

**WILLIAM CAVE (1637-1713) AND THE FORTUNES OF  
*HISTORIA LITERARIA* IN ENGLAND**

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## **Abstract**

### **WILLIAM CAVE (1637-1713) AND THE FORTUNES OF *HISTORIA LITERARIA* IN ENGLAND**

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This thesis is the first full-length study of the English clergyman and historian William Cave (1637-1713). As one of a number of Restoration divines invested in exploring the lives and writings of the early Christians, Cave has nonetheless won only meagre interest from early-modernists in the past decade. Among his contemporaries and well into the nineteenth century Cave's vernacular biographies of the Apostles and Church Fathers were widely read, but it was with the two volumes of his *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* (1688 and 1698), his life's work, that he made his most important and lasting contribution to scholarship.

The first aim of the thesis is therefore to build on a recent quickening of research into the innovative early-modern genre of *historia literaria* by exploring how, why, and with what help, in the context of late seventeenth-century European intellectual culture, Cave decided to write a work of literary history. To do so it makes extensive use of the handwritten drafts, annotations, notebooks, and letters that he left behind, giving a comprehensive account of his reading and scholarly practices from his student-days in 1650s Cambridge and then as a young clergyman in the 1660s to his final, unsuccessful attempts to publish a revised edition of his book at the end of his life. Cave's motives, it finds, were multiple, complex, and sometimes conflicting: they developed in response to the immediate practical concerns of the post-Restoration Church of England even as they reflected some of the deeper-lying tensions of late humanist scholarship.

The second reason for writing a thesis about Cave is that it makes it possible to reconsider an influential historiographical narrative about the origins of the 'modern' disciplinary category of literature. Since the 1970s the consensus among scholars has been that the nineteenth-century definition of literature as imaginative fictions in verse and prose – in other words literature as it is now taught in schools and universities – more or less completely replaced the early-modern notion of literature, *literae*, as learned books of all kinds. This view is challenged in the final section of this thesis, which traces the influence of Cave's work on some of the canonical authors of the English literary tradition, including Johnson and Coleridge. Coleridge's example, in particular, helps us to see why Cave and scholars like him were excluded lastingly from genealogies of English studies in the twentieth century, despite having given the discipline many of its characteristic concerns and aversions.

## **Prefatory Note**

This dissertation does not exceed the regulation length of 80,000 words, including footnotes, references, and appendices but excluding the bibliography.

I confirm that this dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or am concurrently submitting, for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution.

I have followed the MHRA *Style Guide* (3rd edition, 2013). For the most part original spelling and punctuation have been preserved, although in some cases they have been lightly modernised. Dates have been converted to New Style, with the year starting 1<sup>st</sup> January. Translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. Any abbreviations are explained as they arise in the main body of the thesis.

## **Acknowledgements**

Working on the life of a historian who consistently concealed his debts to other scholars, especially the informal assistance he received from friends and colleagues, has made me sensible of the need to acknowledge my own. First and foremost this thesis would not have been possible without funding from the AHRC for my MPhil and then for my PhD, this time in partnership with a donation from Mrs Kyoko Gledhill. Generous grants at different times from the AHRC, the Cambridge English Faculty, and Sidney Sussex College enabled me to attend conferences in Plymouth and Oxford and to carry out research overseas in the summer of 2016.

Elsewhere in Cambridge the Rare Books Room in the University Library has been my base for the past three years: the efficiency and expertise of its staff cannot be emphasised enough, and my thesis would have been considerably poorer without their advice, fetching, and kindness. In the course of my research I have also benefited from visits to farther-flung libraries, and I am grateful to staff at the British Library, Lambeth Palace Library, St George's Chapter Library, Windsor, the Royal Library, Copenhagen, the Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, and the Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen. Three archivists in particular deserve special mention. Erik Petersen in Copenhagen was a fount of knowledge about early-modern European scholarship and pointed me in the direction of several relevant manuscript sources, and in Windsor, Kate McQuillan and Clare Rider were unfailingly helpful; I hope they will be gratified to see one of the Chapter's former members restored to his full importance.

Over the past three years I have incurred substantial debts to several other people. Conversations in person or by email with Christopher Tilmouth, Richard Serjeantson, Karen Collis, Kelsey Jackson Williams, Alexander Regier, and Marcello Cattaneo have helped to clarify my thinking. Edward Wilson-Lee and Joana Craigwood made me feel part of the English Literature community at Sidney Sussex and entrusted me with a steady, invigorating supply of undergraduate teaching. Since meeting him at a conference in Cambridge in 2016, Mark Vessey has been a source of encouragement and guidance just as valuable to the completion of this thesis as his published work on Jerome and Erasmus. Two of my undergraduate tutors have also continued to play a role in my work, years later. With his usual generosity Winfried Rudolf let me stay at his flat while I worked in the library in Göttingen, despite being out of the country at the time. Tom Roebuck drew me into the history of scholarship in my second year at Oxford before I realised what was happening, and had an equally decisive impact on my research in the second year of my PhD, realising before I did that my whole thesis needed to be about Cave, not just a single chapter. My gratitude is due next to Nick Hardy, not only for numerous suggestions and discussions, but also for sharing his work with me so freely: it will be clear how much this thesis owes to his book, and any simplifications and misapplications of his research are entirely my own. Kirsten Macfarlane, meanwhile, has been blazing a trail for me to follow since we were tutorial partners as undergraduates. Phil Connell has been a model supervisor after taking me on for the last third of my PhD: my thesis would have been greatly improved if I had had his help from the beginning.

It goes without saying that this dissertation would not have been written without the support of my parents and sister, which has been constant. Lastly, I want to thank Adeline: checking over my bibliography was the least of the ways in which she improved things.

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# Introduction

## The Rise of English Literary History?

In 1688 the first English literary history was published, with a second volume appearing ten years later. Depending on your perspective or specialism, this date will either seem very late or much too early. John Leland's *De Viris Illustribus*, written in the 1530s and 1540s but not published till 1709, or Thomas Warton's *The History of English Poetry* (1774-81) are more commonly described as the first English histories of literature. So, to clarify: in 1688 the first book printed in England to call itself a literary history was published. The question is whether this clarification weakens the force of the opening claim. There are too many examples to name of books announcing new themes in their titles but ending up repeating old themes or, on the other hand, disguising real innovation under familiar titles. What was new and different, if anything, about William Cave's *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* (1688-98)?

'Clarify' might have been an inappropriate choice of word because, considered more closely, the title of Cave's book is anything but clear, at least to modern eyes. In the first place it is hard to tell what it is a history *of* exactly. Its title has a double object: it is a history of literature (if that is the same as a literary history) and it is a history of ecclesiastical writers. The temptation is to fold these two together and read the title as promising a history of ecclesiastical literature, but this is immediately unsatisfying as a solution, since it fails to capture the historical specialness of either of its adjectives, *literary* or *ecclesiastical*.

The first of these, *literary*, looks particularly difficult to parse. It might at least be possible to define it negatively: Cave's *Historia Literaria* is not about literature in the modern sense of imaginative fictions. Since the work of René Wellek and Raymond Williams in the 1970s it has become an axiom of English studies that this modern sense only emerged at the start of the nineteenth century. Despite approaching the question from practically opposite political positions and making sense of their findings in similarly divergent ways, Wellek and Williams

lighted on the same basic facts in their investigations into the etymology of ‘literature’. As they discovered, the word’s classical and early-modern variants described the ability to read and write (*litteratus*), a culture of general learning (*litterae*), and a body of learned writings (*litteratura*), particularly printed ones.<sup>1</sup> Initially the English noun *literature* carried the same range of meanings, but over the course of the eighteenth century it gradually ‘narrowed’ or ‘specialized’ until it came to refer primarily to ‘imaginative’ or ‘creative’ writings in prose and verse, thus taking on some of the functions fulfilled by the word *poetry* or *poesie* in the Renaissance.<sup>2</sup>

Three decades earlier in his influential *The Rise of English Literary History* (1941) Wellek had already decided Cave’s place in this trajectory. In his words, ‘Cave, though calling his book a literary history, is not literary in the modern sense’.<sup>3</sup> A quick glance at the contents and form of the *Historia Literaria* will help us to see why he reached this verdict.<sup>4</sup> The ‘literature’ catalogued in Cave’s book included writing of all kinds: poems and plays but also sermons, hymns, histories, liturgies, theological treatises, controversial tracts, legal collections, confessions of faith, and every kind of letter imaginable. Between them the two parts contain more than two thousand bio-bibliographical entries for ecclesiastical writers, starting with Jesus and ending with Martin Luther. Some amount to a couple of sentences and others span dozens of pages. Each entry includes a brief account of the author’s life: when and where he (and sometimes she) was born, how he was educated, when he adopted or forswore Christianity, what controversies he joined, and when and how he died. The biographical parts of the longer entries finish with impressions of the writer’s character and orthodoxy, taken from ancient and modern testimonies, and a

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<sup>1</sup> See René Wellek, ‘What is Literature?’ in *What is Literature?*, ed. by Paul Hernadi (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1978), pp. 16-23, and *The Attack on Literature and Other Essays* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982), pp. 12-16; and Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana, 1976), pp. 150-54, and *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 46-50.

<sup>2</sup> The fullest account of this lexical shift is Richard Terry, *Poetry and the Making of the English Literary Past, 1660-1781* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), chapter 1, pp. 11-34.

<sup>3</sup> *The Rise of English Literary History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941), p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> William Cave, *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria, A Christo Nato usque ad Saeculum XIV Facili Methodo Digesta* (London, 1688) and *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria. Facili et perspicua Methodo digesta. Pars Altera* (London, 1698).



description of his style – terse, polished, fluent, crabbed, harsh, grandiloquent, and so on. There then follows a list of his writings, typically divided into sections for genuine, doubtful, and spurious works, as well as for those no longer extant. At the end there is a paragraph detailing modern editions of the author’s collected *Opera*.

On a larger scale the volumes’ principle of arrangement is chronological. A note in the margin indicates the author’s *floruit*, the date when he was at the mid-point of his literary career. The writers are grouped into *saecula* – periods of a hundred years – named after that century’s predominant heresy or intellectual tendency. The fourth century is thus the ‘Saeculum Arianum’ and the thirteenth is the ‘Saeculum Scholasticum’. Each chapter starts with a page-long synopsis of the most notable events in its hundred-year span: the deaths of Roman emperors, the first stirrings of controversy, the rise of heresiarchs. The two volumes both start with lengthy introductions about Cave’s methods and an alphabetised list of the modern secondary literature that he consulted. The later book adds summaries of ecclesiastical councils after every chapter and three dissertations on writers who had proved hard to date, Greek liturgical texts, and the recent debate about the possible antitrinitarianism of the fourth-century bishop Eusebius of Caesarea.

So much for the books’ form. If we wanted to thicken our account of Cave’s work, we could point to the flowering of bio-bibliographical scholarship in the years immediately before and after he published his first volume. In 1686 two rival histories of Christian literature had been produced on the Continent: Casimir Oudin’s supplement to Robert Bellarmine’s *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis Liber Unus* (Rome, 1613) and the first installment of Louis Ellies Dupin’s multi-volume *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques*, which appeared in an English translation by the scholar William Wotton from 1693.<sup>5</sup> Thomas Pope Blount’s *Censura*

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<sup>5</sup> Casimir Oudin, *Supplementum de Scriptoribus vel Scriptis Ecclesiasticis a Bellarmino omissis* (Paris, 1686); Louis Ellies Dupin, *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques depuis les 1ers siècles de l’Église jusqu’au XVIIe*, 17 vols (Paris, 1686-1714); and William Wotton, trans., *A New History of Ecclesiastical Writers*, 13 vols (London, 1693-1706).

*Celebriorum Authorum* (1690) and Anthony Wood's dictionary of writers who attended Oxford (1691-92) represented the English strand of this surge of interest in bio-bibliography.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile influential handbooks by Adrien Baillet in 1685 and Daniel Georg Morhof in 1688 provided systematic accounts of why this genre – soon to be re-christened *historia literaria* – was so important.<sup>7</sup>

Within the last decade or so *historia literaria* has stimulated a burgeoning field of research. This has mostly been limited to its uptake in early-modern Germany, where enthusiasm for it was at its keenest.<sup>8</sup> In the wake of seminal essays by Martin Gierl and Helmut Zedelmaier in the 1990s a familiar narrative has established itself.<sup>9</sup> Christophe Milieu had already articulated the need for a history of letters in 1551, but it was Francis Bacon's call in 1605 and then again in 1623, this time at greater length and in Latin, for a 'historia literarum' or 'just history of learning' that really lit the literary-historical touchpaper.<sup>10</sup> The early high-points in the tradition were Peter Lambeck's unfinished *Prodromus Historiae Literariae* (1659) and Morhof's similarly incomplete *Polybistor* (1688). With its emphasis on who had written what and when, the subject of *historia literaria* began to be introduced in German universities like Kiel and Helmstedt, initially by private tutors in an unofficial capacity before being offered formally as a way of preparing

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas Pope Blount, *Censura Celebriorum Authorum sive Tractatus in quo varia virorum doctorum de clarissimis cujusque seculi scriptoribus iudicia traduntur* (London, 1690) and Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses: An exact history of all the writers and bishops who have had their education in the most ancient and famous University of Oxford*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1691-92).

<sup>7</sup> Adrien Baillet, *Jugemens des Savans sur les Principaux Ouvrages des Auteurs*, 9 vols (Paris, 1685-86) and Daniel Georg Morhof, *Polybistor Sive de Notitia Auctorum et Rerum Commentarii* (Lübeck, 1688).

<sup>8</sup> The most concise summary of *historia literaria* in Germany is Hanspeter Marti, 'Litterärgeschichte (historia litteraria)', in *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie begründet von Friedrich Ueberweg. Die Philosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Volume 5.2, ed. by Helmut Holzhey and Vilem Mudroch (Basel: Schwabe, 2014), pp. 1425-29.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Gierl, 'Bestandsaufnahme im gelehrten Bereich: Zur Entwicklung der "Historia literaria" im 18. Jahrhundert', in *Denkhorizonte und Handlungsspielräume: Historische Studien für Rudolf Vierhaus zum 70. Geburtstag* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1992), pp. 53-80; and Helmut Zedelmaier, "'Historia literaria". Über den epistemologischen Ort des gelehrten Wissens in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert*, 22 (1998), 11-21.

<sup>10</sup> See Donald R. Kelley, 'Writing Cultural History in Early Modern Europe: Christophe Milieu and his Project', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 52.2 (1999), 342-65; and Anette Syndikus, 'Die Anfänge der Historia literaria im 17. Jahrhundert: Programmatik und gelehrte Praxis', in *Historia literaria. Neuordnungen des Wissens im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Frank Grunert and Friedrich Vollhardt (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2007), pp. 3-36. For Bacon's proposal, see *The Oxford Francis Bacon, Vol. IV: The Advancement of Learning*, ed. by Michael Kiernan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 62.

students for the higher disciplines of theology, law, and medicine by providing them with a tour through the major books in each subject.<sup>11</sup> In the absence of any complete works of *historia literaria*, guides, sketches, handbooks, and introductions to the genre piled up instead: the most popular were by Burkhardt Gotthelf Struve (1704), Jacob Friedrich Reimann (1708-13), Christoph August Heumann (1718), Nicolaus Gundling (1734-36), and Johann Andreas Fabricius (1752-54).<sup>12</sup>

In a sense early-modern *historia literaria* is still awaiting its historian. We are sorely in need of a single, global account of the genre that synthesises the findings of these separate articles and essays, as well as extending its scope beyond Germany to France and Britain, where related but distinct traditions of literary history have been almost entirely overlooked, the work of Claude Crispin and Kelsey Jackson Williams excepted.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, there is still a consensus to be found in this body of scholarship about what happened to *historia literaria* in the eighteenth century. That is, the future of the genre lay in ‘library science’ on the one hand and ‘cultural history’ on the other as its instincts towards bibliography grew apart from its interests in grander explanatory narratives about the history of learning, which in the Enlightenment were increasingly assimilated to the conjectural study of the development of the human intellect.<sup>14</sup> The death of the genre as such, in its original form, was hastened by a sharper

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<sup>11</sup> See especially Paul Nelles, ‘Historia litteraria and Morhof: Private Teaching and Professorial Libraries at the University of Kiel’, in *Mapping the World of Learning. The Polyhistor of Daniel Georg Morhof*, ed. by Françoise Waquet (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000), pp. 31-56; and ‘Historia litteraria at Helmstedt. Books, professors and students in the early Enlightenment university’, in *Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by Helmut Zedelmaier and Martin Mulsow (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001), pp. 147-76.

<sup>12</sup> The best guides to this field are the essays in *Historia literaria*, ed. by Grunert and Vollhardt. See also Dirk van Miert, ‘Structuring the History of Knowledge in an Age of Transition: The Göttingen *Geschichte* between *Historia Literaria* and the Rise of the Disciplines’, *History of Humanities*, 2.2 (2017), 389-416.

<sup>13</sup> See Claude Crispin, *Aux Origines de l'Histoire Littéraire* (Grenoble: Presse universitaires de Grenoble, 1973) and ‘Aux Origines de L'Histoire Littéraire Française: “Les éloges des Hommes sçavans Tirez de l'histoire de M. de Thou par Antoine Teissier” (1683-1715)’, *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France*, 72.2 (1972), 234-46; and Kelsey Jackson Williams, ‘Canon before Canon, Literature before Literature: Thomas Pope Blount and the Scope of Early Modern Learning’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 77.2 (2014), 177-99. I am especially grateful to Dr Jackson Williams for sending me a copy of his essay before its publication.

<sup>14</sup> See Michael C. Carhart, ‘Historia Literaria and Cultural History from Mylaeus to Eichhorn’, in *Momigliano and Antiquarianism: Foundations of the Modern Cultural Sciences*, ed. by Peter N. Miller (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), pp. 184-206.

revival at the end of the century, particularly in Kant's writings, of the complaint that it was merely cumulative, an uncritical and pedantic survey of knowledge that made so-called 'information overload' worse rather than short-cutting the growing forest of printed knowledge, as its early practitioners claimed it would.<sup>15</sup>

Any hope that this renewal of interest in *historia literaria* would come to trouble René Wellek's famous account about the development of English literary historiography has therefore largely been extinguished. Instead this research ends up reconfirming that account by portraying *historia literaria* as a baroque expression of the age-old habit of cataloguing, and leaving untouched the schema of oppositions between 'early-modern' and 'modern' ways of studying literature that have been central even to recent, more sophisticated version of Wellek's thesis, for instance by Richard Terry and Stefan Hoesel-Uhlig: bibliographical accumulation vs historical narrative, antiquarianism vs criticism, polymathic erudition vs philosophical aesthetics, and finally, as the outcome of these oppositions, general learning vs imaginative works, otherwise expressed as *literae* vs *literature*.<sup>16</sup> In most accounts, then, the 'rise' of English literary history is also necessarily the decline of early-modern *historia literaria*.<sup>17</sup> Johnson, Goldsmith, Warton, Southey, Godwin, Wordsworth, and Coleridge are all names that figure prominently in this story of how English literary studies were emancipated from early-modern erudition, thus creating the modern discipline.<sup>18</sup> The problem with this narrative – and this is

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<sup>15</sup> See Martin Gierl, 'Historia literaria. Wissenschaft, Wissensordnung und Polemik im 18. Jahrhundert', in *Historia literaria*, ed. by Grunert and Vollhardt, pp. 113-27 (p. 115); and Chad Wellmon, *Organizing Enlightenment: Information Overload and the Invention of the Modern Research University* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2015), pp. 123-50.

<sup>16</sup> For instance Stefan Hoesel-Uhlig, 'What is the History of Literature?' in *Scholarly Environments: Centres of Learning and Institutional Contexts, 1560-1960*, ed. by Alasdair A. Macdonald and Arend H. Huussen (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 121-34 and 'The Historical Formation of the Modern Concept of Literature' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> This case is put most bluntly in Alvin Kernan, *Printing Technology, Letters, and Samuel Johnson* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987) and Lawrence Lipking, *The Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

<sup>18</sup> On Godwin and Southey, see Mark Salber Phillips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), chapter 10, pp. 259-321; and David Fairer, 'Southey's Literary History', in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*, ed. by Lynda Pratt (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 1-17.

where the present thesis intervenes – is that it was the same poets, critics, and historians who were the most careful, interested eighteenth-century and Romantic-period readers of Cave’s *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*. Yet so far no one has made anything resembling a full, or even partial, study of Cave’s work in its own context or as it was subsequently read and remade.

## II

One way of explaining how ‘literature’ changed its meaning would be to tell the story as follows. In the seventeenth century literary culture was factional and rancorous. The earliest forms of literary history were commemorative in nature: biographies of poet-worthies, funeral monuments, epitaphs, and posthumous *Opera Omnia*.<sup>19</sup> Projects of this kind were almost always politically or confessionally motivated: typical examples would be John Weever’s *Laudian Ancient Funerall Monuments* (1631) or the standard-format editions of royalist, aristocratic poets by the London bookseller Humphrey Moseley in the 1640s and 1650s.<sup>20</sup> ‘Criticism’ of poetry and drama was often indistinguishable from ecclesiastical and political critique, for instance in a work like Andrew Marvell’s *The Rehearsal Transpros’d* (1672-73).<sup>21</sup>

In the eighteenth century a new kind of reader and a new way of reading emerged. Joseph Addison and others started to write for and create a public unimpressed by dry Latin scholarship and wanting to read for pleasure rather than instruction or use.<sup>22</sup> The discourse of aestheticism took shape to cater for this polite, vernacular, coffeehouse audience, giving it a

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<sup>19</sup> See Terry, *Poetry and the Making*, chapter 3, pp. 63-92.

<sup>20</sup> See Alexandra Walsham, “‘Like Fragments of a Shipwreck’”: Printed Images and Religious Antiquarianism in Early Modern England’, in *Printed Images in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. by Michael Hunter (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 87-109; and David Scott Kastan, ‘Humphrey Moseley and the Invention of English Literature’, in *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, ed. by Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Lindquist, and Eleanor F. Shevlin (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), pp. 105-23.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Gavin, *The Invention of English Criticism, 1650-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 14.

<sup>22</sup> David Bromwich, *A Choice of Inheritance: Self and Community from Edward Burke to Robert Frost* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 1-19.

gentlemanly, disinterested language for discovering and discussing the beauties of English poems, plays, and eventually novels.<sup>23</sup> In economic terms, the vast majority of readers – many of them women for the first time – were consumers, not producers. The decision in 1774 by the House of Lords to end perpetual copyright, or at least reaffirm its illegality, made it possible and commercially viable to reprint editions and anthologies of the major English and Scottish poets. The English literary canon was made, with Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton at its pinnacle.<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile the conflict between ‘ancients’ and ‘moderns’ in the English Battle of the Books had lasting implications for the rest of the century.<sup>25</sup> On the one hand, the historicizing scholarship of the moderns won the day: the pastness of the past became a commonplace, and ancient and medieval poetry began not only to be studied in their original contexts but also to allure precisely because they offered a glimpse of the primitive, uncivilized past.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, the debate created an enduring dislike of the university scholar, whose methods were associated with narrow-mindedness and dogmatism of all kinds.<sup>27</sup> Neo-Latin was replaced as the language of scholarship by the vernaculars, but intellectual labour in general was increasingly divided between specialists and non-specialists under the conflicting Enlightenment goals of democratizing learning and advancing it at the same time.<sup>28</sup>

These developments all converged at the end of the century. In Germany eighteenth-century scholars had long been using the history of literature, *historia literaria*, to find non-

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<sup>23</sup> Jonathan Brody Kramnick, *Making the English Canon: Print-Capitalism and the Cultural Past, 1700-1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), introduction and chapter 1, pp. 1-53.

<sup>24</sup> Trevor Ross, *The Making of the English Literary Canon: from the Middle Ages to the Late Eighteenth Century* (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998), p. 297; see also William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), chapters 5-7.

<sup>25</sup> Joseph M. Levine, *The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991).

<sup>26</sup> Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, chapter 10, pp. 259-321 and Kramnick, *Making the English Canon*, chapter 2, pp. 54-104.

<sup>27</sup> Kramnick, *Making the English Canon*, pp. 54-104, and Hoesel-Uhlig, ‘The Historical Formation’, pp. 13-35.

<sup>28</sup> See Robin Valenza, *Literature, Language, and the Rise of the Intellectual Disciplines in Britain, 1680-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

dogmatic, irenic solutions to religious and political controversies by gathering together everything that had been written about a particular dispute and then eclectically picking out the best approaches, whatever confession or party they emerged from (as long as their authors were not Roman Catholic).<sup>29</sup> England initially lagged behind in this respect, but the French Revolution forced a crisis: now that the connection between learning, ‘opinion’ and revolutionary violence had been exposed, ‘literature’ would come to be a historical and aesthetic category, rather than a forward-looking or reformist one. After this conservative reaction, works of literature came to be defined more and more as imaginative and creative or, from the other perspective, non-political and non-confessional.<sup>30</sup>

This narrative is satisfyingly complete: it takes us smoothly towards the conclusion we expect. But there might be an alternative story to tell about the same period, especially if we work backwards from the inescapable fact that, despite literature’s apparent drift towards definition-by-imagination, plenty of writers in the early and middle nineteenth century continued to use the word in its old or ‘early-modern’ sense. The story would go like this:

In the nineteenth century literature was a central battleground for confessional and political combatants. Characteristic works were Joseph Mendham’s *Literary Policy of the Church of Rome* (1830), which gave a history of papal practices of censorship, and Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria* (1817), a theological polemic against the Dissenting communities to which he had belonged in his younger days. The two multi-volume collections assembled by the publishers John Nichols and his son John Bowyer Nicols – *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* (1812-16) and *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (1817-58) – tried, with similarly

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<sup>29</sup> See Martin Gierl, *Pietismus und Aufklärung. Theologische Polemik und die Kommunikationsreform der Wissenschaft am Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1997), pp. 487-542; and Helmut Zedelmaier, ‘*Cogitationes de studio litterario*. Johann Lorenz Mosheims Kritik der *Historia litteraria*’ in *Johann Lorenz Mosheim (1693-1755). Theologie im Spannungsfeld von Philosophie, Philologie und Geschichte*, ed. by Martin Mulsow and others (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), pp. 17-43.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Keen, *The Crisis of Literature in the 1790s: Print Culture and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

partisan motives, to present recent intellectual history as the achievement of a Tory, nonjuring, clerical, oppositional, and scholarly set of men of letters.<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile historians and critics of poetry borrowed the idioms of ecclesiastical history to describe what Francis Jeffrey called ‘the catholic poetical church’, with Southey using the framework of heresy and orthodoxy in his ‘Sketches of the Progress of English Poetry from Chaucer to Cowper’ in his biography of Cowper (1836).<sup>32</sup>

This nineteenth-century attitude was the outcome of a long, slow confessionalization of letters and learning: it was not a coincidence that the convert-from-Catholicism turned apostate-from-Protestantism Archibald Bower, during one of his brief periods of conformity to the Church of England, chose to entitle his new venture, a monthly periodical reviewing new books, *Historia Litteraria* (1730-34). The English Enlightenment was clerical, and many of its most dramatic flare-ups were over doctrine or ecclesiology: the radicalism of Joseph Priestley, the Feathers Tavern petition in 1772, and the Bangorian Controversy from 1716, to name only a few.<sup>33</sup> Literary studies were an outgrowth of this ecclesiastical mindset or milieu, and mid-century scholar-clerics like William Warburton, Joseph Warton, and Richard Hurd became interested in ancient and medieval poetry as a source of counter-arguments to anticlericalist attacks on the Church of England from within and without.<sup>34</sup>

In this sense and others there was an obvious continuity between their work and that of an earlier generation of Anglican scholars led by George Hickes and Humphrey Wanley, whose studies of early and medieval English writing were a legacy of post-Restoration and post-

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<sup>31</sup> Simon During, *Exit Capitalism. Literary Culture, Theory, and Post-Secular Modernity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 8-12.

<sup>32</sup> Robert Southey, *The Life and Works of William Cowper*, 2 vols (London, 1836), II, pp. 122-30; and Francis Jeffrey, ‘Art. VIII. *Thalaba, the Destroyer*. A Metrical Romance. By Robert Southey. 2 vols. 12mo. London.’ *The Edinburgh Review*, 1 (1802), 63-83 (p. 63).

<sup>33</sup> Brian Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England: Theological Debate from Locke to Burke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

<sup>34</sup> Philip Connell, ‘Afterword: Writing Religion and the Genealogy of the Literary Aesthetic’, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* (forthcoming, 2018). I am grateful to Dr Connell for sharing a copy of this article with me prior to its publication.



Revolutionary debates about the Church of England.<sup>35</sup> The separation of Hurd from Hickes, vernacular literary criticism from Neo-Latin scholarship, was merely the fantasy of a few self-proclaimed gentlemen ‘ancients’ like William Temple who felt imperilled by the sophistication, expertise, and self-confidence of Richard Bentley and his ilk. In reality, the Battle of the Books was a minor fracas whose schematic division of ancients and moderns failed to describe much more culturally central debates about how to edit Scripture; anyway, most scholars had always freely mixed ‘historicist’ with ‘neoclassical’ or ‘prescriptive’ approaches to literary texts.<sup>36</sup>

The real tension within Erasmian humanism that broke out at the end of the seventeenth century was not so much between two viable methods but between ideal and reality. Members of the so-called Republic of Letters styled themselves as cosmopolitan, irenic, and interested in learning above all, whether it came from Geneva or Rome. But the events of the mid-century across Europe exposed the shallowness of this ideal: not only had apparently transconfessional scholarly cooperation failed to defuse civil, political, and religious violence, but the whole infrastructure of early-modern learning had fueled it in the first place with its emphasis on disputation.<sup>37</sup> Intolerance just as much as irenicism would characterise literary studies thereafter.

### III

The roughly equal length given to these narratives above should not be read as an indication that they enjoy anything like equal favour among historians. The first account is overwhelmingly

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<sup>35</sup> See David C. Douglas, *English Scholars* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1939).

<sup>36</sup> Kristine Haugen, ‘The Birth of Tragedy in the Cinquecento: Humanism and Literary History’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 72.3 (2011), 351-70; and Nicholas Hardy, ‘Literary History as Critical Practice: Dryden’s “Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire”’, in *The Oxford Handbook of English Prose, 1640-1714*, ed. by Henry Power and Nicholas McDowell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

<sup>37</sup> On the causal connection between ‘literature’ and violence, see William Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment: Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England and its Empire, 1648-1715* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), especially chapter 1, pp. 17-40; and Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), chapter 7, pp. 250-93. On the limits of the ideal of the ‘Republic of Letters’, see Nicholas Hardy, *Criticism and Confession: The Bible in the Seventeenth Century Republic of Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

the view of scholars working in English departments: to retrieve names from my footnotes, it has been shaped to different extents by the work of Jonathan Kramnick, Trevor Ross, Robin Valenza, Richard Terry, Michael Gavin, Jon Klancher, and Paul Keen, who might disagree on details but agree on a general picture of eighteenth-century and thence modern literature as the product of secularization and academic specialization. Whereas to my knowledge the second has never been articulated in quite this way, at least as a thesis about the development of ‘literature’ that might interest ‘literary’ scholars. Simon During and Philip Connell have made important (and quite different) claims about the closeness of ecclesiastical and literary culture in the eighteenth century, but for the most part early-modern ‘literary’ or learned culture has been studied under the aegis of other disciplines like the history of scholarship – and even there, the dominant belief is that ‘literature’ really was a site for transconfessional exchange, as it will remain until (or, more pessimistically, unless) the recent groundbreaking work of Nicholas Hardy, William Bulman and a few others is properly absorbed.<sup>38</sup>

To state its aims simply, this thesis tries to apply these new insights about the Republic of Letters forwards, using them to overturn the standard explanation or explanations for how and why the modern concept of literature developed. What should be obvious from my two narratives is that they both end in the same place: that is, the modernity of the first ends up looking like the early-modernity of the second, with ‘literature’ a site for deconfessionalized, depoliticized expression. It has recently become possible to pierce through the *respublica literaria*’s appeal to ecumenicism and peacefulness and see it either as a legitimate ideal or as a ‘disingenuous pretext for promoting a particular version of confessional orthodoxy’ (or both).<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> To give a single representative example, Dirk van Miert has recently re-stated this belief in the irenicism of scholarship in the seventeenth century: see ‘Trommius’s Travelogue. Learned Memories of Erasmus and Scaliger and Scholarly Identity in the Republic of Letters’, *Early Modern Low Countries*, 1 (2017), 51-70; and ‘What was the Republic of Letters? A brief introduction to a long history (1417-2008)’, *Groniek*, 204 (2016), 269-87.

<sup>39</sup> Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*, p. 197.

It is an open question whether the early nineteenth-century definition of literature will be susceptible to the same kind of analysis.

From Raymond Williams onwards, a (left-leaning) strand of literary criticism has always been open to the idea that the narrowing of literature's definition to works of the imagination was a capitalist, conservative, and/or bourgeois response to new social and political conditions. However, the paradox of this approach has been that critics working in this tradition have also tended to reify the conceptual change of the early nineteenth century, concluding that the conservative specialization of 'literature' became its lasting definition.<sup>40</sup> But how sure can we be that this definition is not just as ideal, or unreal, as its early-modern counterpart? This is not to deny that for much of the twentieth century and probably still today 'literature' has primarily meant works of poetry, drama, and fictional prose. But perhaps what look like consecutive historical positions, the shift from 'early-modern' *literae* towards 'modern' *literature*, need to be recast as two simultaneous versions of 'literature' that have gained and lost ground on one another in new contexts as different parties have tried to politicize, neutralise, confessionalize, and pacify it for their own ends.

#### IV

The scholarly life of the Church of England clergyman William Cave makes a perfect case-study with which to prise open the traditional genealogy of English literary studies. This is because, firstly, his career was shaped by a tension within late humanism between competing approaches to literature. As a way of finishing his education, Cave made an extensive study of humanist correspondence, prefaces, treatises, and biographies, searching for testimonies about the learning of ancient and modern authors and copying them into a notebook which became as a result a kind of conduct-book about the values of the Republic of Letters. Throughout his life

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<sup>40</sup> Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, p. 50.

he remembered and appealed to these ideals, but as his confessional and parochial commitments accumulated he also increasingly found them wanting. His *Historia Literaria*, which he spent slightly more than thirty years of his life conceiving, drafting, writing, and revising, was a monumental expression of his disenchantment with the *respublica literaria* and early-modern *litterae* more generally. The second reason why Cave is ideal is that his books were so widely read in the century or so after his death: looking for Cave among the theologians, poets, critics, and historians of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries becomes a heuristic for reconsidering Enlightenment and Romantic-period literary culture at large.

As should be plain by now, this thesis combines several methodologies. The first three chapters are recognisably contributions to the history of scholarship, building on recent studies by Jean-Louis Quantin, Nicholas Hardy, Dmitri Levitin, William Bulman, Kristine Haugen, and Richard Serjeantson that have transformed our understanding of what ‘scholarship’ was for in the seventeenth century, what the relations were between apologetics, controversial divinity, and erudition, and what the intellectual and sociological character of ‘late humanism’ was. This part of the thesis addresses, in unprecedented detail, the question of why Cave decided to write a literary history. His studies at Cambridge in the 1650s, his intensive course of theological reading in the 1660s after he had taken orders, the interest in Neostoic writers that he inherited from his father, his career-defining enthusiasm for the lives of the early Christians, his correspondence with prominent scholars and journalists in Leipzig and Hamburg, his responsibilities as a London clergyman and later as a canon of St George’s Chapter, Windsor, his relationships with his amanuenses, research assistants, and collaborators, and his intermittent but chronic problems with his eyesight all help to explain how the ‘first’ English literary history came into existence. To build up this portrait, I make extensive use of his annotated books, published and unpublished letters, commonplace books, and manuscript drafts of his publications.

At the same time this thesis is also meant to interest and address literary scholars. The fourth chapter particularly, an account of literary history writing in the century after Cave's death, sets itself the task of proving that it is impossible to understand how and why poems, plays, and novels were studied in the eighteenth century without considering the ways in which the ambitions and tensions of early-modern Neo-Latin erudition were reproduced, lost, and remade. In effect, and quite deliberately, late seventeenth-century literary culture is made unfamiliar, if not unrecognisable, in this thesis. The founding heroes of Cave's world were patristic, not classical; its locale was cathedral chapter libraries and the homes of London clergymen, not playhouses, coffeehouses, or aristocratic country seats; its aims and moods were apologetic, Anglican, parochial, and often intensely intolerant; its languages were Latin and English; its Erasmianism was contested, not automatic or simple; and its archetypal literary form was the clerical letter of recommendation, not the poem or play. To put this same claim in different terms, the ecclesiastical world of Cave, Thomas Smith, Jean Le Clerc, Otto Mencke, William Sancroft, Henry Wharton, and William Beveridge has just as much to tell us about literature, then and now, as traditional depictions of the literary world of Marvell, Milton, Dryden, and Pope.

# 1

## The Makings of a Literary Historian

Towards the end of his life, William Cave gave a short synopsis of his career to one of his admirers in Germany, the Hamburg professor Johann Albert Fabricius. From the first, Cave said, he had ‘worshipped ancient literature’. He had devoted himself to the Church Fathers, searching for traces of them in the annals of ecclesiastical history, and he had diligently studied the books of all learned men and cultivated their friendship if they were still alive.<sup>1</sup> All his own research had been meant to serve the scholarly public, rather than simply satisfying his own curiosity.

As a characterisation of Cave’s life in scholarship this was a mostly reliable self-portrait. By the eighteenth century he enjoyed a Europe-wide reputation as a historian of the early Christians. His books were fixtures of English clerical culture: at least one contemporary suggested that copies of his *Primitive Christianity* (1673) should be chained to the reading desk of every church in the country.<sup>2</sup> But it was also extremely bland. It would be difficult to find a scholar in this period who would not have described himself in the same terms, especially among the group of men whose friendship Cave had cultivated, like Henry Dodwell, William Beveridge, John Mill, Edward Bernard, and Thomas Smith. It therefore fails to explain why Cave did what almost none of them thought to attempt: writing a work of literary history.

Unfortunately there are no ready explanations for this puzzle in the existing literature. In a way this lacuna is unexpected. The last ten years or so would appear to have been a propitious time for a new examination of Cave’s *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* (1688 and 1698). On the one hand, there has been a surge of accounts about the culture of English

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<sup>1</sup> Cave’s letter to Fabricius, dated 13<sup>th</sup> October 1709, is in Copenhagen Royal Library (hereafter KB), Fabricius 104-123 4<sup>o</sup> (Bu-Cr), no. 116. It starts: ‘Praefiscini dixerim, me a primis studiorum meorum rudimentis antiquas literas excoluisse [...]’.

<sup>2</sup> Anonymous, *An Occasional Letter: Containing Some Thoughts about a National Reformation* (London, 1698), pp. 12-13.

scholarship in the second half of the seventeenth century. Thanks to studies by Jean-Louis Quantin, Kristine Haugen, Dmitri Levitin, and William Bulman, we now know substantially more than we used to about the methods, concerns, and vitality of so-called late humanism. Much of the old historiographical scaffolding has been taken down: the idea that Restoration divines were just the latest in a long line of Anglicans defining themselves by their *via media* appeal to the Fathers, the simplistic opposition between scientific ‘moderns’ and humanist ‘ancients’, the assumption that the only classical scholarship worth mentioning is practised on canonical Latin poets in textual editions.<sup>3</sup> It has now become possible to see many of the period’s intellectual concerns – like its fascination with pagan philosophy and its interest in late, patristic, Greek texts – as mainstream and sophisticated where they might once have looked uncritical and esoteric.

On the other hand, a small industry has devoted itself to exploring the enthusiasm in early-modern Germany for Francis Bacon’s proposals for a *historia literarum*. Here we start to encounter the first of our problems, however. This body of work gives the impression that the genre was largely a German phenomenon that owed its rise to a set of specifically German conditions: reforms to university curricula, the secularising philosophy of Christian Thomasius, new tensions within Lutheranism, and so on.<sup>4</sup> It is hard to see how the same genre could have survived, or at least have maintained the same levels of excitement, in clerical English scholarship. This outcome looks even less likely in light of the prevailing view that Anglo-German intellectual exchange only started in earnest in the nineteenth century, with even recent

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<sup>3</sup> See Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Kristine Haugen, *Richard Bentley: Poetry and Enlightenment* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2011); and Dmitri Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science: Histories of Philosophy in England, c.1640-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> For a list of relevant sources, see footnotes 8-15 in my introduction.

attempts to revise this attitude only bringing the starting-point back as far as the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

The available scholarship ends up presenting us with two choices. We could decide to see Cave as an English outlier, working away in a genre that failed to interest most of his contemporaries: this would be to beg the question, of course, of how far Cave's decision to write a literary history was a conscious investment in German sources and methods in the first place. Or we could take Kristine Haugen's approach, which is to use the term 'historia litteraria' as a shorthand for almost all scholarly labour in Restoration England and possibly Europe too, so that – by implication: Haugen does not discuss it – German *historia litteraria* would be only the specialized expression of a larger erudite project including, in England, works like Thomas Stanley's *History of Philosophy* (1655-62) and Thomas Gale's editions of the Greek philosophers Apollodorus (1675) and Iamblichus (1678). As she puts it, the expression is 'a fitting name for the seventeenth-century enterprise of mapping the contours of each genre of writing in antiquity, through extant texts and lost ones, in poetry, philosophy, and beyond'.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter tries to avoid making a choice of this kind. There are merits to Haugen's expansive definition, but it also seems to confuse a mode (literary history as the interest in ancient learning) with a specific form or genre (*historia litteraria*): it is comparable to characterising the same period of English history as an age of epic, which might be true in a general sense but

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<sup>5</sup> Garold N. Davis complained about this view more than 50 years ago: see his essay 'Anglo-German Cultural Relations and the Thirty Years' War', *The Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association*, 22.2 (1968), 22-29. For recent revisionist work, see Heather Ellis, 'Enlightened Networks: Anglo-German Collaboration in Classical Scholarship', in *Anglo-German Scholarly Networks in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Heather Ellis and Ulrike Kirchberger (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 21-38; Thomas Biskup, 'Transnational Careers in the Service of Empire: German Natural Historians in Eighteenth-Century London', in *Scholars in Action: The Practice of Knowledge and the Figure of the Savant in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, ed. by André Holenstein, Hubert Steinke, and Martin Stuber, 2 vols (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), I, pp. 43-69; and Graham Jefcoate, *Deutsche Drucker und Buchhändler in London 1680-1811: Strukturen und Bedeutung des deutschen Anteils am englischen Buchhandel* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> Haugen, *Richard Bentley*, p. 51.



would inadequately describe the large differences between *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Clarissa* (1747-48).

Two claims are thus balanced in what follows: it was unusual for an English scholar to invest so heavily in a German genre, although less unusual than it might first appear, and Cave's *Historia Literaria* was a conventional product of Church of England erudition after the Restoration. To use the critical idiom brought over by Haugen and others from the history of science, we would say that Cave's research into literary history was a distinctive but not abnormal endeavour. That is to say, it grew out of the central scholarly concerns of his day, but it also took some of Cave's special interests or insights to make writing a *historia literaria* seem appealing. To make its case, this chapter revisits Cave's self-portrait of his scholarly life, following his studies from start to finish.

#### **'worn out with long and tedious Winter Journeys': Cave's childhood**

Cave was born on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1637. Like many of his contemporaries, his early years were marked dramatically by the political crises of mid-century England. When he was five a group of parliamentary soldiers was billeted to the rectory in Pickwell, Leicestershire, where his father had his living. For the next few years these soldiers punished John Cave for his intransigent royalism by throwing their dinner onto the floor, assaulting his servants, harrasing his children, firing a gun at him as he was giving a sermon, and accusing him of stealing their horses. Eventually they succeeded in getting him ejected from his parish in around 1644. As a result the family became itinerant, relying on the charity of neighbours and relatives to support them before settling in London. John died in November 1657, 'being broken', as his son put it, 'with *Age and Sufferings*, and worn out with long and tedious *Winter Journeys*, from *Committee* to *Committee*'.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> John Walker, *An Attempt Towards Recovering an Account of the Numbers and Sufferings of the Clergy of the Church of England* (London, 1714), p. 221.

Cave's testimony, as he later provided it to the antiquary John Walker, is our only source for these events. Whatever its accuracy, it is clear that Cave's resentment at his family's ill-treatment persisted. Otherwise not much is known about his father. According to John Nichols, during his time as a student at Lincoln College, Oxford, he lodged for eight years with Robert Sanderson, who would later ordain his son William after the Restoration.<sup>8</sup> The only work of his to be printed was a metaphysical elegy for Henry, Lord Hastings, which was included alongside poems by Marvell and Dryden in a volume entitled *Lachrymae Musarum* (1649).<sup>9</sup> Cave's contribution was openly and wittily Athanasian, wondering how Hastings' goodness could be 'More highly honor'd, and more dearly lov'd' after his death than 'when 'twas Consubstantial' in his being while he was still alive.<sup>10</sup>

Despite his low profile, John Cave was evidently a clergyman of some learning. The survival of a notebook among his son's possessions now in the library of St George's Chapter, Windsor, makes it possible to give a fuller account of his interests.<sup>11</sup> What this notebook shows in the first place is that the turbulence of the Civil War did not halt his studies. Between June 1642 and some time in the 1650s John made (and dated) a series of entries in a commonplace book that had already been extensively annotated by one or possibly two former owners; Cave may have inherited the volume or bought it second-hand, a relatively common fate for notebooks containing ready-made digests of theological learning.<sup>12</sup>

These earlier layers would themselves amply repay further study. Many of the entries were probably written in the 1630s, as several contain long transcriptions from the 1629 edition

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<sup>8</sup> John Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire*, 4 vols (London, 1795-1815), II (1795), p. 773 and repeated in Vivienne Larminie, 'John Cave (d.1657)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. by Colin Matthew and Brian Harrison, 60 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), X, pp. 600-01.

<sup>9</sup> The social profile of the contributors to this volume is briefly discussed in Nicholas McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance in the Civil Wars: Marvell and the Cause of Wit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 29-30.

<sup>10</sup> *Lachrymae Musarum; the Tears of the Muses*, ed. by Richard Brome (London, 1649), p. 36.

<sup>11</sup> This commonplace book is now St George's Chapter Library, Windsor [hereafter SGCL], C.526.

<sup>12</sup> For an example of a commonplace book being bought second-hand, see Richard Serjeantson, 'The Education of Francis Willughby', in *Virtuoso by Nature: The Scientific Worlds of Francis Willughby (1635-1672)*, ed. by Tim Birkhead (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 44-98 (p. 61).

of Lancelot Andrewes' *Opuscula*. Lots of them consist of page after page of uninterrupted, and usually unattributed, extracts from recent works of Roman Catholic scholarship: for instance, François Feuardent's commentary in his edition of Irenaeus (1575) and Scriptural commentaries by the Jesuits Louis de Molina (1592), Michael de Palacios (1595), Luis de Tena (1611), and Sebastião Barradas (1606-11) among others.<sup>13</sup> When his sources start to argue too vociferously for Papal supremacy the note-taker tends to intrude with objections from Protestant authorities like Bartholomäus Keckermann, Johannes Gerhard, or Jerome Zanchi, but for the most part the content is plainly anti-Calvinist.<sup>14</sup> This animus may or may not have been what drew the royalist, episcopalian John Cave to purchase the book at a time when official concerns about Arminianism in the universities were increasing.<sup>15</sup>

Still, Cave's thirty or so actual additions to the commonplace book were less controversial. The tenor of his entries is conveyed by one of his earliest annotations, a description of the ancient Roman goddess of friendship, Amicitia, copied out from Lilius Gyraldus's *De Deis Gentium*, first published in 1548.<sup>16</sup> He continued to pursue this interest in classical antiquity for the next decade, copying out extracts from, inter alia, the 1604 Leiden edition of Seneca and Caelius Rhodiginus's *Antiquarum Lectionum* (1516) about Roman *mores*, the

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<sup>13</sup> See the entries for 'Christi Consubstantialitas', 'Christi Regnum et Haereditas', 'Christi Scientia', and 'Deus', in SGCL C.526, pp. 86, 410, 412-16, 418-20. Sebastião Barradas, *Commentaria in Concordiam et Historiam Evangelicam*, 4 vols (Mainz, 1606-11) [first published Coimbra, 1599-11]; Luis de Tena, *Commentaria et Disputationes in Epistolam D. Pauli ad Hebraeos* (Toledo, 1611); Michael de Palacios, *Enarrationes in Epistolam B. Pauli Apostoli ad Hebraeos* (Salamanca, 1595); and Louis de Molina, *Commentaria in primam divi Thomae Partem* (Cuenca, 1592).

<sup>14</sup> Bartholomäus Keckermann, *Systema SS. Theologiae, Tribus Libris adornatum*, 2nd edn (Hanover, 1607); Jerome Zanchi, *De Natura Dei seu Divinis Attributis. Libri V* (Heidelberg, 1577); and Johannes Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*, 6 vols (Jena, 1610-19), VI (1619).

<sup>15</sup> On worries about the use of Roman Catholic doctrines and materials in the 1630s, see David Hoyle, 'A Commons Investigation of Arminianism and Popery in Cambridge on the Eve of the Civil War', *The Historical Journal*, 29.2 (1986), 419-25 and Margo Todd, "'All One with Tom Thumb': Arminianism, Popery, and the Story of the Reformation in Early Stuart Cambridge", *Church History*, 64.4 (1995), 563-79. The classic study of anti-Calvinism in England is Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c.1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987). See in addition Anthony Milton's observation that Calvinists like Perkins were also capable of mining Roman Catholic commentaries in his book *Catholic and Reformed. The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 235.

<sup>16</sup> SGCL C.526, p. 4.

luxuriousness of imperial life and the gradual decline of eloquence after the age of Seneca.<sup>17</sup> In the typical way of early-modern humanists, Cave's antiquarian interest in the manners of ancient life was openly Christianizing, and his reading moved freely between pagan and patristic writings. In the summer months of 1648, for instance, he used Elia del Medigo's fifteenth-century commentary on Gregory of Nazianzen for edifying definitions of social or intellectual habits like 'curiosity' and 'scandal'.<sup>18</sup> Occasionally he drifted into more contested theological territory, for instance writing beneath the former owner's long entry on episcopacy that 'everything worth saying on this subject is said superbly by Jeremy Taylor', a reference to his *Of the Sacred Order and Offices of Episcopacy* (1642).<sup>19</sup> He also drew on the work of the Roman Catholic devotional author Jeremias Drexelius, but mainly it was his 1638 *ars excerpendi* manual that Cave was reading, apparently less for its specific points of instruction than for the pretty descriptions of flora and fauna – roses, doves, bees, and ants – that Drexelius used as metaphors for the note-taking process.<sup>20</sup>

In the final analysis this commonplace book might not help us to characterise John Cave any more precisely than his son did, although we could add 'humanist' to 'episcopalian' and 'royalist'. Even so, this sketch of Cave's reading in the 1640s and 1650s, as general as it is, can lead us to more specific discoveries not only about his son's world-view but also his intellectual inheritance. For a start, William actually inherited his father's library, including his

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<sup>17</sup> C.526, pp. 104 and 306. For the passages Cave was referring to, see Caelius Rhodiginus, *Lectionum Antiquarum Libri triginta* (Cologne, 1620), pp. 53-54, 793, and 807; and L. *Annaei Senecae Fil. Philosophi: Nec non M. Annaei Senecae Pat. Rhetoris Opera Omnia*, ed. by Janus Gruterus (Leiden, 1604), p. 515.

<sup>18</sup> C.526, pp. 277 and 285. See *Gregorii Nazianzeni Theologici Opera*, ed. by Jacobus Billius, 2 vols (Paris, 1630), II, pp. 2 and 6-8.

<sup>19</sup> C.526, p. 382: 'Qui omnia quacunque vel excogitari de isto subiecto possunt videat cum summa laude'.

<sup>20</sup> Cave was using the 1641 edition. For the relevant passages, see *Aurifodina Artium et Scientiarum Omnium: Excerpendi Solertia, Omnibus litterarum amantibus monstrata* (Antwerp, 1641), pp. 76-77, 78, and 133-34. For studies of Drexelius's *ars excerpendi* book and the popularity of his devotional works in England, see Florian Neumann, 'Jeremias Drexels *Aurifodina* und die *Ars excerpendi* bei den Jesuiten', in *Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit*, ed. by Helmut Zedelmaier and Martin Mulsow, pp. 51-62; and J. M. Blom, 'A German Jesuit and his Anglican readers. The case of Jeremias Drexelius (1581-1632)', in *Studies in Seventeenth-Century English Literature, History, and Bibliography: Festschrift for Professor T. A. Birrell on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. by G. A. M. Janssens and F. G. A. M. Aarts (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1984), pp. 41-51.

commonplace book, after his death in November 1657, as the inscriptions in many of the books now in the library of St George's Chapter indicate. Some of these books shed further light on John's interests. In the copy of Jacques Merlin's *Conciliorum quatuor generalium* (1535), for instance, he has used the margins of the book to supplement the editor's descriptions of popes and councils with information from Henri de Sponde's 1623 epitome of Baronius's *Annales* (1588-1607), anticipating his son's future career as an ecclesiastical historian.<sup>21</sup> That particular edition of the Church Councils, too, would play a decisive and strange role in Cave's thinking, as we shall see in chapter 3. Cave would also come into possession of Drexelius's *Aurifodina* and, like his father, would turn out to be fascinated by botanical metaphors for scholarly labour, particularly bees.<sup>22</sup>

More speculatively, we might want to suggest that seeing and taking part in his family's misfortunes in the 1640s gave Cave's scholarship its cast for the rest of its life. It is tempting but perhaps misleading to read one of his father's interventions in his copy of Merlin's *Concilia*, where he underlined a decree forbidding ejected clergymen from seeking support in another diocese, as a meditation on his experience of deprivation.<sup>23</sup> In any case, almost all of the reading that we have records of John Cave undertaking took place after his ejection and throughout a decade or more of harassment. This affinity of erudition and persecution – erudition under persecution – would lastingly motivate much of his son's scholarship.

### **'one of the idle and negligent ones': Cave in Cambridge**

The next important phase of Cave's life was his time at Cambridge, where he was admitted as a sizar in May 1653 after attending Oakham School. He matriculated at St John's College seven

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<sup>21</sup> The copy of Merlin's edition is now SGCL M.190. Cave's father was using the 1623 Mainz edition of de Sponde's epitome rather than the 1612 *editio princeps* or 1618 reprint: see Henri de Sponde, *Annales Ecclesiastici Ex XII. Tomis Caesaris Baronii in Epitomen redacti. Editio altera* (Mainz, 1623).

<sup>22</sup> Now SGCL D.190. Cave wrote out a date at the front of his copy: 14<sup>th</sup> January 1659. He started making additions in his father's commonplace book at the same time.

<sup>23</sup> John Cave underlined a phrase from Pope Innocent's decretal letter to Victricius of Rouen: 'Abiectus a sua ecclesia clericus, ab altera non suscipiatur ecclesia' (fol. 184<sup>v</sup>).

months later and remained there probably until the early 1660s, graduating BA in February 1657 and proceeding MA in April 1660.<sup>24</sup>

St John's as Cave first encountered it in the early 1650s was just beginning to recover from a period of turbulence in the previous decade. Two decades earlier, under the headship of William Beale, the college chapel had been transformed by a programme of ceremonialist experimentation which saw it decorated with a new altar frontal showing Christ being taken down from the cross and paintings of other scenes from Christ's life on the walls.<sup>25</sup> After Beale's ejection, the fittings, pictures, and organ were removed, the walls whitewashed, and the chapels for the Catholic martyrs (and college benefactors) John Fisher and Hugh Ashton were converted into rooms for students.<sup>26</sup> The college seems to have remained committedly royalist throughout, and by the start of the next decade peace and eventually prosperity had returned.<sup>27</sup> From later perspectives this was a period in the college's history when learning particularly flourished: its students at this time included Edward Stillingfleet (MA 1656), William Beveridge (MA 1660), and the scientist Martin Lister (BA 1659).<sup>28</sup>

Cave was apparently not one of the young scholars who set St John's alight. One of his near-contemporaries, Isaac Milles (MA 1663), remembered that he 'was then looked upon as one of the idle and negligent ones, and seemed to live without much Thought or Reflexion'.<sup>29</sup> Given the way that the BA curriculum emphasised self-directed learning, this is not an

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<sup>24</sup> The relevant records here are: Cambridge University Archives Matr. 7 (1650-1669), p. 129; Grace Book H (1648-1668), p. 154; and *Admissions to the College of St John the Evangelist in the University of Cambridge. Parts I, II. Jan. 1629/30 – July 1715*, ed. by John E. B. Mayor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893), p. 110.

<sup>25</sup> See Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 194.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Baker, *History of the College of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge*, ed. by John E. B. Mayor, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1869), I, p. 226.

<sup>27</sup> See Mark Nicholls, 'The Seventeenth Century', in *St John's College Cambridge: A History*, ed. by Peter Linehan (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), pp. 96-161; Anna Marie Roos, *Web of Nature: Martin Lister (1639-1712), the First Arachnologist* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), p. 46. On the political climate in mid-century Cambridge, see John Twigg, *The University of Cambridge and the English Revolution, 1625-1688* (Cambridge: Boydell Press, 1990), pp. 149-205.

<sup>28</sup> See Baker, *History of the College of St John*, p. 232.

<sup>29</sup> Isaac Milles, *An Account of the Life and Conversation of the Reverend and Worthy Mr Isaac Milles* (London, 1721), p. 15.

improbable scenario.<sup>30</sup> We know almost nothing about his tutor, Richard Houlden, who anyway seemed to stop taking new pupils in the same year, and there are no records of reading that would correct or confirm Milles' report.<sup>31</sup> However, we can at least identify what Cave was expected to study. If he was like his contemporaries, he would have followed a regimen of ethics, logic, and metaphysics in the mornings and oratory, poetry, and ancient history in the afternoons for the first three years, with the option to move on to more specialized subjects in his fourth year, like civil law or medicine.<sup>32</sup> As Richard Serjeantson and Mordechai Feingold have shown, the course was based on an ideal of general humanist learning: its successful product would be able to read, dispute, and write fluently in Latin, if not Greek as well.<sup>33</sup> Seventeenth-century guides to the syllabus by Richard Holdsworth and James Duport also encouraged students to keep up with their devotional reading, recommending authors like John Preston, Robert Bolton, and Richard Baxter.<sup>34</sup>

Despite his apparent indifference to his studies, Cave was settled enough at Cambridge to stay on after completing his BA. Less is known about the MA curriculum in this period: it seems likely that it would have consisted of deeper and more specialized learning in the same historical and philological vein, with a continued emphasis on disputation.<sup>35</sup> For the first three years of this degree it is hard to reconstruct exactly what Cave was reading, but his fourth year

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<sup>30</sup> See Mordechai Feingold, 'The Humanities', in *The History of the University of Oxford: Volume IV, Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, ed. by Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 211-357 (p. 228).

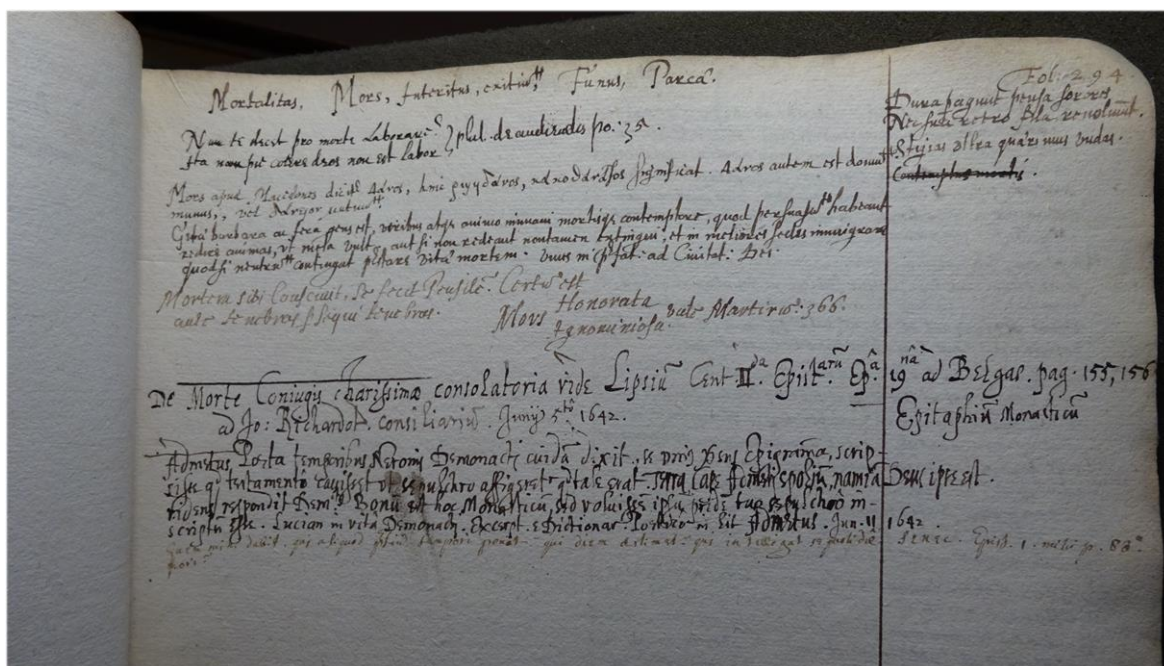
<sup>31</sup> For a brief outline of Richard Houlden's *curriculum vitae*, see *Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part I – to 1750*, ed. by John Venn and J. A. Venn, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), II, p. 389. There are no more references to Houlden in the Grace Book after the entries for Cave's intake of students in 1653, when he had four other pupils besides Cave.

<sup>32</sup> For the example of one of Cave's contemporaries at St John's, Matthew Robinson (BA 1648), see *Autobiography of Matthew Robinson*, ed. by John E. B. Mayor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1856), pp. 19-30.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Serjeantson, 'The Education of Francis Willughby', pp. 44-98 and Feingold, 'The Humanities', pp. 211-357.

<sup>34</sup> C. D. Preston and P. H. Oswald, 'James Duport's Rules for his tutorial pupils: a comparison of two surviving manuscripts', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 14 (2011), pp. 317-62 (p. 334); and Richard Holdsworth, 'Directions for a Student in the Universitie', in *The Intellectual Development of John Milton. Volume II: The Cambridge University Period 1625-1632*, ed. by Harris Francis Fletcher (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961), Appendix II, pp. 623-55 (p. 640).

<sup>35</sup> See Dmitri Levitin, 'Rethinking English Physico-theology: Samuel Parker's *Tentamina de Deo* (1665)', *Early Science and Medicine*, 19 (2014), 28-75 (p. 35).



**Figure 1.** Detail from Cave's commonplace book, now RBK C.526 in St George's Chapter Library. Cave's addition is the very last line (from Seneca's letters). His father's notes, dated June 1642, are immediately above. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor.

is better documented thanks to the survival of his father's commonplace book, which Cave began adding his own notes to in January 1659. These entries are too sparse to show any system or pattern of reading: most of the extracts are made from books published or republished in the last five years, so Cave was possibly just making use of stock that was still available in Cambridge bookshops. Still, a couple of main concerns can be discerned from his additions. The first was theology, at a very basic level. In fact the definitions of key concepts that Cave copied out – 'theology', 'sanctification', 'repentance' – are rudimentary enough to suggest that he was belatedly catching up on lost studies with the help of Reformed primers by William Ames, William Jenkyn, and Anthony Burgess.<sup>36</sup>

Cave's other activity in this period was reading Seneca's letters, almost certainly in his father's old copy of the 1604 Leiden edition. Like his father, he was comfortable finding

<sup>36</sup> SGCL C.526, pp. 81, 108, and 270. William Jenkyn, *An Exposition of the Epistle of Jude*, 2nd edn (London, 1656); Anthony Burgess, *CXLV Expository Sermons Upon the whole 17<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Gospel according to St John* (London, 1656); and probably William Ames, *Medulla Theologica. Editio Novissima* (Amsterdam, 1656) rather than the 1623 or 1627 editions.



Christian arguments in the ancient pagan, for instance filing Seneca's advice about acting as if our behaviour were always being observed under the topical heading 'Deus' and remarking of a passage in Letter XIII that it was 'an almost Christian antidote and argument against fear'.<sup>37</sup> There was of course a long tradition of reading Seneca in this way, stretching back to Jerome via Erasmus, but the crises of the middle decades of the seventeenth century seem to have made his philosophy newly appealing in Cambridge and elsewhere.<sup>38</sup> As Teresa Grant has recently shown, his letters particularly chimed with the sentiments of excluded royalists like Thomas Stanley, who found in them 'a paradigm of living well under tyranny – a literary-political act of immense importance'.<sup>39</sup>

Cave was probably drawn to Seneca for the same reason. Many of the entries in his commonplace book suggest that the literature of disappointment struck a chord with the son of an ejected minister. A friend is someone you could follow into exile (from Letter IX); a life of private leisure is superior to one of public service (Letters XIX and XX); the expectation of misfortune is worse than the reality (Letter I); a sick man will be unhappy no matter how prosperous he is (Letters XVI and XVII); and so on. This mindset must have coloured Cave's other reading in this period too, as quotations in the commonplace book from St Bernard and Thomas Fuller's *Church-History* (1655) address the same theme of patience in an unjust world.<sup>40</sup>

### **'a right textman and practical preacher': Cave's studies in the 1660s**

In 1659 Cave could have consoled himself with the commonplace that he took from one of St Bernard's sermons: 'when you seem to be laid low, take it as a good sign, and as an argument

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<sup>37</sup> C.526, pp. 286 and 316: 'Antidotus et argumenta fere Xtiana'. For the passages in Seneca the Younger, see the 1604 *Opera Omnia*, pp. 92-95.

<sup>38</sup> See Serjeantson, 'The Education of Francis Willughby', p. 71.

<sup>39</sup> Teresa Grant, 'Smells Like Team Spirit: Seneca and the Shirley-Stanley Circle', *The Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, 40.1 (2013), 34-51 (p. 49).

<sup>40</sup> C.526, pp. 55 and 95. See *Sancti Bernardi Claraevallensis Opera Omnia* (Antwerp, 1620), pp. 10 and 428-29; and Thomas Fuller, *The Church-History of Britain; from the Birth of Jesus Christ, until the Year M.DC.XLVIII* (London, 1655), sig. a2<sup>v</sup>.

that grace is at hand, for just as the heart exalts before ruin, so it is humbled before it exalts'.<sup>41</sup> The restoration of traditional Church of England institutions a year or so later was almost perfectly timed for Cave. Nine months after his MA graduation he was ordained deacon by his father's former chamber-fellow Robert Sanderson, now bishop of Lincoln. His ordination as a priest followed in May 1662, and shortly after that he was appointed to a living at St Mary's in Islington, then just outside London, which he held until 1691.<sup>42</sup>

Cave's appointment and the demands of parish life did not spell the end for his studies. In fact, it was in the 1660s that he entered on one of the most sustained, or at least best documented, periods of theological reading in his life. In Cave's case there must have been a specific incentive for this course of studies, because he proceeded Doctor of Divinity at Cambridge in 1672 after the statutory twelve years had lapsed since his MA, which would have meant performing in a certain number of academic disputations.<sup>43</sup>

But there was also a more universal expectation that the typical young clergyman would prepare for his clerical duties of catechizing and preaching by renewing his studies after leaving university. Of Cave's near-contemporaries from St John's, Matthew Robinson (BA 1648) recollected being supervised 'in the serious study of divinity' by the preacher Edward Bowles, with a view to becoming 'a right textman and practical preacher'.<sup>44</sup> As a curate at Barley and then vicar in High Wycombe, Isaac Milles (MA 1663) studied the Old and New Testaments in their original languages and read the apologetic works of Origen and Lactantius.<sup>45</sup> Henry Newcome (MA 1651), by his own account without any guidance, improved his preaching by

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<sup>41</sup> See *Bernardi Opera Omnia*, p. 674: 'Cum te humiliari videris, habeto id signum in bonum, omnino argumentum gratiae appropinquantis nam sicut ante ruina exaltatur cor, ita ante exaltationem humiliatur'.

<sup>42</sup> 'William Cave (CCed Person ID 86991)', *The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540-1835*: <<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>> [accessed 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017].

<sup>43</sup> See Cambridge University Library Grace Book Θ (1668-1718), pp. 55-56. For a description of what was required of DDs, see Denys Arthur Winstanley, *Unreformed Cambridge: A Study of Certain Aspects of the University in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), pp. 64-73.

<sup>44</sup> *Autobiography of Matthew Robinson*, ed. by John E. B. Mayor, p. 37.

<sup>45</sup> Milles, *An Account*, p. 48.

reading Robert Bolton's *The Foure Last Things* (1632), John Preston's *The New Covenant* (1629), and Daniel Dyke's *The Mystery of Selfe-Deceiving* (1615).<sup>46</sup> Although we still lack manuscript evidence of what clergymen were reading in this phase of their lives, the typical gist of their studies seems relatively clear.<sup>47</sup> As Richard Serjeantson has argued in his introduction to his edition of a treatise written by Méric Casaubon in 1668, the post-university curriculum was meant to produce clergymen who could use a wide range of historical and philological learning to argue convincingly for the certainty of Christian revelation.<sup>48</sup> In Casaubon's words of advice to the young recipient of his treatise, 'What am I the better, to know that *Christianitie* is the true religion, if, as a Christian I doe not know; &, as a Divine, I cannot satisfie others, what is true *Christianitie*?'.<sup>49</sup>

After the programme of studies which he seems to have commenced in around 1667, Cave would have been more than adequately equipped for this task. His notebook presents a storehouse of arguments for why Christianity was 'reasonable', 'true', 'certain', or 'advantageous', to use the nearly interchangeable vocabulary of his day. These proofs were drawn from a large range of titles published mostly in the 1650s and 1660s either as new books or as new reprints of old ones, like the recent Cambridge edition of Origen's *Against Celsus* (1658), or the seventh editions of Michael Walther's *Harmonia Biblica* (1665) and Henry Hammond's *Practical Catechism* (1662), all of which Cave used instead of earlier versions.<sup>49</sup> Cave's working library included the staples of early-modern apologetic literature by Hugo Grotius and Philippe de Mornay, but his studies of reasonable Christianity were also much deeper, if not

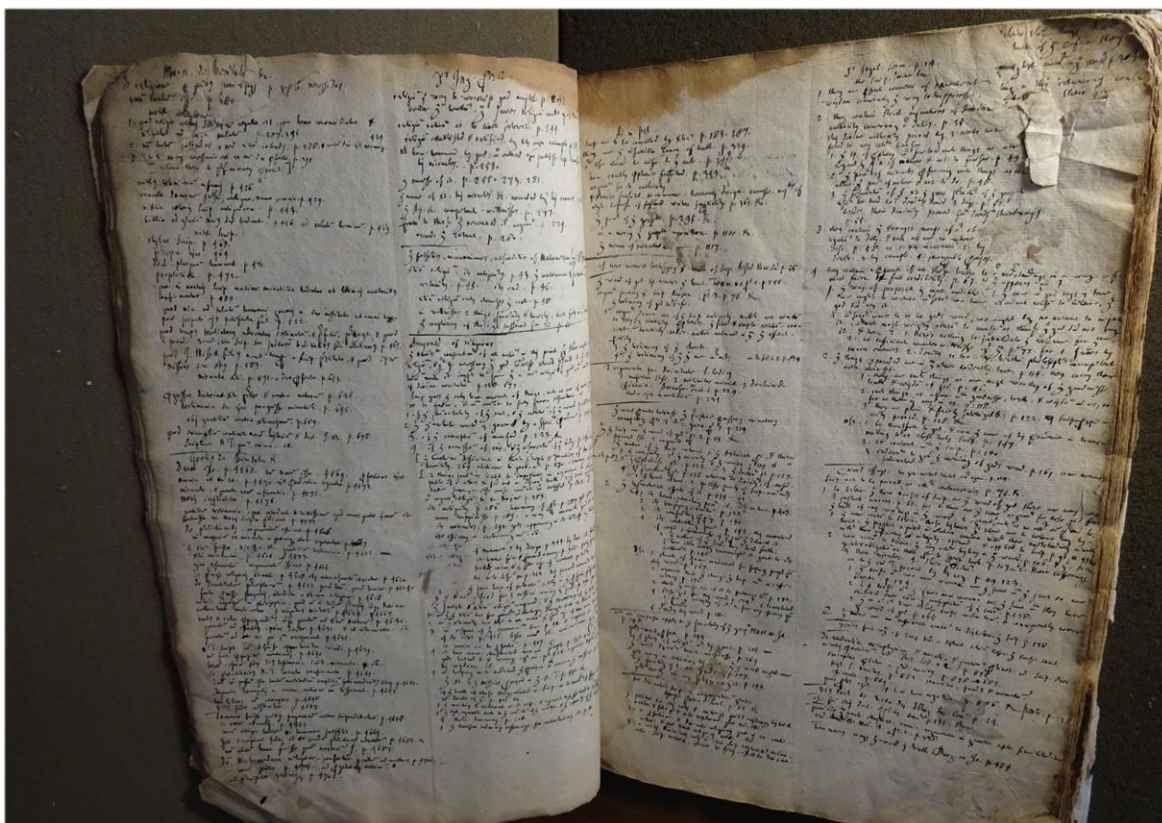
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<sup>46</sup> *The Autobiography of Henry Newcome, M.A.*, ed. by Richard Parkinson, 2 vols (Manchester: Printed for the Chetham Society, 1852), I, p. 12.

<sup>47</sup> For general accounts of the 'graduate' theological curriculum, see Stanley Lawrence Greenslade, 'The Faculty of Theology', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. III: The Collegiate University* (Oxford, 1986), ed. by J. H. McConica, pp. 295-334; and William Costello, *The Scholastic Curriculum at Early Seventeenth-Century Cambridge* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 107-45.

<sup>48</sup> See Richard Serjeantson's introduction to his edition of *Generall Learning, A Seventeenth-Century Treatise on the Formation of the General Scholar by Meric Casaubon* (Cambridge: RTM Publications, 1999), pp. 1-65. The quotation above is from p. 102.

<sup>49</sup> Of the 68 titles I have been able to identify (which is almost all of them), 52 were printed after 1650.



**Figure 2.** Pages from Cave's 1660s notebook, now RBK C.525 in St George's Chapter Library. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor.

broader, than we might expect. As he made his notes from his reading, copiousness seems to have mattered more to him than synthesis: there is no sign that he was bothered by repetition as he discovered and then copied out the same or very nearly the same arguments again and again over forty or so pages.

So how would Cave have demonstrated Christianity's reasonableness, if he been called to? The first set of arguments was historical.<sup>50</sup> As Cave's reading showed him, there was a stable of facts proving that Christianity had instantly shown its superiority to other religious creeds: Christ had fulfilled all the ancient prophecies about the Messiah, his life had perfectly exemplified his teachings, his doctrine had spread rapidly around the world, early believers had

<sup>50</sup> SGCL C.525, fols. 5r-6r. The leaves of the manuscript are unnumbered, so I have given them my own folio references. In what follows I have indicated the editions Cave was reading; the footnotes are used for books whose titles are not provided in the main text.

been sufficiently convinced of its truth to die for it, it was successful despite contradicting many of the customs and values of the age, it had won acceptance without needing to be imposed by force, and so on. Cave's sources here included Moïse Amyraut's *A Treatise Concerning Religions* (English translation 1660), David Chytraeus's *In Deuteronomium Mosis Enarratio* (1575), the expanded 1650 edition of Lancelot Andrewes' catechism, John Lightfoot's *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae* (1658), and especially Simon Episcopius's collected works (1650 and 1665).

Arguments of this kind relied on the notion being articulated in Cave's day in England and France that the historical facts of the Christian narrative were 'morally certain': that is, if they were not mathematically demonstrable, they still deserved at least as much credit as episodes in secular history like Caesar's conflict with Pompey.<sup>51</sup> Cave made a note of this claim when he found it in Richard Baxter's *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (9<sup>th</sup> edition 1662) and Stillingfleet's *A Rational Account of the Grounds of the Protestant Religion* (1665). The upshot of this epistemology was that the burden of proof rested on the quality of the evidence provided by the written sources for Christianity's historical origins, above all the New Testament. Again, Cave was able to find countless ways of proving Scripture's reliability or, to put the same claim in language that was either synonymous or distinctive depending on the context, its divinity. Sample arguments included: that its writers had no reason to lie, their low status, the fact that events in Scripture had been given external corroboration by pagan historians, the harmony of Scripture's different parts, its perspicuity, its obscurity, and its supernatural effects on men. Several monographs devoted to the question of Scripture's authority had been published in England within the previous two decades. Cave made use of contributions by John Goodwin (1647), Nathaniel Ingelo (1658), John Owen (1659), and Robert Boyle (1661) as well as Friedrich

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<sup>51</sup> On appeals to moral certainty in theological contexts, see Jean-Louis Quantin, 'Reason and Reasonableness in French Ecclesiastical Scholarship', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 74.3 (2011), pp. 401-36 (pp. 418-26).

Spanheim's *Dubia Evangelica* (1639) and less specialized works like John Arrowsmith's *Armillae catecheticae* (1659).<sup>52</sup>

This genre of apology sometimes defaulted to simplistic and contentious assertions of fact – like the impossibility of the text of Scripture having been corrupted or interpolated – but it was mostly underpinned by an awareness that the Bible was a complex document that required specialist readers. Cave devoted four sides of his notebook to this theme. He started by summarising the qualities that had made the Hebraist Joseph Mede such a proficient critic, finding a list of these in John Worthington's preface to his recent edition of Mede's works (1664): his skill in ancient languages and Jewish history, his impartiality, his 'serious diligence', his 'purity of soul', and his practice of using transparent passages of Scripture to explain more opaque ones.<sup>53</sup> Cave then followed this up with a lengthy set of notes about how to read the Bible, listing possible traps for the unwary reader (e.g. several names being used for one person), obvious places to go to for help, like public lectures or more knowledgeable friends, and habits of mind to cultivate before studying it: prayerfulness, disinterest, gratitude to God, and so on. Cave was synthesising a considerable amount of reading here. Recently published Continental guides to sacred criticism feature particularly heavily in his notes, like André Rivet's *Isagoge* (1627), Petrus Ravanellus' *Bibliothecae Sacrae Pars Secunda* (1663), and Johann Heinrich Hottinger's *Thesaurus Philologicus* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1659). His English sources included books by Samuel Torshell (1641) and Benjamin Needler (1655) as well as Edward Leigh's *A Systeme or Body of Divinity* (1662) and John Trapp's *Theologia Theologiae* (1641).<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> C.525, fols. 6<sup>r</sup>-8<sup>r</sup>. Robert Boyle, *Some Considerations Touching the Style of the H. Scriptures* (London, 1661); Nathaniel Ingelo, *The Perfection, Authority, and Credibility of the Holy Scriptures* (London, 1658); John Goodwin, *The Divine Authority of the Scriptures Asserted* (London, 1648); John Owen, *Of the Divine Originall, Authority, Self-evidencing Light and Power of the Scriptures* (Oxford, 1659).

<sup>53</sup> C.525, fol. 10<sup>v</sup>. See *The works of the pious and profoundly-learned Joseph Mede*, ed. by John Worthington (London, 1664), sig. \*\*\*v\_\*\*\*\*\*r.

<sup>54</sup> C.525, fols. 11<sup>r</sup>-13<sup>r</sup>. Samuel Torshell, *An Exercitation upon the same Prophecy of Malachy* (London, 1641) and Benjamin Needler, *Expository Notes, with Practical Observations towards the opening of the first five chapters of the book of Moses called Genesis* (London, 1654).

Cave's reading thus armed him with a set of techniques for resolving what might otherwise have looked like contradictions in Scripture. In the next section of his notes he began applying these techniques, confronting many of the notorious textual cruces where the Bible described God acting in ways that seemed to contradict many of the *a priori* characteristics that were required definitionally or scholastically of any deity. Cave did this in the course of a section on God's attributes where each new sheet in his notebook has a different topical heading: 'truthfulness', 'mercy', 'goodness', 'justice', 'dominion', 'longsuffering', grace, and 'unity'.<sup>55</sup> These topics were handled in different ways, but Cave's notes tended to follow a similar pattern, starting with an enumeration of the standard proofs for God possessing the attribute. After this, Cave defined the attribute, or gave several definitions, concentrating on the different words used to describe it in Scripture. Then followed a set of notes about how Christians should respond to God now that they knew he was, say, just or merciful. Finally Cave discussed possible complications or contradictions: how, for instance, can God be just if he is said to punish children for their parents' sins? The main authorities that recur in Cave's notes are the fourth book of Jerome Zanchi's *De Natura Dei* in the second volume of his complete works (1619), Johannes Gerhard's *Loci Communes Theologici* (1657 edition), the fourth book of Simon Episcopius's *Institutiones Theologicae* in his *Opera* (1650), Johannes Hoornbeeck's *Theologiae Practicae, Pars Prior* (1663) and John Arrowsmith's *Armillae catecheticae* (1659).

A representative example that might clarify Cave's methods in this section is the page or two of notes about God's unity. Cave firstly made a note of passages in the recent literature where various references to God's oneness in the Bible had been collected together: one such passage was in John Preston's *A Treatise of the Knowledge of the Divine Essence and Attributes* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1631). Then, taking a more abstract view, he wrote a list of all the ways in which a thing

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<sup>55</sup> C.525, fols. 14<sup>r</sup>-19<sup>r</sup>.

can be said to be ‘one’, drawing it from books by Edward Leigh, Johannes Gerhard, and Simon Episcopius, as well as John Pearson’s *An Exposition of the Creed* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1662). Next he copied out reasons why God is necessarily or demonstrably ‘one’: his nature is perfect, he has supreme dominion, and even pagans had had to admit his singleness. Cave’s sources here included Alexander Ross’s *A View of all Religions in the World* (4<sup>th</sup> edition 1664), Thomas Byrdall’s *A Glimpse of God* (1665), and the fourth volume of the *De Osculo Seu Consensu Ethnicae et Christianae Philosophiae* (1605) by the Roman Catholic author Mutio Pansa. Hugo Grotius and others then furnished him with an account of why pagans were polytheists despite recognising this fact of his oneness: unsurprisingly, this error was to be attributed to their stubbornness, arrogance, and ability to draw the wrong conclusions. After quickly noting down some passages addressing the question of how God’s oneness can be reconciled with the doctrine of the Trinity – taken from the work of Gerhard and Episcopius among others – Cave then moved on to consider some of the practical implications of knowing that God is one: among them, it should make us realise that monarchical government is the best kind, human beings should try to find unity, and baptism should only be performed once. These observations derived principally from Robert Sanderson’s *Twenty Sermons* (1656) and Simon Patrick’s books on baptism (1659) and communion (1660).

As the last section of this entry suggests, this study of God’s attributes was intended to be the foundation for a practical theology rather than being merely speculative. In the final part of his notebook Cave accordingly concentrated on the practices of Christian piety. His notes served a double purpose here.<sup>56</sup> They contained a set of instructions about how to live – for instance from Ralph Venning’s *The New Command Renew’d* (1652) and George Swinnock’s *Works* (1665) – but they also doubled up as arguments for why, if a Christian lived in this way, his or

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<sup>56</sup> C.525, fols. 19<sup>v</sup>-26<sup>r</sup>.



her religion was superior to Judaism, Islam, and atheism. In other words, the nature of Christianity's moral precepts was further proof of its reasonableness: they were not contrary to reason, they would stimulate charity and peacefulness and encourage obedience to civil magistrates, and they were made easier to achieve by numerous divine and human assistances and rewards, including the promise of eternal life.

The kind of clergyman that this course of reading would have helped to shape is not unfamiliar to modern scholarship. Historians of the Restoration period have known for a long time that the appeal to reason and reasonableness was conventional Church of England rhetoric, even if we have had to be reminded more recently that 'reasonable' was roughly synonymous with 'historical', rather than having any essential scientific or physico-theological content (although it could have that too).<sup>57</sup> The account given here of Cave's studies does not so much challenge the prevailing consensus as thicken it considerably. The reason for dwelling at length on his studies, besides the new light that it sheds on what and how a scholar was actually reading in this phase of his life, is that they had a drastic impact on Cave's career. In a real sense, as we shall see, the scholar who would write the first work of *historia literaria* in England was born from this notebook.

### **'he y<sup>t</sup> looks into my booke may soon satisfy himselfe': into the 1680s**

The notebook by no means gives us a full picture of Cave's scholarly training in this period, however. Particularly, it tells us next to nothing about how and when he read the Fathers, which most letters of advice to young clergymen made a predictable point of emphasising. In Cave's case it is unlikely that he waited until the end of his education to make an informed study of

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<sup>57</sup> See Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom*, p. 15 and Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment*, p. 149. On more 'scientific' natural theology in the period, see Scott Mandelbrote, 'The Uses of Natural Theology in Seventeenth-Century England', *Science in Context*, 20.3 (2007), 451-80; and Levitin, 'Rethinking English Physico-theology', pp. 28-75. Some of the traditional studies are John Spurr, "Rational Religion" in Restoration England', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 49.4 (1988), 563-85; and Gerard Reedy, *The Bible and Reason: Anglicans and Scripture in Late Seventeenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

their writings, as Jeremy Taylor seemed to tell his young charges to do in a letter of 1660.<sup>58</sup> As we have seen, Cave's notebook contains a smattering of references to Origen and Chrysostom as well as the ancient ecclesiastical histories of Eusebius, Sozomen, and Socrates, but nothing systematic. Whenever it happened, by the end of the next decade Cave had emerged as one of the most prolific contemporary historians of early Christianity in Europe.

His career as an author started in 1673 with his first book, *Primitive Christianity*. This was a comprehensive, synchronic study of the customs of the first three or four centuries of Christianity: how and when the early Christians had worshipped, what the layout of their churches was, who governed their churches, what ancient discipline looked like, and above all what their essential character or virtues were. These descriptions were apparently drawn from patristic writings, which were thickly cited in the book's margins. The whole work was divided into three parts, apparently following, as Cave put it, St Paul's 'distribution of Religion into *piety* towards God, *sobriety* towards our selves, and *righteousness* towards others'.<sup>59</sup>

Apparently is a necessary qualification because Cave's method of fetching his early Christian sources was much more circuitous than the surface of his book admits. The tripartite division was almost certainly learned not directly from St Paul but from Jeremy Taylor, who had used it in several of his works as a rubric for analysing the habits of 'holy living' that needed to follow repentance if it was sincere.<sup>60</sup> Cave had enthusiastically taken down notes from Taylor's *Great Exemplar* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1653) and *Ductor Dubitantium* (1660) in the 1660s, and Taylor's influence shows itself in his writings not only in common attitudes on points of

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<sup>58</sup> See Colin McKelvie, 'Jeremy Taylor's Recommendations for a library of Anglican Theology (1600) [sic]', *Irish Booklore*, 4.2 (1980), pp. 96-103 (p. 102): 'when you are ready and can find time read the fathers of the first 300 years at least, they are few and not very voluminous and they are the surest guides'.

<sup>59</sup> William Cave, *Primitive Christianity: or, The Religion of the Ancient Christians in the first Ages of the Gospel* (London, 1673), sig. a7<sup>r</sup>. The quotation from Paul is Titus 2.12.

<sup>60</sup> For an example see Jeremy Taylor, *Unum Necessarium: or, The Doctrine and Practice of Repentance* (London, 1655), p. 82: 'We must live godly, righteously, and soberly in this present world; we must not live either to the world, or to ourselves, but to God'. See also Taylor, *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* (London, 1650), p. 61.

doctrine – episcopacy and infant baptism, for instance – but also in the blend of patristic scholarship and practical divinity characteristic of both men's work.<sup>61</sup>

More generally, *Primitive Christianity* belonged to the new tide of devotional literature that had been rising in England since the 1640s. For all that it was a work of history rather than a moral treatise, it was written in the same mood of penitential piety characteristic of the writings of Taylor, Henry Hammond, Richard Allestree, and others in the same period.<sup>62</sup> Still, it is worth being cautious about applying to Cave the terms usually reserved for this group of men, like 'holy living school' and 'moralists', with their connotations of High Church ritualism and Arminian soteriology.<sup>63</sup> Cave had found practical directions to pious living everywhere in his 1660s reading, in writers from all positions on the Church of England spectrum (and outside it): he was even comfortable using the heading 'the excellency & beauty of holinesse', apparently a Laudian shibboleth, to summarise passages by nonconformist presbyterians like Thomas Manton.<sup>64</sup>

These links must have been obvious to Cave's contemporaries, even if he chose not to spell them out. But there was a second level of indebtedness that there were stronger incentives to cover over. *Primitive Christianity* had started out, in a way that is impossible to discern from the printed text, as a set of annotations in his copy of a Roman Catholic ecclesiastical dictionary first published in 1644. On the interleaved pages of Domenico Magri's *Notitia de' Vocaboli Ecclesiastici* (1650), Cave had added further information to supplement or correct its author's

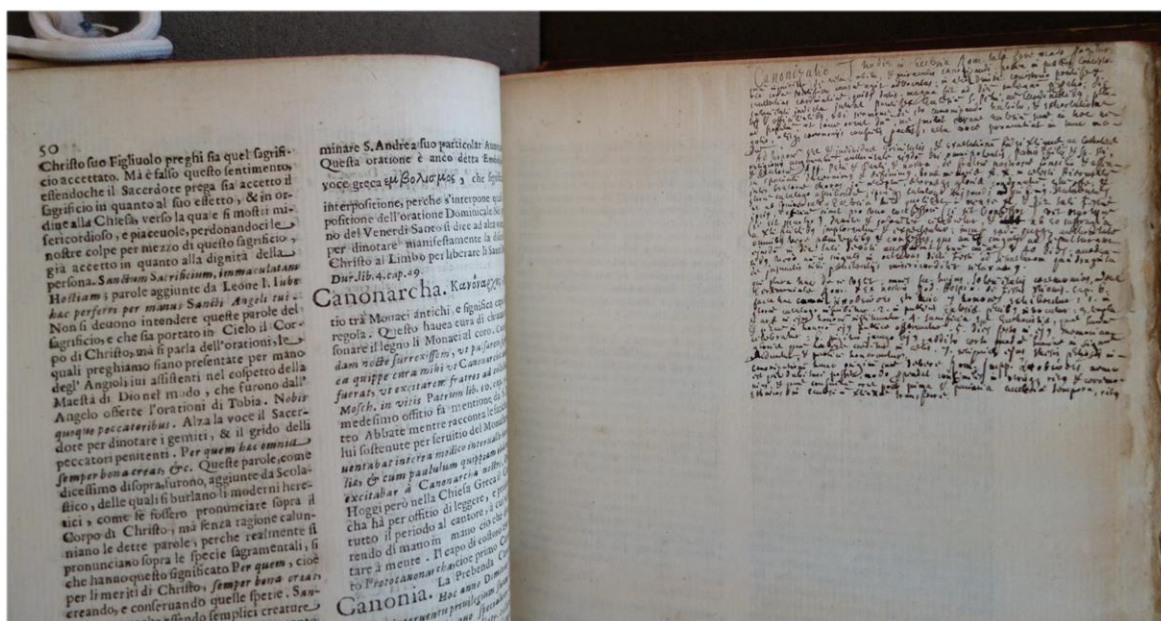
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<sup>61</sup> On Taylor's 'ambivalent' attitude to the Fathers, see Quantin, *The Church of England*, pp. 242-47.

<sup>62</sup> See John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 235-78; and Eamon Duffy, 'Primitive Christianity revived: religious renewal in Augustan England', *Studies in Church History*, 14 (1977), 287-300.

<sup>63</sup> Studies that use these terms to describe a distinctive grouping of English divines include Jeffrey S. Chamberlain, 'Moralism, Justification, and the Controversy over Methodism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 44.4 (1993), 652-78; Alister E. McGrath, 'The Emergence of the Anglican Tradition on Justification 1600-1700', *Churchman*, 98.1 (1984), 28-43; and C. F. Allison, *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1966).

<sup>64</sup> C.525, fol. 24<sup>v</sup>. Cave used this expression of a section in Thomas Manton's *A Practical Commentary: or, An Exposition with Notes on the Epistle of Jude* (London, 1657), pp. 35-38.



**Figure 3.** Example of Cave's annotations in his copy of Domenico Magri's *Notitia de' Vocaboli Ecclesiastici*, now RBK M.25 in St George's Chapter Library. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor.

explanations of terms like 'altar' and 'presbyter'.<sup>65</sup> His additions were assembled from three types of source: (i) patristic texts, (ii) ancient church canons, as reproduced in William Beveridge's *Synodikon* (1672), and (iii) Calvinist books, especially the work of Jean Daillé as well as Rudolf Hospinian's *Festa Christianorum* (1593). When it came to writing up his book, Cave combined what he had gleaned from this research with facts that he had discovered in Magri's dictionary, but crucially he failed to cite any of his modern sources, not even Magri, in the printed text of *Primitive Christianity*, thus making it look like his observations were drawn directly from the Fathers.

Working in this way had obvious advantages. Magri's dictionary unwittingly showed Cave how far Roman Catholics had digressed from the practices of early Christianity. Its entry for altars, for instance, explained when they were to be washed with wine or sprinkled with

<sup>65</sup> Cave's copy is now SGCL M.25.

water and why priests were to kiss them before greeting their congregations.<sup>66</sup> Lower down Magri also considered Pope Sylvester's fourth-century decree that altars were to be built from stone rather than wood. In response, Cave used the facing page of his copy to write out descriptions of altars and communion tables from the writings of Athanasius, Augustine, Origen, Arnobius, and Clement of Alexandria. He then drew his conclusion in *Primitive Christianity*: not only were ancient tables still made of wood after Sylvester's decree, but 'they had not any such *fixed and gaudy* Altars (as the *Heathens* then had in their *Temples*, and *Papists* still have in their *Churches*)'.<sup>67</sup> Magri's book, then, provided grist for Cave's anti-Catholic mill. Cave's reading of Calvinist sources served the same end from the opposite approach: Hospinian's denunciation of the traditional, papist calendar seems to have interested him, for instance, for its anecdotes about Roman imperiousness and superstition.<sup>68</sup>

This was not the whole story, however. It was not necessarily disingenuous for Cave to say of details that he had discovered surreptitiously from Domenico Magri that they were 'so notoriously known' or 'so commonly known and obvious', as he often did: it was probably the not unreasonable belief that an ecclesiastical dictionary would represent the general teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, rather than the opinions of any specific individual, that made him choose it as the basis for his studies in the first place.<sup>69</sup> It was less defensible, on confessional as well as scholarly grounds, to base his wholly positive descriptions of several ancient institutions or practices, like genuflection and deacons, on insights that he had stolen from the same book. He treated Jean Daillé no less selectively, happy to channel his attacks on Roman innovations in discipline and the management of the sacraments, but also prepared to

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<sup>66</sup> Domenico Magri, *Notitia de' Vocaboli Ecclesiastici, Con la Dichiaratione Delle Cerimonie, & Origine de' Riti Sacri*, 2nd edn (Rome, 1650), pp. 11-13. Cave's annotation is on the facing page (hereafter, references for his annotations are given in the format 'page number + a').

<sup>67</sup> Cave, *Primitive Christianity*, part I, p. 143.

<sup>68</sup> On Hospinian, see Anton Largiadèr, 'Das reformierte Zürich und die Fest- und Heiligtage', *Zwingliana. Beiträge zur Geschichte Zwinglis/ Der Reformation und des Protestantismus in Der Schweiz*, 9.1 (1953), 497-525 (pp. 519-22).

<sup>69</sup> For examples of Cave using these phrases to disguise his borrowings from Magri, see *Primitive Christianity*, part I, pp. 316 and 335.

ignore the Calvinist's arguments that third- and fourth-century practices were usually no less novel and corrupt when compared with New Testament traditions. Predictably Cave also showed no interest in his notes in the central thesis of Hospinian's book that most Christian festivals – currently being revived with a vengeance in England – were thinly-concealed appropriations of pagan celebrations.<sup>70</sup>

Cave thus had different incentives for concealing his sources. Not doing so would have exposed both the shallowness of his own research but also, potentially, the dubiousness of some Church of England traditions, at least in the eyes of its Reformed critics, home and abroad. As contradictory as it sounds, he probably also wanted to avoid making himself a hostage to fortune by disclosing the specific targets and weapons of his polemic (not least because these were often identical): as he told a relative of his around the same time, the end of such 'evill and mischievous' tit-for-tat debates was 'men after all usually holding faster to their own notions'.<sup>71</sup> Whatever his motives, they were quickly vindicated by his book's popularity, as it went through four editions in ten years, with a Dutch translation in 1692 and the first of several German editions in 1693.<sup>72</sup> Very few of his readers can have been deceived into thinking that his book was as irenic as its author claimed it was: as the preface to the German translation put it, no one could miss that he was 'obsessed with the hierarchy and liturgy of the Church of England, and overjoyed when he meets with anything similar in antiquity'.<sup>73</sup> Even so, this skepticism did not prevent them from being impressed by its portrait of primitive piety.

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<sup>70</sup> On this aspect of Hospinian's work, see Carl Philipp Emanuel Nothaft, 'From Sukkot to Saturnalia: The Attack on Christmas in Sixteenth-Century Chronological Scholarship', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 72.4 (2011), 503-22.

<sup>71</sup> Bodleian MS Eng. hist. b.2. fol. 70<sup>r-v</sup>. This letter is undated and the recipient unidentified but it must have been written between 1673 and 1676.

<sup>72</sup> See Edgar C. McKenzie, *A Catalog of British Devotional and Religious Books in German Translation from the Reformation to 1750* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), pp. 140-43.

<sup>73</sup> William Cave, *Erstes Christenthum, oder Gottesdienst der alten Christen in den ersten Zeiten des evangelii* (Leipzig, 1694), p. 37: 'Gleichwie ich auch nicht leugnen kan, das ich nicht eben in allen und jeden mit diesem autore eins bin, aus ursache weil er mit der hierarchie und liturgie der englischen kirche eingenommen, und also allezeit erfreuet ist, so ofte er in der antiquität etwas findet, welches demselben gleich kommet'.

The instant success of *Primitive Christianity* was probably what led to Cave being commissioned to write his next book, a set of biographies of the Apostles entitled *Antiquitates Apostolicae* (1675). This was designed as a companion volume for the new (fifth) edition of Jeremy Taylor's biography of Jesus, *The Great Exemplar*, first published in 1649. Cave later told one of his correspondents that he had accepted this commission reluctantly, but the pairing made sense on a number of grounds.<sup>74</sup> As we have seen, Cave had already shown himself an adept of Taylor's methods, and *The Great Exemplar* (in its 1653 second edition) was one of the books that he had been reading in the 1660s. Moreover, the fact was that Cave had long been preparing to write a book about the Apostles, having entered a series of notes into his copy of Magri's dictionary about the lives and deaths of some of the Apostles. These scraps of biographical information were lifted from Rudolf Hospinian's *Festa Christianorum*, which Cave was using to explore the ancient (or sometimes more recent) origins of the main festivals in the traditional liturgical calendar.

Closer to home, Anthony Sparrow's *A Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer* (1655) and Hamon L'Estrange's *Alliance of Divine Offices* (1659) would have offered Cave similar but much more sympathetic, even nostalgic accounts of traditional Church holidays; that he used Hospinian's book instead suggests the controversial, anti-Roman impulse behind his *Primitive Christianity*. It seems clear in any case that his *Antiquitates Apostolicae* was meant to capitalise on the revival of scholarly and popular interest in the liturgical calendar now that the traditional celebration of saints' days like the Feast of St Stephen had been resumed at the Restoration.<sup>75</sup> Much as Taylor's *Great Exemplar* alternated between erudite investigations of the ancient sources

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<sup>74</sup> See Cave's remark in his letter to Smith, dated 21<sup>st</sup> December 1675, Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 69: 'I was determin'd to it by other men's choice, & not my own, & how great a disadvantage y<sup>t</sup> is (if there were no more,) I need not tell you'.

<sup>75</sup> See Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Year, 1400-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 247-49; and David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), pp. 34-49.

for Christ's life and sermon-like essays on topics like repentance and prayer, so Cave's lives were in a mixed mode of worship, apologetic, scholarship, and art. Like Taylor's richly illustrated book, each new chapter in Cave's collection contained two quarter-page cuts. The engraving on the right-hand side, designed by the Czech emigré Wenceslaus Hollar, vividly depicted an Apostle – whichever one was the subject of the chapter – being martyred, and this was accompanied on the left-hand side by an individual portrait of the same Apostle in profile.<sup>76</sup>

This second group of engravings had a provenance that reveals a great deal about the commercial and intellectual context in which Cave's work was produced. They seem to have been recycled from a series of plates originally printed separately and marketed to owners of prayer books, who were meant to paste them into their copies at the relevant place: the image of Bartholomew next to the Collect for St Bartholomew's Day, for instance.<sup>77</sup> It is hard to know whether re-using these popular prints represented savvy opportunism on the part of Cave's publisher or whether, in fact, his biographies of the Apostles were sold to ordinary churchgoers as a kind of spiritual exercise, a means for them to prepare in private for their public acts of worship, in this case by helping them to reflect on the lives and deaths of the saints whose anniversaries organised the church calendar. This scenario looks more plausible if we consider that a book written thirty years later explicitly for this purpose and in a more obviously didactic question-and-answer format, Robert Nelson's enormously popular *Festivals and Fasts* (1704),

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<sup>76</sup> The plates by Hollar are unsigned but they are identified as his in Richard Pennington, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Work of Wenceslaus Hollar 1607-1677* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 17-19.

<sup>77</sup> This practice is still unstudied. There is a brief description of it in Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 249. Having consulted a sample of prayer books on Early English Books Online and in Cambridge University Library, I would tentatively suggest that three different series of engravings were available to be bought in the 1660s. The plates in Cave's book are the same as the engravings in a 1673 prayer book now at Christ Church College, Oxford, shelfmark Z.F.4.16.



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**Figure 4.** Plates in Cave's *Antiquitates Apostolicae* (1675), from the copy (CCA.48.43) in Cambridge University Library. The instruction beneath the left-hand engraving – redundant in its new context – tells readers to paste it next to the Collect for St Bartholomew's Day in their prayer books.

drew most of its lessons about the Apostles from Cave's book.<sup>78</sup>

If Cave was initially circumspect about the prospect of writing the lives of the Apostles, he must have received enough encouragement from 'wise & good men', as he wrote to Thomas Smith, 'to thinke of carrying on the same design for some part of the first ages of Christianity'.<sup>79</sup> In 1677 and 1683 he published the two halves of what added up to a complete portrait of early Christianity, a kind of biographical gallery of the Church Fathers from the first century to the fourth. These biographies followed the same pattern as the chapters in his earlier book on the Apostles. Accounts of the Fathers' lives were followed by descriptions of their character,

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<sup>78</sup> Robert Nelson, *A Companion to the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England* (London, 1704), xiv. On Nelson's book, see Brent Sirota, 'Robert Nelson's *Festivals and Fasts* and the Problem of the Sacred in Early Eighteenth-Century England', *Church History*, 84.3 (2015), 556-84.

<sup>79</sup> See Cave's letter to Smith, 21<sup>st</sup> December 1675, Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 69.

opinions, and orthodoxy, and a quick list of their writings; the word for this genre that contemporaries gave to these lives, not always abusively, was ‘panegyric’ or ‘eloge’.<sup>80</sup> Elsewhere in Europe this was the sort of multi-volume venture being undertaken by teams of scholars. Two key sites were Antwerp, home of the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum* since 1643, and Port-Royal in Paris, where lives of Chrysostom (1664), Athanasius (1671), Basil (1674), and Origen and Tertullian (1675) had recently been printed.<sup>81</sup> Cave preferred to present himself as a solitary pioneer, excusing himself from reading the Benedictine biographies by pleading ignorance of French.<sup>82</sup>

But for all his claims to the contrary, Cave knew that he was not toiling away in scholarly isolation. Anyone reading his books in this period would have found many of his arguments instantly familiar. This was because *Primitive Christianity* as well as his biographies constantly returned to – and indeed were noticeably motivated by – the apologetic concerns of his reading in the late 1660s. In this respect, the preface that he wrote for his middle collection of lives, *Apostolici* (1677), was both a résumé of his work so far and a plan for what was still to come. This essay, billed as an account of why Christianity had flourished before Constantine’s adoption of it as the official religion of the Roman Empire, was mostly a (silent) digest of passages summarised earlier on by Cave in his notebook from Jeremy Taylor’s *Ductor Dubitantium* (1660), Stillingfleet’s *Origines Sacrae* (1662), and especially ‘The History of Anaxanacton’ in the second part of Nathaniel Ingelo’s *Bentivolio and Urania* (1664), a not particularly subtle allegory using the narrative device of a fictitious pagan sect’s rise to power to show that the triumph of Christianity was explicable in civil, worldly, and rational terms.<sup>83</sup> What

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<sup>80</sup> See John Dunton, *The Young Students Library* (London, 1692), pp. 324 and 330.

<sup>81</sup> For an account of the Benedictine biographies, see Jean-Louis Quantin, *Le Catholicisme Classique et Les Pères de l’Église: Un retour aux sources (1669-1713)* (Paris: Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, 1999), pp. 206-48; for the Bollandists, see Jan Marco Sawilla, *Antiquarianismus, Hagiographie und Historie im 17. Jahrhundert: Zum Werk der Bollandisten; Ein wissenschaftshistorischer Versuch* (Munich: Niemayer, 2009).

<sup>82</sup> See William Cave, *Ecclesiastici: or, The History of the Lives, Acts, Death, and Writings, of the most Eminent Fathers of the Church, that flourisht in the Fourth Century* (London, 1684), ‘The Preface to the Reader’, sig. d<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>83</sup> Nathaniel Ingelo, *Bentivolio and Urania, The Second Part, in Two Books* (London, 1664), pp. 236-84.

his preface achieved in miniature, Cave's books drew out to a vast length – a demonstration of Christianity's historical reasonableness, the way in which its adversaries and sceptics had been won over by the erudition, holiness, and steadfastness of the early Christians.

As his career progressed, Cave became increasingly prominent as an apologist for rational Christianity in its Anglican guise, not least because his popularity as a preacher rose at the end of the 1670s. Cave's sermons never enjoyed the reputation of, say, John Tillotson's or Edward Stillingfleet's but he still seems to have been relatively active across London: in addition to his regular role at St Mary's in Islington, he also gave occasional sermons at St-Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange, St-Dunstan-in-the-West, and St-Mary-le-Bow.<sup>84</sup> At some point he also joined the lively court culture at Whitehall, becoming chaplain in ordinary to Charles II, one of forty-eight at any one time.<sup>85</sup> John Evelyn saw him preach in this capacity in January 1680.<sup>86</sup> Gaining a place on this circuit, moreover, gave him regular opportunities to distil the lessons of his 1660s reading into concise public statements of the advantages of Christianity in the face of (not wholly imaginary) freethinking and libertine arguments. The two Whitehall sermons of his to be printed by royal command – a statistic that puts him in fairly select company<sup>87</sup> – show him diligently recapitulating passages in his notebook, as he silently drew from William Gurnall's *The Christian in Compleat Armour* (1658-62 edition), commentaries on the Epistle of Jude by

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<sup>84</sup> See the Lent Lists for 1680, 1685, and 1687: *A List of the Preachers appointed by the Lords Commissioners for the Diocese of London* (London, 1687); *Lent Preachers, Appointed by the Lord Bishop of London, to Preach on Wednesdays and Fridays, for the Year 1684/5* (London, 1685); *Lent-Preachers, Appointed by the Lord Bishop of London, to Preach on Wednesdays and Fridays, for the Year 1679/80* (London, 1680).

<sup>85</sup> For a description of this culture, see Matthew Jenkinson, *Culture and Politics at the Court of Charles II, 1660-1685* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 75-106.

<sup>86</sup> *The Diary of John Evelyn, with an Introduction and Notes*, ed. by Austin Dobson, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), III, p. 43.

<sup>87</sup> According to Jenkinson, *Culture and Politics*, p. 84, fewer than 5% of court preachers had more than one of their sermons published by royal command.

Thomas Manton and Anthony Burgess, and accounts in Suetonius and Polydore Vergil about the guilt-induced hallucinations of various rulers, including Richard III and Caligula.<sup>88</sup>

By the early 1680s the core arguments of his early studies were in urgent need of restating. In particular, one of the standard legitimations for the Church of England's existence – that its members were necessarily loyal subjects of the state – was looking increasingly precarious now that James II's succession was imminent. For Cave, passive obedience was more than just an abstract principle of political theology. In many ways his commitment to it was what had made him a historian of the early Church in the first place. As we have seen, he had grown up watching his father submit himself peacefully to abuse and dispossession. His father's copy of Seneca had given him a language for articulating this mentality, and later on books by George Swinnock and John Arrowsmith had translated this pagan ideal into the Christian vocabulary of civil obedience. In the late 1660s he had begun to discover stories of early Christian stoicism, making a note for instance of Gregory of Nazianzen's famous claim that the victims of Julian the Apostate's anti-Christian purges had resisted only with tears and prayers, never sedition, and copying out a fragment attributed to the second-century martyr Polycarp, as preserved in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, arguing that Christians are taught to obey and honour their rulers.<sup>89</sup> That this quotation is the first evidence we have of Cave reading Eusebius's history, the book that had probably the greatest influence on his own concerns as a historian, suggests how fundamental or motivating this theme was to his life and research.

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<sup>88</sup> William Cave, *A Sermon Preached before the King at Whitehall, on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. 1684/5* (London, 1685), p. 29. See Thomas Manton, *A Practicall Commentary: or, An Exposition with Notes on the Epistle of James*, 2nd edn (London, 1652) and Burgess, *CXLV Expository Sermons*.

<sup>89</sup> C.525, fol. 19<sup>v</sup>. The first of these notes is: 'Xtianorum lachrymas, quos multas multi profuderunt. τοῦτο μόνον ἔχόντων κατὰ τοῦ διώκτου φαρμακόν. Naz.' See *Gregorii Nazianzenii Opera*, ed. by Billius, I, pp. 93-94. The second is: 'δεδιδάγμεθα γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναις τιμὴν κατὰ τὸ προσήκον τὴν μὴ βλάπτουσαν ἡμᾶς ἀπονέμειν. Polyc. ad Procons. Praeceptum nobis est, ut magistratibus & potestatibus a deo constitutis honorum debitum exhibeamus, qui nobis ipsis nihil noceat'. See *Eusebii Pamphili Ecclesiasticae Historiae Libri Decem*, ed. by Henri Valois (Paris, 1659), p. 132.

Indeed, almost all his publications of the 1670s and 1680s were filled with vignettes of early Christians enduring persecution without protest.

Like many of his contemporaries, Cave was therefore ready to be appalled by the publication of Samuel Johnson's *Julian the Apostate* in 1682, which tried to overturn the traditional arguments about early Christian passive obedience – referred to sneeringly by Johnson as 'Mountebank Receipts of Prayers and Tears' – in order to legitimise excluding or overthrowing the Duke of York if he came to the throne.<sup>90</sup> The general outlines of this controversy are too well-known to need re-telling.<sup>91</sup> However, it will be worth pausing briefly to consider Cave's role in it as a way of finishing this section, since the different ways in which he responded to Johnson's book help us to see not only what was driving his work in this period but also how closely his 'scholarly' concerns were implicated with apologetic, controversial, and even judicial strategies.

Cave's willingness to defend the doctrine of passive obedience was never in doubt. In a sermon addressed to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1680, he had contrasted the peaceableness of true Christians with the seditiousness of Roman Catholics, silently borrowing from Henry Hammond's *Of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (1660 edition) and reminding his audience that 'prayers and tears' were the proper response to persecution.<sup>92</sup> Still, some of his contemporaries might have been disappointed by the restrained tone of his *Ecclesiastici*, published a year after Johnson's book and dealing with the same period of history. By his own account, Cave had already written the introductory essay, which gave an account of pagan campaigns against Christians, 'some Months before ever the Dispute was started

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<sup>90</sup> Samuel Johnson, *Julian the Apostate: Being A Short Account of his Life* (London, 1682), p. 30.

<sup>91</sup> See Brent Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 46-49.

<sup>92</sup> William Cave, *A Sermon Preached Before the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of London* (London, 1680), p. 13. See Henry Hammond, *Of the Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*, in *A Practical Catechism*, 7th edn (London, 1662), pp. 448-58. On the anti-Catholic rhetoric encouraged in Gunpowder Day sermons, see David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*, pp. 173-86.

concerning *Julian*, which has made so much noise amongst us', but even the main part of the book failed to refute Johnson any more directly than by presenting Gregory of Nazianzen as both a model of passive obedience and as excessively aggressive in his anti-Julian invectives.<sup>93</sup> As Cave put it, had Gregory 'foreseen the ill consequences of such rash and warm transports, he would as readily have retracted them, as he gave vent to them'.<sup>94</sup>

But what Cave's restraint suggests is not so much a reluctance to turn historical scholarship into a vehicle for controversy as a recognition that it was just one among several different ways of defending Church of England doctrine.<sup>95</sup> Concealing his use of Domenico Magri's dictionary from the readers of *Primitive Christianity* probably reflected a similar sense that a high-pitched mode of animadversion was unsuited to some kinds of scholarship, rather than a concern about the limits of controversy in general. Indeed, Cave did not have to wait long for a chance to silence Johnson. On 20<sup>th</sup> November 1686 he was one of the nine London clergymen who turned up to St Paul's to sign a sentence of degradation against him (while some of his higher-profile contemporaries, like Stillingfleet and Tillotson, ignored the summons).<sup>96</sup> In order to understand Cave's work in the years ahead – particularly in the wake of 1685 and 1688 – we need to keep in mind this interplay between coercion, apologetic, suppressed polemic, and erudition that marked his career as a popular historian in the 1670s and 1680s.

### **'I intend in the summer to come to Windsor': Cave at St George's**

Well before 1688 it must have become apparent to Cave that he was not going to ascend to the same heights of English clerical life as his college contemporaries William Beveridge and Edward Stillingfleet. The reasons are probably various, but his choice of patron may not have

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<sup>93</sup> *Ecclesiastici*, sig. c3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>94</sup> *Ecclesiastici*, p. 334.

<sup>95</sup> The kind of argument made repeatedly in Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment*.

<sup>96</sup> See J. Wickham Legg, 'The Degradation in 1686 of the Rev. Samuel Johnson', *The English Historical Review*, 29 (1914), 723-42.

helped. Cave dedicated his first two books to Nathaniel Crew, bishop successively of Oxford (1671-74) and Durham (1674-1721); the preface to *Primitive Christianity* indicated that he had given Cave encouragement and support at an earlier stage of his career.<sup>97</sup> By the early 1680s Cave was addressing his writing to the archbishop of Canterbury, William Sancroft, instead, making it possible to speculate, as Thomas Hearne did, that his expectations of receiving preferment from Crew had been disappointed.<sup>98</sup> It is certainly true that apart from his appointment in 1677 to the lucrative living of Ryton (near Durham), which likely owed to Crew's influence, Cave received no obvious signs of favour from his patron.<sup>99</sup>

Instead Cave ended up winning a canonry at the College of St George's in Windsor in November 1684. Windsor became Cave's home for roughly half the year until the end of his life. From 1684 until about 1690 he tended to reside there between May and October, before switching to a November-April residence from 1691 onwards.<sup>100</sup> This shift had several explanations. In the early part of his career Cave's duties at Islington and as a royal chaplain required him to be in London to preach during the important Lent months. Thereafter it was in Windsor that he was expected to give his Lent sermons, in his capacity as 'Lecturer' at St George's, a position he was elected to in successive years between 1693 and 1698 and then again from 1700 to 1709.<sup>101</sup> As Cave grew older and frailer he also started to spend his summers at Epsom and Tunbridge Wells so that he could take the waters there.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> *Primitive Christianity*, sig. A4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>98</sup> *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne. Vol. 1: July 4, 1705 – March 19, 1707*, ed. by C. E. Doble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), p. 111.

<sup>99</sup> Cave received a royal dispensation to hold Islington and Ryton in plurality on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1677: see Lambeth Palace Library [hereafter LPL] F II/17/25a-b, fol. 145<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>100</sup> See the monthly records of attendance in SGCL V.B.3: *Attendance Book*, fols. 77<sup>r</sup>-152<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>101</sup> See Cave's remark to Otto Mencke in a letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> March 1694 and printed in *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, ed. by Friedrich Otto Mencke, 10 vols (Leipzig, 1742-54), I.3 (1742), p. 549: 'Sum hic Windesoriae positus, Praelectoris theologici in Collegio nostro munus sustineo, adeoque toto hoc quadragesimali tempore nullo modo abesse possum'.

<sup>102</sup> Cave mentions doing this, in various letters, in August 1682, August 1698, and July 1700.

Cave was kept busy at Windsor in this period: there were parish affairs to manage, works to be surveyed, and home improvements to make – in his case, a new vault, summer-house, wash-house, and stables.<sup>103</sup> Nevertheless, a prebend of this kind was not exactly a sinecure for a promising mid-career scholar.<sup>104</sup> The timing of his appointment suggests, on the contrary, that his patrons had very definite expectations about the kind of work that he would pursue there. The year before had been a particularly prolific one for Cave, and by the end of it he had gained a new reputation as a polemicist. In addition to his (relatively reticent) *Ecclesiastici*, he had also written two controversial pamphlets: *A Serious Exhortation*, printed anonymously, in which he justified persecuting Dissenters by comparing them to ancient sectarians like the Donatists, and *A Discourse concerning the Unity of the Catholic Church*, a more scholarly essay defending episcopacy and attacking theories of papal supremacy.<sup>105</sup> It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that Cave's patrons hoped for more of the same now that he was set up at Windsor.

St George's must have looked like a hospitable place for Cave's ecclesiastical studies. At the time it was already home to one of the most distinguished names of European letters, the Dutch emigré Isaac Vossius, who was a canon there until his death in February 1689.<sup>106</sup> Vossius had brought with him his renowned library of printed books and manuscripts, many of them containing the annotations of scholars of a previous generation like Joseph Scaliger, Isaac Casaubon, and Claude Saumaise.<sup>107</sup> It is unthinkable that Cave would not have enjoyed easy access to this collection and Vossius's expertise on ancient Christian writings, and indeed a few

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<sup>103</sup> See SGCL VI.B:5 *Register of Chapter Acts*, 'Copies of Patents & Mandates (1684-1729)', pp. 64, 104, and 244.

<sup>104</sup> See Serjeantson, *Generall Learning*, p. 2.

<sup>105</sup> [William Cave], *A Serious Exhortation, with some Importance Advices, Relating to the Late Cases about Conformity, Recommended to the Dissenters from the Church of England* (London, 1683) and *A Dissertation Concerning the Government of the Ancient Church, By Bishops, Metropolitans, and Patriarchs* (London, 1683). For the theory behind Cave's justification of civil coercion, see Mark Goldie, 'The Theory of Religious Intolerance in Restoration England', in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. by Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 331-68.

<sup>106</sup> The best account of Vossius's scholarly interests is Haugen, *Richard Bentley*, pp. 67-70.

<sup>107</sup> See Astrid C. Balsen, 'Collecting the Ultimate Scholar's Library: the *Bibliotheca Vossiana*', in *Isaac Vossius (1618-1689) between Science and Scholarship*, ed. by Eric Jorink and Dirk van Miert (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 281-309.



scraps of information survive to show the two men trading information about the apocryphal Epistle of Barnabas and a work spuriously attributed to Chrysostom.<sup>108</sup> Unfortunately for Cave this contact was relatively short-lived: after Vossius's death his 'wary & suspicious' executors, as he put it in a letter to Thomas Smith, made it harder to consult his library and then sold it off to Leiden University, to the annoyance of almost every scholar in England.<sup>109</sup>

Even without Vossius's collection the canons at St George's possessed an impressive research library, with particular strengths in editions of the Fathers, European theology, and English divinity. In Cave's day the chapter's books were kept in the cloisters before being relocated in 1692 to the Priest Vicars' Hall, where a large depiction of the Last Supper hung on the walls.<sup>110</sup> Cave played an active part in organising and increasing this library. When it was catalogued by John Hartcliffe in 1705 he added several handwritten additions or corrections to the inventory, and jointly with Hartcliffe he also donated a copy of the 1670 Antwerp edition of Baronius's *Annales*, possibly as part of the accessions policy requiring canons to contribute either £10 or books of the equivalent value to fund its upkeep.<sup>111</sup> Unlike Vossius, who kept his books in his study, Cave also seems to have merged his own collection with the chapter library, since the catalogue is unusually deep in some quite specific areas that were also specialisms of Cave's, like the writings of Leo Allatius and Vincent Placcius.<sup>112</sup>

As ideal as these facilities were, Cave's time at Windsor did not pan out as his employers might have wished. In fact his career as a controversial pamphleteer was over almost as soon as

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<sup>108</sup> Cave wrote to Vossius on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1678 asking on Henry Dodwell's behalf about manuscripts of the Epistle of Barnabas: a copy of the letter is now Bodleian MS D'Orville 470, p. 136. Later on, after Vossius's death, he wrote in his own copy of the *Historia Literaria*, 'Immo non esse genuinum Chrysostomi opus, ipse mihi olim confessus est Vossius', referring to (pseudo-)Chrysostom's *Synopsis Vetus Testamenti*. Cave's copy is now SGCL RBK C.142; see p. 313 for the annotation.

<sup>109</sup> See Cave's letter to Smith dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 1689, now Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 77. For an account of this affair, see John Henry Monk, *The Life of Richard Bentley, D.D.* (London, 1833), pp. 21-22.

<sup>110</sup> For a brief history of the library, see John Callard, *A Catalogue of Printed Books (Pre-1751) in the Library of St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle* (Leeds: Maney and Son, 1976), xi-xix.

<sup>111</sup> For the accessions policy, see SGCL VI.B.5, p. 262. The 1705 catalogue is now SGCL M.891 67D.

<sup>112</sup> For evidence of Vossius keeping his books in his study, see SGCL VI.B.5, p. 33.

it started. The reason why is immediately clear. Elsewhere in England the accession of James II in 1685 provoked vigorous opposition, but proximity to the royal palace must have made it unwise for the canons at St George's to mount any anti-Catholic resistance of their own, even as the new king annexed the eastern wing of their chapel for Roman Catholic services.<sup>113</sup> As a result Cave had to direct his scholarly energies away from explicit polemic. Instead, he redoubled his interest in an idea that had attracted him on and off for at least a decade – writing a work of literary history. By the early eighteenth-century the whole life of the college had reorganised itself around this project, becoming a kind of research institute for literary-historical training in the German tradition. The library was stocked with many of the old standards and instant classics of the genre, and several of the clergymen attached to St George's, like John Robinson and John Wyville, had close links to German intellectuals.<sup>114</sup> Towards the end of his life Cave painted a remarkable scene of this community for Fabricius: 'we often join in conversation about you', he told his correspondent, 'and your exceedingly erudite writings, especially your *Bibliotheca Graeca*'.<sup>115</sup> To see how and why this change had taken place we need to return to an earlier moment in Cave's career.

### **'Lambecio consilio plane contrariis': Cave and *historia literaria***

Some time shortly after its publication in 1674 Cave came across a book printed in Hamburg called *De Scriptis et Scriptoribus Anonymis et Pseudonymis Syntagma*. This was a survey identifying the names of writers who had published covertly, either under noms-de-plumes or anonymously. Its author, the Hamburg professor Vincent Placcius, called it a contribution to the project of

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<sup>113</sup> See Joseph Pote, *The History and Antiquities of Windsor Castle, and the Royal Chapel, and Chapel of St George* (Eton, 1749), p. 62. On anti-Catholicism in James's reign, see Sirota, *The Christian Monitors*, pp. 51-53.

<sup>114</sup> Robinson, briefly dean of Windsor in 1709 and 1710, had served as a diplomat in Hamburg earlier in the decade, and one of the newer canons, John Wyville, was apparently a regular visitor to the same city, fetching books for Cave whenever he travelled. See Cave's references to Robinson and Wyville in his letters to Fabricius, now KB Fabricius 104-123 4<sup>o</sup> (Bu-Cr), nos. 115-18.

<sup>115</sup> See Cave's letter to Fabricius, dated 16<sup>th</sup> January 1710, now KB Fabricius 104-123 4<sup>o</sup> (Bu-Cr) no. 117: 'saepiuscule de te scriptisque tuis perquam eruditis sermones miscemus, praesertim de Bibliotheca tua Graeca, cujus Continuationem avidissime cupiunt, et expectant nostrates'.

Baconian literary history.<sup>116</sup> In his words, a work of that scope was only imaginable after as many books as possible had been ascribed to their correct authors and dates, a task made harder by the ‘trouble-makers of literature’ who hid under false names.<sup>117</sup>

Cave was already primed to discover a book like Placcius’s. He had just published his own contribution to this project, his *Tabulae Ecclesiasticae* (1674), a chronological list of more than a thousand Christian writers starting with St Peter and ending with Martin Luther. This list was displayed over three folio sheets in the ‘tabular’ format of rows and columns associated particularly with Eusebius’s lost *Chronicon*. In Germany, tables of global history were often hung on classroom walls as didactic aids.<sup>118</sup> If this is hard to imagine of Cave’s more specialized chart of the history of ecclesiastical literature, at least one English reader in the period mentioned keeping a copy constantly to hand in his study for when he needed to check a point of chronology.<sup>119</sup> For Cave, fresh from his work on the primitive Christians, this second publication was a natural outgrowth of his interests in the late 1660s, offering a visualization of one of the central arguments for Christianity’s early and continued success in the world: ‘the singular learning of many, who became champions to defend it’, as he wrote in 1677.<sup>120</sup>

Placcius appeared enough of a fellow traveller for Cave to write to him in 1676, sending a copy of his book for good measure; almost immediately a new edition was printed in Hamburg, apparently without his consent.<sup>121</sup> Over the next few years Cave exploited his correspondence with Placcius to learn more about the German branch of *historia literaria* that was already looking predominant. The two men were particularly interested in the first work of

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<sup>116</sup> Vincent Placcius, *De Scriptis et Scriptoribus Anonymis et Pseudonymis Syntagma* (Hamburg, 1674), ‘Praefatio’, sig. )(.

<sup>117</sup> Placcius, *De Scriptis*, ‘Praefatio’ [no signature]: ‘rei litterariae turbatoribus occultis aliis’.

<sup>118</sup> See Benjamin Steiner, ‘Die Fundamente der Vergangenheit. Historische Tabellenwerke und die Ordnung der Geschichte in der Frühen Neuzeit’, *biblos. Beiträge zu Buch, Bibliothek und Schrift*, 60.1 (2011), 29-55.

<sup>119</sup> See [John Collinges,] *The Vindication of Liturgies, Lately Published by Dr. Falkner, Proved No Vindication of the Lawfulness, Usefulness, and Antiquity of Set-Forms of Public Ministerial Prayer* (London, 1681), p. 14: ‘Dr Cave’s Tables are continually in mine eye while I am in my Study’.

<sup>120</sup> William Cave, *Apostolici: or, The History of the Lives, Acts, Death, and Martyrdoms of those who were contemporary with, or immediately succeeded the Apostles* (London, 1677), xii.

<sup>121</sup> See Cave, *Historia Literaria*, i.

scholarship to try to address Bacon's programme systematically, Peter Lambeck's *Prodromus Historiae Literariae* (1659). Placcius eventually found a copy of this book for Cave in a second-hand Hamburg bookstore and also shared with him his plan to revise it substantially.<sup>122</sup> There were good reasons for wanting to do this, as Lambeck had never completed his history of literature, having started ambitiously with Adam – the inventor of letters – and then only reaching Moses. Still, the rest of the book consisted of sketches of what the complete, multi-volume history would look like, so there was enough information to make finishing Lambeck's book seem achievable.<sup>123</sup> What these *sciagraphia* showed was that the main part of the work, had Lambeck completed it, would have contained lists of writers in each century, arranged by religion, profession, and genre. Interspersed around these lists would then have been dissertations on different topics, like 'Cicero's library', 'the government of the early Church', and 'the decline of Latin style after Augustus'.

For now, ambitions of completing this project would have to wait. In the meantime Cave and Placcius concentrated on a more realistic target: adding new names to the long list of authors who had written anonymously or pseudonymously. Cave kept up a steady supply of information in the 1670s before their correspondence fell off, but he renewed his assistance again in 1689 after Placcius addressed him directly in his *Invitatio Amica*, a public appeal for help from scholars across Europe.<sup>124</sup> None of Cave's contributions or letters survive in their original form, but Placcius's policy of minutely and generously documenting his many sources – a practice in deliberate contrast to the culture of anonymity he was battling to unmask – in the

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<sup>122</sup> See Placcius's letters to Cave, dated 25<sup>th</sup> July 1676 and 21<sup>st</sup> April 1677, now Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg [hereafter Hamburg SUB] Sup. ep. 71, fols. 50<sup>v</sup>-52<sup>r</sup> and fol. 77<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>123</sup> Peter Lambeck, *Prodromus Historiae Literariae* (Hamburg, 1659). See Anette Syndikus, 'Die Anfänge der *Historia literaria*', pp. 5-36.

<sup>124</sup> Vincent Placcius, *Invitatio Amica ad Antonium Magliabecchi, aliosque Illustres & Clarissimos Reip. Litterariae* (Hamburg, 1689), p. 21.

expanded edition of his *Syntagma*, eventually printed after his death in 1708, makes it an easy task reconstructing them.<sup>125</sup>

At first glance the information that Cave provided Placcius appears miscellaneous and without method. Among his insights, for instance, he identified the Jesuit Théophile Raynaud as the author of a book about ancient hats published in Lyon in 1655 and ascribed the so-called *Geographia Nubiensis*, a medieval Arabic work first printed in the West in Paris in 1619, to ‘Alsharif Aldirsium’ (i.e. Muhammad al-Idrisi). He was also predictably helpful when it came to English writings, telling Placcius inter alia that Simon Patrick was the author of three recently published devotional works, that the pseudonymous ‘Democritus Junior’ behind *An Anatomy of Melancholy* was Robert Burton, and that a manuscript history in New College, Oxford, was the work of the medieval chronicler Matthew Paris.

Yet Cave’s bibliographical tips were also consistently motivated by apologetic and controversial aims. Without ever theorizing or historicizing the practice of anonymity, Cave’s enthusiasm for the act of unmasking clearly stemmed from a set of personal convictions about why writers had chosen to conceal their names in the first place. One reason was located in England’s recent history of violence, which Cave had experienced first-hand. Thus he observed that a book written ‘in a time of tyranny’ after Charles’s ‘nefarious deposition’ had only been claimed by its author, the royalist writer George Bate, in editions printed after the Restoration, when it was finally safe to do so.<sup>126</sup> The other reason was that anonymity offered protection for heterodox writers wanting to disseminate their opinions freely. The heresy that particularly exercised Cave in this regard was antitrinitarianism, and over the years he kept coming back to Placcius with new information about, for instance, pseudonyms used by Jan Crell, Lelio Sozzini,

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<sup>125</sup> Vincent Placcius, *Theatrum Anonymorum et Pseudonymorum*, ed. by Johann Albert Fabricius (Hamburg, 1708). A typical attribution of Placcius’s might be: ‘Cave sent this to me in letters from Islington dated June 1676’: see for instance p. 104.

<sup>126</sup> Placcius, *Theatrum*, p. 259.

Andrzej Wiszowaty, and Jonasz Szlichtyng. In one of his first letters Cave also expressed bewilderment that his correspondent had not already unveiled Spinoza as the author of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670). In case Placcius was simply unaware, Cave informed him that Spinoza was a Jewish convert to Christianity – in fact he was hardly recognisable as a Christian – whose precepts aimed at overthrowing the foundations of natural theology.<sup>127</sup>

In other words, Cave was using his expertise to expose hidden threats to what his experiences and reading had taught him were the pillars of reasonable Christianity: particularly, respect for divinely appointed magistrates, civil peace, and the doctrine of a God who is incorporeal, single, and in three persons. Publicly unmasking heretics was a way of hauling them through the coals before their seditiousness in doctrinal matters could generate larger social and political unrest, as Cave's reading in ancient ecclesiastical history showed him it inevitably did: 'when crises break out in the Church, disturbances break out in the State', he had written in his 1660s notebook, quoting the fifth-century historian Socrates.<sup>128</sup>

In his first entrée to the new genre of *historia literaria*, Cave was therefore learning that what looked like a pan-European project was easily adaptable to the concerns of his English education. It is also important to emphasise here that he was not forcing Placcius against his will to meet an insular, or exclusively English, agenda. As the German scholar repeatedly told Cave, he was a keen student of English divinity, having also ranged over the literature of rational religion that Cave had encountered in the 1660s: not only 'Dyke and the writings of similar men' – in other words the same devotional books recommended to new graduates by Richard Holdsworth – but also Charles Wolseley's *The Reasonableness of Scripture Belief* (1672) and Robert

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<sup>127</sup> Placcius, *Theatrum*, pp. 177-78.

<sup>128</sup> SGCL C.525, fol. 1r: 'ye hist. speaking of those troubles wch were brought into y<sup>e</sup> church fastens this remarque upon it, καὶ ποτέ μὲν τὰ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἡγούμενα, εἴτα αὐθις ἐπακολουθοῦντα τὰ δημόσια saepe cum tumultus ecclesiarum antegrediuntur, resp. commotiones consequuntur'. See *Historiae Ecclesiasticae Scriptores Graeci*, ed. and trans. by Johannes Christopherson, 2 vols (Geneva, 1612), I, p. 677.

Boyle's *Some Considerations about the Reconcilableness of Reason and Religion* (1675).<sup>129</sup> Compiling a dictionary of the pseudonymous and anonymous writers who undermined this edifice was just as much a controversial, coercive strategy for Placcius as it was for Cave.<sup>130</sup> If Cave was eager to hear about German *historia literaria* from Placcius, his correspondent was no less interested in learning about English theology from him: somewhere in the middle a distinctively Anglo-German mode of apologetic was born.

Cave had to wait for a long time to see the fruits of his collaboration with Placcius, asking Fabricius in October 1709 to send him a copy of the *Theatrum Anonymorum et Pseudonymorum* (1708) that he had published from Placcius's notes.<sup>131</sup> While he waited he slowly set about converting his early research into a *historia literaria* of his own. At the start of the 1680s he began cutting out columns from his *Tabulae Ecclesiasticae* and pasting them into a notebook, now RBK C.524 at St George's.<sup>132</sup> Next to the boxes containing the original entries for the Christian authors in his list, he wrote out fuller accounts of their lives and in a few cases lists of their writings. This was all with a view to publishing a book that was obviously indebted to his conversations with Placcius a few years earlier, since the plan at this stage was to combine long bio-bibliographical entries with dissertations on the state of literature in each century, just as Lambeck had proposed, with careful descriptions of which writings were genuine and which were spurious in each writer's oeuvre, using the same methods of detection and unmasking he had honed contributing to Placcius's book.<sup>133</sup> Then illness struck. Cave had to abandon his research after reaching the entry for Ephrem the Syrian in the fourth century, although in 1685

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<sup>129</sup> See Placcius's letter of 18<sup>th</sup> December 1677, now Hamburg SUB Sup. ep. 71, fol. 89<sup>r-v</sup>.

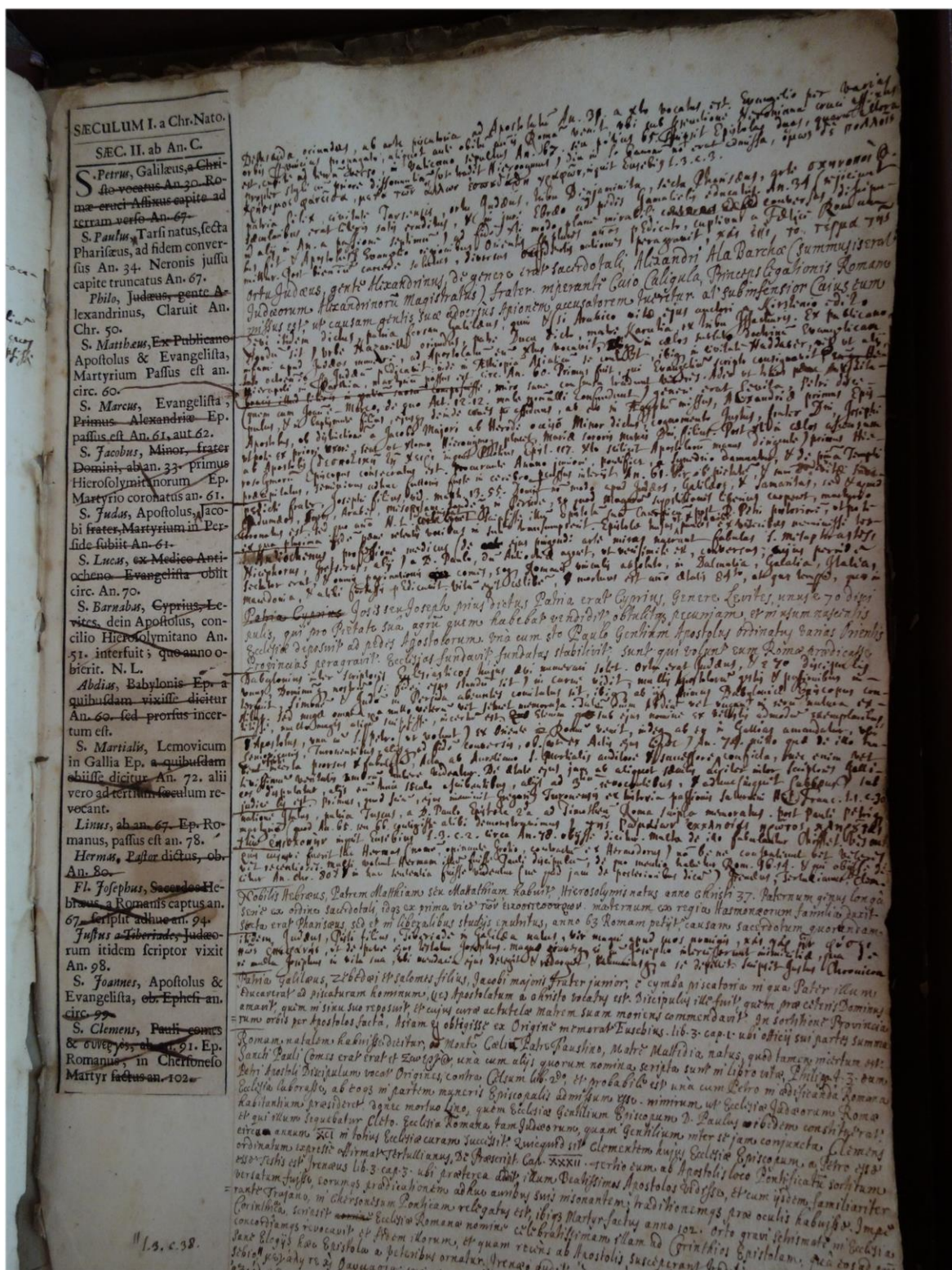
<sup>130</sup> Referring to Placcius's book Martin Mulsow has written that writers of *historia literaria* acted as 'dangerous persecutors, belonging to the category of police informers and snoops'. See his article 'Practices of Unmasking: Polyhistor, Correspondence, and the Birth of Dictionaries of Pseudonymity in Seventeenth-Century Germany', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 219-50 (pp. 234).

<sup>131</sup> See Cave's letter to Fabricius dated 13<sup>th</sup> October 1709, now KB Fabricius 104-123 4<sup>o</sup> (Bu-Cr), no. 116.

<sup>132</sup> This notebook is incorrectly labelled on the first side as 'Dr Caves Tabulae Ecclesiasticae MS'; it is unfoliated.

<sup>133</sup> See Cave's account of his plan in *Chartophylax Ecclesiasticus: quo prope MD Scriptores Ecclesiastici, tam Minores, quam Majores, tum Catholici, tum Haeretici, eorumque Patria, Ordo, Secta, Munera, Aetas et Obitus; Editiones operum praestantiores; Opuscula, quin & ipsa Fragmenta breviter indicantur* (London, 1685), 'Praefatio ad Lectorem' [no signature].





**Figure 5.** Page of notes written by Cave and an amanuensis in the early 1680s. This notebook is now RBK C.524 in St George's Chapter Library. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor.



he was able to publish a drastically reduced version of his literary history. The complete work would only appear in 1688 after a further period of intense study bringing with it a new set of problems.

**‘Mr Wharton was with me but 7 or 8 months’: Cave and the *Historia Literaria***

By the end of the seventeenth century Cave was famous across Europe. His vernacular works were continually being reprinted and translated. Little by little he had built up a correspondence network centring on the community of journalists and academics in Leipzig, which he had become adept at using to publicize his work on the Continent. Since its publication in 1688 his *Historia Literaria Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum* had continued to win rave reviews in the new learned periodicals, especially in the Leipzig *Acta Eruditorum* managed by his friend Otto Mencke.<sup>134</sup> Suitably encouraged, he had been working on a second installment from the middle of the 1690s.

Then Cave received a shock to his reputation. It is not clear whether the rumour was already nosing about, as it would in the early eighteenth century, that his reputation was exaggerated or at least built on shallower foundations than he was prepared to admit. Henry Dodwell repeated this rumour to Thomas Hearne in 1706: substantial parts of the *Historia Literaria* had been written not by Cave but by his young research assistant, Henry Wharton.<sup>135</sup> Even if this possibility was not yet the subject of public gossip, in 1697 Cave found himself needing to refute it after coming across a copy of his book which contained extensive markings in Wharton’s hand indicating which sections he thought were his and which were by Cave. As soon as he saw this book in the house of his son-in-law Robert Gery, Cave wrote to his

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<sup>134</sup> See *Acta Eruditorum Anno MDCLXXXVII publicata* (Leipzig, 1690), pp. 75-83.

<sup>135</sup> *Remarks and Collections*, p. 253.

contemporary at Cambridge, Thomas Tenison, now archbishop of Canterbury, to complain and set the record straight.<sup>136</sup>

This episode usually receives a mention whenever Cave's *Historia Literaria* is discussed in the existing secondary literature, as one of the few well-known facts of his biography.<sup>137</sup> Surprisingly, no one has yet explored it or tested the claims and counter-claims in Cave's letter to Tenison and an autobiographical fragment that Wharton left behind, which are the only relatively familiar pieces of evidence, despite the survival not only of Wharton's copy of the *Historia Literaria* in Lambeth but also various illuminating drafts and notebooks on either side.

In March 1686 Cave had begun casting around for a research assistant and amanuensis. Ralph Barker, a fellow at Caius College, duly recommended Henry Wharton, a recent Cambridge BA. The younger scholar was meant to benefit from this partnership just as much as Cave. The original idea was for Wharton to study divinity *ab initio* under Cave's auspices and while living with him.<sup>138</sup> In practice this might have meant working through a similar reading-list to the one Cave had followed in the late 1660s: in his autobiography, for instance, Wharton mentioned reading the works of Jacob Arminius and Simon Episcopius and Hugo Grotius's commentary on the New Testament at this time.<sup>139</sup> The specific research tasks that Cave set his assistant as they worked on the *Historia Literaria* were probably also meant to serve the same educational purpose, introducing him to the writings of the Fathers for the first time.<sup>140</sup>

After a short delay work started in earnest in September 1686. They began by returning to the drafts that Cave had made in his notebook in the early years of the decade. On the first,

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<sup>136</sup> Cave's letter to Tenison, dated October 1697, is now LPL MS 930, no. 14.

<sup>137</sup> See Haugen, *Richard Bentley*, p. 263.

<sup>138</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, my account is based on the version given in Wharton's autobiographical fragment. This was published for the first time in the nineteenth century as the appendix to George D'Oyly's *The Life of William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 2 vols (London, 1821), II, pp. 103-74.

<sup>139</sup> See D'Oyly, *The Life of William Sancroft*, p. 112: 'Ego interim studiorum theologicorum fundamenta posui, ab Arminii, Episcopiique operum et Grotii in Novum Testamentum annotationum lectione auspicatus'.

<sup>140</sup> Cave referred to Wharton in his letter to Tenison as 'so young a man of 21 years, & who by his own Confession had never lookt into y<sup>e</sup> Fathers till he came to me'.



*Ecclesiasticum Paralipomena* (1686) needed consulting for its account of the writings of Epiphanius of Salamis, and a work entitled *de vero et perfecto Amore* should be added to the list of Athenagoras' writings.<sup>141</sup> They then made a start adding not only new entries to the drafts but also new details to existing entries, still concentrating on writers of the first four centuries. Wharton later claimed responsibility in his autobiography for writing all the accounts of 'lesser-known writers, especially heretics', and in his copy of the *Historia Literaria* there are strong proprietary lines in pencil next to entries for early Gnostics and sectarians like Basilides, Valentinus, Montanus, and Bardesanes.<sup>142</sup>

But since most of the biographies were already complete, the main task at this stage was drawing up bibliographies, usually by copying out the contents-pages of recent critical *Opera Omnia*. To take Cyprian as an example, this meant collating the lists in John Fell's recent Oxford edition (1682) with the slightly older Paris text of Nicholas Rigault (1666 edition). If the relevant book was not in Cave's collection in Islington or Windsor, Wharton was sent out to find a copy in another London library such as Thomas Tenison's at St-Martin-in-the-Fields, where he compared the Basel (1557) and Paris (1686) editions of Zonaras's *Annales*, and Lambeth Palace, where he transcribed the list of Zonaras's manuscripts in Peter Lambeck's catalogue of the Imperial Library in Vienna (1665-79).<sup>143</sup> Cave then made use of these notes 'in my own words & way', although Wharton still tended to take credit for the bibliographies when he marked up his copy of the published text.

The sections for the first four centuries of Christian literature were finished by December 1686. At this point in the narrative it becomes harder to reconcile Wharton's account with Cave's. Wharton seems to have grown more and more frustrated with his supervisor. In

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<sup>141</sup> SGCL C.524 [unfoliated]: 'Athenagoras. Amatoria ejus' & 'Epiphanius, vid. Colomesii Paralip.'.

<sup>142</sup> *The Life of William Sancroft*, p. 114: 'Praeterea, addendi erant minoris notae scriptores quam plurimi, et in his omnes haeretici, quos intactos omiserat Cavus'.

<sup>143</sup> See Cave's letter to Tenison.

retrospect, he later said, his disaffection had been quick: from the first he had been disappointed by Cave's laziness, moroseness, hypochondria, and lack of intellectual seriousness. Now as their work progressed Cave's enthusiasm for the project cooled considerably, so that he began devoting his time to visiting friends, feigning illness, or slumbering by the hearth. In Wharton's words, Cave contributed 'a bit for the fifth century, a little for the sixth century, and almost nothing of the rest'.<sup>144</sup> On page 282 of his copy of the *Historia Literaria* Wharton reported this shift in the division of labour by adopting a new annotating strategy: up to this point (around the year 401) straight pencil lines indicate his own additions, whereas after it they indicate Cave's, now that these were the smaller part.<sup>145</sup>

Cave unsurprisingly rejected this version of events in his letter to Tenison: by his account, his assistant had continued to work from his notes and under his supervision. The evidence probably favours Wharton's narrative, however. In the first place his annotations paint a relatively credible picture of Cave taking charge of the entries for pre-eminent figures or at least ones of special interest to him – Socrates, Sozomen, Philostorgius, John Malelas, the early missionaries Theodorus and Augustine, and so on – and Wharton being left to take care of the rest. Moreover, throughout his career, as in his work with Wharton, Cave's interest as a historian was mostly limited to the earliest centuries of Christianity, and he was quickly fatigued, even nauseated, by almost everything written in the late antique and medieval periods, which in his opinion was all overgrown with academic jargon and superstitious legends: as he put it in a letter of 1695, 'my mind and strength flee from later centuries'.<sup>146</sup> When another literary historian criticized his work for neglecting the writings of medieval scholastics, Cave responded

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<sup>144</sup> *The Life of William Sancroft*, p. 115: 'adeo ut in saeculi quinti historia texenda permodicum fecerit; in sexto saeculo, parum; in sequentibus fere nihil'.

<sup>145</sup> LPL MS 956, p. 282: 'Ab hoc loco omnia nigro plumbo non notata ejusdem sunt authoris cujus illa quae huiusque notata sunt: & vicissim quae linea decussata notantur, juncta utriusque nostrum opera sunt conscripta'.

<sup>146</sup> See Cave's remark in a letter to Edward Bernard dated 9<sup>th</sup> April 1695, now Bodleian MS Smith 8, p. 125: 'Ad veteriora descendere refugit animus, refugiunt vires, saecula quae tu recte vocas non optima'.

emphatically: ‘you can have your Aquinas and Bonaventuras, and the dregs of more recent times’.<sup>147</sup> In light of this remark, it is revealing that among Wharton’s papers in Lambeth Palace Library are handwritten lives of Aquinas and Bonaventura (among a dozen or so others) that almost exactly resemble the entries printed in 1688.<sup>148</sup>

In any case, their collaboration came to an end in mid-1687, and the *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* was through the press by January 1689. The question of attribution had arisen in the middle of the previous year, generating several heated discussions, but Cave felt that he had graciously settled Wharton’s concerns by allowing him to publish the account of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries under his own name as an appendix to the main work. The two men were on good enough terms for Cave to transcribe and send his former amanuensis, in 1694, a biographical register of all the deacons at St George’s Chapter since the fourteenth century.<sup>149</sup> Wharton’s early death a year later looked to be the end of it, until Cave discovered his copy of the *Historia Literaria* in 1697 and had to write to Tenison asking him to insert his letter into the book ‘that so impartial persons may be rightly informd in the state of things’.

Tenison kept the letter but was sufficiently alarmed – and perhaps also convinced – by Wharton’s claims that he or someone else after him scrubbed out Wharton’s explanations about what the different symbols meant, thus making the lines, crosses, and underlinings impossible to decipher without Cave’s letter, which does not seem to have been kept nearby; the book itself was then stored with Tenison’s possessions rather than with the rest of Wharton’s manuscripts at Lambeth. This was an extreme but understandable response. On balance, the

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<sup>147</sup> William Cave, *Pars Altera*, ix: ‘Habeat sibi Oudinus suum Thomam, Bonaventuram suum, & siqua sequioris saeculi recrementa’. The historian was Casimir Oudin: see *Epistola Casimiri Oudini de Ratione Studiorum Suorum ad Johannem Fridericum Mayerum* (Leiden, 1692), sig. B2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>148</sup> See LPL MS 586, pp. 24-32.

<sup>149</sup> See LPL MS 593 pp. 189-96. This document has the heading, in Wharton’s hand: ‘Thoma Frith canonico Windesor. ad. an. 1618 contextus, Georgio Evans Canonico Windsor. ad. an. 1683 continuatus, Guilielmo Cave Canonico Windesor. abbreviatus, et ad me transmissus anno 1694’.



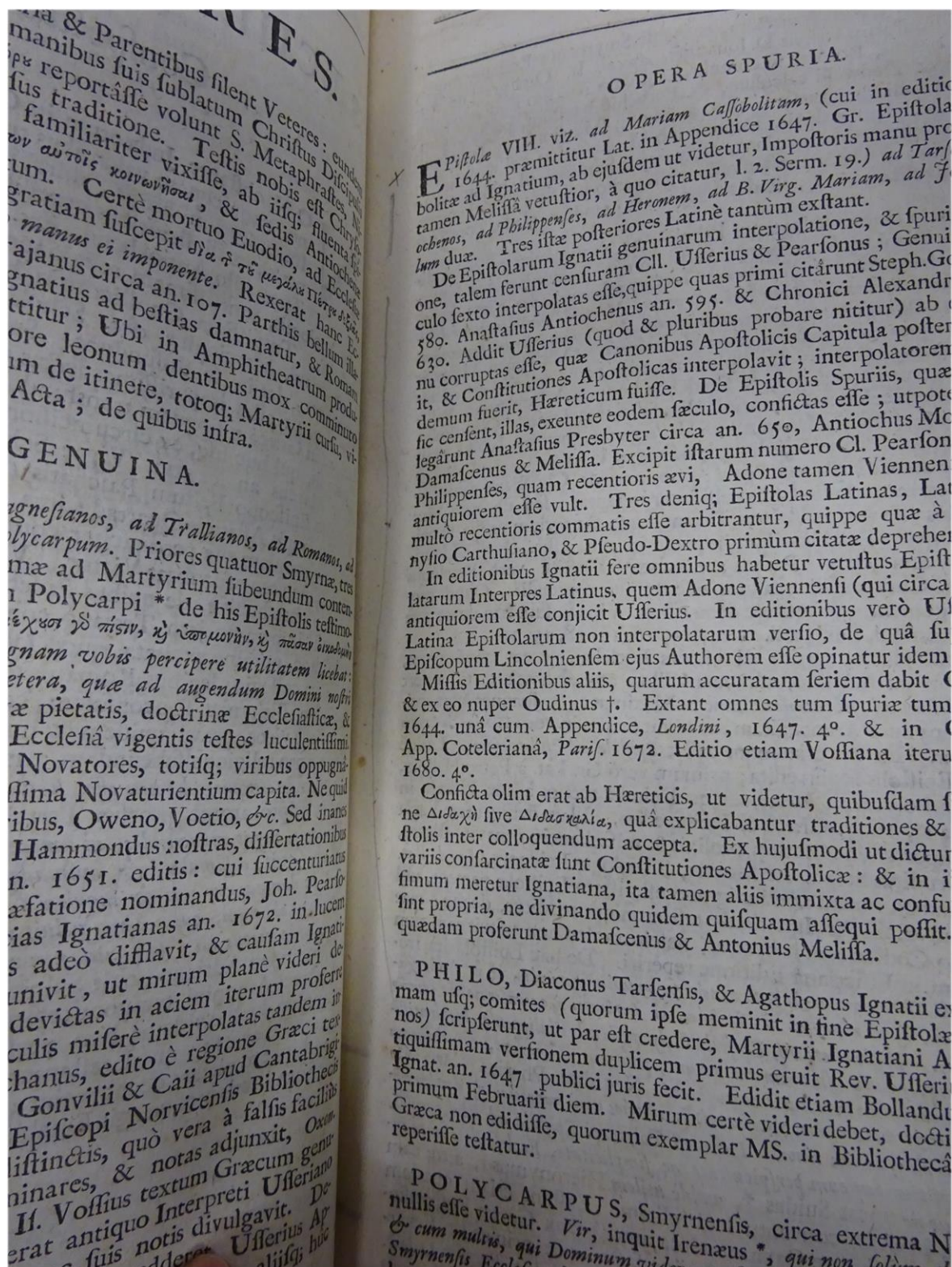
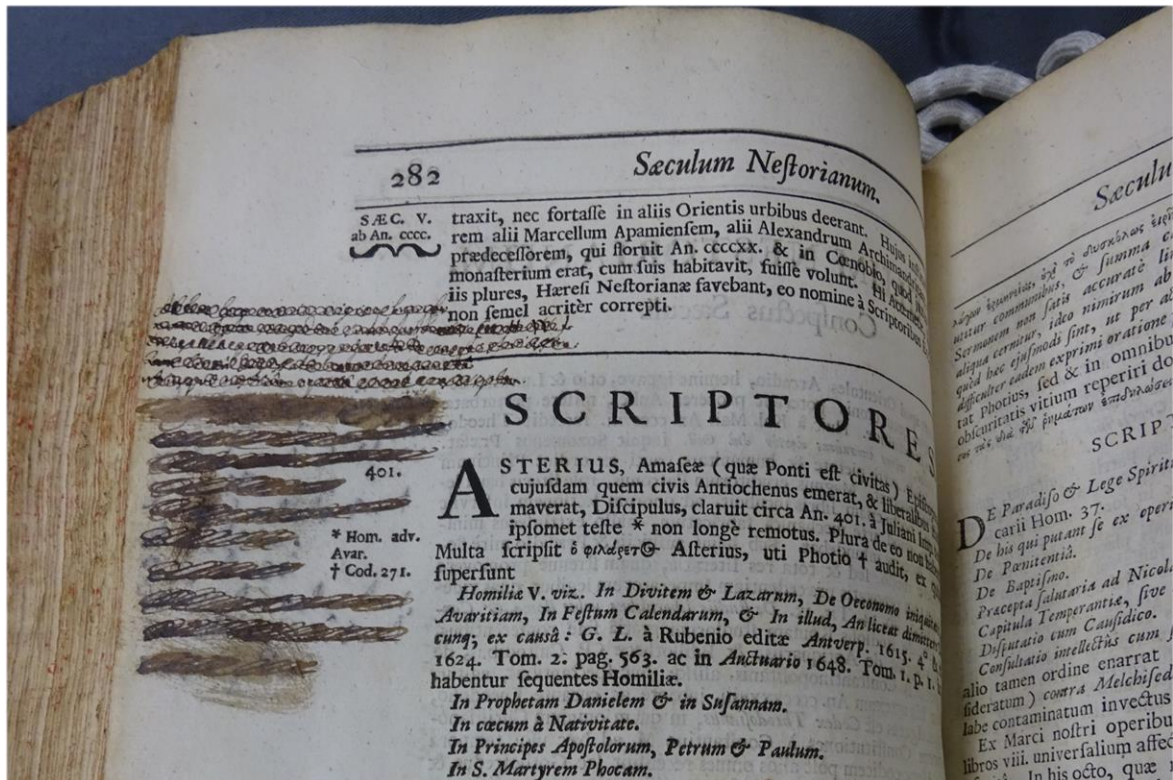


Figure 7. Markings in Henry Wharton's copy of the *Historia Literaria*, now MS 956 in Lambeth Palace Library. Reproduced with permission of Lambeth Palace Library.





**Figure 8.** Detail from Wharton's copy of the *Historia Literaria*, now MS 956 in Lambeth Palace Library. The annotation was there to explain what the different lines, underlinings, and crosses in the book meant. It was subsequently erased, but not before Cave read it and quoted it indignantly in his letter to Tenison. Reproduced with permission of Lambeth Palace Library.

claims and counter-claims on each side seem equally believable, to the discredit of both scholars. Throughout his career Cave was not always prompt to thank his friends for their help: at least one other scholar would later complain about not being acknowledged for his many contributions.<sup>150</sup> Wharton, for his part, had a reputation even among his friends for vainly overstating his achievements.<sup>151</sup> But given a choice between protecting Cave's reputation and elevating Wharton's, Tenison and his contemporaries would not have scrupled for long.

If we put this question briefly to one side, the episode amounts to a detailed portrait of the scholarly methods that Cave and Wharton employed to write the *Historia Literaria*. To

<sup>150</sup> The scholar was Abednego Seller, whom we will encounter in the next chapter. His complaint was made to John Hudson, who told Thomas Hearne: see *Remarks and Collections*, p. 111.

<sup>151</sup> See Nicholas Battely's remarks in his letter to John Strype dated 9<sup>th</sup> July 1695, now Cambridge University Library MS Add. 3, no. 53: 'I have seen M<sup>r</sup> Wharton's Collections of MSS. They are neither so great, nor of such value as y<sup>e</sup> world expect' and 'He was ambitious to have y<sup>e</sup> reputation of publishing those things himselfe'.



compose the biographical parts, they took existing printed lives – an example would be the *Vita* of Sidonius Apollinaris by Joannis Savarone (1598) – then extracted key dates and events, put them into bullet-point form, and then re-combined them into a continuous narrative, usually keeping many of the original biographer’s expressions. The starting-point for the bibliographies, as we have seen, was recent critical editions: the list of Jerome’s writings, for instance, was a recension of the indexes in Erasmus’s Basel text (1553 edition) and Marianus Victorinus’ Cologne text (1616 edition). Where reliable contents-pages were unavailable, the two men had to comb through a wider range of primary and secondary sources for references. To take a pair of examples revealed by some handwritten notes of Wharton’s, in the Paris edition of Clement of Alexandria’s *Stromata* (1629) they came across a remark about what a certain Julius Cassianus had written, and then Christopher Sand’s *De Veteribus Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (1669) informed them about the existence of a third-century writer called Theognostus of Alexandria. Predictably, there was no record of their use of the antitrinitarian Sand in the entry for Theognostus in the *Historia Literaria*.<sup>152</sup>

Actually this last example of Cave’s practices shows that the question of whether or not he minimised Wharton’s contributions cannot be set aside so easily. Any distinction between his methods and his instincts for suppressing the names of his sources and collaborators would be a highly artificial one. The irony of this episode – an irony probably lost on Cave – is that it proves why *historia literaria* was considered such an urgent task in this period. Scholars like Placcius and, in France, Adrien Baillet were writing treatises about anonymity and pseudonymity precisely because the ethics of authorship, collaboration, and acknowledgement were so uncertain or unregulated.<sup>153</sup> It would be easy to charge Cave with hypocrisy, especially when his

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<sup>152</sup> See Christopher Sand, *Nucleus Historiae Ecclesiasticae* (Amsterdam, 1669), p. 55, and *Clementis Alexandrini Opera Graece et Latine*, ed. by Daniel Heinsius (Paris, 1629), p. 320.

<sup>153</sup> On Baillet, see Kate E. Tunstall, ‘Pseudonyms, Ghosts, and Vampires in the Republic of Letters: Adrien Baillet’s *Auteurs déguisez* (1690)’, *Romance Studies*, 31.3/4 (2013), 200-11; and Françoise Waquet, ‘Pour une éthique de la réception: les *Jugemens des Livres en Général* d’Adrien Baillet (1685)’, *XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, 159 (1988), 157-74.

treatment of Wharton is compared to Placcius's generous, self-reflexive habit of acknowledging his contributors. A more interesting approach, however, would be to see his *Historia Literaria* as an attempt to harness or benefit from controversial strategies of concealment without openly risking controversy. Hiding his use of Magri's *Notitia de' Vocaboli Ecclesiastici* or Sand's *De Veteribus Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, refusing to spar with Samuel Johnson in print, and covering up his research assistant's influence on his own work – more than just examples of scholarly malpractice or leitmotifs of Cave's career, these were both the controlling methods of his literary-historical practice and a reflection (or exploitation) of the instabilities that made it necessary in the first place.

#### **'worn out with reading, research, and writing': Cave in the 1690s**

The timeliness of Cave's book would have been immediately apparent in the years after its publication. In the early 1690s Cave read Daniel Georg Morhof's *Polyhistor* (1688), the most systematic – soon to be the most popular – guide to the new vogue for literary history, which must have confirmed that the genre was becoming a fixture of the scholarly landscape.<sup>154</sup> Rival accounts of the history of ecclesiastical literature also began to emerge. The French scholar Louis Ellies Dupin continued to add volumes to his *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques* after its first installment in 1686, beating Cave to the punch by including a striking new feature: resums of the acts and decrees of the church councils in each century. Casimir Oudin, formerly a Roman Catholic monk, promised in 1692 that he was working on a new ecclesiastical bibliography that would correct Cave's mistakes, like his neglect of medieval scholastics.<sup>155</sup> Cave was not necessarily in a hurry to respond to his critics and rivals: despite being warned about Oudin's critique in the year of its publication by a correspondent of his in Leipzig, it was only

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<sup>154</sup> See Cave's expressions of interest in Morhof's work in a letter to Otto Mencke dated July 1691 and printed in *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, I.2 (1742), p. 352.

<sup>155</sup> Oudin, *Epistola*, sig. B2<sup>v</sup>. Oudin's promise was only realised several decades later with the publication of his *Commentarius de Scriptoribus Ecclesiae Antiquis Illorumque Scriptis* (Frankfurt am Main, 1722).

several years later that he acquired and read a copy. But eventually, probably in around 1694, he began preparing a second volume.

Cave wanted this to be ‘another part’ rather than a ‘new edition’ of the first volume. As he explained in a letter to Edward Bernard, his goal was to add new entries for writers omitted in 1688, improve the bibliographies with new information, and include a history of ecclesiastical councils at the end of each section.<sup>156</sup> Clearly this was not a radical change of emphasis or method. Still, resuming his studies presented Cave with certain difficulties. In most ways Cave’s life was much the same in the mid-1690s as it had been a decade earlier, having kept his preferments in 1688/89 and being unlikely to win new ones. But many of his old resources had disintegrated. Wharton had died, and several of his closest intellectual allies, especially Thomas Smith and Abednego Seller, were no longer so companionable now that they were officially excluded from orthodox ecclesiastical life as Nonjurors.<sup>157</sup> So Cave had to begin reconstructing a support network. The first step was to find a replacement for Wharton as his assistant, a role taken on by his son-in-law Robert Gery. Then he began sending out information-requests to a number of different scholars, including John Mill, Robert Cannon, and Edward Bernard.

Cave first wrote to Bernard, for instance, in March 1695. In his first letter, after a few brief words of introduction, he invited him to complete a literary-historical questionnaire. Who was the “Severus of Alexandria” who had apparently written a work *De Ritibus Baptismi*, at least according to the title-page of the edition published at Antwerp in the late sixteenth century? Who was the “Josephus” mentioned by John Selden as the author of a Ὑπομνηστικὸν? Was “Valens the Astronomer” a Christian and when had he lived? Were there any Greek manuscripts

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<sup>156</sup> See Cave’s letter to Edward Bernard dated 9<sup>th</sup> April 1695 and now Bodleian MS Smith 8, p. 125.

<sup>157</sup> See Cave’s complaint about this in his letter to Otto Mencke dated 15<sup>th</sup> March 1693 and printed in *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, I.2 (1742), p. 363.

of works by “Josephus Hebraeus” – better known to us as Flavius Josephus – and was the famous early reference to Jesus Christ in his *Jewish Antiquities* a later interpolation?<sup>158</sup>

Over the next six months or so Cave gradually squeezed answers out of his correspondent. Severus of Alexandria, he was told, was a mistake for Severus of Antioch, a fifth-century monk; the dissertation by the German scholar Johann Andreas Bose (1673) that he had asked for, and which Bernard enclosed, would allow him to judge for himself whether the so-called *Testimonium Flavianum* was genuine or not.<sup>159</sup> As their discussion progressed new questions, authors, and theories cropped up. In one letter, for instance, Cave told Bernard that he was beginning to doubt whether the author of the *Hypomnestikon* was, as he had once thought, “Josephus Tiberiades”, a Jewish convert to Christianity and friend of the heresiologist Epiphanius of Salamis, then mentioned that he had checked with his friend Robert Cannon, a fellow of King’s College, Cambridge. Cave and Bernard also moved on to consider different authors with the name Hippolytus and, in the best-documented example of Cave’s research methods in this period, the case of the Byzantine historian Joseph Genesius.

Their discussion of Genesius centred on a manuscript in the Bibliotheca Albertina in Leipzig. Another of Cave’s correspondents, the young scholar Christian Wagner, was preparing an edition of this text, a tenth-century chronicle. Wagner was skeptical of the conventional wisdom that attributed this work to “Joseph Genesius”. This claim was indeed built on slender foundations: the sole evidence for the existence of a writer called Genesius is a reference in the work of the eleventh-century Byzantine historian John Skylitzes.<sup>160</sup> Wagner proposed instead that the authors of the work were a pair of historians called “Georgius” and “Theophanes”, the

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<sup>158</sup> See Cave’s letter to Edward Bernard dated 19<sup>th</sup> March 1695 and now KB NKS 1675 2<sup>o</sup>, no. 19.

<sup>159</sup> Johann Andreas Bose, *In Periocham Flavii Josephi de Jesus Christo Exercitatio Historico-Critica* (Jena, 1673). See Cave’s letter to Bernard of 30<sup>th</sup> April 1695, now KB NKS 1675 2<sup>o</sup>, no. 20.

<sup>160</sup> For recent accounts of Genesius’s work and this manuscript, see the introductions to *Genesios: On the Reigns of the Emperors*, ed. and trans. by Anthony Kaldellis (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1998) and *Josephi Genesii Regum Libri Quattuor*, ed. by A. Lesmüller-Werner and I. Thurn (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1978).

sons of a “John of Diocaesarea”, basing his speculation on a gnarled Greek inscription in the colophon of the Leipzig manuscript. In his view the name written out after these verses, ΓΕΝΕΣΙΟΥ, must have been a corruption of ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ.<sup>161</sup>

Cave had this inscription transcribed and posted to him by his correspondent Thomas Ittig. Seeing how convoluted it was, in June 1695 he asked Otto Mencke to ask Ittig to double-check the manuscript; for some reason it was a third scholar, Gottfried Olearius, who eventually did the checking.<sup>162</sup> At the same time he wrote to Bernard to get his opinion: did the inscription need emending?<sup>163</sup> While he had the attention of his Oxford friend he also wondered if he could check a book in the Bodleian for him. The reason was that Cave had failed to find the famous reference to Genesius in his copy of Skylitzes’s history, even though Gerard Vossius said it was there in his *De Historicis Latinis* (1627): what Cave wanted to know from Bernard was whether it was to be found in another edition of the same history. The answer came back that Cave’s suspicions were correct – the reference was only in the 1570 Vienna edition, not the 1647 Paris text – and also that the inscription would make more sense if Πάτης were changed to Πάτερ, so that the inscription could now be read as saying that the manuscript was copied out for John of Diocaesarea and that its ‘author’ (Πάτερ: i.e. Genesius) was a better chronicler than “Georgius” (i.e. George Syncellus) and “Theophanes” (i.e. Theophanes the Confessor).

Eventually Cave exhausted the evidence or Bernard’s patience and wrote up new entries for Severus of Antioch, Flavius Josephus, “Josephus Christianus”, Joseph Genesius, Hippolytus of Thebes, and “Hippolytus Arabus”. True to form, he only acknowledged Bernard’s assistance in two of these entries. As a result this behind-the-scenes exchange gives us a much sharper glimpse into his working methods than the printed text allows. He started with unpromising,

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<sup>161</sup> Nothing of Cave’s correspondence with Wagner survives. Cave gave an account of Wagner’s work in the entry for Genesius in his *Pars Altera*, pp. 313-14.

<sup>162</sup> See Cave’s letter to Mencke dated 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1695 and printed in *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, I.3 (1742), p. 553.

<sup>163</sup> See Cave’s letter to Bernard dated 24<sup>th</sup> May 1695, now Bodleian Library MS Smith 8, p. 127.

fragmentary pieces of evidence: dubious title-pages to old editions, imprecise observations in more recent works of scholarship, corrupted Greek dedicatory inscriptions in inaccessible archives. Then he tested his evidence: was it grammatical? Did it agree with the existing chronology? Was this “Josephus” not in fact another “Josephus” who had lived much later? When all else failed, an extensive circle of experts could be called upon to pursue these lines of inquiry for him or in concert with him.

Even this correspondence, however, does not make Cave’s priorities explicit. The image that it presents is misleading if it implies, as it easily might, that these scholars were simply fact-enthralled or curious about the history of literature for its own sake. The authors discussed with Bernard look like a miscellaneous collection, but in fact there was a clear rationale to Cave’s inquiries. Cave must have started by thinking about Flavius Josephus: hence why he was addressing himself to Bernard, one of the great European experts on this writer.<sup>164</sup> This interest would then have led him on naturally to other authors named Josephus, like Joseph Genesius and the so-called “Christian Josephus”, who in Cave’s opinion had lived in the early fifth century and had been given this name because his *Hypomnestikon* plagiarised heavily from Flavius Josephus’s better-known histories.<sup>165</sup> Since this book also contained substantial excerpts from the work of Hippolytus of Thebes, the next question to consider was about writers called “Hippolytus” too.

So why Josephus in the first place? By this stage it will be unsurprising that the answer lies in Cave’s reading in the late 1660s. There Cave had repeatedly come across the idea that debates about the evidence for Christianity could be won much more easily with recourse to the testimony of its enemies than its followers, who could inevitably be accused of bias. As Nathaniel Ingelo put it, in a remark stored up by Cave under the heading ‘the name of Xt, his

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<sup>164</sup> See Thomas Roebuck, ““Great Expectation among the Learned”: Edward Bernard’s Josephus in Restoration England”, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 23 (2016), 307-25.

<sup>165</sup> See Cave, *Pars Altera*, pp. 140-41.

miracles &c recorded by his enemies': 'In the Books of such as were his mortal Adversaries, and therefore willing to have buried any thing which might keep his Remembrance alive in the World, we find the mention of his Name'.<sup>166</sup> The possibility that there was a reference to Jesus in a work of history that was not only virtually contemporary with his life but was also written by a Jew was irresistible to many scholars, although also heavily contested; Cave would have found a full review of the controversy in one of the books that Bernard sent him, Johann Andreas Bose's *In Periocham Flavii Josephi de Jesus Christo Exercitatio Historico-Critica* (1673). At the core of Cave's most minute literary-historical scholarship, then, was the same enthusiasm for apologetics that had sustained his writing from the beginning.

#### **'from the first foundations of my studies': conclusions**

In winter 1689, a few years after his collaboration with Cave had ended, Henry Wharton brought out a book entitled *Historia Dogmatica de Scripturis et Sacris Vernaculis*. The bulk of its contents came from James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh, who had left his research in an incomplete, disorganised state at his death in 1656. Eventually his notes had passed to William Sancroft, who had left it to Wharton, his chaplain, to prepare them for publication.<sup>167</sup> The book in its final form was divided into ten chronologically-arranged chapters considering the attitudes in different historical periods to reading Scripture in the vernacular, with a copious commentary by Wharton added at the end. Earlier sections consisted mostly of strings of quotations from ancient Christian and Jewish authorities; later ones were more varied in style and included an essay on how the Roman Church had succeeded in making Latin the standard language of worship and lists of medieval men and women who had been punished for reading, teaching, or owning copies of the Bible in English. In the introduction, Wharton emphasised that

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<sup>166</sup> SGCL C.525 5v. See Ingelo, *Bentivolio and Urania*, p. 276.

<sup>167</sup> The story is recounted in *Jacobi Usserii Historia Dogmatica Controversiae inter Orthodoxos et Pontificios de Scripturis et Sacris Vernaculis*, ed. by Henry Wharton (London, 1689), 'Praefatio', sig. a<sup>v</sup>-a2<sup>r</sup>.

Ussher's work offered a new method for refuting Roman Catholics.<sup>168</sup> Tit-for-tat exchanges in which patristic quotations arguing one way were answered with patristic quotations arguing the other had proved fruitless. In their place, Wharton suggested, Church of England scholars needed to write historical accounts of when and why disagreements over doctrine had arisen in the first place – the history of controversy as a way of renewing controversy, not escaping from it.

What its first readers might not have guessed, however, was that Wharton's edition was actually much less polemical than he had initially wanted it to be. Tucked away in his annotated copy of the *Historia Literaria* in Lambeth is a loose set of sheets containing an alternative preface to the book. A note at the top, also in Wharton's hand, indicated that Sancroft had asked him to delete it, in case it stirred up new tensions with English 'schismatici'.<sup>169</sup> It is not hard to see why the archbishop of Canterbury was worried. His chaplain was set to load his preface with opprobrium, wanting to use Ussher's book not so much to refute Roman Catholics abroad as to confront the arguments of nonconformists at home that the Church of England's commitment to traditional practices like kneeling at the altar and making the sign of the cross brought it dangerously close to Rome. Wharton made no attempt to temper his abuse. As he put it, 'the minds of the faithful need to be armed against the attacks of swindlers, who do not worship letters, but rather accuse those who do'.<sup>170</sup>

This chapter began with Cave's comment to Fabricius that he had always worshipped ancient letters. It should hopefully be clear by now that this self-characterisation was not as bland as it might first have appeared. Or at least its blandness was part of the point: claiming to love literature was not a way of implying that he had given up fighting for the Church of

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<sup>168</sup> *Historia Dogmatica*, ed. by Wharton, sig. a<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>169</sup> LPL MS 956: 'Ista scripseram in praefatione ad Usserii Historiam Dogmaticam, verum deleri voluit Archiepus Cant, nimiam Schismaticorum rabiem veritus'. The sheets are inserted between pp. 362 and 363.

<sup>170</sup> MS 956: 'armanda fidelium mentes adversus Tenebrionum impetus; qui literas adeo non colunt, ut colentes eo nomine accusent'.



England, but it was not exactly a way of describing a life devoted to religious controversy either. The episode of Wharton's cancelled preface usefully rounds off this first chapter because it draws together many of the scholarly energies that we have seen at work in Cave's career: polemical-mindedness, the appeal to Christian antiquity, the concealment or suppression of one's actual targets for strategic reasons, and the turn to 'letters' as a site for waging a form of controversy that would save itself from the some of the contingencies of controversy. To an extent, Cave's scholarly life was just as continuous as he portrayed it in his letter to Fabricius: almost from beginning to end he pursued the same apologetic aims, just in different modes. But to understand why he embraced this turn to literature more firmly or explicitly than any of his contemporaries, we need to re-examine the relationship between his early studies and his later role as a literary historian.

## The “Republic of Letters”, Jerome, and the Good Literary Historian

The engraved frontispiece to the second edition of Louis Ellies Dupin’s *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques* (1690-97) depicted a transhistorical gathering of ecclesiastical dignitaries in a spacious seventeenth-century library.<sup>1</sup> The presses lining the walls contain shelves for the writings of Athanasius, Augustine, Jerome, Calvin, and Luther, among others. At the front a distinctively early-modern figure in a cardinal’s biretta sits thinking at a writing desk, surrounded by clusters of various nondescript ancient and modern clergymen. To his left, two scholars immediately identifiable as Jerome and Augustine re-enact the poses of Plato and Aristotle from Raphael’s celebrated fresco in the Vatican. Jerome, pointing to the ceiling, clutches a folio volume under his right arm. A lion stands at his heels, a traditional feature of his iconography since the Middle Ages.<sup>2</sup>

Jerome had won his prominent place in this engraving as a pre-eminent representative of Christian learning and letters – exegete, linguist, translator, letter-writer, theologian, man of letters. In the context of Dupin’s *Bibliothèque* of Christian authors, he had a special significance because he was widely credited with having pioneered the genre of ecclesiastical bibliography, a claim that Dupin acknowledged in the preface to his first volume.<sup>3</sup> His *De Viris Illustribus*, written in 392/93, had quickly found admirers and imitators. From the late fifth century onwards, starting with Gennadius of Massilia, a series of scholars had updated his catalogue,

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Ellies Dupin, *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques*, 2nd edn, 9 vols (Paris, 1690-97). In the Cambridge University Library copy this engraving appears before volume III (1691).

<sup>2</sup> For the traditional legend about Jerome removing a thorn from a lion’s paw, see Eugene F. Rice Jr, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 37-44. On early-modern images of Jerome the man of letters, see Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 1-5; and Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 75-81.

<sup>3</sup> Dupin, *Nouvelle Bibliothèque*, I (1690), p. 4: ‘Mais S. Jérôme est le premier des Chrétiens qui ait fait un ouvrage exprés sur les Écrivains Ecclésiastiques’.

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**Figures 9 and 10.** Frontispieces to *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques*, volume III (1691), left; and *A New History of Ecclesiastical Writers*, volume I (1693), right. From the copies now in Cambridge University Library, shelfmarks 7.2.45 and P.9.29 respectively.

adding entries for authors who had lived after his day.<sup>4</sup> The tradition had crossed from manuscript into print with Johannes Trithemius's review of German writers, published in 1494.<sup>5</sup> In England its pioneers were John Leland and John Bale, who had both emphasised their debts to Jerome, the founder of the genre.<sup>6</sup>

From 1693 Dupin's *Bibliothèque* began appearing in an English translation by William Wotton. This version was accompanied by a new engraving clearly based on the original frontispiece in Dupin's book but also re-drawing it in important ways. Although still set in a

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<sup>4</sup> See Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse, 'Bibliography before Print: The Medieval *De Viris Illustribus*', in *The Role of the Book in Medieval Culture*, ed. by Peter Ganz (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986), pp. 133-54.

<sup>5</sup> See Klaus Arnold, 'De viris illustribus: Aus den Anfänge der humanistischen Literaturgeschichtsschreibung. Johannes Trithemius und andere Schriftstellerkataloge des 15. Jahrhunderts', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 42 (1993), 52-70.

<sup>6</sup> See *The Laboryouse Journey & serche of John Leylande, for Englandes Antiquitees, geven of hym as a newe years gyfte to Kynge Henry the viii*, ed. by John Bale (London, 1549), sig. Di<sup>r</sup>-v.

library, the scene is now much less sedate. Where Jerome and Augustine once stood, a figure – possibly Arius, or just an archetypal heretic – cowers on the floor, protecting himself with his hand. Behind him a pair of similarly long-locked philosopher-authors are trying to escape the grasp of a smiling, boyish prince, possibly Constantine, who is gesturing invitingly to a group of anxious-looking supplicants on his right, as well as a frail old man supporting himself with a staff. Englishmen who had seen Domenichino’s famous seventeenth-century painting of Jerome in Rome might have recognised the same pose of exhausted asceticism in this figure here, although it is hard to know how precisely the identification is meant.<sup>7</sup> In any case, Jerome the man of letters is conspicuously absent from this engraving. His lion has wandered over to the writing desk at the front, where instead of a Roman cardinal a seventeenth-century Englishman sits: that the words ‘Biblia Sacra’ are legible on the book in front of him suggests that he may be meant as a portrait of Brian Walton, whose *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* (1654-57) reflected Protestant distrust of the Latin ‘Vulgate’ text of the Bible translated by Jerome and endorsed by Roman Catholics at Trent.<sup>8</sup> It is as if not just the lion but also the centre of scholarly gravity in the engraving has shifted away from Jerome, towards new and more respectable men of learning.

This chapter considers Cave’s attempt to speed up this shift and find a way of writing literary history without imitating Jerome. It explores why some late humanist intellectuals had come to be so sceptical of Jerome’s achievements and what alternatives were left to scholars who wanted to write in a genre that was inescapably associated with him. In this sense it is not exactly a case-study of Jerome’s reception in the later seventeenth century, as useful as that would be.<sup>9</sup> Instead it tries to build on Mark Vessey’s articles on Jerome, which have considered

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<sup>7</sup> On English responses to this painting, *The Last Communion of St Jerome*, see Clare Haynes, ‘The Culture of Judgement: Art and Anti-Catholicism in England, c.1660-c.1760’, *Historical Research*, 78 (2005), 483-505 (p. 493).

<sup>8</sup> On Walton, see Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*, pp. 362-70.

<sup>9</sup> Two articles that make a start on a history of Jerome’s reception among late humanists are Scott Mandelbrote, ‘Origen against Jerome in Early Modern Europe’, in *Patristic Tradition and Intellectual Paradigms in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century*,

how the *De Viris Illustribus*, the original text of literary history, gave future scholars a form for writing about the literary past and also a set of tensions that reproduced themselves in the work of historians and critics as different as Erasmus, George Saintsbury, and Jacques Derrida.<sup>10</sup>

Another way of describing the chapter's concerns would be to say that it is framed by the question of what made a good literary historian by seventeenth-century standards. The difficulties Cave and others had in deciding whether Jerome was a good model or not reflected a larger set of uncertainties about the role of 'literature' or 'letters' in confessional debate. As several scholars have recently pointed out, *historia literaria* was considered such a useful resource for early-modern university students because it would teach them the standards of learned conduct by providing them with countless examples from history of scholars behaving badly: this is why a work like Johann Burckhardt Mencke's *De Charlataneria Eruditorum* (1715), a popular satire on academic etiquette, was just as characteristic of the genre as, say, Peter Lambeck's *Prodromus*.<sup>11</sup> This chapter therefore starts with a discussion of Cave's early inquiries into the ideals of the *respublica literaria*; it then follows him as he measures a series of literary historians, including Jerome, against those ideals. The Cave presented so far in this thesis might look like a model of intellectual unscrupulousness, but his scholarly habits were at least carefully chosen, as we shall see.

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ed. by Silke-Petra Bergjan and Karla Pollman (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 2010), pp. 105-36; and Karen Collis, 'Reading the Bible in the "Early Enlightenment": Philosophy and the Ars Critica in Jean Le Clerc's Early Theological Dialogues', *Erudition and the Republic of Letters*, 1 (2016), 121-50.

<sup>10</sup> See Mark Vessey, 'Latin Literary History after Saint Jerome: The *Scriptorum illustrium latinae linguae libri* of Sicco Polenton', *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch/Journal of Neo-Latin Language and Literature*, 6 (2004), 303-11; 'Literary History: A Fourth-Century Invention?' in *Literature and Society in the Fourth Century AD: Performing Paeideia, Constructing the Present, Presenting the Self*, ed. by Lieve Van Hoof and Peter Van Nuffelen (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), pp. 16-30; 'Writing before Literature: Derrida and the Latin Christian World', in *Derrida and Antiquity*, ed. by Miriam Leonard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 289-317; and "'Nothing if Not Critical?': G. E. B. Saintsbury, Erasmus, and the History of (English) Literature", in *Erasmus and the Renaissance Republic of Letters*, ed. by Stephen Ryle (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), pp. 427-55.

<sup>11</sup> See Merio Scattola, '*Historia literaria* als *historia pragmatica*. Die pragmatische Bedeutung der Geschichtsschreibung im intellektuellen Unternehmen der Gelehrtengegeschichte', in *Historia literaria*, ed. by Grunert and Vollhardt, pp. 37-63.

### **‘qualis erat oratio, talis erat & vita’: learning about the Republic of Letters**

In the early 1670s Cave was nearing the end of the twelve years that the university statutes required of MAs before they could proceed Doctor of Divinity.<sup>12</sup> As he got to the bottom of his theological reading list, it was natural that he should start to plan his own contribution to religious scholarship and to wonder about what sort of scholar, divine, or writer he was going to be. Retrospect tells us what he became: an apologist for the Church of England who tended to hide his controversial motives and often dealt ungenerously with his fellow scholars. But all this lay ahead: so, for now, Cave made a detailed study of the history of scholarship to learn more about the different paths open to him.

Probably around the same time that he was carrying out his research for *Primitive Christianity*, Cave began using his copy of Domenico Magri’s dictionary for another purpose: filing away notes about a host of ancient and modern writers. Seneca, Pliny the Elder, Tibullus, Augustine, Paulinus, Philostorgius, Cassiodorus, William of Malmesbury, Hugo Grotius, and Simon Episcopius were among the authors he made entries for, usually in the form of short paragraphs copied out from various sources including Caspar Scoppe’s *Ars Critica* (1662 edition), Joannes Wowerius’s edition of Sidonius Apollinaris (1598), and Julius Caesar Scaliger’s influential *Poetices libri septem* (in either the 1581, 1586, or 1594 edition). The majority of the notes, however, came from the printed correspondence of early-modern humanists. Judging from his entries, Cave seems to have consumed this literature almost systematically, working his way through the letters of Paulus Manutius (1560), Marc-Antoine Muret (1613), Isaac Casaubon (1638), Justus Lipsius (1639), Philip Melanchthon (1647), Dominicus Baudius (1650), Claude Sarrau (1654), Roland Desmarests (1655), Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1662), and Jacques Moisant de Briex (1670).

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<sup>12</sup> See Winstanley, *Unreformed Cambridge*, pp. 68-73.

A few examples of Cave's notes will help to show what he was looking for in his reading. The entry for the Roman grammarian Festus, for instance, was taken from a letter sent to Marc-Antoine Muret in which, in passing, his correspondent mentioned that he loved Festus for the 'pleasing variety of matter and learned antiqueness of words in his writings', a tribute that Cave duly copied out.<sup>13</sup> For the fourth-century writer Rufinus he wrote out Gerard Vossius's remark that the liberties he had taken as a translator were notorious.<sup>14</sup> Third, in the entry for Nikolaus Gerbelius he borrowed a description of him from Joachim Camerarius's biography of Philip Melanchthon (1655 edition), where he was said to be a great, honest, humane, pleasant, and learned lawyer who had mixed with excellent company in Vienna.<sup>15</sup>

If there was a generic term for the men assembled in his notebook, other than writers and better than scholars, it would be 'men of letters' – or, in the various circumlocutions offered to Cave in his reading, men who had protected the 'dignitatem literarum' like Pierre Pithou or been 'magnus litterarum vindex' like Isaac Casaubon.<sup>16</sup> In other words, it was about the inhabitants of the so-called early-modern *respublica literaria*, extended backwards in time to include classical and medieval *littérateurs*. Within the last thirty years this European community of a learned élite has been a key organising principle for research into the history of early-modern humanism.<sup>17</sup> In more recent work its reality has been questioned, if not demolished

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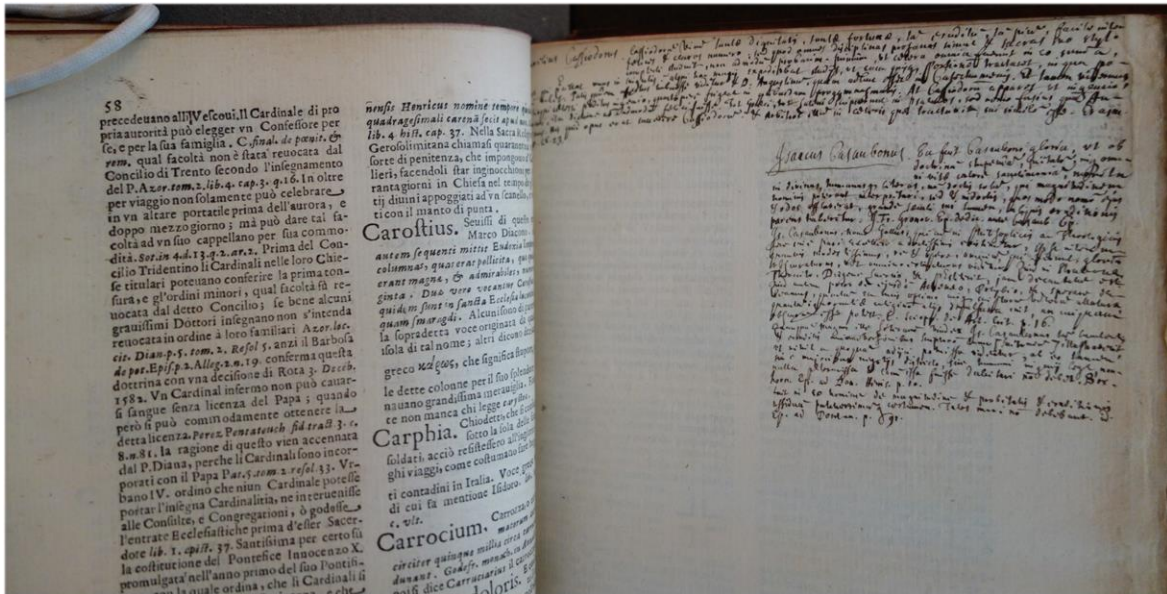
<sup>13</sup> SGCL M.25, p. 122a: 'quem ego auctorem insigniter diligo, tum ob rerum omnium iucundissimam varietatem, tum verborum antiquitatem doctissimam'. See Marc-Antoine Muret, *Epistolae, Hymni Sacri, et Poemata Omnia. Editio Ultima* (Lyon, 1613), p. 47.

<sup>14</sup> M.25, p. 235a: 'Rufini libertatem, vel licentiam potius in transferendo nemo ignorat'. See G. J. Vossius, *Theses Theologicae et Historicae, De Variis doctrinae Christianae Capitibus* (Oxford, 1628), p. 545.

<sup>15</sup> M.25, p. 180a: 'vir optimus atque integerrimus, & humanitate, suavitate morum, doctrina, omni genere solidae laudis excellens. Hic JC [Jurisconsultus] diu dederat operam collegio in illa urbe sacerdotum primario, & aliquando Viennae Austriacae cum Joan. Cuspiniano, & illius aetatis optimarum disciplinarum atque artium fama celebribus vixerat familiariter'. See Joachim Camerarius, *Vita Philippi Melanchthonis* (The Hague, 1655), p. 369.

<sup>16</sup> M.25, pp. 58a and 217a. For these terms see Isaac Casaubon, *Epistolae, quotquot reperiri potuerunt, nunc primum junctim editae* (The Hague, 1638), p. 416; and Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn, *Epistolae & Poemata* (Amsterdam, 1662), p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> See Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995); and Anthony Grafton, 'A Sketch Map of a Lost Continent: the Republic of Letters', in *Worlds Made by Words: Scholarship and Community in the Modern West* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 9-34.



**Figure 11.** Cave's notes about Cassiodorus and Isaac Casaubon in his copy of Magri's *Notitia de' Vocaboli Ecclesiastici*, now RBK M.25 in St George's Chapter Library. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor.

altogether, although the old model persists.<sup>18</sup> The claims that its members and its modern theorists made for it – that it was a space for harmonious epistolary cooperation where scholars put aside political and confessional differences – now look particularly specious. But it was as an ideal that Cave was encountering it in his reading, or as a set of guidelines about scholarly behaviour, and in that sense it was very real.<sup>19</sup> His reading gave him the opportunity to study its values: what was the best kind of learning? Who were the great scholars? Was it more important for a scholar to be pious or eloquent? What did good academic conduct look like? Was it acceptable to make use of books written by heterodox writers, or was it impossible to separate an author's learning from his beliefs?

<sup>18</sup> See Caspar Hirschi, 'Piraten der Gelehrtenrepublik: Die Norm des sachlichen Streits und ihre polemische Funktion', in *Gelehrte Polemik: Typen und Techniken gelehrter Konfliktführung in der respublica litteraria des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Kai Bremer and Carlos Spoerhase (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2011), pp. 176–213; Kristine Haugen, 'Controversy, Competition, and Insult in the Republic of Letters', *History of Humanities*, 1 (2016), 399–407; and Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*.

<sup>19</sup> Recent studies of early-modern debates about how scholars should behave include Ingrid A. R. De Smet, 'Calumnia Dira Pestis: Slander, Memory, and Collective Identity in the Republic of Letters, or How Polemics are Historicized', *Lias*, 38 (2011), 185–206; and Sari Kivistö, *The Vices of Learning: Morality and Knowledge at Early Modern Universities* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).



Cave found numerous examples of what made scholars virtuous or vicious. One definition of good scholarship was a desire for the truth uncontaminated by party enthusiasm or prejudice: the model here was David Blondel, who, as Cave noted, had called into question the received wisdom that there had once been a female Pope, even though this myth was a favourite anti-Roman trope for many of his Calvinist co-religionists.<sup>20</sup> Taking it for granted that being able to read, write, and speak Latin and Greek were essential qualifications for membership of the Republic of Letters, some of the other virtues surveyed in Cave's notebook were Gassendi's encyclopaedism, William of Malmesbury's reliability, and Isaac Vossius's (far from proverbial) politeness. Tell-tale signs of bad scholarly practice, by contrast, included taking excessive liberties as a translator (like Rufinus), being excessively grandiloquent (like Hilary of Poitiers), trying to excel in all branches of learning rather than mastering one (like Cassiodorus), recycling old wives' tales uncritically (like Georgius Cedrenus), having a dictatorial manner (like Simon Episcopus), abusing your adversaries (like John Bale), or spreading heresies (like Michael Servetus).

In general Cave's annotations describe an ideal of learning that we might want to call 'Erasmian humanism' nowadays.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, of all the volumes of letters that Cave read in this period, it was the London edition of Erasmus's correspondence printed in 1642 that he made heaviest use of; this edition was doubly useful because it included the prefatory letters Erasmus had written for his patristic and classical editions, sparing Cave the labour of having to consult them individually in their separate volumes when he wanted to find out what his source had to say about Arnobius Junior, Alger of Liège, Lucian, Hilary, Origen, Basil, Hilary, and Seneca.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> M.25, p. 37a. The entry for Blondel is from Claude Sarrau, *Epistolae Opus Posthumum* (Orange, 1654), pp. 224-25.

<sup>21</sup> See Jacques Chomarat, *Grammaire et Rhétorique chez Erasme* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1981).

<sup>22</sup> For a quick survey of Erasmus's patristic editions, see Jan den Boeft, 'Erasmus and the Church Fathers', in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: from the Carolingians to the Maurists*, ed. by Irena Backus, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1997), II, pp. 537-72.

Cave raided Erasmus's writings often enough that a series of recurring phrases in his notes must have started to sound like clichés: a good writer should leave you thirsting for more, he should hurry you *in medias res*, he should be 'mire διδακτικός', he should temper his speech for his different audiences, and so on.<sup>23</sup> Drawing from the springs, the attractiveness of universal learning, and the ugliness of scholasticism were also motifs of Erasmus's letters and prefaces. But two Erasmian values in particular were unmissable: the need for moderation, and the ideal of scholarship as a synthesis of piety, learning, and eloquence.

The motto for the second ideal was Erasmus's judgment of Basil of Caesarea: 'Qualis erat oratio, talis erat & vita'.<sup>24</sup> This summary was to be found in the preface to his edition of Basil, first published in 1532, in the middle of a long paragraph that Cave copied out in full. The idea that there was a link between good living and fine talking explains why Cave devoted so much space in his notebook to the issue of literary style. He seems to have been especially attracted to passages in Erasmus's prefaces comparing and contrasting different kinds of patristic and classical eloquence. Thus he made a note that Guitmond of Aversa was harsher and more rhetorical than Alger of Liège; that Athanasius was didactic without Tertullian's harshness, Jerome's showiness, Hilary's torturousness, Augustine's digressiveness, or Gregory of Nazianzen's smoothness; and that Basil was more eloquent than the laborious Demosthenes, graceless Isocrates, frigid Lysias, or artless Pericles. In addition to Erasmus, Cave also looked to Julius Caesar Scaliger's *Poetices* for similar summaries of literary style, in this case those of the late antique poets Paulinus of Nola, Sidonius Apollinaris, and Ausonius.<sup>25</sup> His annotations about early-modern scholars, likewise, almost always mentioned their rhetorical abilities, although in much less differentiated terms.

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<sup>23</sup> See M.25, pp. 24a and 32a.

<sup>24</sup> M.25, p. 32a. See *Epistolarum D. Erasmi Roterodami Libri XXXI* (London, 1642), p. 1628.

<sup>25</sup> Julius Caesar Scaliger, *Poetices libri septem* (Lyon, 1594), pp. 822-25.

The other Erasmian value was moderation. By the seventeenth century, at least among certain kinds of Protestant, Erasmus was being hailed as an icon of non-dogmatic, irenic scholarship.<sup>26</sup> In Restoration England, as Gregory Dodds has suggested, he was particularly popular among champions of a comprehensive church settlement like Edward Stillingfleet.<sup>27</sup> Erasmus had made his most celebrated case for a doctrinally minimal and thus confessionally capacious Christianity in the preface to his edition of Hilary of Poitiers (1523), which Cave read.<sup>28</sup> There he had argued that good living mattered more than profound knowledge: no one would be damned for not knowing whether the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father alone or from the Father and the Son, and it was even theoretically possible to conceive of Arians who were pious despite their heterodoxy, yet – so Erasmus went on to say – so much of the violence of the past century had been caused by intellectual disagreements over abstruse points of doctrine.<sup>29</sup>

As he read, Cave gravitated towards professions of intellectual moderation or even-mindedness. Many of the selections on his reading-list were clearly there because they seemed to have perfected a method of reading across confessional lines or of finding the good even in bad books. An obvious example was Philip Melancthon, who was almost as legendary as Erasmus in seventeenth-century England for his restraint and ecumenicism: Cave ended up reading not only Camerarius's biography, but also his correspondence (1647) and David Chytraeus's *Adhortatio ad Orationes Philippi Melancthonis* (1614).<sup>30</sup> Again it was a remark of

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<sup>26</sup> See Bruce Mansfield, *Phoenix of his Age: Interpretations of Erasmus c.1550-1750* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1979).

<sup>27</sup> See Gregory D. Dodds, "Betwixt Heaven and Hell": Religious Toleration and the Reception of Erasmus in Restoration England', in *The Reception of Erasmus in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Karl Enenkel (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 103-27.

<sup>28</sup> On Erasmus's preface, see John C. Olin, 'Erasmus and His Edition of Saint Hilary', in *Erasmus, Utopia, and the Jesuits: Essays on the Outreach of Humanism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994), pp. 27-37.

<sup>29</sup> *Epistolarum D. Erasmi*, pp. 1635 and 1640: 'Non damnaberis si nescias, utrum spiritus a patre & filio proficiscentis, unicum sit principium, an duo' and 'Et tamen probabile est inter Arianæ factionis homines fuisse, quibus persuasum esset, hoc quod de Christo prædicabant, verum ac pium esse'.

<sup>30</sup> See Timothy J. Wengert, "With Friends Like This...": The Biography of Philip Melancthon by Joachim Camerarius', in *The Rhetorics of Life-Writing in Early-Modern Europe. Forms of Biography from Cassandra Fedele to Louis*

Erasmus's, this time from his revised edition of Seneca, that served Cave with a credo for this method: as he had put it, the path to follow when dealing with potentially risky books like Seneca's was to distinguish between 'what was to be avoided and what was to be pursued'.<sup>31</sup> Throughout his programme of studies in the early 1670s Cave discovered plenty of examples of humanists doing exactly this, like Claude Sarrau remarking generously that the ancient historian Philostorgius still deserved to be read despite being an Arian.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, he also tried to build this generosity into his own note-taking practices, often softening a harsh remark about a particular author with a gentler one: thus he balanced John Twyne's critique of Geoffrey of Monmouth's talent for fabling with John Leland's suggestion that the credit of Geoffrey's history remained despite his use of unreliable sources, and similarly he paired an attack on Simon Episcopus's 'harsh, stinging, bitter, virulent' manner with praise for his erudition, mildness, and love of peace.<sup>33</sup>

### **'il lui échauffoit la bile': Jerome, man of letters**

If Cave had wanted to find a portrait of all these virtues in a single scholar, he needed to look no further than Erasmus's *Hieronymi Stridonensis vita*, first published in 1516. As we know from the work of Eugene Rice and Lisa Jardine, the Jerome of this biography was a kind of avatar for early-modern scholars.<sup>34</sup> If we need to resist the charm of Erasmus's claims that he was

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XIV, ed. by Thomas F. Mayer and D. R. Woolf (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), pp. 115-26; and Dewey D. Wallace Jr, 'The Anglican Appeal to Lutheran Sources: Philipp Melancthon's Reputation in Seventeenth-Century England', *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 52.4 (1983), 355-67.

<sup>31</sup> M.25, p. 245a: 'quae sint in hoc autore fugienda quae sequenda'. See L. *Annei Senecae Opera, et Ad Dicendi Facultatem, et Ad bene videndum utilissima*, ed. by Erasmus (Basel, 1529), sig. a3v.

<sup>32</sup> M.25, p. 203a: 'Gothofredi Philostorgium omnes flagitamus: quamvis enim Arrianae haeresis labe & infamia merito notetur, fieri tamen non potest quin Historia Ecclesiastica inde aliquam lucem mutuetur'. See Sarrau, *Epistolae*, p. 55.

<sup>33</sup> M.25, pp. 110a and 127a. The criticism of Episcopus was from Jacob Crusius, *Mercurius Batavus sive epistolarum libri V* (Amsterdam, 1650), p. 456: 'sed quam omnia, bone Deus, in eo aspera, aculeata, ferrea, virulenta!'. The praise was from *Praestantium ac eruditorum virorum epistolae ecclesiasticae et theologicae varii argumenti*, ed. by Christopher Hartsoeker and Philip van Limborch (Amsterdam, 1660), sig. \*4r. The criticism of Geoffrey was from John Twyne, *De Rebus Albionis, Britannicis Atque Anglicis, Commentariorum libri duo* (London, 1590), p. 111, and the praise from John Leland, *KYKNEION ἈΣΜΑ Cylene Cantio* (London, 1658), p. 10.

<sup>34</sup> See Rice, *Saint Jerome*, pp. 84-136; and Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters*, pp. 55-82. See also John B. Maguire, 'Erasmus' Biographical Masterpiece: Hieronymi Stridonensis Vita', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 26.3 (1973), 265-73.

writing the first truly critical biography of Jerome, having cleared away the superstitious rubbish of the medieval tradition, it is no less interesting to think of his life as a new kind of hagiography whose subject was the saintly man of learning rather than the miracle-performing saint.<sup>35</sup> The essential point, as Mark Vessey has argued, is that for Erasmus Jerome's career was an exemplar of proto-humanist practices of commonplacing, rhetoric, textual criticism, and literary history serving theological ends.<sup>36</sup> Like many of the scholars in Cave's notebook, this Jerome was a man of letters who celebrated learning wherever it came from and, 'had he been permitted, would have forgiven errors of faith out of respect for erudition'.<sup>37</sup> Erasmus borrowed a famous classical simile to describe Jerome's eclecticism: like the bee, he was able to extract honey from (heretical) plants without sucking up their poison too.<sup>38</sup>

For all this, there was no place for Jerome in Cave's notebook. Nor, indeed, was there to be a *Vita Hieronymi* in Cave's *Ecclesiastici* (1683), his collection of biographies of fourth-century Fathers. This omission might have looked reasonable were Cave's excuse for leaving him out not so weak: it was true to say, as he did, that much of Jerome's life spilled over into the fifth century, but so did Chrysostom's (the last biography in the collection) and anyway two years later in his *Chartophylax Ecclesiasticus* Cave would explicitly count Jerome among the writers of the fourth century, the 'Saeculum Arianum'. A much more likely explanation for omitting him is that Cave's early doubts about Jerome had hardened into a lifetime aversion, or at least an uncertainty about what to do with him. By the 1680s, his relationship with Jerome was extremely complex. On the one hand he was vastly familiar with his work. He almost certainly owned the

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<sup>35</sup> A point made in Hilmar M. Pabel, *Herculean Labours: Erasmus and the Editing of St. Jerome's Letters in the Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 179-80.

<sup>36</sup> Mark Vessey, "'*Vera et aeterna monumenta*': Jerome's Catalogue of Christian Writers and the Premises of Erasmian Humanism", *Die Patristik in der frühen Neuzeit: Die Relektüre der Kirchenväter in den Wissenschaften des 15. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Günther Frank and others (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 2006), pp. 351-75.

<sup>37</sup> 'Eximii Doctoris Hieronymi Stridonensis vita', in *Omnia Opera Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis*, 9 vols (Basel, 1516), I, sig. B2<sup>r</sup>: 'libenter, si licuisset, fidei vitium eruditioni condonaturus'.

<sup>38</sup> 'Hieronymi vita', sig. B2<sup>r</sup>. On this simile, see Jürgen Stackelberg, 'Das Bienengleichnis: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der literarischen Imitatio', *Romanische Forschung*, 68 (1956), 271-93.

nine volumes of the 1553 Basel edition of his works, and when he needed to compile the list of his writings for the *Historia Literaria* he also sent his assistant Wharton out into the field – more precisely to St Martin-in-the-Fields – to check the copy of the 1616 Cologne edition by Mariano Vittori in Thomas Tenison's new library.<sup>39</sup> Jerome's books were among the most frequently cited works in his vernacular biographies. On the other hand – and here is the complexity – these citations were very often abusive in tone, usually references to Jerome's mistakes.

There were lots of incentives for disliking Jerome in Cave's day. Actually there had always been incentives: as one scholar has recently pointed out, he 'has never lacked for critics or detractors'.<sup>40</sup> But in the seventeenth century his reputation was particularly contested after a millenium or more of superstitious hagiography and just under a century of increasingly confessionalized editions by Roman Catholic scholars.<sup>41</sup> His influence could be seen in some of the chief bêtes noires of Protestantism: Mariolatry, saint-worship, relic-obsession, asceticism, monasticism, and so on. He was also known as a champion of virginity, and he was the main villain of Henry Wharton's *A Treatise of the Celibacy of the Clergy* (1688), which Wharton must have been composing at the same time as he was collaborating with Cave. But what especially irked scholars across Europe was not so much Jerome's opinions as his character. That is, his hastily-expressed and ill-informed beliefs were usually seen as the depressing but inevitable consequence of his temperamental unsoundness. As Wharton put it, 'his Prejudice and Passion is too well known to be herein trusted'.<sup>42</sup> The entry for Jerome in the *Historia Literaria* finished with a similar verdict: he was 'of a fervent and immoderate disposition', he gave free reign to

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<sup>39</sup> On Tenison's library, see Peter Hoare, 'Archbishop Tenison's Library in St Martin's-in-the-Fields: the Building and its History', *London Topographical Record*, 29 (2006), 127-50.

<sup>40</sup> Richard J. Goodridge, 'Vir Maxime Catholicus: Sulpicius Severus' Use and Abuse of Jerome in the *Dialogi*', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 58 (2007), 189-210 (p. 189).

<sup>41</sup> See Hilmar M. Pabel, 'Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism of Erasmus' Edition of St. Jerome', *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, 6 (2004), 231-62; and Mandelbrote, 'Origen against Jerome', p. 125: Jerome 'suffered as a victim of the excesses perpetrated by his own hagiographers'.

<sup>42</sup> [Henry Wharton], *A Treatise of the Celibacy of the Clergy, Wherein its Rise and Progress are Historically Considered* (London, 1688), p. 96.

his emotions, and as soon as he scented the merest hint of a reproach he would lash out intemperately at his adversaries.<sup>43</sup>

This un-Erasmian vision of Jerome was gaining ground at the end of the seventeenth century. Jerome was on the verge of becoming the model of bad scholarship. This is not to suggest that he was not also defended and praised in the highest terms: no one committed to this task more seriously than the Maurist Jean Martianay, who brought out an edition in five volumes between 1693 and 1706 before adding a lengthy biography in French. But for the first time suspicion of Jerome's manner was starting to cross confessional lines. When Martianay complained about the 'froideur de nos Historiens nouveaux', he had in mind the work of his co-religionist Adrien Baillet, who in his account of Jerome in the ninth volume of his *Vies des Saints* (1701) had admitted his erudition but also scolded him for his impetuosity, biliousness, and the haste with which he reached and stuck to his judgments.<sup>44</sup> Martianay tried to imply that Baillet's work unmasking pseudonymous authors had made him over-zealous: his Jerome was thus a 'fantôme', a word that Baillet had used to describe books circulating dangerously without an author.<sup>45</sup> But there is no doubt that the more seventeenth-century *littérateurs* thought about the ethics of authorship, the less attractive Jerome seemed in most respects.

The ideal of learning that Cave had studied in his notebook was still intact here. The problem was that Jerome no longer lived up to it. In the twelfth volume of Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont's *Ecclesiastical Memoirs* (1707), he was portrayed not only as hot, hasty, prejudiced, and inexact, but also as incapable of realising that heterodox writings could still be valuable, a

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<sup>43</sup> Cave, *Historia Literaria*, p. 219: 'Caeterum quod sanctissimi viri pace dictum sit, praefervidi erat & impotentis animi, qui affectibus suis nimis indulgebat; semel laceratus, adversarios asperrime tractavit, & ab invectiva ac satyrica scribendi vena vix ac ne vix temperavit'.

<sup>44</sup> Adrien Baillet, *Les Vies des Saints: Composées sur ce qui nous est resté de plus authentique & de plus assuré dans leur histoire, disposées selon l'ordre des calendriers & des martyrologes. Tome IX* (Paris, 1701), pp. 833-34. For Martianay's comment, see *La Vie de Saint Jérôme, Prêtre Solitaire et Docteur de l'Église* (Paris, 1706), 'Avertissement', sig. āiv<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Martianay, *La Vie de Saint Jérôme*, p. 523. For Baillet's use of the word, see Tunstall, 'Pseudonyms, Ghosts, and Vampires', p. 206.

mirror-image of Erasmus's ecumenical scholar-bee.<sup>46</sup> Jean Le Clerc, meanwhile, offered a series of 'precautions' to take when reading Jerome, more or less accusing him of the same scholarly vices surveyed in Cave's notebook: he wrote in anger, he was fair-weathered, and he filled his writings with exaggerations and fables for rhetorical effect.<sup>47</sup> (His willingness to criticize Jerome should make us sceptical of Karen Collis's suggestion that Jerome was the 'model critic' for Le Clerc).<sup>48</sup> So now it was Jerome's enemies who embodied the virtues of the *respublica literaria*, especially Baillet and Tillemont, by not flinching from calling his saintliness into question, even at the risk of undermining one of the long-cherished axioms of their own confession.<sup>49</sup>

The unexpected outcome of this new attitude, however, was that Jerome became more important, not less, to the construction of an early eighteenth-century ideal of scholarly life. At first glance it would seem unlikely for the boom of *historia literaria* in Germany to coincide with a revival of interest in Jerome, yet this is exactly what happened. Ernst Salomon Cyprian's edition of the *De Viris Illustribus* (1700) was quickly followed three years later by a new edition of Gennadius's continuation by Wilhelm Ernst Tentzelius, and then in 1718 Johann Albert Fabricius published his *Bibliotheca Ecclesiastica*, a revision of Aubert Le Mire's standard seventeenth-century edition of the late antique and medieval works comprising the *de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* tradition, including Jerome's. It is true that there were more narrowly 'philological' concerns motivating this revival, in the wake of Jean Mabillon's discovery of a manuscript in the library of St-Germain-des-Prés containing numerous unattested textual variants; Cyprian and Tentzelius were blocked from consulting a copy of this manuscript by Jean Martianay, but

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<sup>46</sup> Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires Pour Servir à l'Histoire Ecclésiastique Des Six Premiers Siècles. Tome Douzième* (Paris, 1707), p. 2: 'Il n'a pas fait paroître la mesme equité que Saint Augustin, à discerner dans les plus méchans ce qu'il y avoit de bon, de ce qui meritoit veritablement d'estre blasmé'.

<sup>47</sup> Jean Le Clerc, *Quaestiones Hieronymae, In quibus expenditur Hieronymi Nupera Editio Parisina, multaque ad Criticam Sacram & Profanam pertinentia agitantur* (Amsterdam, 1700), pp. 233-77.

<sup>48</sup> See Collis, 'Reading the Bible', p. 138.

<sup>49</sup> Jean-Louis Quantin has used the phrase 'the generalization of criticism' to describe the willingness of scholars like Tillemont to disprove 'corporate beliefs of [their] own order': see 'Reason and Reasonableness', pp. 414-48 (p. 416).



by then their enthusiasm had already been kindled.<sup>50</sup> This fact is not all-explaining, however. As Martin Gierl has shown, it was central to the self-image of German *historia literaria* that it was eclectic, ecumenical, and moderate, a form for defusing theological controversy.<sup>51</sup> The scholars who wrote it were clearly not unaware of Jerome's new reputation as a firebrand: Fabricius, for instance, underlined the phrase 'he dealt harshly with his opponents' in his copy of Cave's *Historia Literaria*.<sup>52</sup> So why were they so interested in his catalogue of Christian writers?

The best way of answering this question is by thinking more carefully about the afterlife of the *De Viris Illustribus*. In many ways this book was an anomaly in the context of Jerome's oeuvre. Specifically, it had always had the effect of turning his admirers temporarily into his detractors, and vice versa. Not long after it was written Augustine had made a complaint that would recur in the centuries to come: Jerome had not been explicit enough about which of the authors in his catalogue were heretics, and he had also failed to warn his readers to avoid their teachings.<sup>53</sup> In the early-modern period this insight was dismaying for those who admired him because he was normally a scourge of heretics, as ferocious as a lion in defence of Catholic orthodoxy. The Jesuit Antonio Possevino had to settle for stating that, if Jerome praised Origen and Eusebius in the catalogue, at least he abused them elsewhere in his writings.<sup>54</sup> To those invested in an ideal of moderation, however, precisely this lack of ferocity gave the *De Viris Illustribus* a special significance. That is, Jerome's literary history looked like it might be the last place in his work where the Erasmian ideal survived: moreover, the contrast between the restraint and irenicism of the catalogue and his heresiological hot-headedness elsewhere served

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<sup>50</sup> See Jean Mabillon, *Veterum Analectorum Tomus I-IV* (Paris, 1675-85), II (1676) pp. 42-47 and also, for an account of their attempts to gain access to a copy, *Gennadii Massiliensis Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, ed. by Wilhelm Ernst Tentzelius (Jena, 1703), 'Lectori Benevolo Ernestus Salomo Cyprianus' [unpaginated].

<sup>51</sup> See Gierl, *Pietismus und Aufklärung*, pp. 515-29.

<sup>52</sup> Fabricius's copy is now in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, call number Th. 246 2<sup>o</sup>. His underlining is p. 154.

<sup>53</sup> See *S. Augustini Epistulae*, ed. by Alois Goldbacher, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, XXXIV.1-2, XLIV, LVII, LVIII (Vienna and Leipzig, 1885-1923), XXXIV.2 (1898), no. 40, pp. 69-81 (p. 79).

<sup>54</sup> Antonio Possevino, *Apparatus Sacer ad Scriptores veteris, & novi Testamenti*, 2 vols (Venice, 1603), I, p. 3. See Possevino's comparison of Jerome to a lion in volume II, p. 37.

to re-affirm that 'literature', the study of the textual past, was a privileged space where even the most notoriously fervent scholars cooled into moderation.

Of course this solution was not widely satisfying, even if as a way of thinking about literature it became increasingly important as the eighteenth century wore on. The problem for scholars of Cave's generation was that a series of Roman Catholic bibliographers had responded to their disappointment with Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus* by trying to write the kind of literary history that Jerome would have written in his more characteristically ferocious moods. Heresy-hunting was thus the keynote of the seventeenth-century catalogues of writers by Robert Bellarmine, Antonio Possevino, Aubert Le Mire, and Philippe Labbé. This was not lost on their confessional rivals: as Johann Andreas Bose complained in his *Schediasma de comparanda Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum* (1673), most of these books were extremely hostile to Protestants.<sup>55</sup> The German ideal was obviously an attempt to pacify this aggression, but what it left scholars with was a bitterly confessional, anti-Protestant *historia literaria* on the one hand, and on the other a Protestant genre that had disabled itself from answering back by appealing to the peaceful Jerome. It thus relied on a precarious consensus that confessional controversy was undesirable in the first place.

### **'a turbidis lacunis': Leland over Bale**

One of the scholars in Cave's notebook who required careful, selective treatment was the sixteenth-century English writer John Bale. A model of even-handedness was already available to Cave in the preface to John Selden's edition of the medieval historian Eadmer, which he partially transcribed. On one side of Selden's balance-sheet, Bale had played a key role in the revival of true religion in England with his biographies of English writers, even if he had relied

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<sup>55</sup> See Bose, *Schediasma de comparanda Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum* (Jena, 1673), p. 17.

on the work of the true pioneer, John Leland.<sup>56</sup> On the other side, he had attacked papists with excessive ferocity and intemperateness, although he had been castigated in turn by the Roman Catholic historian John Pits, who had, nevertheless, also plagiarised Bale's work.<sup>57</sup> The sharp turns of Selden's prose – neither praise nor blame lasts for long – go some way to highlighting the ironies of immoderate inter-confessional abuse. After these examples of scholarly intemperateness, in a passage that Cave omitted, Selden explained that he would include both Bale's and Pits' descriptions of Eadmer rather than trying to synthesise them, so that 'the even-minded reader' would be able to find a 'temperate balance' between extremes.<sup>58</sup>

Towards the end of his life Cave's attitude towards Bale was less charitable. In 1708 he wrote to the Oxford scholar Anthony Hall to welcome his forthcoming edition of John Leland's *De Viris Illustribus*. The original letter no longer survives but Hall printed an extract from it, with Cave's permission, in the prefatory matter for his edition.<sup>59</sup> Cave complained that it had taken so long for Leland's book to see the light of day, praised the politeness and elegance of its prose, and offered to send over some of his papers to assist Hall in writing his commentary. He then observed that the new edition would finally allow scholars to pass beyond the foul swamps, 'putidas lacunas', of John Bale's bio-bibliographical catalogues and return to the purer springs of Leland's.<sup>60</sup> There was little of Selden's equanimity here. Ironically, Cave sounded much more

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<sup>56</sup> SGCL M.25, p. 28a. For Selden's comments, see *Eadmeri Monachi Cantuariensis Historia Novorum Sive Sui Saeculi Libri VI*, ed. by John Selden (London, 1623), p. 10: 'sub initia rerum sacrarum apud nos superiori saeculo instaurationis, Antistes in *Hibernia Ossoriensis* claruit, & scriptorum *Anglicanorum* vitas, praevia *Ioannis Lelandi* opera maxime demum adiutus collegit'.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid*: 'Sed in *Romanum* Pontificem ejusque omnis fere aevi adsecras infenso ferociter animo & satis intempestive passim invectus, materiem tamen ferme totam Pontificio scriptori [Pitseo] subministravit, ab eo interim haud satis humaniter exceptus'.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*: 'Quae uterque habet de *Eadmero*, malui subijcere, ut medium inde temperatumque libramentum lectori aequo conflatur, quam novi consarcinatoris personam mihi ipsi induere'.

<sup>59</sup> John Leland, *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis*, ed. by Anthony Hall, 2 vols (Oxford, 1709), I, 'Testimonia Quaedam de Joanne Lelando, et ejus Opere De Viris Illustribus' [unpaginated]. Hall's response to Cave, asking for permission to reprint his letter, was published in an English translation in the first volume of William Huddesford, *The Lives of those Eminent Antiquaries John Leland, Thomas Hearne, and Anthony Wood*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1772), I, pp. 104-05.

<sup>60</sup> See Cave's letter in Leland, *Commentarii*, I [unpaginated]: 'Si putidas *Balaei* lacunas tanti aestimamus, tam avidè haurimus, quanto *purius ex ipso fonte bibuntur aequae? Si tanti vitrum, quanti margaritum? ut ore Tertulliano loquar?*'.

like the intemperate Bale. In fact the vocabulary actually was Bale's: in his *Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Scriptorum Summarium* (1548), Bale had remarked on reforming sixteenth-century efforts to take the Church of England away from foul ponds, 'a turbidis lacunis', and towards purer waters.<sup>61</sup>

Leland and Bale have a good claim to be England's first literary historians.<sup>62</sup> But the long and protracted publication history of Leland's catalogue, and Bale's apparently devious role in it, were a source of continual frustration to early-modern scholars. Anthony Hall's *editio princeps* was the very late fruit of more than a century and a half of editorial labour. The main events in this history have recently been recounted in rich detail by James Carley: Leland's travels in the 1530s and 1540s, the mental illness that stopped his work in 1547, John Bale's use of his research in his own *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Brytanniae Catalogus* in the late 1550s, and the steady acquisition of Leland's manuscripts by the Bodleian from the 1630s.<sup>63</sup> By the end of the seventeenth century scholars were convinced that the time had come to finally publish the *De Viris Illustribus*, and several plans were set afoot. The most promising of these centred on the antiquarian Thomas Tanner, who started work in summer 1694 before deciding that, rather than a simple edition of Leland's book, he wanted to produce a union catalogue of English literary history weaving together the work of Leland, Bale, Pits, and the medieval bibliographer Henry de Kirkestede.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> John Bale, *Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Scriptorum, Hoc Est, Angliae, Cambriae, ac Scotiae Summarium, in quasdam centurias divisum* (Wesel, 1548), fol. 239r: 'Quoniam iam denuo resumptis viribus, conatur Anglicum orbem ad pristinam christianae fidei simplicitatem sacris monitis revocare, atque a turbidis lacunis ad vitales illas ac purissimas viventium aquarum scatebras reducere'.

<sup>62</sup> A claim made in Anne Hudson, 'Visio Baleii: An early literary historian', in *The Long Fifteenth Century: Essays for Douglas Gray*, ed. by Helen Cooper and Sally Mapstone (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 313-29; and James Simpson, 'The Melancholy of John Leland and the Beginnings of English Literary History', in *The Oxford English Literary History, Volume 2 1350-1547: Reform and Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 7-33.

<sup>63</sup> John Leland, *De Viris Illustribus = On Famous Men*, ed. by James Carley (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2010), introduction, lii-clvii.

<sup>64</sup> See Richard Sharpe, 'Thomas Tanner, the 1697 Catalogue, and *Bibliotheca Britannica*', *Library*, 6.4 (2005), 381-421.

Cave followed Tanner's progress closely and optimistically from 1695 and over the rest of the decade, keeping his overseas correspondents updated and asking his English ones whether the book had been sent to the press yet.<sup>65</sup> In a letter of 1697 to the Leipzig journalist Otto Mencke he reported excitedly that Tanner would make 'infinite additions' to Leland's book and include a long preface on 'the origin of letters' in England.<sup>66</sup> He also seems to have heard that each chapter of Tanner's book would begin with a dissertation on the major intellectual controversies and the 'state of literature' in the century it covered, much as Cave had done himself in his *Historia Literaria*. But nothing came of this project and Cave and others had to wait until Hall's much less ambitious edition of 1709 to see Leland in print.

The unfairness of Leland's fate, in contrast to the fortunes of his editor and rival Bale, was widely felt in the seventeenth century. But the impatience of scholars like Cave also reflected their sense of a more important contrast between the two historians. Although Leland and Bale have almost always been twinned (then as now), their work reflected strikingly different concerns. James Simpson's distinction between Leland's 'civic and literary' humanism and Bale's heresy-hunting 'radical' Protestantism is a useful shorthand.<sup>67</sup> Leland's catalogue, to begin there, was an Erasmian account of the survival of politeness and literary elegance in times of superstition and ignorance: hence his sympathy for poets, from Caedmon to Chaucer, his reference to Jerome as 'a man of miraculous eloquence and learning', and his glowing description of Robert of Bridlington as a scholar-bee able to extract honey but not poison.<sup>68</sup> In a brief (and famous) reflection on his own practices as a scholar, Leland had emphasised his

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<sup>65</sup> As in his letter to Edward Bernard, dated 24<sup>th</sup> May 1695 and now Bodleian MS Smith 8, p. 127.

<sup>66</sup> Cave's letter to Mencke dated 15<sup>th</sup> March 1697 was printed in *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, VI.2 (1748), pp. 369-70.

<sup>67</sup> Simpson, 'The Melancholy of John Leland', p. 20.

<sup>68</sup> Leland, *De Viris Illustribus*, pp. 342-43 and 728-29; unless otherwise indicated I am quoting from Carley's English translation. Leland addressed commendatory verses to Erasmus, whom he may have met: see James Carley, 'Four Poems in Praise of Erasmus', *Erasmus in English*, 11 (1981), 26-27.

own eclecticism, suggesting that there was no book, however bad, that was absolutely without value.<sup>69</sup>

By contrast, Bale's *Summarium* (1548) and *Catalogus* (1557-59) were vehicles for his anti-Catholicism. His entries thundered against the 'locusts', 'Sodomites', and 'Belials' who he thought had dominated intellectual history for so long. This was clearly an advance rejection of the moderation valued by the members of the seventeenth-century *respublica literaria*. In fact many of the writers celebrated by Bale would only have made it into Cave's notebook as models of bad scholarship: for instance he tended to praise his proto-Protestants for sending letters to the Pope that were 'stinging' (*aculeata*), which is exactly what Simon Episcopus was criticized for being in the letter by Jacob Crusius that Cave copied out into his notebook.<sup>70</sup> Bale's outlook thus had less in common with Leland's than with that of the compilers of the most sustainedly anti-Roman work of historical scholarship in the period, the so-called Magdeburg Centuries. Indeed, Bale had first been contacted in 1553 by one of the scholars involved in the project, and from 1554 to the early 1560s he received occasional requests for help from its instigator, Matthias Flaccius Illyricus, a figure of stereotypical immoderation and confessional excess in the humanist imagination, most notably as Melanchthon's anti-type in Camerarius's biography.<sup>71</sup>

Cave's reference to the foul swamps of Bale's catalogue makes sense in this context. Disparaging remarks of this kind were commonplace in the second half of the seventeenth century. Thomas Fuller famously described him as 'bilious Bale'.<sup>72</sup> Cave's research assistant Henry Wharton complained throughout his career that he was inaccurate, malicious, and more

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<sup>69</sup> Leland, *De Viris Illustribus*, pp. 120-21.

<sup>70</sup> See n. 33 above and Bale, *Summarium*, fols. 97<sup>v</sup> and 106<sup>r</sup>: 'Ad Innocentium Romanum pontificem aculeata dedit scripta [...]'.  
<sup>71</sup> Alexander Alesius's letter contacting Bale, dated 1553, has been printed and translated in Honor McCusker, *John Bale Dramatist and Antiquary* (Bryn Mawr: Pennsylvania, 1942), pp. 68-69. On the links between English scholars like Bale and the Centuriators, see Norman L. Jones, 'Matthew Parker, John Bale, and the Magdeburg Centuriators', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12.3 (1981), 35-49; and Anthony Grafton 'Matthew Parker: The Book as Archive', *History of Humanities*, 2.1 (2017), 15-50. On Flaccius as Melanchthon's anti-type, see Wengert, "'With Friends Like This...'", p. 123.

<sup>72</sup> Thomas Fuller, *The History of the Worthies of England* (London, 1662), p. 220.

interested in his confessional agenda than the truth.<sup>73</sup> As he told Gilbert Burnet, ‘*Bale* is scarcely to be believed when he relateth a matter upon his own knowledge, much less when he delivereth any thing at 1200 Years distance without any Authority’.<sup>74</sup> Wharton also thought, as did almost everyone, that Bale had stolen from Leland, and moreover that Leland’s version of literary history was superior to Bale’s. Yet it was hard to be certain in the absence of a printed edition of the *De Viris Illustribus*. Some scholars were clearly content to wait for it to appear; others actively tried to get it into print; others, like Wharton, visited the Bodleian to inspect Leland’s manuscripts first-hand.<sup>75</sup>

Early in his career Cave had taken a different approach. So far we have not considered any of the entries that he made in his notebook for British writers like King Alfred, Bede, Gildas, Nennius, William Camden, and John Barclay. Many of these were taken from Leland – just not from his *De Viris Illustribus*, which was forty years away from being published. Instead Cave used the commentary written by Leland for his Latin poem *Cygnea Cantio*, first published in 1545 and then again in 1658.<sup>76</sup> An example of what Cave copied out is Leland’s criticism of the historian John Rous – ‘a man of greater diligence than judgment’.<sup>77</sup> He also made an entry for Leland himself, compiling a list of his published and unpublished works from all the separate autobiographical references that Leland had made in this commentary.

In other words, Cave was using the commentary to *Swan Song* as a kind of ersatz *De Viris Illustribus* while the real thing remained unpublished. In several other places in the notebook, even where Cave was no longer copying directly from Leland, he continued to show

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<sup>73</sup> For examples see Henry Wharton, *Anglia Sacra, sive Collectio Historiarum*, 2 vols (London, 1691), I, xv, xxx-xxxi, xlv, xlvii.

<sup>74</sup> Anthony Harmer [Henry Wharton], *A Specimen of Some Errors and Defects in the History of the Reformation of the Church of England* (London, 1693), p. 85.

<sup>75</sup> Wharton made a list of the contents of Leland’s manuscript remains in the Bodleian on a piece of paper, now LPL MS 585, p. 115.

<sup>76</sup> The best study of this poem is James Carley, ‘John Leland’s *Cygnea Cantio*: A Neglected Tudor River Poem’, *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 32 (1983), 225-41.

<sup>77</sup> SGCL M.25, p. 235a: ‘vir majoris longe diligentiae, quam iudicii’. See Leland, *Cygnea Cantio*, pp. 107-08.

a Lelandesque interest in a tradition of English eloquence: this is true for instance of his entries for Shakespeare, Philemon Holland, and Michael Drayton, which were taken from William Dugdale's *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656). What is even more striking is that in three of his entries, Cave copied out exactly the phrases in Leland's commentary that Bale had silently repeated, almost word for word, in his *Summarium*: for instance his judgment that Nennius was a 'not contemptible writer'.<sup>78</sup> It therefore looks like Cave was already doing precisely what he hoped Hall's edition would make possible: going from Bale's derivative, swamp-like catalogues to Leland's purer originals – as if he had firmly chosen Leland over Bale as a model for literary history.

### **'ferociter animo & satis intempestive': Bale over Leland**

Cave may or may not have had thoughts of turning his notes on early-modern scholars into a book, as he did with the annotations on early Christianity that he was entering into his copy of Magri's dictionary at the same time. Either way, his notebook was already reminiscent of several books published recently where critical and biographical remarks about scholars were gathered together into a collection. One was Scévole de Sainte-Marthe's *Elogia* (1602), a later edition of which Cave read and used in his notebook. Another was Clement Barksdale's *Monumenta Litteraria* (1640), which was made up of a series of obituaries lifted from Jacques-Auguste De Thou's *Historia Sui Temporis* (1604-18), widely seen by Protestants as setting a standard for ecumenical, inter-confessional truth-telling in scholarship.<sup>79</sup> A second edition of Barksdale's book was published under a different title in 1671, just as Cave was making his own notes.

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<sup>78</sup> The parallels are as follows. Nennius: 'scriptor non contemnendus' (Cave & Leland, p. 18) & 'Hic non contemnendus autor' (Bale, fol. 37<sup>v</sup>). Geoffrey: 'interpretes historiae figmenta secutus Bladudo – utinam incidisset Gallofridus in historiam probatae fidei' (Cave & Leland, p. 10) & 'Interpres autem Galfridus erat, non fictor historiae, & homo aetate sua tam prosa quam carmine eruditus' (Bale, fol. 84<sup>v</sup>). Gerald: 'vir suo saeculo inter literatos non parvi precii' (Cave & Leland, p. 94) & 'vir suo saeculo inter literatos non parvi precii' (Bale, fol. 93<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>79</sup> For the development of this myth, see Alfred Soman, 'The London Edition of De Thou's History: A Critique of Some Well-Documented Legends', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 24.1 (1971), 1-12. See also Ingrid A. R. De Smet, *Thuanus: The Making of Jacques-Auguste De Thou (1553-1617)* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2006).



Towards the end of the century, finally, Thomas Pope Blount's *Censura Celebriorum Authorum* (1690) offered readers yet another collection of testimonies about ancient and modern writers.<sup>80</sup>

If Cave did not end up publishing a book like Blount's, many of his annotations still found their way into print over the next decade or so. In particular, the notebook's concern for eloquence was reflected in the vernacular biographies of the Church Fathers collected in his *Apostolici* and *Ecclesiastici*. Cave ended most of these lives with a short, often comparative set-piece about their subject's literary style: Augustine was dry, Chrysostom was proverbially golden-tongued but too digressive, Tertullian was harsh and sarcastic, Gregory of Nazianzen grand but florid, Hilary laboured and obscure, Origen clear but capable of lapsing into redundancy. (Only Cyprian and Basil seemed to Cave to possess the fluency, grace, power, softness, and ease of pure eloquence). As Cave acknowledged in the margins, these descriptions were often taken from the prefaces of Erasmus, 'a competent judge of these matters', and almost all of them had started out as annotations in his notebook in the early 1670s.<sup>81</sup>

By 1688 Cave's approach had changed. The Latin entries in the first volume of the *Historia Literaria* still mostly finished with a section on the writer's style. However, Cave no longer used Erasmus's judgments to help him describe the eloquence of Athanasius, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzen, Origen, or Cyprian, although he repeated his critique of Hilary's grandiloquence.<sup>82</sup> Several of the writers Cave had made notes about in the early 1670s resurfaced in his literary history: Alger of Liège, Guitmundus, Cassiodorus, Lucian, Paulinus, and Apollinaris. But Cave neglected to include a description of their style at all, let alone re-use his notes from Erasmus or Julius Caesar Scaliger's *Poetices*. When Cave remembered to discuss style, he preferred to borrow the opinions of late antique Greek scholars like Philostorgius and, especially, the ninth-century Patriarch of Constantinople, Photius.

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<sup>80</sup> The best account of Blount's book is Jackson Williams, 'Canon before Canon', 177-99.

<sup>81</sup> See Cave, *Apostolici*, p. 264.

<sup>82</sup> Cave, *Historia Literaria*, p. 165.

Cave's *Historia Literaria* was a retraction of his interests in the early 1670s in another more profound sense. In 1700 Cave would hear from the German scholar and librarian Ernst Salomon Cyprian that he was planning an improved edition of the Magdeburg Centuries.<sup>83</sup> Writing back to express his delight at the news, Cave reminded his correspondent that he had always admired Flaccius's project. Two years earlier, in the preface to the second part of his literary history, Cave had indeed devoted a long paragraph to it, in which he noted that it was divided into thirteen 'centurias, sive saecula' which dealt with Christian doctrines, councils, scholars, heretics, martyrs, and illustrious men: in other words, Cave thought of it as belonging to the *De Viris Illustribus* genre.<sup>84</sup>

This method of arranging ecclesiastical history into centuries was by no means natural or traditional. As Harald Bollbuck has shown, the compilers took several years and as many quarrels to settle on it.<sup>85</sup> Bale's *Summarium* and *Catalogum* were divided up into *centuriae* but, misleadingly, these were groups of a hundred writers each, not periods of a hundred years. So when Cave organised his literary history into century-long *saecula*, as he did, he was almost certainly imitating the practice of the Centuriators: that he named these centuries after various ancient and modern heresies is further proof of his new commitment to their heresiological attitude to history. In the preface to his *Historiae Literariae Pars Altera* (1698) Cave admitted that the vigorous anti-Catholicism of Flaccius and his team had caused them to make mistakes, using Basil's image, a favourite of controversial apologetic at this time, of a gardener trying to straighten a crooked tree but ending up bending it too far in the opposite direction in his over-eagerness to correct it.<sup>86</sup> Yet he also recorded, with obvious pleasure, the impact of the

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<sup>83</sup> Cave's letter to Cyprian dated 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1700 is now in the Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Nachlass Cyprian, Chart. A.422, pp. 18-19.

<sup>84</sup> Cave, *Pars Altera*, iii.

<sup>85</sup> Harald Bollbuck, *Wahrheitszeugnis, Gottes Auftrag und Zeitkritik: Die Kirchengeschichte der Magdeburger Zenturien und ihre Arbeitstechniken* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2014), pp. 281-302.

<sup>86</sup> Cave, *Pars Altera*, iii: 'Inesse labes & naevos, multa omissa, peccata multa, deprehendi etiam quandoque in ipsis Conditoribus nimiam affectuum indulgentiam, & ἀμετρίαν τῆς ἀνθορκῆς, nec negari potest, nec debet dissimulari'. For seventeenth-century use of the simile, see Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England*, p. 65.

Magdeburg Centuries in Rome, whose inhabitants had feared that Hannibal was at their gates again, this time to deprive them of their superstitions, frauds, impostures, and corruption.<sup>87</sup> It could no longer have been clear to Cave that men like Flaccius and Bale were models of bad scholarship, if this was their effect.

### **‘impotens animi’: Leo Allatius, a new Jerome**

In 1691 the Oxford scholar Arthur Charlett wrote to the Nonjuror Abednego Seller to get advice about his plan to bring out a new edition of Plutarch’s *Περὶ παίδων ἀγωγῆς*, *On Educating Children*.<sup>88</sup> Seller had been a confidante of Cave’s since 1680, when he sent him a copy of a book that he had recently written defending Cave against an attack on his scholarship by the nonconformist Jonathan Hanmer.<sup>89</sup> His response to Charlett, a formidable survey of ancient and early-modern Greek education manuals, caused his correspondent to shift tack slightly and publish an edition of Plutarch’s *How to Study Poetry* with St Basil’s *On Reading Pagan Books* instead, with assistance from the young scholar John Potter.<sup>90</sup> This edition was obviously part of a new philhellenism in English scholarship, perhaps culminating in Pope’s translations of Homer (1715-26), but it also helps us to discover some of the reasons why men like Cave and Seller, as well as others in their clerical milieu, had begun to lose confidence in the ideals of Erasmian Latin humanism.

Seller answered Charlett’s request with a barrage of bibliographical facts, providing a long annotated list of Greek educational books with details of their modern editions. He started

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<sup>87</sup> Cave, *Pars Altera*, iii-iv: ‘Vix dum publici juris factae sunt priores Centuriarum partes, cum tota commovebatur Roma, & tanquam Hannibal ad portas, tota contremuit. Videbant aulae Romanae proceres, Ecclesiae suae fraudes & imposturas, superstitiones & corruptelas, nova placita pro antiquis venditata, in hoc opere ubique detegi, & denudari, nullique jam non constare, praesentem Ecclesiae Romanae faciem tantum a primaeva illa & Apostolica distare, ὅσον οὐρανός ἐστ’ ἀπὸ γαίης’.

<sup>88</sup> Charlett’s letter has not survived but Seller’s response dated 19<sup>th</sup> September 1691 is now Bodleian MS Ballard 35, no. 36.

<sup>89</sup> See Abednego Seller, *Remarques Relating to the State of the Church of the First Centuries* (London, 1680). Cave’s copy with a handwritten inscription by Seller is now SGCL S.194.

<sup>90</sup> ΠΛΟΥΤΑΡΧΟΙ ΧΑΙΡΩΝΕΩΣ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ Πῶς δεῖ τὸν Ποιημάτων ἀκούειν. Καὶ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΙ ΟΜΙΛΙΑ ΠΡΟΣ ΝΕΟΥΣ Ὅπως ἂν ἐξ Ἑλληνικῶν ὠφελοῖντο λόγων, ed. by John Potter (Oxford, 1694).

with Plutarch's *De Liberis Educandis* and *De Audiendis Poetis*.<sup>91</sup> The only other comparable classical Greek works that he could remember, he said, were Isocrates' *Oratio ad Nicoclem* and *Praecepta ad Demonicum*, but Charlett should consider including St Basil's *Sermo ad Adolescentes de Legendis Libris Gentilium* in his edition of Plutarch, 'that excellent Heathen moralist'. Seller then went on to mention Chrysostom's *De Educandis Liberis*, as well as a set of late antique and early medieval Byzantine handbooks about training princes by Agapetus the Deacon, Theophylact of Ohrid, and Manuel II Palaeologus. Then he indicated a pair of Western manuals that would furnish useful notes for Charlett's commentary: Maffeo Vegio's *De Educatione Liberorum* (1491) and Philippe D'Outremann's *Paedagogus Christiannus* (1629).

Seller's interest in these books was not unusual. In the past thirty years, Chrysostom's tract had been translated into English by John Evelyn (1659), there had been a London edition of Isocrates' orations to Demonicus and Nicocles in 1676 with two subsequent revised versions nearer the end of the decade, and Hugo Grotius's edition of Plutarch's tract on studying poetry, published in 1623, was still well-known. The Byzantine handbooks were probably less readily available or accessible: a reader would have had to consult the 1651 Paris edition of Theophylact's entire works, for instance, if he wanted to find the text of the Παιδεία Βασιλική. So a new collection of all of these manuals in one place would probably have proved interesting and useful to Seller's contemporaries. Probably to make the edition easier to consult, Seller suggested to Charlett that it be divided up into two volumes: one for Plutarch, Isocrates, and Basil, and another for Chrysostom and the Byzantine texts.

Probably, but not only: because Seller seems to have had another agenda to pursue here. In thematic terms, the way of arranging the treatises that he recommended to Charlett was hardly the most convenient. Chrysostom's tract belongs more naturally with Plutarch's and

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<sup>91</sup> For an introduction to Plutarch's tract on studying poetry, see Plutarch, *How to Study Poetry* (*De Audiendis Poetis*), ed. by Richard Hunter and Donald Russell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Basil's discussions of poetry, and Plutarch's *On Educating Children* fits just as well with the other accounts of how to train up young men. But the division starts to make more sense if we consider what they have to say about how to read bad books. The works by Plutarch, Basil, and Isocrates collected in the first volume, for instance, are all relatively sanguine about the risks posed to young readers by godless, immoral, and heretical books. The obvious sign that they share the same attitude is that they all describe how boys should study by comparing the ideal reader to a bee gathering honey from flowers while skillfully avoiding thorns and toxins.<sup>92</sup> The treatises in the second volume, on the other hand, view dangerous writings and performances as inevitably corrupting for young men unless they shun them entirely. As Chrysostom put it, 'he which doth not heare filthy and wicked things, does not likely speak wicked things'. According to Manuel II Paleologus, 'it is impossible to draw clean water from a dirty spring'.<sup>93</sup>

If Charlett had taken Seller's advice, then, the first volume of his book would have been a summary of a classic humanist method of reading. Recent scholarship should have made us wary of using the technical term 'eclectic' too loosely, but as an ideal this method had its roots in pagan and Christianity antiquity. Jerome had played an influential role in its cultivation, adapting St Paul's exhortation 'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good' into a motto for his practice of making use of Origen's considerable erudition without being contaminated by his heterodoxy.<sup>94</sup> Erasmus had helped to generalise it with translations of Plutarch's tracts, written while he was in Cambridge in 1511 and 1512, and of Isocrates' *Ad Nicoclem*, which he

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<sup>92</sup> See Plutarch, *How to Study Poetry*, p. 61; *S. P. N. Basilii Opera Omnia Quae Exstant*, ed. by J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, XXIX-XXXII (Paris, 1857), III (1857) p. 569; and Isocrates, *Orationes Duae: 1. Ad Demonicum. 2. Ad Nicoclem*, 3rd edn (London, 1680), p. 61.

<sup>93</sup> Chrysostom, *The Golden Book of St John Chrysostom, Concerning the Education of Children*, trans. by John Evelyn (London, 1659), p. 24; and *Imp. Caes. Manuelis Palaeologi Aug. Praecepta educationis regiae, ad Ioannem filium*, ed. by Johannes Löwenklau (Basel, 1578), p. 101: 'nam aquam e fonte non hauries aliam, quam cuiusmodi semper ex eo promanat' (my translation above is deliberately loose).

<sup>94</sup> For criticism of work loosely applying the term 'eclecticism', see Ulrich Schneider, 'Eclecticism and the History of Philosophy', in *History and the Disciplines: The Reclassification of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Donald R. Kelley (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 1997), pp. 83-101; and Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom*, p. 6. On Jerome's 'eclecticism', see Michael Albrecht, *Eklektik. Eine Begriffsgeschichte mit Hinweisen auf die Philosophie- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1994), pp. 64-68.

had attached to his handbook of princely education, the *Institutio principis* (1516).<sup>95</sup> Cave would have encountered it in the commonplace book that he inherited in 1658, where his father had copied out a passage from Jeremias Drexelius's *Aurifodina* (1641) celebrating 'the little bee flying around Hybla' as a figure for the diligent note-taker.<sup>96</sup>

The second volume, however, would have offered a critique of this Erasmianism. As Seller knew or was shortly to learn, its attitude of suspicion towards certain kinds of book had a long history. At some point in his career, either before or after his letter to Charlett, Seller used the paste-down and blank leaves at the front of his copy of Gerard Vossius's *De Poetis Graecis et Latinis*, first published in 1654, to gather almost a hundred quotations, often in abbreviated form, about ancient Greek poets and poetry.<sup>97</sup> Some of these were relatively neutral, reflecting an antiquarian interest in the origins of Greek literary forms shared by Richard Bentley and others scholars of their generation: examples are his notes about the ancient Agathyrsi putting their laws into verse to make them easier to remember, and about who the first comic poets were.<sup>98</sup> But most of them were much more value-laden. For instance, Seller made a note of passages in Philostratus's letters and his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, Horace's *Ars Poetica*, Sextus Empiricus's *Adversus Mathematicos*, and John Malelas's *Chronicle* suggesting that poets were fabulists, that they had license to write and do whatever they pleased, that they were a demonic race, that their natural audience was drunkards, lovers, and brawlers, and that they were like bees gathering in swarms and expecting sweet treats in return for their labour.<sup>99</sup> He also copied

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<sup>95</sup> For Erasmus's interest in Plutarch and Isocrates, see Erika Rummel, *Erasmus as a Translator of the Classics* (Toronto, Buffalo, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1985), pp. 71-88 and 103-08; and Otto Herding, 'Isokrates, Erasmus und die Institutio principis christiani', in *Dauer und Wandel der Geschichte. Aspekte Europäischer Vergangenheit. Festgabe für Kurt von Raumer Zum 15. Dezember 1965*, ed. by Rudolf Vierhaus and Manfred Botzenhart (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1966), pp. 101-43.

<sup>96</sup> SGCL C.526, p. 135. See Drexelius, *Aurifodina*, p. 78: 'Apiculam intueri in Hybla volitantem [...]'.  
<sup>97</sup> Seller's copy is now Cambridge University Library Adv.d.44.1.

<sup>98</sup> These notes are: 'Agathyrsi, tempore Platonis, leges in cantilenas mutarunt, ne rustici earum obliviscerentur' and 'Poetae primi Comici fuerunt Susarion, Mullus, et Magnes'.

<sup>99</sup> Richard Bentley had suggested that Malelas meant ἀρμονικοῖς, musical, rather than δαιμονικοῖς; see 'Joanni Millio, S.T.P. Richardus Benteius', in *Joannis Antiocheni Cognomento Malalae Historia Chronica*, ed. by Humphrey Hody (Oxford, 1691), pp. 1-98 (p. 44).

out a phrase from the letters of Photius of Constantinople as well as Richard Montague's translation in his 1651 edition: 'τὸ ποιητῶν αὐτόνομον ἔθνος' (the autonomous race of poets), 'exlex et sui juris natio' (outlaws, beholden to no nation).<sup>100</sup>

In a way, all that Seller was doing in his copy of Vossius's book was trying out the same critical vocabulary that had interested Cave in the early 1670s: fables, licence, eloquence, springs, bees. Several of his annotations would not have looked out of place in Cave's notebook, like his reference to a passage in a seventeenth-century history describing Arabic scholars as skilled in chronology but liable to fill their work with fables and superstitions.<sup>101</sup> For the young Cave, however, fabling and excessive inventiveness had simply been bad scholarly practices in contrast to commendable ones like stylishness and open-mindedness. This contrast, Seller was discovering in his studies of Greek literary history, was not always a stable one. In the fragments of criticism that he gathered up, eloquence and eclecticism were often represented as the causes of heresy and error, not their antidote or opposite. Take the phrase he lifted from Isaac Vossius's book about Ignatius's letters (1680), 'a poetis sua hausisse Valentinianos', which itself was based on Epiphanius's suggestion that the Gnostics drew their heresies from ancient Greek poets, whose 'fables were the cause of all sectarianism': this was clearly a damaging insight for humanist theories of reading and rhetoric.<sup>102</sup>

So what had happened to the Erasmian ideal? One answer might be that the seventeenth century had already seen it travestied. In 1633 a book had been published in Rome with the title

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<sup>100</sup> Photii, *Sanctissimi Patriarchae Constantinopolitani Epistolae*, ed. by Richard Montagu (London, 1651), no. 209, p. 306. For a discussion of Photius's attitude to reading pagan poets as expressed in this letter, see Oscar Prieto Domínguez, 'On the Founder of the Skripou Church', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, 53 (2013), 166-91.

<sup>101</sup> 'Historiarum quoque, & Chronologiae haud ignari erant, tametsi antiquorum omnium more illas fabulis aliquando, & superstitionibus temperarent, quia ut plurimum a Poetis historiae huiusmodi conscribebantur': see Abraham Echellensis, *Chronicon Orientale. Cui accessit eiusdem Supplementum Historiae Orientalis* (Paris, 1651), p. 162.

<sup>102</sup> *S. Ignatii Martyris Epistolae Genuinae Ex Bibliotheca Florentina*, ed. by Isaac Vossius, 2nd edn (London, 1680), p. 279: 'Hinc est, quod Epiphanius, agens de illis Gnosticis, qui ante Valentinum fuere, dixerit, Graecos Poetas, eorumque fabulas, occasionem omnibus sectis dedisse'.

*Apes Urbanae*, ‘Urban Bees’. Its author was the Roman Catholic librarian Leo Allatius.<sup>103</sup> Allatius, born on the island of Chios, was an archetype for many Englishmen of what Thomas Smith called the ‘Latinizing Greeks’ or what Seller, in another letter to Charlett, called the ‘Graeculus esuriens’, the hungry little Greek who would say anything to get paid and fed, whether his current employers were Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans, or Roman Catholics.<sup>104</sup> At any rate, Allatius was the pre-eminent scholar of the Eastern Church in Rome at a time when vast amounts of energy, erudition, and money were being spent under the auspices of Cardinal Francesco Barberini and his uncle Pope Urban VIII on settling the problem of their confession’s relation to Greek Orthodoxy. Allatius’s book memorialised this culture of scholarship in bio-bibliographical form, as its subtitle indicated: *De Viris Illustribus, qui ab Anno MDCXXX, per totum MDCXXXII Romae adierunt*.<sup>105</sup>

Bees were an appropriate choice of symbol for Allatius’s book. Its title page grandly displayed the Barberini family coat-of-arms, depicting three bees in a pendant, an emblem playing on the idea that the scholars catalogued in it were Pope Urban’s bees, as well as city-dwelling ones.<sup>106</sup> Early-moderns would also have remembered the classical association of bees with sociability, harmony, and productivity, as in Virgil’s *Georgics*.<sup>107</sup> But Allatius also weaponised the image. In the dedicatory letter to Antonio Barberini, another of the Pope’s nephews, he

<sup>103</sup> For a quick sketch of Allatius’s career, see Karen Hartnup, ‘On the Beliefs of the Greeks’. *Leo Allatius and Popular Orthodoxy* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), pp. 53-74.

<sup>104</sup> Seller’s letter to Charlett dated 1688 is now Bodleian Library MS Ballard 35, no. 27. The phrase was originally Juvenal’s. For Smith’s phrase, see his *An Account of the Greek Church, as to Its Doctrine and Rites of Worship* (London, 1680), ‘To the Reader’, sig. a6<sup>r</sup>. An excellent account of Greek scholarship in Rome in this period is Ingo Herklotz, *Die Academia Basiliana: Griechische Philologie, Kirchengeschichte und Unionsbemühungen im Rom der Barberini* (Rome, Freiburg, Vienna: Herder, 2008).

<sup>105</sup> Leo Allatius, *Apes Urbanae, sive De Viris Illustribus qui ab Anno MDCXXX, per totum MDCXXXII Romae adierunt, ac Typis aliquid evulgarunt* (Rome, 1633).

<sup>106</sup> On the Barberini crest, see Jérôme Delatour, ‘Abeilles thuanniennes et barberines: les relations des savants français avec les Barberini sous le pontificat d’Urbain VIII’, in *I Barberini E La Cultura Europea Del Seicento*, ed. by Lorenza Mochi Onori, Sebastian Schütze, and Francesco Solinas (Rome: De Luca Editore D’Arte, 2007), pp. 155-72 (pp. 158-59).

<sup>107</sup> See Heather James, ‘The First English Printed Commonplace Books and the Rise of the Common Reader’, in *Formal Matters: Reading the Materials of English Renaissance Literature*, ed. by Allison K. Deutermann and Andras Kisery (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 15-33 (p. 21): ‘The society of bees proposed the utopian image of social harmony and cultural productivity’.



described Rome as a place where ‘letters and virtues’ had flourished while the rest of Europe, separated from communion with it, had suffered war and plague. He then likened Rome’s scholars to bees protecting their king. The Pope, Allatius said, was stingless, armed only with majesty: ‘maiestate, non aculeo armatum’.<sup>108</sup> Of course it was impossible to miss the implication that his scholar-bees would not hesitate to use their stings against aggressors, even as they gathered honey – Roman Catholic propaganda – from their studies of ancient writings. Two idioms therefore met in Allatius’s book: the languages of confessional warfare and classical humanism. What is more, they did not appear so different after all.

Allatius’s publications aroused predictable hostility in England, and several scholars contemplated refuting him in print. Seller asked Charlett in 1688 if any Protestants had ‘purposely undertook’ his study of the consensus between Eastern and Western views on Purgatory (1655).<sup>109</sup> His friend Thomas Smith, for his part, planned to respond to Allatius’s criticisms of Robert Creighton’s *Vera Historia Unionis inter Graecos et Latinos* (1660).<sup>110</sup> Cave was no less alarmed by the implications of Allatius’s work. When he heard of Smith’s plans, he quickly promised his assistance, offering to send over his set of Allatiana or at least summaries or transcriptions of the relevant parts. This collection was considerable: Cave owned copies of his *De Ecclesiae Occidentalis & Orientalis perpetua Consensione* (1648) and *De Purgatorio* (1655), his study of Greek liturgical books (1646) and ecclesiastical architecture (1645), his attempt to debunk the Photian Synod (1662), and his *H. Hottingerus Fraudis & Imposturae Manifestae Convictus* (1661).<sup>111</sup> He also possessed copies of Protestant responses to Allatius by Elias Veiel and Johann Heinrich Hottinger, as he told Smith.

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<sup>108</sup> Allatius, *Apes Urbanae*, sig. A2<sup>v</sup>: ‘Regem summum, maiestate, non aculeo armatum, cingunt, ac protegunt; assiduiq; custodes invigilant; & alius alij incumbens operi, mella sapientiae conficiunt’.

<sup>109</sup> Seller’s letter to Charlett dated 8<sup>th</sup> October 1688 is now Bodleian MS Ballard 35, no. 29.

<sup>110</sup> See Cave’s letter to Smith dated 19<sup>th</sup> June 1675, now Bodleian MS Smith 46, p. 191.

<sup>111</sup> *ibid.* There are copies of all these books in the library of St George’s Chapter, Windsor.

None of these refutations materialised, although the list of Greek liturgical books printed as an appendix to the second volume of the *Historia Literaria* was clearly an English response to Allatius's *De Libris Ecclesiasticis Graecorum* (1645).<sup>112</sup> Even so, Cave's career was shaped profoundly by the problems that Allatius left him with. The scholar from Chios was a new Jerome, Jerome *redivivus*: in a letter to Smith Cave tellingly characterised him with the same expression that he would use for Jerome in the *Historia Literaria*, 'impotens animi'.<sup>113</sup> Here was yet more proof, if any was needed, that erudition was not simply the preserve of polite, transconfessional men of letters.

But Allatius could not just be written off as a renegade, added to the list of pariah scholars like John Bale and Simon Episcopius who never stopped trying to sting their opponents. Just as Bale's victories against Rome showed the limitations or the inertia of Leland's politeness in contexts where controversy was needed, so Allatius's use of the *De Viris Illustribus* seemed to suggest that eclecticism, eloquence, and moderation were already impolite and militarised, just in ways that were harder to detect. From this perspective, the calm Jerome of the *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* and the hot-headed Jerome in evidence elsewhere in his writings represented not so much a contrast between fundamentally different mentalities as a tactical distinction giving him, and others after him, the opportunity to rest or hide their animosities temporarily so that they could erupt more violently later on. Protestants who wrote *historia literaria* were therefore (if we follow out this logic) victims of Roman Catholic rhetoric, tricked into recycling a form that always served confessional purposes and was inescapably Roman or

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<sup>112</sup> Cave had help from Thomas Tenison: see his letter to John Postlethwayt dated 21<sup>st</sup> October 1695, now Bodleian MS Tanner 24, p. 66. There is a set of papers in Tenison's hand at Lambeth, MS 952, no. 103, 8ff, headed 'A Collection of Greeke Liturgys & Liturgic Authors of y<sup>e</sup> Greeke Church in St Martyns Library in 38 Vols' – this might be what Tenison sent Cave.

<sup>113</sup> Bodleian MS Smith 46, p. 191: 'Librum istum Allatii (viri sane doctissimi, sed petulantis nimium & impotentis animi) olim perlegi, & immodestiam ejus & convitia non sine stomacho ubique deprehendi'.

Jeromanesque, to use Mark Vessey's expression.<sup>114</sup> Cave's solution was to find an alternative form of literary history in the work of one of Allatius's nemeses: Photius of Constantinople.

### **'scelestissimus mortalium': Photius before Jerome**

According to Cave, Photius was the most learned Greek of all time: as a scholar and ecclesiastic he was so epoche-making that an entire age of literary history was named after him in Cave's book, becoming the 'Saeculum Photianum'.<sup>115</sup> But no one could have mistaken him for an ecumenical man of letters. As Francis Dvornik pointed out in his groundbreaking book *The Photian Schism* (1948), his reputation was intensely confessionalized in the seventeenth century.<sup>116</sup> For Protestants he belonged to a tradition of legitimate resistance to papal interference in the affairs of ecclesiastical sees outside Rome's jurisdiction, having been ejected from the patriarchate at the behest of a synod in Rome in 869-70 and then recalled by the Council of Constantinople ten years later. Roman Catholics like Baronius painted him as a heretical mischief-maker, relying on a set of hostile near-contemporary sources written by Photius's opponents. The most strenuous or extreme assault on his reputation was Allatius's *De Octavo Synodo Photiana* (1662), which argued that the so-called 'Photian Synod' reinstating him in 879-80 had never actually taken place; Cave wrote of this book that it was another example of a papist trying to sting Photius to death.<sup>117</sup>

Despite their animus against him, Roman Catholics had not relinquished their claim on his writings, particularly his major work of scholarship, an annotated bio-bibliography addressed to his brother Tarasius.<sup>118</sup> Much to the distress of Protestant scholars, the most successful

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<sup>114</sup> Mark Vessey, 'Jerome and the *Jeromanesque*', in *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings, and Legacy*, ed. by Josef Lössl and Andrew Cain (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 225-35.

<sup>115</sup> Cave, *Historia Literaria*, xxv: 'Photium, quo doctiorem forsan nusquam tulit ingeniorum ferax Graecia [...]'.  
<sup>116</sup> Francis Dvornik, *The Photian Schism: History and Legend* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948).

<sup>117</sup> Cave, *Pars Altera*, p. 306: 'Obtortis oculis hanc Synodum intuentur, mille conviciis proscindunt, mille spiculis configunt, Scriptores Pontificii'.

<sup>118</sup> The context for this book is described in *The Bibliotheca: A Selection*, ed. by N. G. Wilson (London: Duckworth, 1994), introduction, and Warren T. Treadgold, *The Nature of the Bibliotheca of Photius* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1980).

edition of the *Bibliotheca* was the version of 1611, reprinted again in 1653, where the Greek text was faced with an avowedly ‘Romanising’ Latin translation by Andreas Schott.<sup>119</sup> Photius, Schott said in his preface, was ‘the most wicked of men’ but his book was still worth reading because it was written before he began to wage war on Rome – in fact he even praised a selection of Popes in it – and before he had developed his heterodox views about the procession of the Holy Spirit.<sup>120</sup> In any case, as Schott put it, we still find uses for books written by enemies to Christianity like Porphyry, Lucian, Eunapius and Zosimus – so why not for Photius’s books too?<sup>121</sup>

Unsurprisingly, Protestant authors reacted with alarm to this portrayal of Photius. The Huguenot refugee Paul Colomiès, in a book dedicated to Cave, compared Schott to two of Photius’s harshest ancient and modern critics, Ignatius of Constantinople and Baronius, echoing a famous remark made earlier in the century in a letter to Joseph Scaliger.<sup>122</sup> John Pearson filled his copy of the 1653 Rouen edition with underlinings keyed to indignant comments in the margin about Schott’s translation.<sup>123</sup> Cave’s response was much more sophisticated: to reclaim Photius by Englishing the *Bibliotheca*, or (to put it another way) by re-Greeking literary history.

There was a wider context here. Throughout the seventeenth century English interest in the Greek Church had gradually risen. In Cave’s day travellers in the Levant like Paul Rycaut

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<sup>119</sup> See Schott’s remarks in the preface to *Myriobiblon sive Bibliotheca Librorum Quos Legit et Censuit Photius Patriarcha Constantinopolitanus* (Rouen, 1653), sig. ē2<sup>r</sup>: ‘Ad stylum quod attinet, qui in Photio pro re nata varius exsistit, equidem sic temperavi, ut terso castoque sermone Latino, hoc est, Romane, si possem, dicerem, sensaque mentis perspicue repraesentarem’.

<sup>120</sup> *Myriobiblon*, sig. ē3<sup>v</sup>: ‘Demus scelestissimum mortalium Photium exstisise [...]’.

<sup>121</sup> *Myriobiblon*, sig. ē3<sup>v</sup>: ‘quae, obsecro, invidia sit repudiare omnino, ac reicere, & ne digito quidem tangere velle, cum acerrimos fidei Christianae perduelles Porphyrium, Lucianum, Eunapium, & Zosimum legamus’.

<sup>122</sup> Paul Colomiès, *Ad Guiliemi Cave Canonici Windesoriensis Chartophylacem Ecclesiasticum Paralipomena* (London, 1686), p. 28: ‘In hac dein versione fere passim vel Ignatianum vel Baronianum se prodit’. See Jacques Gillot’s remark in a letter to Joseph Scaliger dated 1606 and printed in *The Correspondence of Joseph Justus Scaliger. Volume VI: May 1605 to December 1606*, ed. by Paul Botley and Dirk van Miert (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2012), p. 502: ‘Schottus a tourné Phocius, et a voulu que l’on aye tesmoin qu’il est Ignatien et Baronien’. The editors of the correspondence suggest wrongly that Gillot was comparing Schott to Ignatius of Loyola.

<sup>123</sup> This copy is now Cambridge University Library Adv.a.41.3: see pp. 249–50.

and Isaac Basire de Preaumont brought back largely encouraging reports about the similarities between Orthodox and Church of England practices.<sup>124</sup> Enthusiasm about Greek-English affinities led the bishop of London Henry Compton to support proposals for a church to be built for the Greek expatriate community in the city, with work beginning in 1677 once funds had been raised by Joseph Georgirines, the itinerant former archbishop of Samos and Ikaria.<sup>125</sup> Then in 1698 a group of Greek students arrived in Oxford to study at a “Greek College” at Gloucester Hall, although most of them quickly left.<sup>126</sup>

For the most part Cave was an approving but cautious observer of these events. His most substantial contribution in practical terms – one which nevertheless shows how actively he was interested in the project – was encouraging his friend Thomas Smith to bring to the press his research on the Greek Church. Cave was recommended to Smith by their mutual acquaintance Henry Dodwell in April 1675 as ‘a wellwisher to those studyes’. A few months later he wrote to Smith urging him to draw on his experience as a chaplain in Constantinople between 1668 and 1671 to write a comprehensive account of the institutions of the Greek Church.<sup>127</sup> Smith offered to surrender his notes to Cave for him to finish the book instead, but Cave and Dodwell gradually managed to nudge him towards publication and the *De Graecae Ecclesiae Hodierno Statu Epistola* was printed in 1676, with an English translation appearing four years later.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> See Judith Pinnington, *Anglicans and Orthodox: Unity and Subversion 1559-1725* (Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2003), pp. 51-73.

<sup>125</sup> For accounts of the Greek Church in London, see John Penrose Barron, *From Samos to Sobor: The Unorthodox Life of Joseph Georgirines, a Greek Archbishop* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2017), pp. 147-217; and Charles Miller, ‘Educating the English: Dr Thomas Smith and the Study of Orthodoxy in the Seventeenth Century’, in *Anglicanism and Orthodoxy 300 Years after the ‘Greek College’ in Oxford*, ed. by Peter M. Doll (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 113-32.

<sup>126</sup> See Pinnington, *Anglicans and Orthodox*, pp. 100-01.

<sup>127</sup> Cave to Smith, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1675, now Bodleian MS Smith 46, pp. 189-90. See also Henry Dodwell’s letter to Smith dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 1675, now MS Smith 49, p. 115.

<sup>128</sup> Cave to Smith, 19<sup>th</sup> June 1675, now MS Smith 46, pp. 191-92.

Playing a supporting role was probably not what Cave had originally wanted for himself. At different points in his career Cave contemplated writing at least three separate studies of the Greek Church. Dodwell introduced him to Smith by saying that he had hoped to write a continuation of Martinus Crusius's *Turco-graeciae libri octo* (1584), a Lutheran history of Eastern religion up to the late sixteenth century.<sup>129</sup> Cave himself mentioned another ambition that he had had to relinquish, a book about the patriarchs and synods of Constantinople, after realising that he lacked access to the relevant sources.<sup>130</sup> A year later he spoke hopefully of another project which was also destined never to appear, telling Smith that he had discussed with Dodwell an edition of some 'scarce & rare' Greek tracts: Christophoros Angelos's *Enchiridion de Institutis Graecorum*, first printed in a bilingual version in Cambridge in 1619; Metrophanes Kritopoulos's *Confessio catholicae et apostolicae in Oriente Ecclesiae*, written at Helmstedt in the mid-1620s and printed there in 1661; and Petrus Mogilas's *ὀρθόδοξος ὁμολογία*, printed in 1666 in Amsterdam.<sup>131</sup> He also suggested that he would ask 'the present Bishop of Samos', in other words Joseph Georgirines, to contribute something to the volume.

Cave was clearly interested in books of this kind: Eastern scholarship aimed at Western audiences. As the years wore on, he was not easily dissuaded from his vision of publishing a sample of them. When Smith sent him a copy of the revised edition of his book on the Greek Church in 1698, he answered that he had missed an opportunity to include, as an appendix, a recent tract 'concerning the methods the Jesuits make use of to corrupt & undermine the Greeke Church', a reference to a book by the former Patriarch of Jerusalem, Nectarius, which had caused a ripple of interest in England when it had first been printed in Iași, in present-day

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<sup>129</sup> Dodwell to Smith, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1675.

<sup>130</sup> Cave to Smith, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1675.

<sup>131</sup> Cave to Smith, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1676, now Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 71. A useful prosopographical study of some of the Greek scholars mentioned by Cave is Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft 1453-1821: Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfession des Westens* (München: Beck, 1988): see especially pp. 102-07, 219-29, and 229-36.

Romania, in 1682.<sup>132</sup> At least two copies had made their way into the country: one into William Sancroft's hands and the other into Edward Stillingfleet's.<sup>133</sup> Henry Wharton inspected the copy at Lambeth and noted approvingly that it exposed the arrogance, frauds, heresies, and corruptions of the papacy.<sup>134</sup> Cave meanwhile borrowed Stillingfleet's copy and lent it to Abednego Seller, 'whom I had put upon making a collection of matters of that nature'.<sup>135</sup>

Cave's interest in using Orthodox resources to undermine Roman Catholicism therefore ran like a thread through his whole career. A combination of circumstances prevented him from adding directly to existing scholarship on the modern-day Greek Church. But in another sense Cave succeeded in finding a last-minute alliance between Greek and English traditions where an English surrender to Rome looked inevitable: by recovering Photius as an alternative to Jerome. At first glance this looks like a futile or self-defeating task. In the early-modern period, as among modern historians of bibliography, the tendency was to assume that Jerome and Photius were working in the same scholarly tradition and with the same forms.<sup>136</sup> The fact that the version of Photius's *Bibliotheca* currently in circulation was Roman, and the equally unavoidable evidence that he had borrowed from Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus*, made this genealogy more plausible.

Yet there was also a solution hidden away within the second of those facts: the possibility that Photius was reading not Jerome's Latin catalogue, but a contemporary Greek translation of it. This was an exciting insight for scholars in Cave's day, who proved eager to point it out. In the margins of his copy of the *Bibliotheca*, for instance, John Pearson indicated

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<sup>132</sup> Cave to Smith, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1698, now Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 81.

<sup>133</sup> See Abednego Seller's letter to Arthur Charlett, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1689, now Bodleian MS Ballard 35, no. 31.

<sup>134</sup> Wharton's notes are in LPL MS 586. Sancroft's copy was probably what is now LPL H1806.N3.

<sup>135</sup> Cave to Smith, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1698. See Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*, pp. 244-48, for a biography of Nectarius. For the printing of Nectarius's works in Romania, see Norman Russell, 'From the "Shield of Orthodoxy" to the "Tome of Joy": The Anti-Western Stance of Dositheos II of Jerusalem (1641-1707)', in *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, ed. by George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), pp. 71-82.

<sup>136</sup> See Rudolf Blum, *Bibliographia: An Inquiry into its Definitions and Designations*, trans. by Mathilde V. Rovelstad (Folkestone: William Dawson and Sons, 1980).

that Photius had got his information ‘ex Sophronio interprete Hieronymi’.<sup>137</sup> Cave also pointed this out, using it in his *Apostolici* to explain why Photius and Jerome had different opinions about who had paid for Origen’s sermons to be transcribed. (Cave’s incredibly tortuous explanation seems to be that Jerome did not think about what he was copying from Eusebius, Sophronius made his translation more ambiguous than it needed to be, and then Photius was misled by his ambiguity).<sup>138</sup> These exercises in source-hunting might easily look trivial, pedantic, and hardly likely to get Cave out of his bind: did it really matter *how* Photius was reading Jerome, as long as the fact was indisputable *that* he was reading him? Perhaps: but appealing to Sophronius’s translation instead of Jerome’s original was not an unusual step in seventeenth-century England. However contradictory it seems, it was perfectly possible in this period to treat Sophronius not simply as Jerome’s translator but effectively as an independent witness to the same events or facts.

This was a tactic Pearson deployed in his *Vindiciae Epistolarum S. Ignatii* (1672). In the sixth chapter, for instance, he confronted one of Jean Daillé’s arguments for why Ignatius’s letters were a later forgery. Daillé had complained that a passage apparently quoted from his correspondence by Eusebius and Jerome could not have come from a letter actually written by Ignatius. In the passage in question, ‘Ignatius’ mentioned hearing the roar of the lions, implying that he was in Rome, within earshot of the arena, and hours away from death – an unlikely time to be seeing to his correspondence.<sup>139</sup> Pearson’s response was to suggest that Ignatius was writing in Smyrna, which also had an arena. His evidence for this claim was the difference between the Latin and the Greek versions of the quotation: although Jerome made his death sound right at hand (‘I am to be ground up by the teeth of beasts’), Sophronius only had him

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<sup>137</sup> CUL Adv.a.41.3, p. 290.

<sup>138</sup> Cave, *Apostolici*, p. 223.

<sup>139</sup> Jean Daillé, *De Scriptis, quae sub Dionysii Areopagitae et Ignatii Antiocheni Nominibus Circumferuntur, Libri Duo* (Geneva, 1666), p. 434. John Pearson, *Vindiciae Epistolarum S. Ignatii* (Oxford, 1672), pp. 82-89.



implying that his death was near but not imminently so ('I pray that I am ground up by the teeth of beasts').<sup>140</sup> Pearson then went on to insist that it was never good scholarly practice to base any claims on Jerome's literary history, since the only facts in his catalogue that he had not stolen from Eusebius were ones that he had added out of undue haste or for the sake of rhetorical colour.<sup>141</sup> In his view, the only way to read Jerome safely was with his sources in front of you, especially Eusebius, so that the scale of his exaggerations would be apparent.<sup>142</sup> This was how Sophronius had been able to correct his errors.

Like Pearson, Cave saw Sophronius as an alternative to, even an improvement on, Jerome. To pick just one example, he cited both of their judgments on a letter by Polycarp as if they were completely independent: 'very useful says S. *Hierom*, πάνυ θαυμαστή (as *Suidas* and *Sophronius* stile it) *a most admirable Epistle*'.<sup>143</sup> However, Cave also made a riskier commitment to Sophronius's translation. One of the long-lasting puzzles in the reception history of the *De Viris Illustribus* was about a group of ten biographies which Erasmus had discovered in the Greek translation (which he printed for the first time in 1516), believing that they were either by Sophronius or 'some other learned man'.<sup>144</sup> He had then translated them and added them to the original Latin text of the catalogue, seemingly without any warrant from the manuscript tradition. Lots of scholars had been troubled by this move, emphasising that Jerome's catalogue was expressly concerned with writers, which these ten New Testament bishops and disciples were not known to be. For Isaac Vossius in particular, the biographies were the most obvious

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<sup>140</sup> See Pearson, *Vindiciae*, p. 87, where he compared Sophronius's 'εὐχομαι τοῖς ὁδοῦσι τῶν θηρίων ἀλεθῆναι' to Jerome's 'per dentes bestiarum molor'.

<sup>141</sup> Pearson, *Vindiciae*, p. 87: 'Omnia quae de Ignatianis habet in Catalogo, ex Eusebio sumpsit: ex illo transcripsit sententiam hanc ab Irenaeo laudatum. Nihil tale Eusebius, nihil Irenaeus: de suo illa verba quae tempus denotare videantur aut incaute, aut Rhetorice addidit; atque ita quae ab Eusebio acceperat minus recte tradidit, quod ei in hoc Opera solenne est'.

<sup>142</sup> Pearson, *Vindiciae*, p. 89: 'Non est igitur aut abbreviationibus aut exaggerationibus Hieronymi fidendum, ubi Autores ipsos habemus, quos illum secutum esse constat'.

<sup>143</sup> Cave, *Apostolici*, p. 125.

<sup>144</sup> See 'Erasmus Roterodamus Lectori Pio S. D.' at the end of his edition of Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus* in *Omnia Opera Divi Hieronymi*, I, fol. 138r: 'non recenseri ab Hieronymo, sed additos a studioso quopiam ex alio catalogo'.

signs that the extant Greek translation was at best corrupt, late, inept and un-Jeromian, and at worst a deliberate falsification by a trickster, possibly Erasmus himself.<sup>145</sup>

Cave, on the other hand, consistently treated them as legitimate.<sup>146</sup> Possibly they appealed to him for the same reason that Vossius dismissed them, in that they were unlike Jerome: improving corruptions of a dubious original. His instinctive resistance to Jerome thus took him in two possibly contradictory directions. On the one hand he wanted to insist that Jerome's catalogue was plagiarised from his Greek originals. In the early eighteenth century an opportunity arose for Cave to have this opinion passed as scholarly consensus when the German scholar Ernst Salomon Cyprian wrote to ask his advice about the new edition of the *De Viris Illustribus* that he was planning. Cave wrote back to recommend that Cyprian use the footnotes of his edition to provide the Greek passages in Eusebius that Jerome was plagiarising; unfortunately this advice came too late for Cyprian to take it up.<sup>147</sup> On the other hand, Cave consistently tried to demonstrate that some of Jerome's later Greek translators and readers had managed to invent a tradition that derived from him and yet also, paradoxically, had no serious need for him in the first place. Making Photius a reader of Sophronius's catalogue was not a world away from choosing to forget that Erasmus, rather than Photius, was the original source of Cave's interest in literary style: both were attempts to back-translate into Greek the foundations of a tradition of eventually English literary historiography.

### **'good men may commend them that are bad': conclusions**

English enthusiasm for the Greek Church slowly cooled in the final decades of the seventeenth century. The church in Soho was sold to the Huguenots about five years after its foundation,

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<sup>145</sup> Vossius, *S. Ignatii Martyris Epistolae*, pp. 257-58.

<sup>146</sup> See for instance Cave, *Apostolici*, pp. 56 and 63.

<sup>147</sup> Cave to Cyprian, 9<sup>th</sup> July 1700, now Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Nachlass Cyprian, Chart A.422, pp. 18-19. See *S. Hieronymi Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Seu De Viris Illustribus Liber*, ed. by Ernst Salomon Cyprian (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1700), sig. (3)<sup>r</sup>.

and the standing of its leader Georgirines fell during the ‘Popish Plot’ and Exclusion Crisis. Even before then his earliest supporters had expressed doubts about his integrity.<sup>148</sup> Meanwhile Englishmen wondered more generally about the proverbial slipperiness of the Orthodox – ‘Greek honesty’, as Cave put it in a letter.<sup>149</sup> News from the Levant was similarly disturbing, despite Thomas Smith’s claim in his *Account of the Greek Church* (1680) that the then Patriarch of Jerusalem, Dositheos II, had assured him of his antipathy to Rome and promised to give him some anti-Roman tracts to be published in England.<sup>150</sup> The edition of Nectarius’s *Περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς ἀντιρρήσεις* printed at Dositheos’s new press in Iași eventually seemed to meet this promise and partly revived English confidence.<sup>151</sup> But at the same time Englishmen gradually came to learn about the synod led by Dositheos and held at Bethlehem in 1672, whose proceedings certainly looked hostile to the Protestant confessions. It was probably only the slowness with which information trickled through that allowed English hopes about Greek sympathy to their cause to remain buoyant for so long, for as late as 1690 Cave was describing himself as a ‘stranger to the history of that Synod’.<sup>152</sup>

While it lasted, this moment of obsession with the Greek Church gave Cave the opportunity to write literary history apparently resistant to interference from Rome. In Photius he found a model literary historian: a Protestant hero not in the sense that he defused theological debate but, on the contrary, because he was prepared to battle his ecclesiastical adversaries on their terms, to fight against Jerome. To seventeenth-century eyes, he resembled men like Bale and Flaccius who put their (confessional) religious loyalties at the centre of their scholarly lives. He was proto-Erasmian in his interest in literary style – Cave called him ‘Censor κριτικώτατος’

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<sup>148</sup> Barron, *From Samos to Sobo*, pp. 179-217.

<sup>149</sup> Cave to Smith, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1675, Bodleian MS Smith 46, pp. 189-90.

<sup>150</sup> Smith, *An Account*, sig. a4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>151</sup> On Dositheos II, see Russell, ‘From the “Shield of Orthodoxy”’, pp. 71-82.

<sup>152</sup> Cave to Smith, 30<sup>th</sup> December 1690, Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 79.

– but he was also rightly worried about the relationship between style and orthodoxy and the bewitching power of rhetoric.<sup>153</sup>

Yet Photius's example also posed a threat to the ideals of the *respublica literaria* for the same reasons. Throughout this chapter we have seen the same abuse for bad scholars repeat itself: bilious Jerome and Bale, impotent-minded Allatius and Jerome, poets and Greeks who write for their keep, the dictator of letters, the scholar incapable of finding the good in bad books, the historian whose strong prejudices make him unreliable, and so on. The recurrence of these expressions suggest that early-moderns reflecting on the practice of erudition were not so much responding to the example of specific scholars, Leland or Bale, as thinking in terms of types, age-old figures for the man of learning. Despite his early planning, Cave ended up becoming the same type of literary historian as Allatius and, in some of his guises, Jerome.

Johann Albert Fabricius certainly thought so: in 1711 he decided to dedicate a new edition of some of Allatius's writings to Cave, reminding him in a letter that earlier in his career he had 'deservedly praised' Allatius's *De Nilis* (1668), a list of writers in history who shared the name Nilus.<sup>154</sup> Yet, as we should have come to expect by now, Fabricius's gesture was not meant to imply that they were alike in their excessive commitment to confessional warmongering. Quite the opposite: what made them the same kind of literary historian, in fact what made them literary historians, was that the study of ancient writers was the site where (so it seemed, or so Fabricius was implying) they had put aside their confessional differences and found common ground. If Fabricius's own ecumenicism is plain here, it would surely be wrong to think that his re-imagining of recent intellectual history as the triumph of interconfessional cooperation can

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<sup>153</sup> Cave, *Historia Literaria*, p. 551. On Photius's interest in style and poetry, see George Kustas, 'The Literary Criticism of Photius: A Christian Definition of Style', *Hellenika*, 17 (1962), 132-69; and Oscar Prieto Dominguez, 'On the Founder of the Skripou Church', pp. 166-91.

<sup>154</sup> 'Accipe igitur & a me tesseram ac praedem meae meritorum tuorum aestimationis hoc Allatii de Nilis opusculum, Tibi pridem ex merito etiam laudatam, meo autem qualicunque studio jam expositum, quod ubi Tibi probari intellexero [...]'. Fabricius's letter to Cave is dated 25<sup>th</sup> September 1711 and was printed a year later in his *Leonis Allatii De Nilis et eorum Scriptis Diatriba* (Hamburg, 1712), sig.(2). Although it has a separate title-page this edition was published as part of the fifth volume of Fabricius's *Bibliotheca Graeca* (Hamburg, 1712).

be explained simply by his ecumenicism; it would be just as risky to suggest that he genuinely believed that Allatius and Cave were as irenic as he was.<sup>155</sup>

A much more preferable approach would be to see his appeal as yet another confessional tactic: after all, the genre of *historia literaria* that he pioneered was largely a Protestant success story, with very few Roman Catholics attempting it until the end of the century.<sup>156</sup> We would then need to consider the origins of a new kind of Protestant hero, one still defined in opposition to his Roman Catholic counterpart, but whose heroism was precisely (and paradoxically) his ability to suppress or hide the fact of his opposition – in other words, a hero relying for his self-image on the renewal or creation of stereotypes about the antidogmatic Protestant literary historian and the censorious Roman Catholic with his indexes of prohibited and expurgated books. From this perspective it would be particularly rewarding to trace the reception of Photius in Germany in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, when a university dissertation was printed claiming him as the first journalist and the Orientalist Johann Christoph Wolf was making a detailed study of manuscripts of the *Bibliotheca* in England and on the Continent.<sup>157</sup>

Returning to Cave – for him and his contemporaries the issues covered in this chapter were not abstract, rarefied, or narrowly intellectual. Yes, he found that the ideals of the *respublica literaria* were not always workable in the heat of high-level confessional controversy, but they also proved hard to realise in the day-to-day life of an English clergyman. At stake in this conflict

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<sup>155</sup> For claims about Fabricius's ecumenicism, see Ralph Häfner, 'Literaturgeschichte und Physikotheologie: Johann Albert Fabricius', in *500 Jahre Theologie in Hamburg. Hamburg als Zentrum christlicher Theologie und Kultur zwischen Tradition und Zukunft*, ed. by Johann Anselm Steiger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2005), pp. 35-57 (p. 41); and 'Literarische Zimelien: Aspekte der Literaturkritik in Johann Albert Fabricius' Edition der Werke des französischen Protestanten Paul Colomiès', in *Historia literaria*, ed. by Grunert and Vollhardt, pp. 213-30 (p. 225).

<sup>156</sup> See Hanspeter Marti, 'Interkonfessioneller Wissenstransfer in der Zeit der Spätaufklärung. Zur Aufnahme der *Historia literaria* in deutschsprachigen katholischen Ländern', in *Historia literaria*, ed. by Grunert and Vollhardt, pp. 161-90.

<sup>157</sup> There is a reference to Wolf's work on Photius in Martin Mulsow, 'Johann Christoph Wolf (1683-1739) und die Geschichte der verbotenen Bücher in Hamburg', in *500 Jahre Theologie in Hamburg*, ed. by Johann Anselm Steiger, pp. 81-112 (p. 93). The dissertation was *Photius ephemeridum eruditorum inventor* (Wittenberg, 1689): see N. G. Wilson's comments about it in his introduction to *The Bibliotheca*, p. 2.

between scholarly ideal and reality was the question of whether allowing and encouraging bad books to be read freely would create bad men and women or help to train up good ones; on the reverse side, the worry was that abusing dangerous writings would create an atmosphere of equally contaminating rancour. Which was the lesser evil? As we have begun to see, the late humanist literary historian was the intellectual given the task of clearing the literary past of landmines in a zone that was never fully demilitarised, whatever claims were made about it, and with the constant risk of radicalising new enemies.

### 3

#### The History of Literature as the History of (Commendatory) Letters

Consider Cave at three moments in his life:

In December 1697 he writes to the antiquary Edward Lhuyd recommending the letter-bearer to him as a ‘very serious, sober, and hopefull young man’ whose career could benefit from Lhuyd’s encouragement.<sup>1</sup>

In the early 1670s, he copies out a letter from the 1639 edition of the correspondence of the humanist Justus Lipsius, adding it to his copy of Domenico Magri’s *Notitia*.<sup>2</sup> Rather than being an actual example of sixteenth-century correspondence, this is a model or template for letters of recommendation, which Lipsius has enclosed in a letter of 1596 to Erycius Puteanus. In it, Lipsius praises his charge’s nobility, educational attainments, course of life, and erudition, and commends him to the recipient, promising to return the favour.<sup>3</sup>

Third: in the biography of Origen in his *Apostolici*, he mentions how his subject was ordained presbyter in the city of Caesarea after ‘producing his Letters of recommendation’ from Demetrius, his provincial bishop.<sup>4</sup> As the note in the margin indicates, the source for this detail is Jerome’s *De Viris Illustribus* (392/93), in which Origen’s brandishing of his ‘epistola ecclesiastica’ ignites a long-running quarrel with Demetrius, who considered that his episcopal privilege had been violated.<sup>5</sup> In his own career Jerome would experience first-hand the deceptiveness of letters of this kind: in 395 he promised that he would never trust them again, after a traveller recommended to him by his friend Paulinus failed to match up to his credentials and was a source of scandal instead.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cave to Lhuyd, 31<sup>st</sup> December 1697, Bodleian MS Ashmole 1814, p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> SGCL M.25, p. 228a.

<sup>3</sup> Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum selectarum centuriae VIII* (Geneva, 1639), p. 309.

<sup>4</sup> Cave, *Apostolici*, pp. 223–24.

<sup>5</sup> See *Omnia Opera Divi Hieronymi*, ed. by Erasmus, I, fol. 129<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> For an interesting discussion of this episode, see Sigrid Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola: Kommunikation und soziale Kontakte zwischen christlichen Intellektuellen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2002),

These three moments help us to discover a through-line in Cave's career: his fascination with letters of recommendation. What made this interest possible, even natural, was that these letters were an indispensable part of late seventeenth-century life across Europe. Writing them was an almost daily requirement for scholars in post-Restoration England: at least one other of Cave's survives, and it is certain that he sent and received countless more.<sup>7</sup> The same fact is probably true of any literate and relatively mobile culture, and it seems curious that a book about their use across the ages has not yet been written. In this case, Cave was working in a tradition that was thought to stretch back to Cicero and Pliny before being formalised again in the Renaissance.<sup>8</sup> Since the late fifteenth century, guides to letter-writing like Francesco Negri's *Opusculum Scribendi Epistolas* (1488) and Erasmus's *Opus de Conscribendis Epistolis* (1522) had routinely included a section on the specific rhetorical conventions of the form.<sup>9</sup> Justus Lipsius, Cave's model in his notebook, was among the letter-writers who were acknowledged to have mastered these rules; Philip Melanchthon was another.<sup>10</sup>

That Cave copied out Lipsius's template into the notebook where he was learning about the values of the *respublica literaria* should immediately tell us that letters of recommendation were not just a run-of-the-mill practice for humanists. If not themselves an ideal, they were the material or formal expression of an ideal: the ability to give praise wherever praise was due, to cooperate politely in letters by paying tribute to a scholar's learning regardless of his

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p. 369. See Jerome's letters to Paulinus and Sabinianus, nos. 61 and 147, in *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae*, ed. by Isidorus Hilberg, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, LIV-LVI (Vienna and Leipzig, 1910-18), I (1910), pp. 575-82, and II (1918), pp. 312-28.

<sup>7</sup> See Cave's letter to Edmund Gibson, dated 20<sup>th</sup> February 1700, where he asks him to introduce 'my friend and neighbour' to Thomas Tenison; now British Library Add. MS 4275, fol. 96<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Roger Rees, 'Letters of Recommendation and the Rhetoric of Praise', in *Ancient Letters: Classical and Late Antique Epistolography*, ed. by Ruth Morello and A. D. Morrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 150-68.

<sup>9</sup> See Mark Morford, 'Lipsius' Letters of Recommendation', in *Self-Presentation and Social Identification: the Rhetoric and Pragmatics of Letter Writing in Early Modern Times*, ed. by Toon Van Houdt and others (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), pp. 183-98.

<sup>10</sup> Milton Kooistra, 'The Influence of the Protestant Reformation on Philip Melanchthon's Letters of Recommendation', in *Between Scylla and Charybdis: Learned Letter Writers Navigating the Reefs of Religious and Political Controversy in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Jeanine De Landtsheer and Henk Nellen (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), pp. 109-26.



confessional beliefs.<sup>11</sup> Crucially, this ideal of commendation could be traced back to the Christian past without too much effort. Athanasius, Cave wrote in his *Ecclesiastici*, was ‘mild in his Reproofs, and instructive in his Commendations’, a piece of praise borrowed from Gregory of Nazianzen, who had also suggested self-reflexively in the same panegyric that, as Cave paraphrased it, ‘to commend Athanasius, was the same thing as to commend Vertue it self’.<sup>12</sup> According to Cave in the same book, Eusebius of Caesarea was similarly renowned for his habits of praise. He repeated an earlier judgment made about Eusebius’s skillful, proto-humanist handling of heterodox writings: ‘I cannot but commend the Moderation of Pope *Pelagius* the Second, who [...] sayes, that good men may sometimes commend them that are bad’.<sup>13</sup> The advantage of letters of recommendation, in antiquity and the early-modern period, was that they looked like the place where this ideal of scholarly ecumenicism was realised, made practical: they were how jobs were won, hospitality secured, new friendships forged.

With this in mind, it is time to introduce a fourth moment in Cave’s career. Some time in the early 1670s Cave opens Johannes Löwenklau’s *Iuris Graeco-Romani*, a collection of civil and canon law documents printed in Frankfurt in 1596.<sup>14</sup> Following up on a footnote in William Beveridge’s *Synodikon* (1672), he turns to the ‘ΣΥΣΤΑΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ’ on page 438. Like Lipsius’s, this is another template for letters of recommendation: here, ones sent by newly

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<sup>11</sup> See Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, pp. 24-26.

<sup>12</sup> Cave, *Ecclesiastici*, pp. 191-92. See *Gregorii Nazianzenii Opera*, ed. by Billius, I, pp. 373 and 378. On ancient Christian letters of recommendation, see Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil, *Crisis Management in Late Antiquity (410-590 CE): A Survey of the Evidence from Episcopal Letters* (Brill: Leiden and Boston, 2013), p. 17; Anne Marie Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 103-123; Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel*, pp. 358-88; Timothy M. Teeter, ‘Christian Letters of Recommendation in the Papyrus Record’, *Patristic and Byzantine Revue*, 9 (1990), 59-69; and William G. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Cave, *Ecclesiastici*, p. 33.

<sup>14</sup> William Beveridge, *ΣΥΝΟΔΙΚΟΝ sive Pandectae Canonum S.S. Apostolorum, et Conciliorum ab Ecclesia Graeca receptorum*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1672), II, p. 22. On Löwenklau’s activities as a scholar, see Dieter Metzler, ‘Johannes Löwenklau’, in *Westfälische Lebensbilder*, 13, ed. by Robert Stupperich (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1985), pp. 19-44; and M. Th. Fögen, ‘Johannes Löwenklau’, *Rechtshistorisches Journal*, 13 (1994), 197-201.

ordained patriarchs of Constantinople.<sup>15</sup> Löwenklau had probably come across this letter, dating to the early fourteenth-century, in a collection of Greek manuscripts in Rome or Florence.<sup>16</sup> New patriarchs working *pro forma* from this template would have to describe their course of life so far, commend their orthodoxy, promise to uphold the seven Ecumenical Councils, and condemn the heresiarchs or heretics anathematized in them: (i) Arius, (ii) Macedonius, (iii) Nestorius, (iv) Eutychius, (v) Theodore of Mopsuestia, Origen, Didymus and Evagrius, (vi) the Monothelites, and (vii) the Iconoclasts.

Cave's study of this letter did not immediately bear fruit. But he remembered it a decade or so later when considering how to organise his *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*. As we saw in the previous chapter, his decision to divide his work into *saecula* was inspired by the Magdeburg Centuries, but at some point he took the further step of naming each of these centuries. To do this he returned to Löwenklau's template, using its chronological list of heretics as his organising principle: the fourth to eighth centuries in his book therefore became the *Arian, Nestorian, Eutychian, Monothelitic, and Iconoclastic Ages*. His literary history was therefore literary not just in the sense that it was a history of letters, but because it was history as a letter (specifically a long letter of recommendation). Choosing this form also made his book recognisably Photian since, as most early-modern scholars with an interest in the subject knew, the *Bibliotheca* was addressed as a letter to Photius's brother Tarasius, who was setting out on a diplomatic mission and wanted reading material.<sup>17</sup>

By now the arc described in the last few paragraphs should be familiar; the story of the previous chapter is being played out again. Cave discovers a humanist ideal in the early 1670s,

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<sup>15</sup> *Iuris Graeco-Romani Tam Canonici Quam Civilis Tomi Duo*, ed. by Johannes Löwenklau (Frankfurt, 1596), pp. 438-40: 'ΣΥΣΤΑΤΙΚΗ ἘΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ, Literae Commendaticiae, quae a patriarcha Constantinopolitano, recens ordinato, mitti solent'.

<sup>16</sup> It seems likely that the manuscript he used is now Vatican Library Vat. gr. 2220, fols. 88<sup>v</sup>-89<sup>r</sup>, although I am only basing this identification on the catalogue description: see Salvator Lilla, *Codices Vaticani Graeci. Codices 2162-2254 (Codices Columnenses)* (Vatican: In Bibliotheca Vaticana, 1985), p. 240.

<sup>17</sup> Cave called it 'his Letter to his Brother *Tarasius*': see *Ecclesiastici*, p. 336. See also Treadgold, *The Nature of the Bibliotheca*, p. 115, where it is described as 'the overgrown private letter that we call the Bibliotheca'.

searches for its origins in Christian antiquity, and then celebrates it in his vernacular biographies published between 1675 and 1683. Then comes a loss of confidence: in his *Historia Literaria* at the end of the decade he chooses Photius and heresy-hunting over the ecumenicism associated with Erasmus and Erasmus's Jerome. Rather than just exploring this same narrative from another angle, however, this chapter starts where the last one finished. There, the conclusions were largely negative: the ideal of literature was found empty or wanting, with nothing to replace it other than suspicion and critique. Here we will begin to see Cave actively creating a new theory of literature and a new form for literary history, centred on his interest in letters of recommendation and bringing scholarship to bear not just on confessional debates but also on parochial life. This campaign – it does not feel inappropriate to call it that – ended up infringing a different set of early-modern norms, this time theological rather than social. It also seems to show Cave at his least modern or his least literary, which makes understanding his obsession with letters of recommendation all the more essential for finding out why books like his were lost from modern genealogies of literary history.

### **‘those Canonick Epistles (as they called them)’: Cave’s early research**

All it took to capture the interest of early-modern scholars in ancient commendatory letters was a well-known story about Julian the Apostate. As Gregory of Nazianzen and the ecclesiastical historian Sozomen had related, Julian had tried to get rid of Christianity by stealing many of the institutions that had won it so many converts in the first place and then setting up a reformed pagan religion in its place.<sup>18</sup> The objects of Julian’s envy, apparently, were Christianity’s hospitals, schools, monasteries, and forms of charity, especially the practice of giving letters of recommendation to indigent travellers to ensure that they would be treated hospitably wherever

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<sup>18</sup> *Gregorii Nazianzenii Opera*, ed. by Billius (Paris, 1630), I, p. 102; and *Socratis Scholastici et Hermiae Sozomeni Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. by Henri Valois (Paris, 1668), p. 617.

they went.<sup>19</sup> Obviously Julian's jealousy was a boon for later apologists, proving that even Christianity's most committed adversaries had openly admired it. In Cave's day, George Hickes repeated the story in the context of his debate with Samuel Johnson to argue that it would be unreasonable and thus unlikely even for a Roman Catholic like the Duke of York to abandon the Church of England's traditional and cherished customs.<sup>20</sup>

The episode also raised questions that were of a more antiquarian nature, at least at first glance. What exactly were these letters that were apparently the most attractive feature of early Christianity? Gregory and Sozomen hardly clarified matters, using the ambiguous phrases 'ἐν τοῖς ἐπιστολιμαίοις συνθήμασιν' and 'τὰ συνθήματα τῶν ἐπισκοπικῶν γραμμάτων', which their seventeenth-century editors translated into Latin with the clear but inaccurate expression 'in commendatory letters' and the vague but accurate expression 'notes and tokens of episcopal writings'. Questions of naming aside, early-modern scholars wanted to know when the practice of sending them had begun, how they were used, and who else had mentioned them. For his part, Cave started making inquiries in the early 1670s, searching through ancient texts to find references to or better yet actual traces of their use and then writing out some of his answers in his interleaved copy of Domenico Magri's *Notitia de' Vocaboli Ecclesiastici*.

The first place to look, or at least the most ancient, was Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. In the third chapter Paul told his audience that he did not need to approach them with letters of recommendation, 'συστατικά ἐπιστολαί', since they already knew in their hearts why he had come to them and with what authority. This disavowal was a strange point of departure for the study of ancient commendatory letters, but it looked less drastic if it was

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<sup>19</sup> On the evidence for these early Christian charitable practices, see Peregrine Horde, 'Poverty, Charity, and the Invention of the Hospital', in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. by Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 716-52.

<sup>20</sup> [George Hickes], *Jovian: or, An Answer to Julian the Apostate* (London, 1683), p. 150.

coupled with Romans 16.1, where Paul wrote an actual letter of recommendation for the deacon Phoebe.<sup>21</sup>

After Paul the trail went cold until the late second or early third century, where the next source was Tertullian's *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*. Tertullian said of the early churches spread across the Mediterranean that they shared 'the communication of peace, the name of brotherhood, and the token of hospitality'.<sup>22</sup> This last phrase, 'contesseratio hospitalitatis', was reminiscent of Sozomen's 'συνθήματα', and thus suggested to early-modern scholars that it was already normal practice for early Christians to travel with letters of introduction. Helping them to this insight was the fact that a possible example of the form survived in Eusebius's fourth-century *Ecclesiastical History*, which contained an excerpt from a letter recommending Irenaeus of Lyon to the bishop of Rome, although the verbs for 'recommend' here were the slightly different 'συνίστημι' and 'παράτιθημι'.<sup>23</sup> This vignette was seemingly confirmed by contemporary church laws, assuming that the so-called Apostolic Canons belonged to the start of the third century, as Cave persisted in believing, rather than the fifth or sixth.<sup>24</sup> The twelfth and thirty-third of these canons decreed that clergymen should only be received and admitted to communion on their travels if they carried commendatory letters, 'γράμματα συστατικά'.<sup>25</sup>

More evidence was available to scholars in the writings of the fourth and fifth centuries. By this stage it appeared that the two functions of the typical early commendatory letter, providing charity and policing orthodoxy, were now divided between two different kinds of letter. The eleventh canon of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, for instance, distinguished between letters of peace (εἰρηνικαὶ) and recommendation proper (συστατικαὶ), with the first to

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<sup>21</sup> See Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity*, p. 10.

<sup>22</sup> *Q. Septimii Florentis Tertulliani Opera*, ed. by Nicholas Rigault (Paris, 1664), p. 209: 'Sic omnes prima, & Apostolicae, dum una omnes probant unitatem: dum est illis communicatio pacis, & appellatio fraternitatis, & contesseratio hospitalitatis'.

<sup>23</sup> *Eusebii Ecclesiastica Historia*, ed. by Valois, p. 168.

<sup>24</sup> See Cave, *Primitive Christianity*, 'Preface', sig. A5<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> See Beveridge, *ΣΥΝΟΔΙΚΟΝ*, I, pp. 7-8.

be given to poor travellers and the second to clergymen.<sup>26</sup> According to a reference in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, both of these were 'letters of communion' (κοινωνικὰ γράμματα) and they were withheld from schismatics or heretics, a remark that Augustine had reinforced in a well-known letter.<sup>27</sup> As he explained to one of his correspondents, a Donatist made the outlandish claim in a debate with him that he was not a schismatic, since his party continued to enjoy membership of the universal Church. Augustine had responded by inviting him to produce 'communicatory letters, which we call *formatae*' – knowing full well that his failure to do so would prove that most churches excluded the Donatists from communion.<sup>28</sup>

The literature of the early Church thus presented early-modern scholars with a range of terms that may or may not have described the same genre of letter: episcopal passwords, tokens of hospitality, canonical writings, communicatory letters, commendatory letters, and Augustine's *formatae*. This diversity posed problems to anyone like Cave wanting to synthesise the ancient references into a summary of the use of letters of recommendation in the first centuries of Christianity. But help was at hand in the medieval canon law commentaries of Zonaras and particularly Matthew Blastares, the *editio princeps* of which had recently been published by William Beveridge in 1672. Blastares rationalised the letters into three types: συστατικάι, ἀπολυτικάι, and εἰρηνικάι.<sup>29</sup> Cave silently adopted this taxonomy in his *Primitive Christianity*, leaving behind, for the sake of simplicity, the references that he had gathered in his notebook from Eusebius, Augustine, and Tertullian, although he remembered to mention Julian's jealousy of the practice. Thus, in his account, συστατικάι were given to clergymen when they travelled into other provinces as warrants for their good character and orthodoxy;

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<sup>26</sup> ΣΥΝΟΔΙΚΟΝ, I, p. 125.

<sup>27</sup> *Eusebii Ecclesiastica Historia*, ed. by Valois, p. 282.

<sup>28</sup> *S. Augustini Epistolae*, ed. Alois Goldbacher, no. 44, p. 111: 'quaerebam utrum epistulas communicatorias, quas formatas dicimus, posset, quo vellem, dare, et adfirmabam, quod manifestum erat omnibus, hoc modo facillime illam terminari posse quaestionem'.

<sup>29</sup> ΣΥΝΟΔΙΚΟΝ, II, pp. 25-27.

ἀπολυτικάι, or dismissory letters, gave them permission to be ordained on their travels; and εἰρηνικάι provided lay and clerical travellers with assurances of safe passage if they were fleeing persecution.<sup>30</sup>

### **‘Shew me any literas formatas’: confessional debates, 1612-91**

As innocent as Cave made his research seem, any early-modern scholar reading his discussion of commendatory letters would instantly have recognised its confessional motivations. His sources were cutting-edge, and his search for evidence was relatively wide-ranging. But his claim that the early Christians had used these letters to settle controversies and ‘reconcile *dissenting brethren*’ was a provocative claim in the 1670s, after more than half of a century of intermittent debate.

In 1612 a letter by the French Cardinal Jacques Davy du Perron had been published, seemingly without his consent, contending that King James VI was an excellent prince in every respect but one: he could not call himself a Catholic, because only Christians in communion with Rome could lay claim to that title.<sup>31</sup> Stung, James complained to Isaac Casaubon, who responded in the same year. In his view, what made someone a Catholic was professing the orthodox faith as it had been continuously preserved since antiquity.<sup>32</sup> In today’s politically fractured world, he said, exchange between the various Christian communities was impossible. By contrast, the world of the early Church was much more unified under the auspices of the Roman Empire, and communication and hence communion had been much easier. As the English translator of Casaubon’s letter put it, ‘There were then also in frequent use *literae formatae*, that is, demissorie or testimoniall letters; by commerce whereof, and as it were by

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<sup>30</sup> Cave, *Primitive Christianity*, part II, pp. 309-10.

<sup>31</sup> Jacques Davy du Perron, *Lettre de Monseigneur le cardinal du Perron envoyée au sieur Casaubon en Angleterre* (Paris, 1612). For a resumé of du Perron’s debate with Casaubon and James, see W. B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 133-34.

<sup>32</sup> Isaac Casaubon, *Ad Epistolam Illustr. et Reverendiss. Cardinalis Perronij, Responsio* (London, 1612), p. 10.

tokens, communion was held amongst the members of the Church, although farre removed by distance of place'.<sup>33</sup>

At this stage, even within a controversial debate, these *literae formatae* were not yet controversial: Casaubon was explicitly arguing that the culture of harmonious literary exchange in Augustine's day could not be a model for the present, where 'necessarie separation' prevented it.<sup>34</sup> But they slowly took on a more polemical role. John Donne gave them their first turn eight years later in a sermon preached at Lincoln's Inn and published in 1640. The theme of this lecture was Abraham's reception of the angels in Genesis 18. Donne quoted Tertullian to demonstrate that hospitality was a central feature of early Christian life: 'There was *Contesseratio Hospitalitatis*, A warrant for their reception in one anothers houses, wheresoever they travailed'.<sup>35</sup> This practice, he continued, had been formalised at the Council of Nicaea in 325, when a set of rules for *literae formatae* had been drawn up so that heretics would find it harder to counterfeit them. By itself this historical excursion might have seemed unthreatening. However, earlier on in the sermon Donne had already identified that Tertullian's discussion of tokens of hospitality was part of a larger passage in the *De Praescriptione Haereticorum* throwing its voice forwards to seventeenth-century debates: the Church as a whole may be one household, but 'Every Church is a supreme Church' that owed hospitality to the others, but crucially not obedience.<sup>36</sup>

It was left to Peter Heylyn to make letters of recommendation fully polemical. In *The Historie of Episcopacy* (1642) he repeated the claim that the early Churches enjoyed equal power. His proof for this claim was that they had solved disputes not by deferring to Rome's authority but by exchanging their views in '*commercio formatarum*', in other words by means of '*literae formatae*, or *communicatoriae*', using Augustine's phrase to gloss a slightly more opaque

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<sup>33</sup> *The Answer of Master Isaac Casaubon to the Epistle of the Most Illustrious and most reverend Cardinal Peron* (London, 1612), p. 10.

<sup>34</sup> *The Answer of Master Isaac Casaubon*, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> John Donne, *LXXX sermons* (London, 1640), p. 415.

<sup>36</sup> *LXXX sermons*, p. 414.



expression in a work by the fourth-century bishop Optatus of Milevis.<sup>37</sup> It should be obvious from this manoeuvre how far we have come from Casaubon's debate with du Perron. There letters of recommendation had reflected the early, irrecoverable unity of the Christian religion; now they were being used to justify England's break with Rome in the present.

Heylyn also took two further steps. First he gave the letters a second edge, turning them not just against Roman Catholics but also against Reformed arguments that bishops and presbyters were more or less indistinguishable roles in antiquity. As he noted, the tenth canon of the Council of Antioch restricted some of the powers of suffragan bishops but granted them the episcopal right to send *literae formatae* – 'A point of honour, denied unto the ordinary *Presbyters*'.<sup>38</sup> Then in 1657 he asserted that English bishops had already been trading communicatory letters before the arrival of the first Roman Catholic missionaries.<sup>39</sup> Never mind that his evidence for extending the practice to early Britain was unsteady to say the least: it probably owed to the rumour circulating at the time of a reference to *literae formatae* in the sixth-century historian Gildas, which an inspection of his writings would quickly have dispelled.<sup>40</sup> Letters of recommendation were now firmly part of the historiography of Church of England supremacy.

This line of argument was feasible as long as English scholars kept to the account of commendatory letters provided for them by Tertullian, Optatus, and Augustine. Unfortunately this policy relied on a highly selective use of the available sources. Particularly, it required them to ignore a key piece of evidence. Donne gave the game away in his sermon when he observed

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<sup>37</sup> [Peter Heylyn], *The Historie of Episcopacy. The second part. From the Death of St. John the Apostle, to the beginning of the Empire of Constantine* (London, 1642), p. 406.

<sup>38</sup> *The Historie of Episcopacy*, p. 459.

<sup>39</sup> Peter Heylyn, *The Way and Manner of the Reformation of the Church of England Declared and Justified* (London, 1657), p. 56.

<sup>40</sup> This rumour is repeated in John Barnes, *Select Discourses, concerning 1. Councils, the Pope, Schism. 2. The Priviledges of the Isle of Great Britain. 3. The Popes Primacy, and the Supream Power of Kings* (London, 1661), p. 24: 'Gildas the Wise writeth, That Britain almost from the age of the Apostles, had Bishops, who communicated with the rest of the world in Pacifique and formed letters'.

that a formula for *litterae formatae* had been devised at the Council of Nicaea, a detail that none of the traditional sources mentioned. In fact there was only one early text making this claim: a short, perplexing, and explosive note with a complex editorial history. This note had been incorporated into the canon law collection assembled by Regino of Prüm in the ninth century but only printed in 1658. In the interim it had made its first appearance in print in the 1472 *editio princeps* of the more famous twelfth-century *Decretum Gratiani*. But it had its greatest impact when it appeared in Jacques Merlin's edition of church councils, printed in 1524 and then again in 1535. (This was the edition that Cave inherited from his father and kept in the library at St George's).<sup>41</sup> Here it took its place alongside other apparently ancient records of early Christian life and became the basis for a deeply confessionalized history of letters of recommendation.

This alternative history was told in its fullest form by Baronius and then the Milanese scholar Francesco Bernardino Ferrari in his *De Antiquo Ecclesiasticarum Epistolarum Genere* (1613). In their version, the history of *litterae formatae* started with Pope Sixtus in first-century Rome.<sup>42</sup> Over time heretics had learned to counterfeit the letters, using them to trick uncomprehending clergy into re-admitting them to communion after their own provincial bishops had excommunicated them. So a form of encryption was devised at the Council of Nicaea. The letter-writer should take the first letters of the names of the Father (Πατέρ), Son (Υἱός), Holy Ghost (Ἅγιον πνεῦμα), and St Peter (Πέτρος), then the first letter of his own name, of his recipient's name, of the recommendee's, of the name of the town where he lived, and all the letters in the expression ἀμήν. He should then find and combine the numerical equivalents of these characters with the help of the traditional Greek system: α for 1, β for 2, γ for 3, δ for 4

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<sup>41</sup> Jacques Merlin, ed., *Conciliorum quatuor generalium Niceni, Constantinopolitani, Ephesini, et Calcedonensis*, 2 vols (Paris, 1535), II, fol. lxxxi<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> Caesar Baronius, *Annales Ecclesiastici Auctore Caesare Baronio [...] Editio Novissima*, 12 vol (Cologne, 1609), II, pp. 114-16 and 144; and Francesco Bernardino Ferrari, *De Antiquo Ecclesiasticarum Epistolarum Genere* (Milan, 1613), pp. 7-16.

and so on up to  $\omega$  for 800. He would then need to add to this sum the current date, worked out as a number between 1 and 15 in the fifteen-year imperial cycle known as the ‘indiction’.

After this calculation, the letter-writer would be left with a single, hopefully unique cipher that would prove to his recipient that the letter of recommendation was authentic. This formula had not been included in the official proceedings of the Council because (so Baronius and Ferrari said) publishing it would have made it available to heretics, defeating its purpose. There were two conflicting accounts among Roman Catholics about how it had eventually come to circulate. The first was that it had been ratified at the Council of Chalcedon in 451: this would explain why the note followed the acts of that council in Jacques Merlin’s edition.<sup>43</sup> The other possibility was suggested by the heading that accompanied the note: ‘Bishop Atticus: how to write *litterae formatae*’.<sup>44</sup> A bishop of Constantinople called Atticus was known to have sent a copy of the Nicene canons to a synod of African bishops in the early fifth century. It was therefore plausible that the same Atticus had included the Nicene formula in this gift.<sup>45</sup>

The reason why this narrative was so attractive to Roman Catholic scholars was that it reinforced their claims of early Papal supremacy. Rome’s authority was embedded into the letter’s very form. As Ferrari and others emphasised, the formula required clergymen to acknowledge St Peter’s primacy by taking the first letter of his name: those who scrupled at this act of obedience would not be able to acquire letters of recommendation and would be effectively cut off from communion with the rest of the Church.<sup>46</sup> Du Perron capitalised on this point in his response to Casaubon’s letter, published in 1620 after his death two years earlier.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Baronius, *Annales*, II, p. 144.

<sup>44</sup> Merlin, *Concilia*, II, fol. lxxxv: ‘Atticus episcopus qualiter formata epistola fiat’.

<sup>45</sup> Ferrari, *De Antiquo*, p. 13.

<sup>46</sup> See for instance Ferrari, *De Antiquo*, pp. 22-23: ‘additam arbitror a Patribus primam Apostolorum Principis litteram, ipsummet Petrum exprimentem; in cuius sede nimirum viguit semper totius Ecclesiae Catholicae unitas, ac principatus; adeo ut ille demum vere Catholicus esse probaretur, qui Petri successor esset communione coniunctus, is vero Haereticus, atque schismaticus, cui Romanae Sedis communicatio denegaretur’.

<sup>47</sup> Jacques Davy du Perron, *Réplique à la réponse du serenissime Roy de la Grand Bretagne* (Paris, 1620), chapter 26, pp. 144-47.

In his view the need for a cipher in the first place proved, *pace* Casaubon, that the first ages of Christianity were not a time of harmony or unity. Constant eruptions of heresy and schism had made it all the more necessary to define faith in terms not simply of belief but also of actual allegiance to a single Church, which doubled as a kind of central sorting-office for all the certificates of orthodoxy being traded along the Mediterranean. Nine years later this argument was given weight by the republication of eleven *litterae formatae* at the end of Jacques Sirmond's *Concilia Antiqua Galliae* (1629).<sup>48</sup> These were not as ancient as their apologists might have hoped: the earliest was only as old as the beginning of the ninth century. From another perspective, as long as their origins in fourth-century antiquity were a given, the survival of these later examples suggested that the use of the Nicene formula had continued for more than half a millenium in the West.

This history of commendatory letters was bound to antagonise Protestant scholars. In England, however, the response was weak or half-hearted. In his gloss on Paul's *συστατικαὶ ἐπιστολαὶ* in his *Paraphrase and Annotations* (1653), for instance, Henry Hammond simply denied categorically that they were the means 'by which men were testified to be in communion with the Church of Rome', without stopping to consider or refute the story linking them to the Council of Nicaea.<sup>49</sup> Instead it was the French Calvinist David Blondel who produced the most comprehensive critique of the tradition in his monumental *De la primauté en L'Église* (1641), a claim-by-claim dismantling of du Perron's response to Casaubon. The section on *litterae formatae* there started out in general terms. According to Blondel, 'formatae' was just one of the names given to letters of recommendation in the early Church. Others were 'συστατικά', 'ἀπολυτικά', 'pacifici', 'communicatoires', and 'canoniques'. Moreover, there was no single or standard formula for writing them: in his words, they were written 'avec une fort grande liberté

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<sup>48</sup> Jacques Sirmond, *Concilia Antiqua Galliae*, 3 vols (Paris, 1629), 'Appendix', pp. 633-74.

<sup>49</sup> Henry Hammond, *A Paraphrase, and Annotations Upon all the Books of the New Testament* (London, 1653), p. 607.

de style'.<sup>50</sup> In fact the only group that insisted on a prescribed form, along with a secret cipher, was the heretical Eunomian party.

Blondel then turned his attention to the story associating *litterae formatae* with Nicaea, Atticus, and Chalcedon. His first objection was potentially devastating: the note had its origins in the set of canon law documents forged in the ninth century by 'Isidore Mercator'. In fact Jacques Merlin's edition of the councils – as we now recognise – was nothing other than the first complete edition of the Pseudo-Isidorean collection, as Blondel had already shown in 1628.<sup>51</sup> The possibility that this note might have belonged to an earlier layer of authentic legal documents that, as most contemporary scholars agree, the forgers took as their base does not seem to have occurred to Blondel, and his arguments did not settle the question of the note's antiquity: debate seems to have stopped in the early twentieth century, when the German scholar of palaeography Victor Gardthausen concluded that its genuineness was 'indifferent'.<sup>52</sup> In any case, Blondel did not rest his case on manuscript evidence alone. However the story was told, it seemed to him incoherent or reliant on anachronisms.<sup>53</sup> Only Latin examples of the form had survived, even though the formula was framed in the East; it had apparently been put into writing by Atticus, a renowned stylist, yet the note was crabbed and full of solecisms; and finally the whole scheme was self-defeating: the point of the cipher was to make it impossible for heretics to forge the letters, but if it was discussed at Nicaea the secret code would instantly have been available to the Arians who attended the council in their droves.

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<sup>50</sup> Blondel, *De la primauté en L'Église* (Geneva, 1641), p. 454.

<sup>51</sup> For the current state of research into the Pseudo-Isidorean texts, see Eric Knibbs, 'The Interpolated *Hispana* and the Origins of Pseudo-Isidore', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Kanonistische Abteilung*, 99 (2013), 1-71; and Horst Fuhrmann, 'The Pseudo-Isidorian Forgeries', in *Papal Letters in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Detlev Jasper and Horst Fuhrmann (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), pp. 137-95.

<sup>52</sup> In 1832 F.H. Knust pointed out that the note appears in manuscripts of some of these earlier authentic collections: see *De Fontibus et Consilio Ps.-Isidorianae Collectionis* (Göttingen, 1832), p. 3. See also Victor Gardthausen, *Die Schrift, Unterschriften und Chronologie Im Altertum und Im Byzantinischen Mittelalter*, 2nd edn (Leipzig, 1913), pp. 464-65. Earlier Adolf Harnack called the note 'anything other than unsuspicious' (nichts weniger als unverdächtig): 'Litterae Formatae', in *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, ed. by J. J. Herzog and rev. by Albert Hauck, 3rd edn, 24 volumes (Leipzig, 1896-1913), XI, pp. 536-38.

<sup>53</sup> Blondel, *De la primauté*, pp. 467-73.

This demonstration ought to have delighted Church of England scholars: it seemed to demolish Roman Catholic claims that the use of *literae formatae* in antiquity proved the doctrine of papal supremacy. But, astonishingly, no one mentioned it. Either they went on ignoring the story's existence: thus in 1684 an anonymous tract sometimes attributed to Cave but more likely by Robert Grove, bishop of Chichester, recycled the traditional Anglican claim about 'form'd, and communicatory Letters' to justify its arguments about the equality and harmony of early Christian Churches.<sup>54</sup> Or they accepted that it was genuinely Nicene, like Thomas Comber in 1690, in a book that his friend Cave called the best of its kind.<sup>55</sup> A year earlier the ejected minister David Clarkson had pressed Baronius's narrative into the service of his campaign against set forms of the liturgy.<sup>56</sup> For Clarkson, the fact that the formula had been devised but not published at Nicaea was evidence of the reluctance of early Christians to commit their beliefs to writing, and hence make them prescriptive. This was obviously a perverse conclusion to draw from a document that was explicitly designed to standardise Church practices. But rather than dismiss the story outright, as Blondel's research would have enabled him to do, Comber responded that instructions about how to compose and decipher the code had been circulated to every bishop (and yet somehow 'kept secret from Hereticks' at the same time).<sup>57</sup> This passage was removed from the revised edition of Comber's history, which Cave was invited to inspect before it went through the press in 1702, but only as part of a more systematic deletion of the

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<sup>54</sup> [Cave or Grove], *A Discourse concerning the Unity of the Catholick Church Maintained in the Church of England* (London, 1684), p. 9.

<sup>55</sup> See 'The Reverend Dr. Cave's Letter to the Publisher After the Perusal of the several Books contained in this Second Volume' in *A Companion to the Temple: or, A Help to Devotion in the Use of the Common-Prayer. The Second Volume* (London, 1702) [no signature].

<sup>56</sup> David Clarkson, *A Discourse Concerning Liturgies* (London, 1689), pp. 37-38.

<sup>57</sup> Thomas Comber, *A Scholastical History of the Primitive and General Use of Liturgies in the Christian Church* (London, 1690), part II, p. 242.

sections animadverting Clarkson's book rather than because Comber was embarrassed about the claims he had made about the Nicene formula.<sup>58</sup>

The silence that greeted Blondel's book has a number of explanations. Its language may have deterred some readers: perhaps Cave was not the only Englishman in this period who was uninterested in learning French. More importantly, its portrayal of the variousness of early Christian letters of recommendation might have looked like a generalisation of presbyterian attacks in mid-century England on the use of standard or prescribed forms, especially in the liturgy.<sup>59</sup> In Blondel's account, this variousness was proof of the decentralization of early ecclesiastical governance, away from Rome, but at its extreme point it atomised the early Church, implying that the decisions of provincial bishops had local force only: thus Blondel wrote that any bishop on a traveller's route could refuse to admit him to communion even if he was able to present authentic letters of recommendation from the bishop of his own province.<sup>60</sup> There was warrant for this practice in ancient church canons, but stating it in this way was liable to undermine an influential position in the Restoration Church of England that, as the author of the 1684 *Discourse* put it, 'every Act of any particular Church conformable to the Institutions of our Saviour' was 'as an Act of the whole Church', so that 'one may not do, what the other undoes'.<sup>61</sup>

Where Blondel's position could lead was eventually shown in 1691 in Richard Baxter's *Against the Revolt to a Foreign Jurisdiction*. (His readers would have said predictably shown). In this book *litterae formatae* (in Augustine's general sense) were the frequent object of Baxter's sarcasm as he responded to the uses made of them in print and in debate by their conformist

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<sup>58</sup> Comber, *A Companion to the Temple*, sig. A<sup>r</sup>: 'Wherefore, since I do not affect Controversies, and it is the Interest of my Opponents, as well as my own Inclination to let this Dispute fall, I have left out all that concerned that Author, and put the matter of fact together'.

<sup>59</sup> See Bryan D. Spinks, 'Liturgy and Worship', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume 1: Reformation and Identity, c.1520-1662*, ed. by Anthony Milton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 149-67.

<sup>60</sup> Blondel, *De la primauté*, p. 454.

<sup>61</sup> [Cave or Grove], *A Discourse*, pp. 8-9.

champions, specifically Peter Heylyn and Peter Gunning, bishop of Chichester. For obvious reasons, Baxter wanted to challenge the view that there had been, or could be, a form of universal or ‘aristocratical’ ecclesiastical government in which leaders from different confessions made collective decisions binding the whole Church by means of *literae formatae*.<sup>62</sup> As he tried to demonstrate, these letters had never had the legislative or judicial power that this theory implied: they were simply a way of consenting to decisions about orthodoxy already taken by local bishops in synods, and as such they could easily be reversed. If they were actually legally binding, actual examples would have been preserved. Baxter thus parodically inverted Augustine’s appeal to the Donatists: ‘Shew me any *Literas formatas* of all Bishops in the World before the Council of *Nice*, yea, or ever since to this day?’.<sup>63</sup> Ancient letters of recommendation had become an argument for separatism.

#### **‘Upon which the Pope commended him’: testimonials in the 1680s**

The specific effects of Blondel’s book are therefore hard to discern. Unhelped by its arguments, the most lasting legacy of the confessional pressures exerted on Church of England scholars by Baronius, Ferrari, and du Perron was a general sense of unease about letters of recommendation. In a way, this was just the latest appearance in a special context of an old Protestant prejudice. John Bale had articulated this prejudice more than once in the sixteenth century. In his biography of the martyr John Oldcastle (1544), for instance, he mentioned ‘Manye Popyshe parasytes & menne pleasyng flatterers [writing] large commendacyons and encomyes’ of their saints.<sup>64</sup> Then in his anti-Roman play *Three Laws* (printed in 1548), the character of ‘Avarice’ describes himself searching high and low for recommendation: ‘In our perambulacyons | We

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<sup>62</sup> Richard Baxter, *Against the Revolt to a Foreign Jurisdiction, Which would be to England its Perjury, Church-Ruine, and Slavery* (London, 1691), pp. 200-01.

<sup>63</sup> Baxter, *Against the Revolt*, p. 239.

<sup>64</sup> John Bale, *A brefe chronycle concernynge the examinacyon and death of the blessed martyr of Christ syr Iohan Oldecastell the lorde Cobham, collected togyther by Iohan Bale* ([Antwerp], 1544), p. 5.



loke for commendacyons | And lowly salutacyons | In temple, howse, and strete'.<sup>65</sup> David Blondel also played on this longstanding association of commendation with Roman Catholic superstition and error in his book, ridiculing the way in which the fake Nicene formula had 'passed from hand to hand with recommendation' until its authenticity was taken for granted.<sup>66</sup> In this telling, recommendation was a profoundly uncritical activity; it was how falsehoods thrived, or even how papistry thrived.

Letters of recommendation were not safe from this general Reformed suspicion of commendation. That they should be associated with Rome was probably an inevitable historical product of Rome's status as the ecclesiastical and administrative centre of Christianity in the West for centuries. The first English literary history, John Leland's *De Viris Illustribus*, was also the fullest record of this Rome-ward traffic in letters of recommendation: almost all of the British writers whom Leland describes receiving them, like Wilfrid, Winfrith, Alfred, and Matthew Paris, were on their way to or from Rome, a fairly typical move in the life of an ambitious medieval cleric.<sup>67</sup> There was not necessarily an ideology behind this pattern, beyond Leland's humanist admiration for ancient Rome. But when Bale reworked Leland's catalogue, this accidental association hardened into an explanation or causality: letters of recommendation were a specifically Roman Catholic vice. In the case of Bale's entry for Justus, a seventh-century archbishop of Canterbury, commendation and saint-worship went hand in hand: as he put it sarcastically, Justus had been treated in his lifetime by his followers as a 'little saint' just because Pope Boniface V had sent them letters recommending him.<sup>68</sup> Not uncoincidentally, the writers and clerics receiving commendatory letters in Bale's version of literary history were usually also

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<sup>65</sup> John Bale, *The Complete Plays*, ed. by Peter Happé, 2 vols (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1986), II, 3. 1016-19, p. 94. A good account of Bale's propagandistic aims is James Simpson, 'Three Laws', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Drama*, ed. by Tom Betteridge and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 109-22.

<sup>66</sup> Blondel, *De la primauté*, p. 467: 'Veu donc qu'il s'agit d'empescher le debit d'une piece de fausse monnoye que plusieurs personnes tres doctes, ou connivans, ou emportez par l'erreur populaire ont depuis cent ans fait passer de main en main avec recommandation'.

<sup>67</sup> See Leland, *De Viris Illustribus*, pp. 168-9, 206-07 and 236-07.

<sup>68</sup> Bale, *Summarium*, fols. 37<sup>r</sup>-38<sup>v</sup>.

the villains of Christian history who had spread Roman Catholicism around Europe: the most egregious example was the eight-century Anglo-Saxon divine Winfrith, later renamed Boniface, who was given the task of converting Germany after presenting his letters of introduction in Rome.

This theme was still a feature of anti-Catholic polemic more than a century later. Cave was more than capable of exploiting it in the controversial pamphlets that he wrote in the 1680s. In *A Serious Exhortation* (1683), for instance, he appealed to nonconformists by arguing that their distrust of the Church of England had been created by undercover Jesuits like the (suppositious) Faithful Commin, who had fomented sedition in early seventeenth-century England and then returned to Rome to be ‘commended and rewarded’ by the Pope.<sup>69</sup> Meanwhile in his contribution to debates about Rome’s supremacy, the *Dissertation Concerning the Government of the Ancient Church* (1683), the first example that he gave in a long list of Roman interference techniques – just before excommunications, sending over missionaries, and encouraging civil disobedience – was ‘recommending persons to be bishops in foreign Churches, and thence proceeding to impose them’.<sup>70</sup> In his work on the pre-Reformation past, Henry Wharton tried to resist drawing the conclusion that the English system of appointing bishops had worked in this way: as he argued, the apparently solid evidence that there had been an official practice of recommendation in medieval England was misleading, since ‘the King did not always recommend, nor did the Pope always grant his Bulls to the person recommended’.<sup>71</sup>

By the 1680s the scene that Cave had sketched in his *Primitive Christianity* of an ancient Church united by the exchange of canonical letters had switched to a darker vision. His biography of Athanasius in his *Ecclesiastici* was the centrepiece of his thinking in this period. At 158 pages it towered over the rest of the biographies in the collection, offering an allegory of

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<sup>69</sup> [William Cave], *A Serious Exhortation*, p. 29.

<sup>70</sup> William Cave, *A Dissertation*, pp. 264–65.

<sup>71</sup> [Henry Wharton], *A Specimen of Some Errors*, p. 7.

the crises that most worried Cave in his day – Dissent, antitrinitarianism, and papistry. It was also a kind of cautionary tale about letters of recommendation: in a way, and as idiosyncratic as this sounds, their misuse by the Arians was the single most important explanation for Athanasius's downfall in Cave's account, even if he did not spell this out.

To an extent this thesis was not original. In his 1664 biography of Athanasius, Nathaniel Bacon had referred to the recommendation of a nameless Arian presbyter to Constantine as 'the great hinge upon which the affairs of the Empire in relation to the Church did turn'.<sup>72</sup> For the most part, however, commendatory letters had orthodox uses in Bacon's narrative, whereas Cave, who almost certainly based his biography on Bacon's, consistently depicted recommendation as the practice of heretics, or at least a practice mastered by heretics.<sup>73</sup> His ancient sources helped him to this insight: Athanasius's bishop and patron Alexander, for instance, had complained in his letters that the Arians had deceived church leaders into giving them 'wordy letters' and that Eusebius of Nicedomia had 'written letters to all parts commending them'.<sup>74</sup> In his biography, Cave reproduced these complaints as he found them preserved in Henry Valois' editions of the ecclesiastical histories of Theodoret and Socrates.<sup>75</sup> At the same time, a sign of his unusual interest, he also found or created examples of recommendation that his sources had missed, describing for instance how the Eusebian party 'recommended their Opinions' at court and then gave Constantine their recommendations for

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<sup>72</sup> Nathaniel Bacon, *The History of Athanasius, with the Rise, Growth, and Down-Fall of the Arian Heresie* (London, 1664), p. 53.

<sup>73</sup> See Bacon, *The History of Athanasius*, p. 107, referring to Athanasius: 'And they furnish him with Letters of recommendation to the Alexandrian Churches, and so they commend him to the blessing of Almighty God'. The only certain evidence that Cave was familiar with Bacon's book is a note in his hand in the 1705 St George's library catalogue, in which he added Bacon's name next to the existing entry for *The History of Athanasius*, which was originally printed anonymously: see M.891 67D, p. 4. The identity of this Bacon is unclear. He cannot be the Jesuit living in Rome, as the Short Title Catalogue implies he is. The most likely candidate is the student admitted to Trinity College, Cambridge in 1653. See Dorothy Johnston, 'The Life and Domestic Context of Francis Willughby', in *Virtuoso by Nature*, ed. by Tim Birkhead, pp. 1-43 (p. 8, note 21).

<sup>74</sup> *Socratis Scholastici et Hermiae Sozomeni Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. by Valois, p. 10: 'καὶ γράφειν ἐπεχείρησε πανταχοῦ, συνιστῶν αὐτοὺς' and *Theodoriti Episcopi Cyri et Evagrii Scholastici Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. by Henri Valois (Paris, 1673), p. 10: 'σωμυλῶτερα γράμματα'.

<sup>75</sup> See Cave, *Ecclesiastici*, pp. 47 and 50.

bishops to preside over Athanasius's trial at Tyre, anticipating the arts of modern-day Roman Catholics.<sup>76</sup>

This narrative reflected contemporary anxieties. For at least half a century after the Restoration, a continual refrain of Church of England leaders was that practices of ecclesiastical recommendation had fallen into disrepair, as Jeremy Gregory and John Spurr have demonstrated.<sup>77</sup> In 1665, the archbishop of Canterbury Gilbert Sheldon reminded his bishops that no one should be ordained without dimissory letters, as per the 1604 canons.<sup>78</sup> Thirteen years later his successor William Sancroft issued a stronger statement, reaffirming that the granting of testimonial letters was 'a sacred thing, and in the first intention of great and very weighty importance'.<sup>79</sup> Unfortunately, he continued, they were now being given out freely or obtained under false pretences. The result was that 'great mischiefs in the church and scandals daily ensue, persons altogether undeserving, or at least not duly qualified, being too often, upon the credit of such papers, admitted into holy orders'. Sancroft called for the renewal of canonical practice: the letters should be dated and sealed by three clergymen who had known the candidate for at least three years, and they should give a full account of his 'learning, prudence, and holy life'. The success of his appeal is not clear, although it cannot be a good sign that Compton and William Wake reiterated it in subsequent years, and William Lloyd complained

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<sup>76</sup> Cave, *Ecclesiastici*, pp. 78 and 97.

<sup>77</sup> See Jeremy Gregory, 'Standards for Admission to the Ministry of the Church of England in the Eighteenth Century', in *The Pastor Bonus: Papers Read at the British-Dutch Colloquium at Utrecht, 18-21 September 2002*, ed. by Theo Clemens and Wim Janse (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), pp. 283-95; John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England*, chapter 4, especially pp. 182-83; and Norman Sykes, *William Wake: Archbishop of Canterbury, 1657-1737*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), I, pp. 164-65.

<sup>78</sup> Gilbert Sheldon, 'Orders and Instructions by the most reverend father in God Gilbert, lord archbishop of Cant.', in *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae, Ab Anno MDXLVI. Ad Annum MDCCXVII*, ed. by David Wilkins, 4 vols (London, 1737), IV, pp. 582-83 (p. 582).

<sup>79</sup> William Sancroft, 'Directions from the archbishop of Cant. to his suffragans concerning testimonials to be granted unto candidates for holy orders', in *Concilia*, ed. by David Wilkins, IV, p. 600.

about ‘the pervers way of giving lrs Testimoniall’ at St John’s College, Cambridge in a letter to Thomas Tenison in 1697.<sup>80</sup>

The significance of this concern for Cave cannot be emphasised enough. In this thesis we have encountered several different contexts for his work: the political turbulence of the mid-century, the explosion of interest in apologetic accounts of Christianity’s reasonableness, tensions between the ideals and working practices of the Republic of Letters, and the exhaustion of attempts to build an alliance with the Greek Church against Rome. On the face of it a crisis in practices of recommendation looks like a less compelling, or at least a less scholarly, motivation for his work, but it provided his career with its logic just as much as those other contexts.

On the one hand Cave’s response, in the predictable way of early-modern historians, was to use his historical research to provide legitimation for modern-day solutions, in this case for reforming church discipline. The most useful example that he could find for his contemporaries was relayed to them in his biography of Basil of Caesarea in the *Ecclesiastici*. As Cave discovered from Basil’s correspondence, he had initially been dismayed by the abuses that he found in his province: simony was rife, suffragan bishops were ordaining men without any inspection of their suitability, and ‘Interest or Relation, Friendship or Neighborhood were the best Qualifications that most had to recommend them’, so that ‘the Church was fill’d with unworthy men’.<sup>81</sup> *Plus ça change*. So Basil had set about making reforms, in particular by insisting that deacons and presbyters interview candidates for ordination, taking an account of ‘the course and manner of their Life’ and passing testimonials to their provincial bishop. The lessons for the present were impossible to miss.

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<sup>80</sup> Lloyd to Tenison, 31<sup>st</sup> May 1697, now LPL MS 930, no. 45. For Compton’s and Wake’s appeals, see *Concilia*, ed. by Wilkins, IV, pp. 622 and 671.

<sup>81</sup> Cave, *Ecclesiastici*, pp. 243-44.

More than this, Cave's sensitivity to the problem of recommendation gave him a reason for becoming a literary historian and a form for writing literary history. His superiors in the Church of England hierarchy used a variety of equivalent expressions to describe what they expected a testimonial letter to account for: 'the lives and learning of such persons', 'the good life and conversation of the persons to be ordained', 'the ability, honesty, and good conversation of the person commended', and so on. It is not a coincidence that the same expressions could give the gist of most of the bio-bibliographical entries in Cave's *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*. From this perspective its two volumes were a vast archive of historical testimonials about the holiness and orthodoxy of thousands of Christian writers.

Almost any example from the book would prove this claim. If we are prepared to trust Wharton's recollections of who contributed what, the easiest way is to catch Cave in the act of taking a half-completed biography and then finishing it into a recommendation. Take, for instance, the entries for the fourth-century theologian Theodore of Mopsuestia and his slightly later follower Theodoret of Cyrus, whose writings had been officially condemned in the mid-fifth century in an episode known as the Three Chapters Controversy. Wharton's pencil marks in his copy of the *Historia Literaria* indicate that in both cases Cave delegated the main part of the biography to his research assistant then added his own remarks at the end commending the two men. For Theodore, he intervened to list some of the writers who had vindicated his orthodoxy, like Facundus of Hermiane, and pointed out that his reputation for heterodoxy was based on abbreviated, interpolated, and corrupted copies of his works, before observing that it set a dangerous precedent for a man who was judged 'Catholic' in his lifetime, dying in communion with his church, to be anathematized more than a century after his death.<sup>82</sup> In the entry for Theodoret, he likewise tried to rescue him from his critics: whatever they said, he was

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<sup>82</sup> Cave, *Historia Literaria*, p. 296: 'Denique iniquum esse, ut qui pro Episcopo Catholico habitus sit, & in Ecclesiae pace diem obierit, plusquam integro post mortem saeculo, velut Haereticus anathemati subjiceretur'.

pious and disciplined, he had combated heretics, he had given away his inheritance to the poor, he had contributed generously to public building projects, and the theological lapses in his work needed to be attributed to his zeal and fervency.<sup>83</sup>

These two examples are useful because they remind us that recommendation was still a subject of international confessional controversy in this period, even in cases where it looked like its importance was primarily parochial. Over the course of the seventeenth century, Church of England scholars had gradually started to restore the reputations of Theodore and Theodoret. The way that John Pearson underlined the phrase ‘& Theodorum Mopsuestiae laudibus merito extollit’ in his copy of Photius’s *Bibliotheca* gives an indication of the new mood; the contemporary early-modern English translation would probably have been, ‘and he recommends Theodore highly’.<sup>84</sup> The reason was that the Three Chapters Controversy had become a favourite proof of seventeenth-century Englishmen for any number of anti-Papal theses, since as a historical episode it had turned on a series of events that seemed to exhibit the limits of papal authority: Pope Vigilius refusing to denounce Theodore and Theodoret, being summoned to Constantinople and condemned by the emperor Justinian, reversing his decision, and then alienating the Western Churches, who then broke lastingly with Rome.

English excitement about this story had quickened considerably in the years before Cave published his literary history. Gilbert Burnet, Francis Fullwood, and Samuel Parker had all recounted it within the last dozen years to demonstrate, in Burnet’s words, ‘That *Britain* was no part of [the Pope’s] Patriarchate’.<sup>85</sup> Cave’s recommendations were therefore an assertion of England’s supremacy: that is, he was flexing his historic privilege to make recommendations independently of Rome, just as Heylyn and others had found the early British bishops doing.

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<sup>83</sup> Cave, *Historia Literaria*, p. 315: ‘Summam animi puritatem, & arctioris vitae disciplinam’.

<sup>84</sup> See Pearson’s copy, now CUL Adv.a.41.3, p. 991. Cave frequently translated the verb ‘laudare’ as ‘recommend’.

<sup>85</sup> Gilbert Burnet, *A Relation of a Conference, Held About Religion, At London, the Third of April, 1676* (London, 1676), p. 18. See also Francis Fullwood, *Roma Ruit. The Pillars of Rome Broken* (London, 1679), pp. 202-03; and Samuel Parker, *An Account of the Government of the Christian Church, for the first Six Hundred Years* (London, 1683), pp. 333-45.

Modelling his whole literary history on an ancient Greek letter that bore no trace of the Nicene formula – the συστατικὴ ἐπιστολὴ in Johannes Löwenklau's *Iuris Graeco-Romani* – was a much larger confessional riposte along the same lines, a solution to the problem that the most influential histories of commendatory letters in antiquity still made it look like the form was originally or essentially Roman Catholic.

### **‘the patronage of great Examples’: the risks of recommendation**

Commendatory letters were therefore a specific, extremely versatile instance of a much more widely diffused culture of recommendation in late seventeenth-century England. It was obvious to Cave's contemporaries that his books, particularly his vernacular biographies, had made a genre out of recommendation. In the dedicatory letter introducing his *Apostolici*, Cave spelled out that the biographies contained in the collection were meant to serve his readers as exemplary guides about how to lead their lives: as he put it, the Fathers' piety and holiness 'recommend them as incomparable Examples to Posterity'.<sup>86</sup> This was not lost on his audience. His lives were quickly recommended to clergymen as textbooks of holy living.<sup>87</sup>

The importance of recommending by examples was an enduring humanist commonplace (and one that Cave never abandoned). Most theorists of historical writing emphasised that the historian's special role was to muster rhetorical exempla for his readers to imitate or shun.<sup>88</sup> Cave found the same precept urged in a sacred context everywhere in his studies in the late 1660s. The nonconformist George Swinnock stated it best in a passage that Cave checked and noted: '*Cicero tells us, Nothing prevails more with men than similitudes and examples [...] consider therefore the Prophets and Apostles of the Lord*'.<sup>89</sup> In his notebook Cave gathered

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<sup>86</sup> Cave, *Apostolici*, 'To Nathanael Lord Bishop of Durham' [no signature].

<sup>87</sup> See Thomas Bray, *Bibliotheca parochialis: or, A Scheme of such Theological Heads Both General and Particular* (London, 1697), p. 119.

<sup>88</sup> See Paulina Kewes, 'History and Its Uses', in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. by Paulina Kewes (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 2006), pp. 1-30 (p. 13); and Anthony Grafton, *What Was History?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 31.

<sup>89</sup> SGCL C.525, fol. 20<sup>r</sup>. Swinnock, *Works*, p. 841. See C.525, fol. 22<sup>v</sup>, for other notes to the same effect.



numerous passages to this effect, from the writings of Amyraut, Grotius, Manton, Gurnall, and others, under headings like ‘the excellent pattern and example’ of Christ and ‘the example and influence of holy men’. Preaching at Whitehall in 1676 he brought a characteristic anxiety about the misuse of commendation to this theme, telling the royal court that just as virtue is encouraged by noble examples, so ‘Vice is never more fatally prosperous and successful, then when it has the patronage of great Examples to recommend it’.<sup>90</sup>

Despite this near consensus, the practice of recommendation still contained risks for historians and theologians because it was so closely allied to the language of exemplarity. First of all, anyone who looked like over-emphasising ancient examples of holy living, especially Christ’s, was liable to be charged with undermining the soteriological importance of faith and grace or even denying Christ’s divinity altogether.<sup>91</sup> These were accusations that Jeremy Taylor, the pattern for Cave’s scholarship, had faced throughout his career. On its own devotional-historical ground Taylor’s *The Great Exemplar* (1649) was safe enough. But Taylor had accumulated around it a set of opinions that must have made its theological underpinnings appear more suspicious. In his discussions of original sin and repentance in his *Unum Necessarium* (1655) and *Dens Justificatus* (1656), for instance, Taylor had taken his reading of Simon Episcopius to the limits of what could pass safely as Reformed doctrine.<sup>92</sup> To critics, these two books came dangerously close to arguing, as Socinians were characterised as doing, that Christ saved more by the example of his obedience than by his sacrifice, a denial of the classical Calvinist position that God’s justice required a propitiation or satisfaction beyond what imperfect human beings were capable of achieving with good works. Cave knew these

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<sup>90</sup> Cave, *A Sermon*, p. 20.

<sup>91</sup> On accusations of Socinianism in England in this period, see Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution: The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>92</sup> See William Poole, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 40-57; and Mark A. Ellis, *Simon Episcopius’ Doctrine of Original Sin* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).

arguments well from his studies of John Cameron, Johannes Hoornbeeck, Friedrich Spanheim, and Anthony Burgess in the late 1660s.<sup>93</sup>

Like many divines of his generation Cave had made a careful study of Episcopius's and Taylor's teachings on repentance, obedience, and good works, and predictably when he tried to articulate this general position in doctrinal terms he attracted the same critique as Taylor, although to a milder degree. In the biography of Paul in his *Antiquitates Apostolicae* – as we have seen, first published as a companion piece to the fifth edition of the *Great Exemplar* in 1675 – Cave devoted an essay to trying to reconcile the apparently discrepant remarks on justification in Scripture by Paul and James, which stated the conflict between faith and works in the starkest terms. His solution was mostly borrowed from George Bull's *Harmonia Apostolica* (1670), published five years earlier.<sup>94</sup> According to Cave, Paul was objecting to the widespread opinion in his day that men could be saved by observing the rituals of the ceremonial laws, like circumcision: hence salvation was by faith alone. Later on, after Paul's words were misinterpreted, James had had to intervene with the reminder that mere belief in Christ's doctrine, without good works, was insufficient.

Cave employed a familiar idiom to paraphrase James's arguments. As he put it, their aim was 'to shew the insufficiency of a naked Faith, and an empty profession of Religion, that 'tis not enough to recommend us to the Divine acceptance, and to justifie us in the sight of Heaven'.<sup>95</sup> By now it should seem inevitable that Cave was on the brink of using 'recommendation' as an equivalent term to 'justification' here. The immediate temptation is to

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<sup>93</sup> See John Cameron, 'Praelectiones de Ecclesia', in *Ioannis Cameronis Scoto-Britanni Theologi Eximij TA ΣΩΖΟΜΕΝΑ Sive Opera* (Geneva, 1659), p. 240; Friedrich Spanheim, *Dubiorum Evangelicorum Pars Tertia* (Geneva, 1639), p. 14; Johannes Hoornbeeck, *Theologiae Practicae, Pars Prior* (Utrecht, 1663), p. 627; and Anthony Burgess, *The True Doctrine of Justification Asserted and Vindicated* (London, 1654), p. 56.

<sup>94</sup> See Bull, *Harmonia Apostolica* (London, 1670), pp. 53-95. The best discussion of Bull's solution and responses to it is Stephen Hampton, *Anti-Arminians: The Anglican Reformed Tradition from Charles II to George I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), chapter 2, pp. 39-76.

<sup>95</sup> William Cave, *Antiquitates Apostolicae: or, The Lives, Acts and Martyrdoms of the Holy Apostles of our Saviour* (London, 1675), p. 98.

conclude that Cave's interest in testimonials and letters of recommendation, in other words resumés of men's good works throughout their lives, reflects the influence of his education in Arminian texts, although he was just as broadly exposed to Reformed alternatives, and as we have seen, a concern with holy living was not the preserve of a single party of divines in Restoration England, least of all a 'moralist' point of view.<sup>96</sup> In any case, at least one contemporary theologian on the Continent was troubled by Cave's essay. In 1696 the Dutch Calvinist Hermann Wits suggested that by redefining 'faith' as 'obedience' and making good works a condition of justification, Cave over-emphasised man's powers and slighted the role of God's grace. For Wits this was just short of Socinianism, the view that, as he characterised it, belief in Christ meant following the example of his obedience and then being rewarded with eternal life.<sup>97</sup>

Wits's remarks circulated fairly widely thanks to his unofficial role as the gatekeeper of Cave's reputation in much of Reformed Europe, having written the preface for the first Dutch translation of *Primitive Christianity* in 1692.<sup>98</sup> A few years later he repeated it in the introductory essay to the Dutch edition combining Cave's three collections of biographies, *Apostolische Oudheden* (1698), and his critique was then added to subsequent German translations, although tellingly it was left out of rival editions printed at Leipzig, where most of Cave's correspondents were based.<sup>99</sup> Its final appearance was in Latin in Wits's *Miscellaneorum Sacrorum Tomus Alter* (1700), but before then a review of his preface in the *Bibliotheca Librorum Novorum* (1698)

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<sup>96</sup> For the relevant reading on 'moralism' see footnote 63 in the first chapter of this thesis.

<sup>97</sup> Hermann Wits, *Animadversiones Irenicae ad Controversias Quae, sub infaustis Antinomorum et Neonomorum Nominibus, in Britannia nunc agitantur* (Utrecht, 1696), p. 106: 'At quatenam est haec actio? si Socinum audimus, in Christum credere, nihil aliud est quam Deo ad ipsius Christi normam & praescriptum obedientem se praebere, idque faciendo ab ipso Christo vitae sempiternae coronam expectare. A quo non longe recedunt, si modo recedant, illi quibuscum nunc disputamus Fratres, qui similiter fidem definiunt, novam quamdam animi vitaeque rationem, & obedientiam mandatorum Christi?'

<sup>98</sup> *Het Eerste Christendom, Door William Cave: vertaalt door Salomon Bor* (Utrecht, 1692).

<sup>99</sup> *Apostolische Oudheden, &c. id est, Antiquitates Apostolicae [...] & Patrum primitivae Ecclesiasticae, usque ad finem seculi IV* (Utrecht, 1698). The different German editions are *Antiquitates patrum et ecclesiasticae, oder Leben, Wandel, Lehr, Todt und Marter der apostolischen Väter* (Bremen, 1701) and *Antiquitates Apostolicae, oder Leben, Thaten und Märtyr-tod der Heiligen Apostel* (Leipzig, 1710). For a full list, see McKenzie, *A Catalog*, pp. 140-43.

specifically mentioned his comparison of Cave's views to Socinian teachings.<sup>100</sup> It was discovered there by Jean Le Clerc, who then brought it up in 1700 towards the end of a long quarrel with Cave.<sup>101</sup>

Le Clerc's main explicit target in this debate was what we might call the second major risk of recommendation. His reservation about Cave's work, as he began airing it in 1688, was that he was so eager to praise ancient writers that he needed to be described as a panegyrist rather than a historian.<sup>102</sup> His coup was using Wits's critique to hint that there was a connection between the historian obsessed with recommending and the Socinian infatuated with Christ's example. Le Clerc's own motivations for reminding his readers of Cave's proximity to antitrinitarian ideas were only just out of sight here: it gave him a way of deflecting the charge of Arianism that he himself usually attracted, as well as nicely serving his arguments that allowing present-day orthodoxy to be decided by historians of the early Church was risky.<sup>103</sup> In the eighteenth century and beyond, as we shall see in the next chapter, his critique of Cave's scholarship was successful because it began to be taken seriously as a neutral statement about historiographical method, rather than as a self-serving strategy. At the time, Cave's response was to mount a stronger defence of Eusebius's orthodoxy and, with it, of the theological underpinnings of the history of letters.

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<sup>100</sup> See 'Review of H. Wits Oeffening', in *Bibliotheca Librorum Novorum. Mensis Martis & Aprilis. Anno 1698* (Utrecht, 1698), pp. 260-69 (p. 268).

<sup>101</sup> Jean Le Clerc, *Epistolae Criticae, et Ecclesiasticae, In quibus ostenditur usus Artis Criticae, Cujus possunt haberi Volumen Tertium* (Amsterdam, 1700), p. 89.

<sup>102</sup> Jean Le Clerc, *Bibliothèque Universelle et Historique de l'Année 1688. Septembre* (Amsterdam, 1688), X, p. 480: 'Cette charité prétendue, qui ne s'étend qu'aux Peres que l'on regarde comme orthodoxes, a fait que nous n'avons presque que des Panégyriques des Anciens, où l'on a constamment supprimé leurs défauts, lors qu'on ne les a pas pu couvrir du masque de quelque vertu'.

<sup>103</sup> On Le Clerc's brushes with Socinianism, see Annie Barnes, *Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736) et la République des Lettres* (Paris: Librairie Droz, 1938), especially pp. 237-44. Pocock's account of Le Clerc's motivations in his *Barbarism and Religion, Volume Five. Religion: The First Triumph* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 90-127, needs to be supplemented with Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom*, chapter 6, pp. 447-541. More generally see Maria Cristina Pitassi, *Entre Croire et Savoir: Le Problème de la Méthode Critique chez Jean Le Clerc* (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

### ‘he that is sent, ἀπόστολος’: the history of Christian letters

For most of the dozen years of their quarrel, Cave and Le Clerc wrote at cross-purposes. Their theories about writing history were too different for them to find much common ground, and neither moved far from his original position in the period between Le Clerc’s biographical essay accusing Eusebius of being an Arian (1688) and Cave’s last defence of Eusebius and himself in his *Epistola Apologetica* (1700). Le Clerc’s main principle of interpretation – that an ancient writer only reveals his true attitudes when he speaks against his own interests and despite his fear of punishment – made no impression on his opponent, who continued to accumulate explanations for Eusebius’s more suspect actions and statements: he had been tricked by the Arians into defending them, the ancient historians had confused him for the avowedly antitrinitarian Eusebius of Nicomedia, and he had occasionally spoken incautiously or over-zealously.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, although Cave had made a note reminding himself to re-read Denis Petau’s account of the infiltration of Platonism into early Christian theology in 1686, he seemed unbothered by Le Clerc’s recapitulation of the same argument to prove that ancient orthodoxy, just as much as heterodoxy, was shaped by pagan philosophy.<sup>105</sup>

Rather than confront Le Clerc’s arguments directly, Cave’s preferred tactic was to unpick the history of Eusebius criticism. As he observed, most of the accusations of Arianism that Eusebius had attracted had been ideologically motivated, covers for less rational animuses. First of all Jerome, typically, had allowed his ‘zeal and passion’ to get the better of his judgment. Then the bishops assembled at the Second Nicene Council in 787 had been antagonised by his

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<sup>104</sup> Cave made his defence of Eusebius in three places: *Ecclesiastici*, pp. 29-32; *Pars Altera*, Appendix 3, pp. 61-88; and *Epistola Apologetica adversus iniquas Joannis Clerici criminationes* (London, 1700). For Le Clerc’s critical principle, see his *Epistolae Criticae*, p. 65: ‘Quotiescumque Scriptor quispiam loquitur ex sententia & consuetudine vulgo recepta, non est semper putandus cum vulgo sentire, praesertim si periculosum sit dissensum ullum ea in re testari, aut ambiguae sint loquutiones; at si ab ea sententia, vel ab usitatis formulis aliquando manifesto recedat, tum vero ex animi sententia loqui censendus erit’.

<sup>105</sup> SGCL RBK C.524: ‘de Haeresibus Vet. Eccles. ex Platonica philosophia [?] ib. c.3’ – a reference to Denis Petau, *Theologicorum Dogmatum Tomus Primus-Quartus*, 4 vols (Paris, 1644-50), I (1644), Prolegomena, sig.ēiii.ᵀ-ēvi.ᵀ. For a discussion of Petau’s and Le Clerc’s arguments, see Dmitri Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom*, pp. 447-541.

opposition to image worship. More recently Baronius had needed to discredit him to be able to contend that Constantine had been baptised at Rome, rather than Nicomedia, as Eusebius alleged.<sup>106</sup> The only critique that thus required a more careful refutation was a letter of Athanasius's, partially preserved in the published acts of II Nicaea, blaming him for suggesting that Christ was inferior to the Father and not true God.<sup>107</sup>

In response to this remark, Cave argued that Eusebius must have been quoting Scripture – specifically, the phrases (as Cave gives them) ‘the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent’ in John 17.3 and ‘my Father that sent me is greater than I’ in John 14.28. In Cave’s day it was well known that these verses were susceptible of heterodox interpretations, but a queue of commentators had defended their trinitarianism. As Johannes Gerhard, Jerome Zanchi, and Anthony Burgess had suggested – to take examples just from Cave’s reading in the late 1660s – the ‘only’ of the first passage was simply meant to distinguish God from false deities, rather than the Father from the Son. Cave would have found the same defence articulated in a Roman Catholic work if he consulted his father’s commonplace book, where whoever owned the book before John Cave had copied it out from Luis de Tena’s commentary on Paul’s letter to the Hebrews (1611).<sup>108</sup>

The reason why Cave was unperturbed by the possibility that Eusebius had hinted at the Son’s inferiority to the Father was that recent research was demonstrating that the trinitarianism of the ancient Christians was subordinationist.<sup>109</sup> Cave relied particularly on George Bull’s analysis of the evidence in his *Defensio Fidei Nicaenae* (1685), which in turn was

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<sup>106</sup> See Cave, *Ecclesiastici*, pp. 29-33.

<sup>107</sup> See *Sacrosancta Concilia ad Regiam Editionem Exacta Quae Nunc Quarta Parte Prodit Auctor. Tomus Septimus Ab anno DCCCLXXXVII ad annum DCCCXLVII*, ed. by Philippe Labbé (Paris, 1671), p. 498.

<sup>108</sup> SGCL C.525, fol. 19<sup>r</sup>. Burgess, *CXLV Expository Sermons*, pp. 73-74; Johannes Gerhard, *Locorum Theologicorum concisius pertractatorum, Editio Novissima* (Frankfurt and Hamburg, 1657), pp. 261-63; and de Tena, *Commentaria*, pp. 82-83.

<sup>109</sup> On debates over the Trinity in seventeenth-century England, see Paul C. H. Lim, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of The Trinity in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) and Philip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes: The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century* (London: T&T Clark, 2003).

indebted to earlier Remonstrant critiques of the Calvinist position that the Son was αὐτόθεος, ‘God from himself’ or self-generated.<sup>110</sup> Bull identified an ancient, pre-Nicene tradition claiming that the doctrine of the Incarnation required a subordinationist economy of the Trinity, since by definition only a begotten person – like the Son but unlike the Father – was capable of being sent into the world to take human form.<sup>111</sup> For Bull, Eusebius was the chief subordinationist: he had recognised that Christ was ‘as if sent by another’ (‘tanquam ab alio missus’) and therefore could not be αὐτόθεος.<sup>112</sup>

It is easy to imagine this image impressing Cave. In its crudest form it seems to ask: if the Son was sent, does that not make him like a letter? No one took John 17.3 quite so literally. But it was already conventional and by no means heterodox to literalise the metaphor by depicting Christ carrying letters as he descended to earth. In his 1658 poem *Ter Tria*, for instance, Faithful Teate wrote of Jesus that ‘An Universal Monarchs state, to him long since Heav’ns Letters Pattents gave’; Cave would send a copy of the second edition of this poem to Leipzig in 1692, where a German translation appeared in 1700.<sup>113</sup> In a different context – in fact an explicitly subordinationist one – Simon Episcopius strikingly compared Christ to a diplomat

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<sup>110</sup> See Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, chapter 5, pp. 162-91. For the history of debates about whether Christ was αὐτόθεος, see Richard A. Muller, ‘The Christological Problem in the Thought of Jacob Arminius’, *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 68 (1988), 145-63; and *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics. The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca.1520-ca.1725. Volume Four: The Trinity of God*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003; repr. 2006), pp. 76-88.

<sup>111</sup> George Bull, *Defensio Fidei Nicaenae, Ex scriptis, quae exstant, Catholicorum Doctorum, qui intra tria prima Ecclesiae Christianae secula floruerunt* (Oxford, 1685), p. 439.

<sup>112</sup> Bull, *Defensio*, p. 480. For modern discussions of Eusebius’s view of the Trinity, see Mark Edwards, *Religions of the Constantinian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 273-91; Rebecca Lyman, *Christology and Cosmology: Models of Divine Activity in Origen, Eusebius, and Athanasius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 84-122; and Christopher A. Beeley, *The Unity of Christ: Continuity and Conflict in Patristic Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), pp. 50-91.

<sup>113</sup> Faithful Teate, *Ter Tria, or the Doctrine of the Three Sacred Persons, Father, Son & Spirit* (London, 1669), p. 31. See Cave’s letter to Otto Mencke dated March 1692 and printed in the *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, I.2 (1742), p. 356. On the poem see Crawford Gibbon, ‘Poetry and piety: John Owen, Faithful Teate, and communion with God’, in *The Pure Flame of Devotion: The History of Christian Spirituality. Essays in Honour of Michael A. G. Haykin*, ed. by G. Stephen Weaver Jr and Ian Hugh Clary (Kitchener, Ontario, Canada: Joshua Press, 2013), pp. 195-213 and Angela Lynch, *Ter Tria, by Faithful Teate, with notes and a critical introduction* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), introduction.

presenting letters of recommendation, ‘literae systaticae’, from the court he represented.<sup>114</sup> The Remonstrant scholar was arguing from John 17.3 that salvation did not depend on knowing the exact mode of the Son’s filiation: as with the diplomat vouched for by his government, it was enough to know that the Father had sent Christ and written on his behalf.<sup>115</sup> Episcopus then went on to dismiss historical controversies over the word ὁμοούσιος in a way that Cave, the apologist for Nicene orthodoxy, would have disliked, but the simile must have struck him as apt, given his life-long interest in commendation.

In interested hands these metaphors could be generalised into a whole vision of Christian history. Cave never worked this theory out systematically in print, but in more and less specific forms the motif threaded its way through his career. Three examples from texts that played an important part in his education will show Cave encountering different versions of it. First, his father’s commonplace book. There John Cave had made a note of the passage in Taylor’s *Of the Sacred Order and Offices of Episcopacy* where its author used John 20.21 to prove the divine origins of episcopacy: according to Taylor, the verse ‘As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you’ showed that the first bishops had been given their commission directly from God.<sup>116</sup> Second, the notebook that he made out of his copy of Magri’s *Notitia*. On one of its interleaved pages Cave noted the etymology of the word Apostle, observing that ‘Ἀπόστολος’ meant ‘something sent’ in Greek. Five or so years later, this note was the basis for what Cave wrote in the introduction to his second book, where he clarified his point by adding that Roman dimissory letters were ‘usually called Apostoli’.<sup>117</sup> Third, Cave’s reading in the late 1660s. There he would have come across Thomas Manton’s discussion of how the Gospel was described by

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<sup>114</sup> Simon Episcopus, *Opera Theologica* (Amsterdam, 1650), p. 339: ‘quibus tamen istud peculiare est, quod eos subditi non modo teneantur nomine Principis sui recipere, eorumque literis systaticis aut fiduciariis fidem habere, sed & mandatis jussisque eorum, simulatque ea intelligunt, parere ac morem gerere, eumque iis honorem exhibere’.

<sup>115</sup> Episcopus, *Opera Theologica*, p. 340.

<sup>116</sup> John Cave’s note is SGCL C.526, p. 382. Jeremy Taylor, *Of the Sacred Order, and Offices of Episcopacy, by Divine Institution, Apostolicall Tradition, & Catholike Practice* (Oxford, 1642), p. 35.

<sup>117</sup> Cave, *Antiquitates Apostolicae*, ii.



the writer of the Epistle of Jude: ‘Pray mark, ‘tis *sent*; he doth not say we have *brought* it to you, but ‘tis *sent*; ‘tis a token sent from Heaven in love’.<sup>118</sup> Christ, Gospel, Apostles, bishops – quite early on in his career Cave was learning these these were like letters, kinds of letter, literary.

Of course, this raised the question of actual letters. As we have seen, Cave made letters the most important literary form of early Christianity. In this he was emulating Eusebius, whose *Ecclesiastical History* not only made pioneering documentary use of ancient letters, often reproducing their contents in full, but also doubled as a literary history because of the attention that it paid to early Christian writings.<sup>119</sup> Cave implied as much when he wrote to tell Ernst Salomon Cyprian that his new edition of Jerome’s *De Viris Illustribus* should flag all the passages where Jerome had copied Eusebius.<sup>120</sup> Cave may or may not have seen a connection specifically between Eusebius’s subordinationism and his career as a literary historian – as if his special trinitarian interest in Christ being sent by the Father had also made him especially attentive to the letters that early Christians were sending one another. Either way, a sacred history whose key spiritual, providential events were acts of sending and which also devoted considerable attention to acts of letter-writing was bound to raise the importance of literature in Cave’s eyes. To put this insight much more baldly than he would have considered doing: this tradition of historiography gave the impression that literature was a kind of essentially Christian activity, while at the same time Christianity was essentially literary. Again it needs stressing that no one

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<sup>118</sup> Thomas Manton, *A Practical Commentary*, p. 150.

<sup>119</sup> On Eusebius’s pioneering historiography, see Arnaldo Momigliano, ‘Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century A.D’, in *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977), pp. 107-26, and ‘The Origins of Ecclesiastical Historiography’, in *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 132-52; and more recently Andrew Louth, ‘Eusebius and the birth of church history’, in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, ed. by Frances Young, Lewis Ayres, and Andrew Louth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 266-74; and Anthony Grafton, ‘Church History in Early Modern Europe: Tradition and Innovation’, in *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, ed. by Simon Ditchfield, Howard Louthan, and Katherine Elliot Van Liere (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 3-36. For modern claims that Eusebius was a literary historian, see Robert McQueen Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 61, and Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 128.

<sup>120</sup> As discussed in chapter 2. See Cave to Cyprian, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1700, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha: Nachlass Cyprian, Ernst Salomon, Chart. A.422, pp. 18-19.

in the seventeenth century, as far as I am aware, admitted to reading Eusebius and Christian literary history in this way. But in at least one sense Cave went as far as claiming that the literary tradition was *de jure divino*.

From the *Chartophylax Ecclesiasticus* (1685) onwards all Cave's bio-bibliographies started with an entry for Christ. The proof that he was the first Christian writer, Cave claimed, was the survival of a letter of his addressed to King Abgar that Eusebius said he had discovered in the archives in Edessa in Syria. By the late seventeenth century very few scholars were prepared to accept that this missive was genuine, and Cave's apology for it won him ridicule in the 1690s. As various historians told him, the story was filled with inconsistencies: Scripture never mentioned Christ writing a letter, the letter contained quotations from books demonstrably written after Christ's death, there were no references to it before Eusebius, and so on.<sup>121</sup> In fact Cave's support left him in dangerous company: its few outright defenders included the Quaker Samuel Fisher, whose 1660 translation of the letter was part of a campaign to unsettle orthodox assumptions about the boundary dividing canonical writings from apocrypha, and the antitrinitarian Christopher Sand, who seized on Abgar's hesitation in his response to Christ about whether he was God or the Son of God (seeming to imply that he was either one or the other but not both).<sup>122</sup> Nonetheless Cave was not persuaded away from his convictions, even adding further arguments as he revised his literary history in the early years of the eighteenth century.<sup>123</sup> The longer he held out, and the more committed he became to Eusebian claims and

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<sup>121</sup> Books criticizing him for this included Samuel Basnage, *De rebus sacris & Ecclesiasticis Exercitationes Historico-Criticae* (Utrecht, 1692), pp. 432-34; J. C. Frauendorf, *B.C.D. De Epistola Christi ad Abgarum, Speciatim contra Theologum Anglum, Guil. Cave* (Leipzig, 1693); and Philipp Jacob Hartmann, *De Rebus Gestis Christianorum Sub Apostolis Commentarius* (Berlin, 1699), pp. 297-300.

<sup>122</sup> Samuel Fisher, *Something concerning Agbarus, Prince of the Edesseans* (London, 1660) and Christopher Sand, *Nucleus*, p. 97. On the context of Fisher's translation, see Justin Champion, 'Apocrypha Canon and Criticism from Samuel Fisher to John Toland, 1650-1718', in *Judaean-Christian Intellectual Culture in the Seventeenth Century: A Celebration of the Library of Narcissus Marsh (1638-1713)*, ed. by Allison P. Coudert and others (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Press, 1999), pp. 91-117.

<sup>123</sup> See his annotation in his copy of his *Historia Literaria*, now SGCL RBK C.142, p. 3.

methods, the harder it is not to infer that Cave was desperate to recommend all future Christian letters by Christ's original example.

### **‘need we, as some others, epistles of commendation?’: conclusions**

A history of literature where ‘literature’ meant actual letters would strike most modern academics, especially in university English departments, as decidedly unmodern. One where it meant, more specifically, letters of recommendation would strike them as unconscionably anti-modern, or at least as antipathetic not only to their tastes but also to the assumptions guiding their research. This dislike not only has a long history: it also helps to explain how ‘modern’ literary studies came to be. In the twentieth century, an important date in this story – while clearly not its point of origin – would have to be 1919, which is when the young I. A. Richards accepted an offer to lecture for the brand-new English tripos at Cambridge. The anecdote about how this offer was made is well-known but bears repeating here.<sup>124</sup> Dissatisfied with Cambridge, Richards had gone to ask a friend of his, Mansfield Forbes, for letters of recommendation so that he could start a new career as a mountain guide; the letters were written, but then the two men began discussing Wordsworth, Forbes invited Richards to lecture, and so the letters were thrown onto the fire.<sup>125</sup>

The potential symbolism of this moment should be apparent to readers of this chapter. There is no reason to doubt whether it actually happened as Richards described it later on (in a taped interview at Magdalene), although the mythic elements are hard to ignore: remember Paul announcing to the Corinthians that he did not need συστατικαὶ ἐπιστολαὶ to approach them. The possibility that modern ‘literature’ has been defined by a contrast with letters of recommendation, that ‘literature’ began only after they were thrown away, is nevertheless a very real one. A doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Pennsylvania in 1902 which

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<sup>124</sup> See Richard Storer, ‘Richards, Ivor Armstrong (1893-1979)’, *ODNB*, XLVI, pp. 778-81 (p. 779).

<sup>125</sup> See Hugh Carey, *Mansfield Forbes and his Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 68-69.

opened with two specimens of early-modern letters before deciding that the first, a letter of recommendation, was part of a class of writings ‘valuable historically, not for literary purposes’, may not be a particularly gripping or high-level example of this attitude, but its conventionality and lack of distinction are what give its views a certain representativeness.<sup>126</sup>

In any case, it is easy to find more impressive antecedents. Coleridge, for instance, made letters of recommendation a literalisation of hack, sectarian culture in the *Biographia* when he suggested ironically that his career as an author began upon presentation of one.<sup>127</sup> In an earlier period, Warren Boutcher has suggested that Montaigne’s professed dislike of cold, formulaic, and uncreative ‘lettres de faveur et recommandation’ meant that they were ‘the literary antipodes of the *Essais*’.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, this distinction has only sharpened, or become more constitutive, over time until commendatory letters have become anti-literature, the kind of administrative chore that apparently prevents teachers and academics from studying or writing imaginative works of fiction. Julie Schumacher’s recent prize-winning novel *Dear Committee Members* (2014), told entirely through a series of letters of recommendation written by a professor of creative writing, summarises and ironises this complaint in its form: ‘I haven’t published a novel in six years’, its subject laments in one of them.<sup>129</sup> Kazuo Ishiguro’s *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986) draws a similar contrast, making its narrator’s powers of recommendation directly proportional to the instrumentalisation of his paintings as militaristic propaganda.<sup>130</sup>

As we have seen in this chapter, Cave’s definitions were deeply instrumental and non-imaginative: ‘literature’ was useful as a category of texts and skills because it served confessional

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<sup>126</sup> Maude Bingham Hansche, *The Formative Period of English Familiar Letter-writers and their Contribution to the English Essay* (Philadelphia, 1902), p. 7. <<https://archive.org/details/formativeperiod00hansgoog>> [accessed 9<sup>th</sup> December 2017].

<sup>127</sup> *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Biographia Literaria Or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, ed. by James Engell and W. Jackson Bate, 2 vols (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), I, p. 181.

<sup>128</sup> Warren Boutcher, ‘Literature, Thought, or Fact? Past and Present Directions in the Study of the Early Modern Letter’, in *Self-Presentation and Social Identification*, ed. by Toon Van Houdt and others, pp. 137-63 (p. 142).

<sup>129</sup> Julie Schumacher, *Dear Committee Members* (London: HarperCollins, 2015), p. 9.

<sup>130</sup> Kazuo Ishiguro, *An Artist of the Floating World* (London: Faber and Faber, 2013), p. 20.

and ecclesiastical ends. The literary historian – the professional recommender, as Cave made him – was meant to be the voice of Church of England orthodoxy, writing in a form and with assumptions that were firmly anti-Catholic and, more tentatively, anti-Calvinist, Eusebian, episcopalian, and trinitarian. His work was also based on the insight that an earlier definition of literature was much more instrumentalised than early-modern literati claimed, that the mantra of learning for learning's sake (or at least learning not for inter-confessional controversy's sake) was often a calculated pretext when it was not an unrealistic ideal. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries this mantra survived and flourished; but so too did its critique.

***Saeculum Literarium: Cave in the Long Eighteenth Century***

A list of Cave's readers in the century or so after his death would include many of the period's most influential theologians, religious writers, and bishops: John Wesley, William Whiston, Daniel Waterland, Joseph Priestley, Samuel Horsley, and John Henry Newman, for instance. The same list would also be an index to the development of what we might think of as a new class of writer, the English man of letters. Johnson, Warton, Goldsmith, Godwin, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge were all among his readers, and his writing still had a broad appeal in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The entry in Chalmer's *Biographical Dictionary* noted of his studies of early Christianity that they were 'justly esteemed the best books written upon those important subjects', and the editor of a new multi-volume edition of his biographies of the Fathers in 1840 remarked that they were 'so well known and appreciated' that there was no need for a long preface justifying his decision to reprint them.<sup>1</sup>

As persistent as this enthusiasm for his work was, anyone tracing his reception will still have to reckon with the fact of almost universal indifference to Cave in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Even at the time an alternative account of his critical fortunes was being sketched by one of his closest readers. According to Coleridge, writing in 1828, his readership had now dwindled to just 'a few pious old Ladies in Country Towns'.<sup>2</sup> Coleridge made this observation in one of his notebooks in the course of a coruscating attack on Anglican sentimentalism, particularly its 'dim romantic notions' of primitive Christianity. The age of the Apostles, he wrote, had been characterised by violent quarrels over doctrine and worship. Over

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<sup>1</sup> William Cave, *Lives of the Most Eminent Fathers of the Church that flourished in the First Four Centuries. Volume I*, ed. by Henry Cary (Oxford, 1840): 'Advertisement to the Present Edition', sig.a2<sup>r</sup>. See also *The General Biographical Dictionary: Containing an Historical and Critical Account of the Lives and Writings of the Most Eminent Persons in Every Nation. Volume VIII* (London, 1813), p. 472.

<sup>2</sup> *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Volume 5: 1827-1834*, ed. by Kathleen Coburn and Anthony John Harding (London: Routledge, 2002), 5856-57.

time it had been idealized into myth by monks, painters, and poets, ‘sensitized’ into popular tales of saints and virgins. The superstitious frame of mind responsible for this transformation had been banished at the Reformation, revived by Laudian High Churchmen, then extinguished altogether in the ‘Blaze of Protestantism’, so that ‘the whole congregation of Romish Saints have disappeared, Spark after Spark’. The only traces left in the nineteenth century were in the closets of Coleridge’s pious old country ladies: copies of Cave’s *Antiquitates Apostolicae* and Robert Nelson’s *Festivals and Fasts*, themselves relics of an earlier relic-obsessed crypto-Catholic period of English religious life.

Coleridge’s denunciation of his book as ‘Pseudo-biography’ reflected a more widespread suspicion that, despite its survival, Cave’s work belonged to a scholarly past that was better forgotten. A contemporary who was much more sympathetic to Laudian churchmanship than Coleridge, John Henry Newman, expressed himself in similarly embarrassed terms about Cave.<sup>3</sup> Describing his search for reliable early-modern histories of early Christianity to one of his correspondents, Newman wrote of Cave and the French scholar Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont that they were ‘highly respectable, but biographers’.<sup>4</sup> In *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (1833) Newman would engage substantially with Cave’s life of Athanasius (1683).<sup>5</sup> Yet that qualification in his letter, ‘but a biographer’, makes the euphemism ‘highly respectable’ work twice as hard: it seems to admit a similar reservation to Coleridge’s, that Cave was over-intimate

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<sup>3</sup> For Newman’s view of Laud, see Peter Nockles, ‘Anglicanism “Represented” or “Misrepresented”? The Oxford Movement, Evangelicalism, and History: the controversial use of the Caroline Divines in the Victorian Church of England’, in *Victorian Churches and Churchmen: Essays Presented to Vincent Alan McClelland*, ed. by S. Gilley and Peter Nockles (Woobridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 308-69.

<sup>4</sup> See Newman’s letter to Samuel Rickards, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1831, printed in *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman. Volume II: Tutor of Oriel, January 1827 to December 1831*, ed. by Ian Ker and Thomas Gornall, S.J. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 371.

<sup>5</sup> On Newman’s engagement with Cave, see Benjamin John King, *Newman and the Alexandrian Fathers: Shaping Doctrine in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), chapter 2, pp. 70-126.

with the Fathers in a way that risked impropriety, that his methods were not always decently historical and were certainly not cutting-edge.<sup>6</sup>

So what happened between Cave's day and Coleridge's? That we can consider asking this question at all is the product of a new emphasis in eighteenth-century studies. The work of Jonathan Clark, Brian Young, and John Pocock has made it much safer, although still not without its risks, to describe the period in terms of a 'confessional' or 'clerical' culture that joined the Revolution to the Oxford Movement.<sup>7</sup> Long-popular theses about a 'secular' European Enlightenment are being overhauled.<sup>8</sup> In an English context, numerous accounts have taught us to see the eighteenth-century Church of England as a force of social change led by energetic, reforming bishops, as well as a gathering-point for the period's most important intellectual debates.<sup>9</sup> But there is still a long way to go. As churlish as this sounds in the wake of Pocock's monumental work on Gibbon, our knowledge of how ecclesiastical history was read and written is still under-developed, since the studies we have, Pocock's among them, concentrate either on the transformation of 'religious history' into the 'history of religion' or on the strengthening of a liberal, antidogmatic, and anti-patristic historiographical tradition.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> On contemporary contrasts between biography and history, see Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, chapter 5, pp. 131-46.

<sup>7</sup> See Brian Young, *Religion and Enlightenment*; Jonathan Clark, *English Society 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure, and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Volume I. The Enlightenments of Edward Gibbon, 1737-1764* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>8</sup> See William Bulman, 'Introduction', in *God in the Enlightenment*, ed. by William Bulman and Robert G. Ingram (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 1-41.

<sup>9</sup> See Brent S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors*; John Walsh and Stephen Taylor, 'Introduction: The Church and Anglicanism in the "long" eighteenth century', in *The Church of England c.1689-c.1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism*, ed. by John Walsh, Colin Haydon, and Stephen Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 1-64; Robert G. Ingram, *Religion, Reform and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century: Thomas Secker and the Church of England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007); and William Gibson, *The Church of England, 1688-1832: Unity and Accord* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>10</sup> See Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment', in *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change*, 3rd edn (London: Secker and Warburg, 1984), pp. 193-236; Peter Harrison, 'Religion' and Religions in the English Enlightenment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and Brian Young, 'John Jortin, Ecclesiastical History, and the Christian Republic of Letters', *The Historical Journal*, 55 (2012), 961-81. Sophisticated studies of the historiography of religion in this period include Dmitri Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion: Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity in European Historiography from Reformation to "Enlightenment"', *The Historical Journal*, 55 (2012), 1117-60; and Richard Serjeantson, 'David Hume's *Natural*



Moreover, insights about a religious eighteenth century are yet to inform modern assumptions about the period's literary culture, which remain tied to a secular narrative, or at least a narrative of secularization.<sup>11</sup> If it is hard to see what place there would have been for Cave's devotional studies of the Fathers in an 'Arminian Enlightenment', it is even harder to imagine that his confessionalized, patristic approach to literary history would have had anything to teach eighteenth-century men of letters.<sup>12</sup>

This chapter therefore goes looking for Cave in the long eighteenth century. It will find him in some unexpected places: a library on the Isle of Skye, a discussion of Shakespeare's myriad-mindedness, a comment about the plight of modern authors in a commercialised world. But it is worth reissuing the disclaimer that I offered at the start of this dissertation's second chapter about how I was going to approach the early-modern Jerome. Like that, this is not meant to be a study of Cave's influence narrowly conceived. Instead it makes a start on a more ambitious project. Earlier on we considered how Jerome was turned into a 'type' by his seventeenth-century readers wanting a shorthand not only for describing a whole intellectual tradition but also for simplifying their own attraction or aversion to it. Studying Cave's reception in the same way is just as revealing of eighteenth-century habits.

The reason why this chapter can only make a start on this project is that it limits itself to Cave's afterlife. (The obvious constraints of a doctoral thesis play a part here). The story told in the second chapter gained momentum when its discussion of Jerome was combined with essays on John Bale and Leo Allatius. At first glance these looked like they would follow the same trajectory; all three literary historians looked like versions of the same scholarly 'type'.

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*History of Religion* (1757) and the End of Modern Eusebianism', in *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy, 1600-1750*, ed. by Sarah Mortimer and John Robertson (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 267-95.

<sup>11</sup> A point made by Philip Connell, 'Afterword'.

<sup>12</sup> On the narrowing of interest in the Fathers in the eighteenth century, see Robert D. Cornwall, 'The Search for the Primitive Church: The Use of Early Church Fathers in the High Church Anglican Tradition, 1680-1745', *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 59.3 (1990), 303-29; and Gareth Vaughan Bennett, 'Patristic Tradition in Anglican Thought, 1660-1900', *Oecumenica* (1971-72), 63-85.

That they went in different directions was a sign of the contradictions riving late humanist culture, the difficulties that early-modern scholars had finding a single language for talking about men of letters. To offer a similarly complex account of how eighteenth-century literary culture was shaped by seventeenth-century ecclesiastical interests, it would be necessary to study the fortunes of several figures who typified Cave's scholarly milieu in different ways – or were thought to typify it – and who were read widely by later poets, historians, theologians, and critics: Jeremy Taylor springs to mind here. The following study of Cave's readers is offered as an invitation to this larger project.

### **'I long to see how Cave is advanced': the Oxford *Historia Literaria* (1740-43)**

The reception history of Cave's *Historia Literaria* starts with Cave himself. Probably no one was less impressed by the appearance of the 1698 volume than he was. Almost immediately after its publication he wrote to Otto Mencke in Leipzig to blame shoddy printers for its 'elephantine' ugliness, misprints, and omissions.<sup>13</sup> To add insult to injury, his publisher Richard Chiswell had refused to grant him any free copies to present to his friends.<sup>14</sup> After a few years' respite, he therefore began work again on a new edition with the help of his amanuensis, entering his revisions into a copy of his book now kept in the library of St George's Chapter in Windsor.<sup>15</sup> At some point he also acquired the copy that had belonged to his erstwhile (and unrewarded) collaborator Abednego Seller, who had apparently annotated it extensively before his death in 1705. Work was in full swing by 1704 and continued until at least 1709, if not beyond.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Cave to Mencke, 18<sup>th</sup> July 1698, printed in *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, VI.2 (1748), p. 372.

<sup>14</sup> As he apologised in a letter to Thomas Smith, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1698, now Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 81.

<sup>15</sup> Now SGCL RBK C.142. Besides the evidence in this copy, details about Cave's work revising the book were provided by the bookseller Joseph Pote in his advertisements for the new Oxford edition: *A Letter Concerning Subscriptions, And the Compleat Edition of Dr. Cave's Historia Literaria* (London, 1737) and *A Second Letter Concerning the Compleat Edition of Dr. Cave's Historia Literaria* (London, 1739).

<sup>16</sup> See his comments in his letters to Thomas Smith dated 27<sup>th</sup> June 1704 and 13<sup>th</sup> February 1709, now Bodleian MS Smith 48, pp. 83 and 87.

None of Cave's changes was drastic or signalled a complete change of direction. For the most part he set about the task with the same interests and methods that he had developed nearly two decades earlier. First he had to rationalise the 1688 and 1698 volumes, making sure that the additions from the later *Pars Altera* were incorporated into the original entries in the first part; the clumsy way in which this had been done in the pirated edition printed at Geneva in 1705 gave Cave an extra incentive for completing this task carefully. As a note in the margins of his copy suggests, Cave also wanted to include in the new edition his final pamphlet against Jean Le Clerc, originally published on its own in 1700.<sup>17</sup>

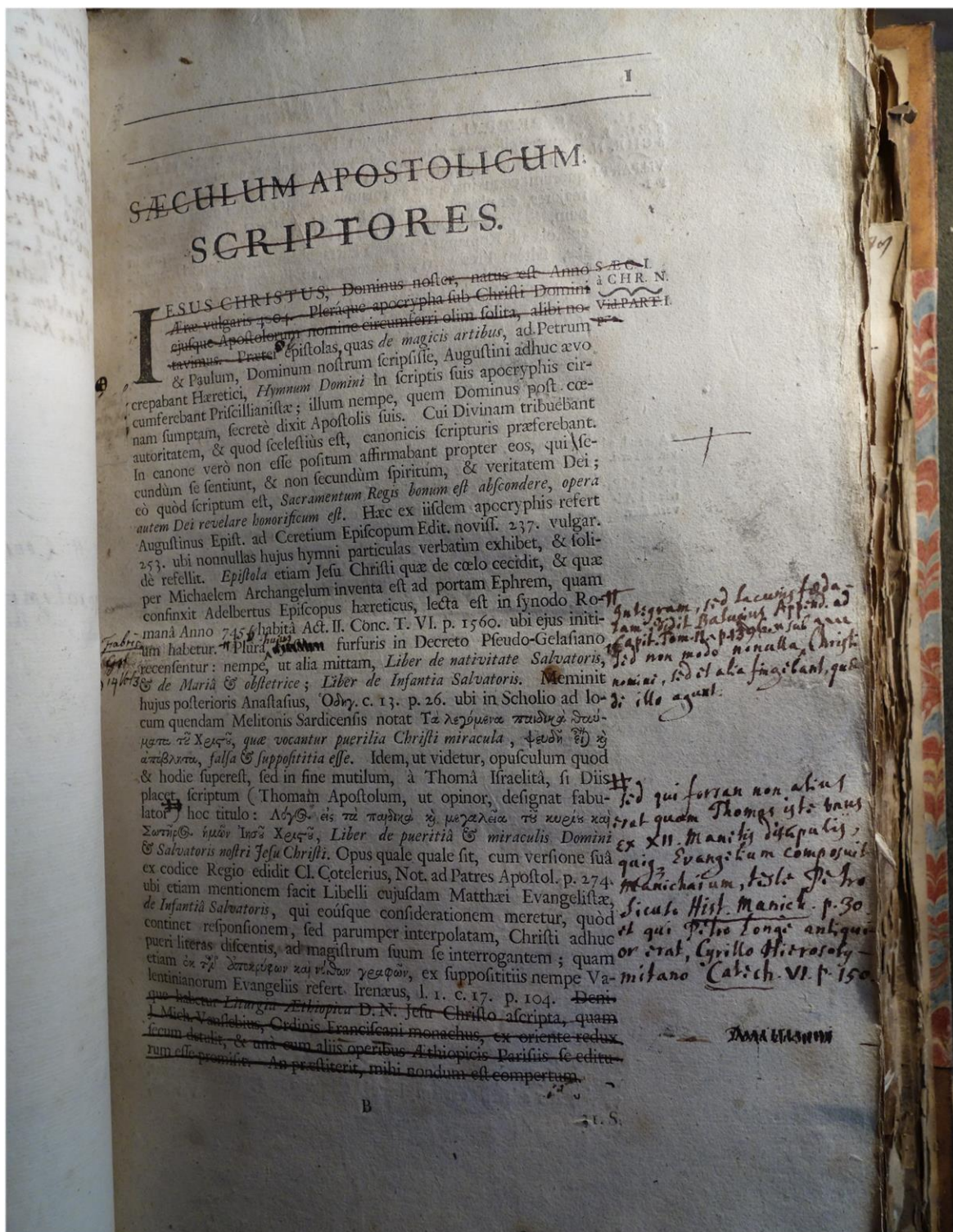
Then there were more scholarly revisions to make. The latest research needed to be taken into account, like Fabricius's *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti* (1703) and Johann Ernst Grabe's *Spicilegium SS. Patrum* (1698-99). Cave paid particular attention to the cutting-edge critical work being done by the Maurists and replaced his existing bibliographies with lists copied out from the contents-pages of, for instance, Jean Martianay's edition of Jerome (1693-1706) and Montfaucon's Athanasius (1698). Now that he had seen Henry Wharton's annotated copy of the first volume, with its large and precise claims about the extent of his contributions, Cave was also in a position to begin reclaiming some of the territory that his former amanuensis had staked out for himself. Thus he rewrote, substantially altered or added for the first time biographies for numerous early heretics, which Wharton had suggested was his special role.<sup>18</sup> The upshot of this activity was that it increased the book's references to the early Christian heresiologists Irenaeus and Epiphanius, an author whom Cave had contemplated editing earlier in his career, so there were longer interests finding expression here too.<sup>19</sup> In the same vein Cave also added a new section to his introduction articulating in a more programmatic way than he

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<sup>17</sup> See SGCL RBK C.142, p. 130: 'Utrumque opusculum ad calcem hujus operis reperitur'.

<sup>18</sup> For instance, Heracleon, Marcion, Epiphanes, Ptolomaeus, and Theophronius.

<sup>19</sup> See his remark in a letter to Smith, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1677, Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 73: 'I have a long time been driving on a design for the reprinting Epiphanius'.



**Figure 12.** Examples of Cave's revisions in his disbound copy of the 1688 and 1698 volumes of the *Historia Literaria*, now RBK C.142 in St George's Chapter Library. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor.

had done so far his long-standing conviction that medieval scholasticism was to blame for the decline of literature after the age of the Fathers.

By about 1709 Cave felt that his book was ready for the press. Unfortunately for him, as he bitterly informed his correspondents, his plans were quickly blocked by his publisher, ‘this ingratefull beast’, ‘ingratissimus mortalium’.<sup>20</sup> The reasons for Chiswell’s reluctance are unclear, but it is likely that a combination of high import taxes on paper and few protections of copyright created a situation where books like Cave’s were expensive to print at home, easy to pirate overseas, and therefore commercially unviable for English booksellers.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile nothing came of an offer from Cave’s correspondent Otto Mencke to have it printed in Amsterdam at his brother-in-law’s press.<sup>22</sup> The only expedient left for Cave was to entrust his revised copy to his executors, the lawyer Sir Thomas Reeve and Edward Jones, a fellow canon at Windsor, with the request that they see it through to the press after his death.<sup>23</sup> In the event, it was another two decades before Cave’s wish began to be realised, when his executors selected the Eton bookseller Joseph Pote to arrange printing in Oxford and then, in around 1736, recruited Daniel Waterland to supervise a final stage of editorial work.<sup>24</sup> Waterland in turn entrusted this task to Isaac Chapman, a petty canon at Windsor. Eventually the new edition was published by subscription in two volumes in 1740 and 1743.

Before examining this edition in more detail we need to step backwards and consider Cave’s critical fortunes since his death in 1713. At first glance his status looks assured. Everyone agreed that he was deeply erudite, to the point where ‘the learned Dr. Cave’ was a conventional way of referring to him. However, this consensus is misleading if it implies that his reputation

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<sup>20</sup> Phrases Cave used in a letter to Smith dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 1709, now Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 87, and a letter to Johann Albert Fabricius dated 30<sup>th</sup> March 1709, now KB Fabricius 104-123 4<sup>o</sup> (Bu-Cr), no. 115.

<sup>21</sup> See Pote’s complaints in his advertisements of 1737 and 1739.

<sup>22</sup> See Cave to Smith, 13<sup>th</sup> February 1709, Bodleian MS Smith 48, p. 87 and Pote, *A Second Letter*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>23</sup> See Joseph Pote, *Proposals for printing by subscription a new edition of Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* (Oxford, 1736).

<sup>24</sup> As Daniel Waterland wrote in a letter to John Loveday, January 1737, printed in *The Works of the Rev. Daniel Waterland*, ed. by William Van Mildert, 3rd edn, 6 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1856), VI, p. 424.

was uncontested. In fact the epithet ‘learned’ did mislead his future readers, as it was often meant to: we will see the outcome of this confusion in later sections of this chapter. For now it is important to recognise that at least half the time it was applied to him it was done sneeringly or ironically in the context of a fifty-year critique of his work. This tradition made two overlapping claims about his scholarship: one historiographical, the other theological.

The first and most lasting critique was provided with its arguments in Cave’s lifetime by his Swiss opponent Jean Le Clerc. Le Clerc’s charge that his practically unconditional defence of Eusebius’s trinitarianism showed him to be a panegyrist rather than a historian was widely repeated.<sup>25</sup> In 1712 Christian Thomasius gave it new force by integrating it into a more systematic and influential account of how to read and write ecclesiastical history. In a set of lectures at the new university of Halle, printed in Latin in 1712 and then in German the following year, Thomasius offered a series of warnings – *cautelae* – for the law students whom, as Ian Hunter has suggested, he wanted to turn into the future servants of a deconfessionalized (Protestant) state.<sup>26</sup> According to Thomasius, almost all histories of Christianity were shaped by their author’s confessional priorities, which the impartial reader needed to detect and read around. This was hardly a new claim but Thomasius generalised it into a critique of confessionalization itself, equating it with un-Protestant dogmatism even when the dogma or orthodoxy being defended was Protestant. Cave’s histories bore the brunt of this attack: according to Thomasius, he was obsessed with finding Church of England doctrines in antiquity, he ignored the Fathers’ errors, and he had embraced a series of early Christian legends

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<sup>25</sup> Jean Le Clerc, *Bibliothèque Universelle*, X, p. 480.

<sup>26</sup> Ian Hunter, ‘Introduction to Christian Thomasius, *Cautelen zur Kirchenrechts-Gelahrheit*’, electronic pre-print (2013), pp. 1-51 (pp. 7-13). <<https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:374464>> [accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2017].

that were without any critical foundation.<sup>27</sup> All this made him in Thomasius's view a practical apostate, a Protestant papizans.<sup>28</sup>

So when Cave was described as 'learned', more often than not it implied a reproach. In the hands of his opponents it usually meant that he lacked proper (Protestant) discernment or judgment: he was sweepingly enthusiastic about the Fathers despite their flaws, or his erudition was marshalled in support of the wrong causes, or he was over-dogmatic. Even readers who sympathised broadly with his attitudes worried about his methods. As Geordan Hammond has recently pointed out, Cave's studies of early Christianity played a 'foundational' role for John Wesley, who published an abridged version of his *Primitive Christianity* in 1753, but only after noting in his journal that it was 'a book wrote with as much learning, and as little judgment, as any I remember to have read in my whole life' because it related 'every weak thing' done by the early Christians.<sup>29</sup>

In other words, a useful but backhanded Protestant concession to Roman Catholic scholars like Baronius, that they were erudite, was being turned against one of their own number, now that an increasingly vocal strain of European Protestantism was starting to rewrite the rules of ecclesiastical scholarship according to its own liberal, antidogmatic, and sometimes Erastian values.<sup>30</sup> In England the most substantial outcome of this tradition was John Jortin's *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History* (1751-73), which renewed Thomasius's critique for a new

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<sup>27</sup> See Christian Thomasius, *Cautelae Circa Praecognita Jurisprudentiae Ecclesiasticae In Usus Auditorii Thomasiani*, 2nd edn (Halle, 1723), pp. 35-36, 56-57, 139-40, 148. For a general account of Thomasius's treatment of Cave, see Thomas Ahnert, *Religion and the Origins of the German Enlightenment: Faith and the Reform of Learning in the Thought of Christian Thomasius* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006), pp. 63-66.

<sup>28</sup> Thomasius, *Cautelae*, p. 140: 'unde vitae Apostolorum a Caveo saepe papizante editae cum magna cautione legendae'.

<sup>29</sup> See the entry for 6<sup>th</sup> October 1750 in *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. In Four Volumes. Vol. II: From November 25, 1746, to May 5, 1760*, ed. by F. W. MacDonald (London, 1827), p. 166. Wesley's abbreviated edition of *Primitive Christianity* was printed in *A Christian Library: Consisting of Extracts from and Abridgments of The Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity, Which have been publish'd in the English Tongue, Vol. XXXI* (Bristol, 1753). On Cave's importance to Wesley, see Geordan Hammond, *John Wesley in America: Restoring Primitive Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 13-41.

<sup>30</sup> For the best available description of this tradition, see Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Volume V*.

audience. For Jortin, Cave was a panegyrist who superstitiously defended and reproduced hagiographies written ‘when romancing was much in fashion’ and bestowed ‘excessive compliment[s]’ on undeserving Fathers like Augustine and Bernard.<sup>31</sup> He thus gave Cave a memorable tag: ‘*The White-washer of the Ancients*’.<sup>32</sup>

For most of Cave’s antagonists in this tradition, the wrong cause to which he had committed his learning with the most compromising results was Church of England trinitarianism. Indeed, criticism of Cave as a historian was usually also, or primarily, a pretext for undermining his authority as a champion of this doctrine. This strategy went back to the controversies of the 1690s.<sup>33</sup> Cave had never shied away from debates about the Trinity, but it was largely William Sherlock’s complacent and sincere suggestion that the orthodox, Athanasian position was inviolable because its history had been recounted ‘with great exactness and fidelity by the learned Dr. *Cave*’ that brought him into the antitrinitarian firing-line.<sup>34</sup> In response to Sherlock’s remark, his opponents praised Cave’s learning, repeated the facts of fourth-century history in exactly the same way as Cave, and then completely reversed his judgments: Athanasius’s trinitarianism was heresy, his persecutors were orthodox, the charges of immorality brought against him were legitimate rather than factitious or politically-motivated, successive emperors had banished him because he was objectively a trouble-maker, not because the antitrinitarian party happened to be in power, and so on.<sup>35</sup> Critics of Nicene trinitarianism thus dealt doubly with Cave: they relied on his learning while exposing what they had decided was his lack of judgment.

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<sup>31</sup> John Jortin, *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, 5 vols (London, 1751-73), II (1751), pp. 246-47, and IV (1773), pp. 260-61. For an account of Jortin’s methods and interests, see Brian Young, ‘John Jortin’, pp. 961-81.

<sup>32</sup> Jortin, *Remarks*, IV, p. 376.

<sup>33</sup> For a general overview of these debates, see Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes*, pp. 98-137.

<sup>34</sup> William Sherlock, *A Vindication of the Doctrine of the Holy and Ever Blessed Trinity* (London, 1690), p. 36.

<sup>35</sup> See Stephen Nye, *The Acts of Great Athanasius with Notes, By way of Illustration, On his Creed* (London, 1690), pp. 3-10. For Newton’s use of the same strategy, see Robert Iliffe, ‘Prosecuting Athanasius: Protestant Forensics and the Mirrors of Persecution’, in *Newton and Newtonianism: New Studies*, ed. by James E. Force and Sarah Hutton (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004), pp. 113-55.



Misuse of Cave's learning in this way continued into the early eighteenth century. By now Cave had a double reputation that at first glance would seem contradictory. On the one hand he was the champion of intolerant, consubstantialist Nicene orthodoxy. On the other, he was a patron of anti-Athanasian heterodoxy because of the assistance that antitrinitarians claimed to find in his writings. The figure who exploited this doubleness most effectively was William Whiston.<sup>36</sup> Like Stephen Nye in the 1690s, Whiston repeatedly cited passages from Cave's work to substantiate his thesis that before the Council of Nicaea most Fathers had held Unitarian or Arian views. Cave's controversial insistence on the genuineness of the letters exchanged by Jesus and Abgar, for instance, helped Whiston when he published a translation of them in his *A Collection of Ancient Monuments* (1713), a brochure of ancient fragments apparently proving that antitrinitarianism was not a fourth-century innovation, as its opponents claimed.<sup>37</sup>

As we have seen in the last chapter, Cave had been warned that his defence of the letters might give a legitimising handle to antitrinitarians encouraged by Abgar's hesitation over whether Jesus was God or the Son of God, as if he could not be both. Even so, Whiston's use of Cave's arguments was particularly unscrupulous, part of a strategy of stealing respectability from Cave by suggesting that their shared interest in the early Church made them the same kind of historian: hence the title of Whiston's most significant work, *Primitive Christianity Reviv'd* (1712), with its brazen allusion to Cave's first book. In fact it would be just as accurate to suggest that Whiston's aim was to make his ally-opponent's learning disreputable. That this project relied on some flagrant misreadings or distortions was beside the point. No one could have missed Whiston's purpose in thanking Cave for his 'great piece of service to the Publick' in

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<sup>36</sup> On Whiston and eighteenth-century antitrinitarianism in general, see Maurice Wiles, 'The Rise and Fall of British Arianism', in *Archetypal Heresy: Arianism Through the Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 63-164.

<sup>37</sup> William Whiston, *A Collection of Ancient Monuments Relating to the Trinity and Incarnation, and to the History of the Fourth Century of the Church* (London, 1713), pp. 5-10.

printing an extract from the antitrinitarian creed of Eunomius of Cyzicus in his *Historia Literaria* (1688), not least because most scholars would have known that it was not Cave but the French scholar Henri Valois twenty years earlier, in his edition of Socrates and Sozomen, who had actually published this text for the first time.<sup>38</sup> Likewise, when Whiston produced a passage from Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical Theology* and observed that 'the Learned Dr. Cave' would never have been able to give it a trinitarian explanation, anyone familiar with Cave's work could have told him that he had already done precisely that, in the first phase of his skirmish with Jean Le Clerc.<sup>39</sup> A careful, fair representation of Cave's views was never Whiston's intention. All he needed to do was show, or make a gesture of showing, that he was working with tools that Cave had provided him with. It would then be clear that Church of England orthodoxy was not only incapable of defending itself but was also self-refuting, as if it contained the resources for its own critique.

This, then, was the state of affairs when Cave's executors finally took steps towards a new edition of the *Historia Literaria*. By itself, this tradition of criticizing and abusing Cave's book was not exactly an argument for republishing it. It is easy to imagine a scenario where his work was deserted, a baroque embarrassment to eighteenth-century sensibilities like Theophilus Gale's *The Court of the Gentiles* (1669-1678). There were certainly more straightforward ways of engaging antitrinitarian arguments than re-issuing a work whose polemical tendencies were partly shrouded by bibliographical erudition, and which still needed considerable editorial attention before it would be ready for the press. For the most part, anyway, trinitarian debates were now being fought on the grounds of Scripture and metaphysics rather than patristic

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<sup>38</sup> William Whiston, *Primitive Christianity Reviv'd: Part IV* (London, 1712), p. 208. For the *editio princeps* of Eunomius's creed, see 'Henrici Valesii Annotationes in Libros Ecclesiasticae Historiae Socratis Scholastici', in *Socratis Scholastici et Hermiae Sozomeni Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. by Henri Valois, pp. 61-64. For a discussion of how it came to be printed in the seventeenth century, see Richard P. Vaggione, 'An appeal to antiquity: the seventeenth and eighteenth century manuscripts of the heretic Eunomius', in *Arianism: Historical and Theological Reassessments*, ed. by Robert C. Gregg (Cambridge, MA: Philadelphia Patristics Foundation, 1985), pp. 335-60.

<sup>39</sup> Whiston, *Primitive Christianity*, p. 106. See Cave, *Pars Altera*, Appendix 3, p. 64.

history.<sup>40</sup> That a new edition appeared was therefore largely due to the influence and interests of a single scholar: Daniel Waterland. In retrospect it is almost impossible to conceive of the project happening at all without Waterland's involvement. That is to say, no one in England possessed the same interests, expertise, and institutional advantages that, in Waterland, combined to make editing the *Historia Literaria* seem both necessary and viable.

In the first place, Waterland was well acquainted with attempts by antitrinitarians to enlist Cave to their cause. As early as 1719 he had tried to rescue him from the clutches of Daniel Whitby, a disciple of Samuel Clarke's teachings. Whitby had claimed a year earlier that Cave thought Lactantius's problematic views on the Trinity were almost universally shared in the early Church; a few years later he drew a similar inference from Cave's discussion of Origen.<sup>41</sup> Like his predecessors, Whitby made a point of emphasising Cave's erudition, although unusually he also praised his judiciousness: Cave was 'this learned Man', 'a man expert in these matters', and 'second to none for his judgments of the Fathers'.<sup>42</sup>

In response Waterland applied the same kind of intricate verbal analysis that was also practised on the Fathers themselves when they were accused of heterodoxy. In this case the dubious expression was the one that Cave used after giving a list of Lactantius's dangerous attitudes towards a variety of subjects, including the Trinity: 'in quibus ὁμοψήφους habuit complures praecedentium saeculorum Patres'.<sup>43</sup> According to Waterland, the connecting relative 'in quibus' meant 'some of which' rather than 'all of which': some of Lactantius's opinions had gained him fellow-travellers, but not all of them, and certainly not his antitrinitarianism.<sup>44</sup> Cave's constant, Bull-like defence of the universality of Nicene orthodoxy

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<sup>40</sup> See Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy*, pp. 63-164.

<sup>41</sup> Daniel Whitby, *Disquisitiones Modestae in Clarissimi Bulli Defensionem Fidei Nicenae* (London, 1718), p. 97; and *A Reply to Dr Waterland's Objections against Dr Whitby's Disquisitiones Modestae* (London, 1720), pp. 29-30.

<sup>42</sup> Whitby, *Disquisitiones*, p. 97: 'vir in his rebus versatissimus' and 'in iudicio de Patrum scriptis ferendo nemini secundo'.

<sup>43</sup> See Cave, *Historia Literaria*, p. 113.

<sup>44</sup> Waterland, *A Vindication of Christ's Divinity* (Cambridge, 1719), pp. 407-09.

elsewhere made it impossible to read his words in any other way: he was a ‘true Lover and Admirer of the primitive Fathers’.<sup>45</sup> The accumulated official outrage of nearly half a century crept into Waterland’s voice at this point: ‘How would the good Man have been filled with Indignation to have found his Name, and His Authority made use of, to such purposes as you have done!’.

A new edition of Cave’s book would therefore settle several scores for Waterland. First, it would be a monumental statement of Anglican orthodoxy given backing, if Joseph Pote’s search for subscribers went well, by some of the most influential members of England’s intellectual, political, and clerical establishment. It would also make it harder for the Church’s enemies, within and without, to traduce Cave for heterodox ends by misquoting him, relying on out-of-date, cheap and error-strewn editions of his work, like the ones pirated at Geneva in 1693, 1705, and 1720, or by ignoring his most systematic intervention in the antitrinitarian debates of his day, his dissertations against Le Clerc, which were currently only available separately rather than as a collection.

Second, resurrecting Cave’s book would make a bold claim about intellectual method. Waterland was not alone in thinking that the traditional, or apparently traditional, English appeal to the Fathers in disputes over doctrine was no longer the reflex it once was. Cave’s entire scholarly project, by contrast, was based on this method, as Waterland implied in *The Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity Asserted* (1734), where he devoted a chapter to ‘the Use and Value of Ecclesiastical Antiquity’ that was filled with references to Cave’s work. (He also recalled Cave’s suggestion that most modern-day attacks on the use of the Fathers couched in the language of method – as attacks on bad history or bad theology – were usually a cover for antitrinitarianism).<sup>46</sup> Throughout his career Waterland seems to have taken steps to re-train a

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<sup>45</sup> Waterland, *An Answer to Dr Whithy’s Reply* (Cambridge, 1720), p. 40.

<sup>46</sup> Waterland, *The Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity Asserted* (London, 1734), p. 431.

new generation in the art of deferring to Christian antiquity in theological debates. Cave had long helped him do this: Waterland's widely-circulated reading-list for young students, first printed in 1730, recommended that they introduce themselves to the writings of the Fathers with Cave's *Historia Literaria* before going on to read them.<sup>47</sup> A new edition would serve this end in obvious ways.

So much for Waterland's motivations. What also distinguished Waterland in this context was that as a canon of St George's Chapter in Windsor he also had access to near perfect institutional conditions for carrying out his task. The genre of *historia literaria* was still alien to most English scholars at this time. Waterland's failure to recruit a scholar at Oxford to work with him on the new edition tells its own story.<sup>48</sup> It is similarly telling that he eventually settled on another Windsor clergyman, Isaac Chapman, as his assistant. Under Cave's influence St George's had been transformed into a research centre for literary history, as we have seen. This was not just a question of books, although its library was uniquely well-stocked with the major works in the genre as well as less significant ones. It was more that members of the college shared a kind of institutional memory about why *historia literaria* mattered and, more specifically, how influential Cave had been on its future development.

This memory was strong even in the late 1730s. A folder of Cave's correspondence still kept at the time in Windsor (and subsequently misplaced) demonstrated his links to some of the most important European literary historians like Thomas Ittig and Johann Albert Fabricius.<sup>49</sup> Many of his friends, and possibly some of his amanuenses, still resided at St George's. Waterland himself was only one remove away from Cave by any calculation: to give one example among several, in 1719 he was appointed to the Lady Moyer Lectureship by John

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<sup>47</sup> Waterland, *Advice to a Young Student with a Method of Study for the First Four Years* (London, 1730), p. 30.

<sup>48</sup> See Waterland's comments about trying to find an Oxford assistant in his letter to John Loveday, January 1737, printed in *Works*, VI, p. 424.

<sup>49</sup> See Pote, *A Second Letter*, p. 3 where he listed some of Cave's international and local correspondents.

Robinson, then bishop of London, who we have already seen *in situ* during his brief spell as dean of Windsor talking to Cave about the work of their mutual friend Fabricius.<sup>50</sup> Nowadays Fabricius's debts to Cave need to be dug up from the archives: the best evidence is a copy of the 1693-1699 Geneva edition of the *Historia Literaria* now in the Royal Library in Copenhagen with copious annotations in Fabricius's hand.<sup>51</sup> In mid-century Windsor they were in plain sight. If Fabricius 'knew every thing almost belonging to the *Historia Literaria*', as Waterland remarked in a letter, the canons at St George's were in a better position than anyone else in England to appreciate how much of this knowledge came from Cave.<sup>52</sup>

Motive, means, and memory: in every one of these respects Waterland was ideally equipped to edit Cave. The problem was that the interplay between these features of his intellectual life was not always stable, so that his knowledge of Cave's centrality to a European tradition ended up vitiating the more controversial, doctrinal, and English aims of his project. At the time this cannot have looked like a problem. On the contrary, it must have seemed to Waterland that the most obvious way of recovering Cave's reputation and defeating his and Waterland's antidogmatic and antitrinitarian critics was precisely by stressing his international reputation among Protestant literary historians. Waterland quickly found a practical way of achieving this. As the markings in the revised copy of the *Historia Literaria* in Windsor reveal, Isaac Chapman's role in preparing the edition for the press was mostly writing instructions for the printers about what size of type to use and how to order Cave's various additions. But Waterland also gave him a more scholarly task, asking him to make a note of passages in recent works of literary or ecclesiastical history that dealt with the same authors or texts as Cave. The

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<sup>50</sup> See Robert T. Holtby, *Daniel Waterland, 1683-1740: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Orthodoxy* (Carlisle: Charles Thurman and Sons, 1966), p. 6.

<sup>51</sup> Now KB Th. 246 2<sup>o</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> Waterland to John Loveday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 1737, printed in *Works*, VI, p. 434.

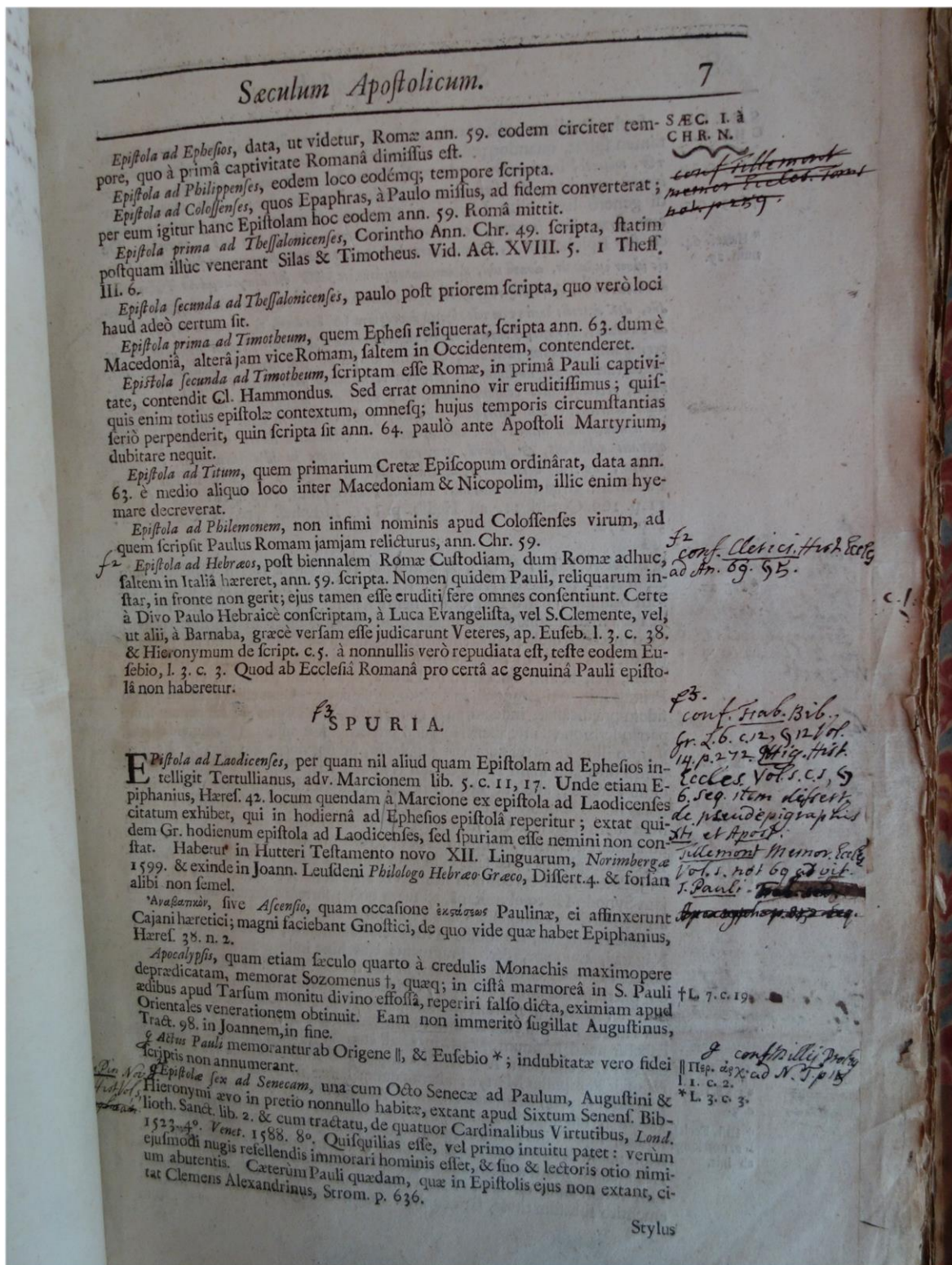


Figure 13. Examples of Isaac Chapman's annotations in Cave's revised copy of the *Historia Literaria*, now RBK C.142 in St George's Chapter Library. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor.

final version then included copious marginal references to these works, among them books by Fabricius, Thomas Ittig, Jean Le Clerc, and Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont.

As Waterland told the antiquarian John Loveday, the intention was not so much to correct Cave as to show where later historians ‘treat of the same things after him, whether differing from him or adding to him’.<sup>53</sup> This is a clear enough indication that Waterland wanted to use the new edition to reorganise the genre of literary history around Cave: his work would be ‘a kind of index to later Bibliothèques, and a common Repertorium for things of that kind’, somehow both foundation-block and capstone of the tradition, starting-point and culmination. It was here that Waterland’s goals began to conflict, however. The new edition powerfully stated Cave’s importance but it did so on terms that conceded just as much to his critics as it won from them. Turning Cave’s book into a *bibliothèque*, *repertorium*, or *universal index* was a gesture to the new vogue for printed book catalogues but also an accommodation of Cave’s scholarship to new ideals of universality, inclusiveness, eclecticism, and neutrality that Enlightenment catalogues were meant to embody.<sup>54</sup> Effectively, his book was muzzled, its polemical origins lost: how could it oppose and silence Jean Le Clerc’s radically different approach to Christian antiquity in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (1716) if it was also continuously a finding-aid for the same book? The tendency of antitrinitarian readings of Cave’s work was to present it – and perhaps all literary history – as a database whose vastness of informational content exceeded its author’s dogmatic attempts to find a single, unifying orthodoxy in it. Waterland’s edition put a similar emphasis on Cave’s learning at the expense of his judgments.

This effect would take time to become apparent. In the short term the most important outcome of the Oxford edition was that Cave’s work was given a second spring. More than

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<sup>53</sup> Waterland to Loveday, January 1737, printed in *Works*, VI, p. 424.

<sup>54</sup> On the Enlightenment catalogue see, with caution, William Clarke, *Academic Charisma and the Origins of the Research University* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 297-335; and Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), pp. 62-66.



three hundred individuals and institutions subscribed for a copy: among them were vice-chancellors, presidents, wardens, principals, college fellows, rectors, deans, prebends, canons, archdeacons, chaplains, right honourables, seventeen bishops, and two archbishops. Moreover, as long as certain clerical and intellectual debates lasted, Cave's work was still enough of a shibboleth to separate an establishment, trinitarian, patristic, moderate-running-to-High-Church party attracted to it from a smaller antidogmatic, liberal, or latitudinarian group that preferred to leave it alone. It is noticeable from the subscription list, for instance, that as an institution Oxford signed up to it much more enthusiastically than Whig Cambridge with its pockets of antitrinitarianism, where only eight libraries and three college heads put in for a copy.<sup>55</sup> In the longer term, however, Waterland's edition helped to produce a Cave who could be disliked as an intolerant, Nicene dogmatist and an Irenaeus-like heresy-hunter and yet also treasured for his learning in clerical and non-clerical contexts alike.

### **'a tincture of enthusiasm': Johnson the literary historian**

At the same time as the second volume of the Oxford Cave was coming off the press, another new book was promising its readers a history of literature in a new form. A year earlier, the bookseller Thomas Osborne had acquired for £13,000 the collection of printed books owned during his life by Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford. Osborne quickly commissioned Samuel Johnson and the antiquary William Oldys to compile a catalogue to advertise its items to prospective buyers in England and Europe.<sup>56</sup> The first and second of its five volumes then appeared in 1743. In the preface, Johnson gave a more elevated account of the catalogue's

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<sup>55</sup> As opposed to 16 libraries and 16 heads of house at Oxford. For the character of mid-century Cambridge, see John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of the Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 71-141.

<sup>56</sup> On the background to this catalogue, see Thomas Kaminski, 'Johnson and Oldys as Bibliographers: An Introduction to the Harleian Catalogue', *Philological Quarterly*, 60 (1981), 439-453; O. M. Brack Jr and Mary Early, 'Samuel Johnson's Proposals for the *Harleian Miscellany*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 45 (1992), 127-30; David McKitterick, 'Thomas Osborne, Samuel Johnson and the Learned of Foreign Nations: A Forgotten Catalogue', *Book Collector*, 41 (1992), 55-68.

conception than his employer might have expected, presenting it in Baconian terms as a work of literary history: an account of the birth, flourishing, persecution, reversals, and decline of opinions, and the rise and fall of different systems of learning.<sup>57</sup>

By the middle of the eighteenth century English enthusiasm for the genre of *historia literaria* had steadily risen. Other sites than the College of St George's now offered resources for studying it, as scholars and librarians began to pay attention to the explosion of interest in Bacon's project in Germany, where *historia literaria* had been adapted for the academic curriculum at universities like Helmstedt and Kiel as a propaedeutic for higher faculty disciplines.<sup>58</sup> At Oxford earlier in the century John Hudson had drawn on his contacts in Germany to fill the Bodleian's shelves with the latest examples of the genre, for instance asking the Hamburg scholar Johann Christian Wolf to send him works like Burkhardt Gotthelf Struve's *Introductio ad Notitiam Rei Litterariae* (1704) and Fabricius's edition of Paul Colomiès' *Opera* (1709).<sup>59</sup> The most impressive private collection meanwhile was probably Edward Harley's library at Wimpole Hall under the supervision of Humfrey Wanley.<sup>60</sup> Lambeck's *Prodromus* (1659), Philippe Labbé's *Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum* (1664), Morhof's *Polyhistor* (1688), and Struve's *Introductio* (1704) were among its holdings.

Johnson and Oldys therefore had access to a rich selection of works in the genre as they catalogued Harley's books, now kept in storage at a property in Marylebone.<sup>61</sup> In fact Johnson seems to have brought to the task an interest in *historia literaria* that was already well-developed,

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<sup>57</sup> Samuel Johnson and William Oldys, *Catalogus Bibliothecae Harleianae, in Locos communes distributus cum Indice Auctorum*, 5 vols (London, 1743-5), 'An Account of the Harleian Library', I (1743), pp. 3-4.

<sup>58</sup> See Paul Nelles, 'Historia litteraria at Helmstedt', pp. 147-75 and 'Historia Litteraria and Morhof', pp. 31-56.

<sup>59</sup> See Hudson's letter to Johann Christian Wolf, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1718, now Hamburg SUB Sup. ep. 4<sup>o</sup> 63, fols. 403<sup>v</sup>-4<sup>r</sup>. On Fabricius's edition of Colomiès, see Ralph Häfner, 'Literarische Zimelien', pp. 213-30.

<sup>60</sup> On the Harleian Collection in general see Cyril Ernest Wright, 'Portrait of a Bibliophile VIII: Edward Harley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Oxford, 1689-1741', *The Book Collector*, 11.2 (1962), 158-74; and the introductions to *Fontes Harleiani: A Study of the Sources of the Harleian Collection of Manuscripts Preserved in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1972) and *The Diary of Humfrey Wanley, 1715-1726, Volume I: 1715-1723*, ed. by Cyril Ernest Wright and Ruth C. Wright (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1966).

<sup>61</sup> For the relocation of the books to Marylebone in 1739, see David Adshead, "'A Noble Musaeum of Books': A View of the Interior of the Harleian Library at Wimpole Hall', *Library History*, 18.3 (2002), 191-206.

and possibly self-defining too. Apparently this knowledge pre-dated his time at Oxford in the late 1720s. As John Nichols recorded, Johnson later told a group assembled in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, that Morhof's *Polyhistor* was 'the book upon which all my fame was originally founded; when I had read this book I could teach my tutors!'<sup>62</sup> There was probably a blend of irony and realism in this remark: it sounds like a dig at university scholars just as much as a paean to the textbooks promising to make them redundant. In any case, it was inevitable that Johnson would see his work on the Harleian catalogue, one of his first scholarly engagements, as the opportunity to make his own contribution to the genre and address or solve some of its long-standing problems.

Even though presses in Germany churned with books about *historia literaria*, many of its professors were increasingly aware that Bacon's universal history of learning was still unwritten. As Helmut Zedelmaier has pointed out, most of the works printed in this period were less histories of literature than introductory handbooks with titles like *Versuch*, *Abriß*, and *Introductio*.<sup>63</sup> Scholars usually accounted for their failure by suggesting that Bacon's original vision of a narrative history was no longer possible to realise now that literary history was being used, as most academics felt it should be, to provide students with a survey of important books and authors organised systematically, not historically, by the disciplinary divisions of contemporary universities.<sup>64</sup> What Johnson realised was that the catalogue-form offered a way of reconciling these two modes of history-writing, articulated in eighteenth-century terms as a distinction between *historia* and *notitia*. I have traced this insight of Johnson's elsewhere, so it is enough to indicate now that it was gleaned from a deep and searching acquaintance with the recent history

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<sup>62</sup> John Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, 8 vols (London, 1817-58), VI (1831), p. 155.

<sup>63</sup> Helmut Zedelmaier, 'Historia literaria', pp. 11-12.

<sup>64</sup> For contemporary expressions of this problem, see Burkhardt Gotthelf Struve, *Introductio ad Notitiam Rei Litterariae & Usum Bibliothecarum*, 2nd edn (Jena, 1706), p. 7 and Burcardi Gotth. Struvii *Introductio in Notitiam Rei Litterariae Usum Bibliothecarum*, ed. by Johann Christian Fischer (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1754), pp. 32-33.

of *historia literaria*, with Gabriel Naudé's *Advis pour dresser une Bibliothèque* (1627) and a trio of the most cutting-edge European catalogues playing a crucial role in his thinking.<sup>65</sup>

This reconstruction of Johnson's work on the Harleian catalogue should ready us for a larger question. What was the relationship between the early writer of *historia literaria* and the future historian of English literature? Eighteenth-centuryists no longer see Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81) as an isolated peak of literary historiography in the period, as René Wellek was prone to doing, but revising Johnson into a point of strong contact between early-modern and modern ways of writing about literature, even or especially where the word 'literature' seems to mean different things to these two cultures, would still have far-reaching consequences for the traditional account of how modern literary studies evolved.<sup>66</sup> That said, the answer to this question has already been decided to most scholars' satisfaction: no such relationship existed. The moderns' Johnson, at least in his role as a literary historian, was a new creation: the product of an 'emancipation' from early-modern erudition, pedantry, Neo-Latin, and general learning.<sup>67</sup> To an extent this view is understandable, given that it started with Johnson himself, who was often anxious to repudiate scholarship devoted to adjusting 'the minute events of literary history'.<sup>68</sup> His observation in the *Life of Dryden* (1779) about the tedium and profitlessness of searching for the titles and dates of 'translated fragments, or occasional poems' seems to strike at *historia literaria*'s whole reason for being.<sup>69</sup> Yet at least one of Johnson's acquaintances looked

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<sup>65</sup> Alex Wright, 'From Bacon's *Historia Literarum* to Johnson's *Literary History*: The *Catalogus Bibliothecae Harleianae* (1743-45)', in *Libraries, Books, and Collectors of Texts, 1600-1900*, ed. by Annika Bautz and James Gregory (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, forthcoming).

<sup>66</sup> For more sophisticated accounts of the diversity of forms of literary history in the period, see April London, *Literary History Writing, 1770-1820* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) and Mark Salber Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, chapter 10, pp. 259-321.

<sup>67</sup> Lawrence Lipking, *The Ordering of the Arts*, p. 85. The same narrative underwrites Stefan Hoesel-Uhlig, 'The Historical Formation'.

<sup>68</sup> Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*, ed. by Roger Lonsdale, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), II, p. 98.

<sup>69</sup> Johnson, *Lives*, II, p. 102.

back on his career and thought that it only made sense in the context of this traditional scholarly and pan-European activity.

After Johnson's death in 1784 one of the members of his circle involved in commemorating his life was the classical scholar and schoolmaster Samuel Parr. Parr's skill and celebrity as a writer of Latin epitaphs – he would later write the official epitaphs for Gibbon and Burke, *inter alia* – made him a suitable candidate to compose the inscription for Johnson's monument in St Paul's, an episode that has been well described by Warren Derry and more recently by Robert DeMaria.<sup>70</sup> But Parr had more substantial ambitions and for the rest of his life he made a series of high claims to his friends about the biography of Johnson that he would write: it would be the third most learned book ever written, it would be a history of Johnson's mind rather than a Boswellian collection of his sayings, and above all it would recover Johnson the scholar, who 'was forgotten in the great original contributor to the literature of his country'.<sup>71</sup>

Parr prepared for this landmark feat of scholarship by earmarking a collection of relevant books to read. His assistant Edmund Henry Barker would later print a list of them in an appendix to his catalogue of Parr's library, published in 1827.<sup>72</sup> It is not clear whether these books were there to help him thicken his account of Johnson's intellectual context or because he thought that they were texts that had helped directly to shape Johnson's own intellect. Two points of interest are nevertheless quick to suggest themselves, despite not being noticed in any of the discussions of Parr's project. The first is that the collection is a miniature library of *historia literaria* in most of its different forms: biographies of scholars, catalogues of anonymous and pseudonymous writings, and satirical accounts of academic foibles, as well as general overviews

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<sup>70</sup> Warren Derry, *Dr. Parr: A Portrait of the Whig Dr. Johnson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 169-90; and Robert DeMaria Jr, 'Samuel Parr's Epitaph for Johnson, His Library, and his Unwritten Biography', in *Editing Lives: Essays in Contemporary Textual and Biographical Studies in Honor of O. M. Brack, Jr*, ed. by Jesse G. Swan (Plymouth: Bucknell University Press, 2014), pp. 67-92.

<sup>71</sup> William Field, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Opinions of the Rev. Samuel Parr*, 2 vols (London, 1828), I, p. 164.

<sup>72</sup> Edmund Henry Barker, *Bibliotheca Parriana. A Catalogue of the Library of the late Reverend and Learned Samuel Parr* (London, 1827), pp. 706-08.

like Christian Falster's *Quaestiones Romanae, sive Idea Historiae Literariae Romanorum* (1718). Predictably Morhof's *Polyhistor* was present too, alongside celebrated eighteenth-century German practitioners of the genre such as Christoph August Heumann, Johann Matthias Gesner, and Christian Gottlob Heyne.

Second and relatedly, the library looked like a collection of Caveana just as much as Johnsoniana: that is to say, the books assembled there would have helped Cave's future biographer just as much as Johnson's. They included, for instance, Kaspar Scoppe's *Ars Critica* (1597) and *Consultationes de Scholarum et Studiorum Ratione* (1636) and Joachim Camerarius's *Vita Philippi Melanchthonis* (1655 edition), three books which Cave read and made notes from at the start of his career. Despite not being listed in the catalogue, Parr was also apparently going to 'employ the epistles of learned men to a great extent', probably the same volumes of humanist correspondence devoured by Cave in the early 1670s.<sup>73</sup> Then there were several books that Cave had helped to shape, like Johann Albert Fabricius's edition of Placcius's *Theatrum Anonymorum et Pseudonymorum* (1708), with its numerous contributions from Cave, as well as the popular *De Charlataneria Eruditorum* by Johann Burckhardt Mencke, whom Cave had looked after on his visit to England in 1697 as a courtesy to his father, the Leipzig historian and journalist Otto Mencke.<sup>74</sup>

So where was Cave? In the absence of any of his books from Parr's small collection it might be sensible to revise the judgment at the top of the last paragraph: this is the polite, humanist, eloquent milieu that Cave imagined joining in the early 1670s as he planned his career as a scholar, occasionally engaged with over his lifetime, but for the most part renounced, if not always consciously, under the pressure of his confessional commitments. Parr's Johnson was the kind of scholar that Cave might have been had his choices not taken his career in a different

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<sup>73</sup> Barker, *Bibliotheca Parriana*, p. 706.

<sup>74</sup> See Cave's letter to Otto Mencke dated 18<sup>th</sup> December 1698 and printed in *Miscellanea Lipsiensia Nova*, VI.2 (1748), p. 370.

direction. From a later perspective, Cave's scholarship might seem to have developed so far from his humanist, irenic beginnings that these two trajectories – the 'Bale' and the 'Leland' impulses – looked less like close and competing aspects of the same personality or culture and more like separate, antagonistic traditions. Indeed, Parr's collection was given its adversarial flavour by Cave's rival, Jean Le Clerc, as represented by his *Parrhasiana* (1700) and his *Opera* (1711), which opened with an autobiography claiming victory over Cave in their long quarrel about Eusebius's orthodoxy.<sup>75</sup>

This portrait of Johnson's intellectual hinterland is persuasive. It is an axiom of Johnson criticism that he saw himself as heir to the scholarly legacy of Erasmus, Scaliger, Grotius, and Bentley.<sup>76</sup> (As an aside, it is bizarre that this thesis can co-exist with the view that to become a modern literary historian he needed to renounce early-modern erudition; the blandness of most claims about Johnson-the-scholar and the equally dismaying reticence to actually explore the uses he made of Renaissance scholarship may help to explain it).<sup>77</sup> Moreover, it makes a certain amount of sense that Cave's books would not have been included in a list of books that were important to Johnson. On the basis of the evidence, the seventeenth-century clergyman was not a major influence on the eighteenth-century critic's thinking. Johnson was clearly familiar with his work: Boswell implies that they were both impressed to find copies of *Apostolici* (1677) and *Ecclesiastici* (1683) among 'many good books' in the library of a house on the Isle of Skye.<sup>78</sup> Yet the only proof we have of Johnson reading Cave is a very late diary entry from a few months before his death, where in the midst of some notes about prayer from William Laud and Jeremy

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<sup>75</sup> [Jean Le Clerc,] *Joannis Clerici Philosophiae et S. Linguae Vita et Opera* (Amsterdam, 1711), pp. 103-04.

<sup>76</sup> See Paul J. Korshin, 'Johnson and the Scholars', in *Samuel Johnson: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Isobel Grundy (London: Vision Press, 1984), pp. 51-69; Robert DeMaria Jr, *Samuel Johnson and the Life of Reading* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp. 71-101; Jack Lynch, *The Age of Elizabeth in the Age of Johnson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Dustin Griffin, *Authorship in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Maryland: University of Delaware Press, 2014), pp. 109-41.

<sup>77</sup> A point made in John Considine, 'The Lexicographer as Hero: Samuel Johnson and Henri Estienne', *Philological Quarterly*, 79.2 (2000), 205-24 (p. 207).

<sup>78</sup> James Boswell, *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, with Samuel Johnson* (London, 1785), p. 178.

Taylor he copied out the names of fifty or so ancient Christian writers under the heading 'See Patres'.<sup>79</sup> The note 'v. Cav' demonstrates that this list was made from the *Historia Literaria*.<sup>80</sup>

All the same, it would be shrewd to consider what motivated Parr's biography. It seems clear that his view of recent intellectual history and his sense of what made a good man of letters were a reflection of his religio-political attitudes in general. Although there was some debate about what these were among his equally tendentious biographers, particularly about whether the term 'latitudinarian' applied to him, a picture quickly emerged of what he had been like: Whig, liberal, and an advocate of religious toleration; on the question of the Trinity, possibly Unitarian but definitely anti-Athanasian; a non-sectarian 'Church of England man' who saw himself as descended from Hooker, Chillingworth, Barrow, Hoadly, and the Jeremy Taylor of *The Liberty of Propheying* (1647); and an 'attentive' but 'not deeply versed' student of the Church Fathers, who he admired only as literary stylists and men of letters rather than as teachers of doctrine.<sup>81</sup> In other words, Parr's self-presentation, as given to us by his biographers, was as an enemy of dogmatism and High Church principles, and indeed all the biographies mention his admiration for the work of that earlier eighteenth-century antidogmatist, John Jortin. Since this was precisely the tradition that had expelled Cave from the genealogy of Protestant scholarship, it is no wonder that Parr left him out of his collection of Johnsoniana. Even in his library as a whole the only book of Cave's to be found was the 1720 Geneva edition of the *Historia Literaria*.

Knowing all this, it starts to seem like Parr was wanting to fashion a Johnson in his own image. Whether he was always able to persuade himself of the honesty of this exercise is another matter. According to one of his biographers he maintained that the Johnson he knew was much

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<sup>79</sup> See the entry for 31<sup>st</sup> October 1784 in Samuel Johnson, *Diaries, Prayers, and Annals*, ed. by E. L. McAdam Jr with Donald and Mary Hyde (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 407-14.

<sup>80</sup> The notes to the Yale edition need correcting: it would be useless listing the mistakes in the editors' suggestion that Johnson 'was evidently reading William Cave's *Apostolici, or...Lives...of the Primitive Fathers*, 1677, perhaps in the later version *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* (2 vols. Basel, 1741-45)'.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> See William Field, *Memoirs*, II, pp. 267-74, pp. 364-65; and John Johnstone, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Samuel Parr*, 2 vols (London, 1829), II, pp. 665-95.



more Whiggish behind closed doors than his public persona suggested.<sup>82</sup> At other times he was apparently less confident: when he was first invited to write Johnson's epitaph, he instead recommended the orthodox champion Samuel Horsley, whom we will encounter in the next section of this chapter.<sup>83</sup> Either way, there was no shortage of accounts offering a very different version of Johnson's intellectual background. In particular, putting to one side many of the other possible Johnsons created and contested after his death, there was already an influential school of thought rediscovering his High Church, patristic, dogmatic roots.

This idea was worked out in the course of debates arising soon after Johnson's death about the character of his religiosity. In 1785 Johnson's friend George Strahan had seen through the press a book called *Prayers and Meditations*, a kind of diary of Johnson's spiritual life. This volume raised an immediate outcry.<sup>84</sup> One of the alarming aspects of the book for many readers was the evidence it gave that Johnson used to offer prayers recommending his deceased family and friends to God's mercy. First the reviewer and then a series of correspondents in *The Gentleman's Magazine* complained that this practice was papist and superstitious: it is easy to detect in their complaints not just outrage at the possibility that Johnson believed in a Purgatory which his friends needed to be prayed out of, but also a revival of the old Protestant fear of recommendation as characteristically Roman Catholic.<sup>85</sup> In response, several contributors wrote in to demonstrate that prayers for the dead were an ancient custom long pre-dating Roman supremacy.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Field, *Memoirs*, p. 160: 'Dr. Parr used to say, expressing himself, in his own strong language, "If ever man talked rebelliously, that man was Sam. Johnson." – "But," added he, with an arch leer and significant nod, "he was not then writing a book'.

<sup>83</sup> See Derry, *Dr. Parr*, p. 170.

<sup>84</sup> Maurice J. Quinlan, 'The Reaction to Dr. Johnson's "Prayers and Meditations"', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 52 (1953), 125-39.

<sup>85</sup> For the review and letters criticizing Johnson, see *Gentleman's Magazine*, 55.9 (September 1785), pp. 724-32; 'T', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 56.3 (March 1786), pp. 214-15; and 'Benvolio', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 57.2 (August 1787), pp. 684-85.

<sup>86</sup> See the letter by 'E. O. I.', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 57.5 (November 1787), pp. 979-81.

The fullest response to this storm about Johnson's piety was John Hawkins' biography, published in 1787. Hawkins admitted that towards the end of his life Johnson had been haunted by the prospect of his death in a way that veered towards superstition; he remembered having to recommend Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living* (1650) and *Holy Dying* (1651) to him for the times 'when he was most distressed'.<sup>87</sup> But rather than trying to excuse or hide this religiosity, Hawkins' solution was to antedate it. His was a Johnson who had been reading the Church Fathers since his Oxford days and planned to write a book comparing patristic and pagan schemes of morality.<sup>88</sup> If his religion had 'a tincture of enthusiasm', it derived from his 'perusal of St. Augustine and other of the fathers'.<sup>89</sup> In the specific case of his commendatory prayers, Hawkins pointed out that this practice had been championed by hard-core, primitivist Nonjurors in the early eighteenth century – an observation that makes the starting-point for Matthew Davis's convincing discussion of Johnson's attraction to this tradition.<sup>90</sup> So whereas Parr and his followers might have seen his flight towards crypto-Catholic prayers of recommendation as a late, aberrant spiritual crisis, Hawkins used it as the key to Johnson's whole career.

Whose was the truer Johnson, Parr's or Hawkins'? Enough ink has already been spilt in modern times about Johnson's politics, but if we wanted to answer this specific question we would need to scrutinise Hawkins' investments as carefully as we looked at Parr's earlier.<sup>91</sup> That Johnson left him his copy of Baronius's *Annales* in his will suggests not so much that the

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<sup>87</sup> John Hawkins, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (London, 1787), p. 542.

<sup>88</sup> Hawkins, *Life of Johnson*, p. 12.

<sup>89</sup> Hawkins, *Life of Johnson*, p. 162.

<sup>90</sup> Matthew M. Davis, "'Ask for the Old Paths': Johnson and the Nonjurors", in *The Politics of Samuel Johnson*, ed. by Jonathan Clark and Howard Erskine-Hill (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 112-67.

<sup>91</sup> His motives are still quite vague, despite two fairly detailed books on him by Bertram H. Davis: *Johnson before Boswell: A Study of Sir John Hawkins' Life of Samuel Johnson* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957) and *A Proof of Eminence: The Life of Sir John Hawkins* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1973). For debates about Johnson's politics, see the three collections edited by Jonathan Clark and Howard Erskine-Hill: *Samuel Johnson in Historical Context* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), *The Interpretation of Samuel Johnson* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), and *The Politics of Samuel Johnson* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

emphasis in Hawkins' biography on Johnson's studies of Christian antiquity was accurate as that this interest had a personal significance for the two men, that it was a special feature of their friendship as it might not have been of Johnson's other relationships.<sup>92</sup> But it should also be clear by now that we have switched from considering whether Johnson was a traditional, late humanist literary historian in Cave's mould to whether his readers thought he was or wanted him to be. What the debate over Johnson's erudition makes clear is that the dilemma facing seventeenth-century scholars was still alive a hundred or so years later. At its simplest, the question posed by this dilemma was whether good men could commend books by bad ones. In more complex terms, it asked about the autonomy of literature, the possibility that learning should be saved from confessional and political dispute.

On the one hand, Parr recruited Johnson for a liberal, tolerationist tradition where, so the claim went, learning was free from dogma. Johnson's apologists on the letters pages of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, on the other hand, insisted that his literary criticism was another expression of his High Church piety. One correspondent, 'Anti-Stiletto', put this thesis most concisely. In his or her view, Johnson's religiosity explained some of his more puzzling literary-critical decisions, like the way that 'he *recommended* one poem of Blackmore's, and the languid verses of Watts, to be inserted in the great collection of English poets'. In other words, his practice was to commend bad poets as long as they were good men and to disparage atheist or impious writers, however stylish or learned they were. (David Hume was the example given).<sup>93</sup> The verb 'recommended' was italicised here because the letter-writer was quoting Johnson's own words in the *Lives of the Poets*; given that the letter was written in the context of a debate

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<sup>92</sup> See James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, 2 vols (London, 1791), II, p. 573.

<sup>93</sup> 'Anti-Stiletto', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 56.1 (January 1786), pp. 17-23 (p. 22).

about Johnson's prayers of recommendation, it also hinted that there was a link between Johnson the student of poetry and Johnson the student of primitive Christianity.<sup>94</sup>

The reason why both these interpretations were available was that Johnson was consistently equivocal about literature's definition. Especially in his *Lives of the Poets*, writing as a historian made it possible for Johnson to describe this tension without settling it. More often than not he relied on irony, borrowing seventeenth-century worries but rarely making a decision about how serious they were historically or what they meant in the present. His Dryden, for instance, had usually written hastily, intemperately, resentfully, and out of 'zeal for Rome' – all the vices that Cave and his contemporaries disliked in scholars like Jerome and Leo Allatius.<sup>95</sup> But did any of this make him a worse or even a distinctive poet or critic? Dryden had also perfected the art of aggressive self-commendation in his prefaces and dedications, which Johnson thought represented the birth of modern English literary criticism: but was this the corruption of originally generous humanist practices of commendation or just the frank admission that these practices had always been impolite, quarrelsome, and self-serving, whatever the members of the *respublica literaria* claimed?<sup>96</sup> Milton being commended on his tour of Italy 'for every thing but his religion' either proved the gallantry and inclusiveness of an transconfessional elite praising learning above all or, contrastingly, the entrenchment of confessional differences even in literary contexts.<sup>97</sup> Johnson's judgment about Dryden's 'desertion of dramatic rhyme' was an example of the same irony, a kind of displaced critique – displaced into literary criticism – of his notorious confessional and political changes of allegiance even though Johnson had already forgiven him for his defection to Rome.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> See Johnson, *Lives*, IV, p. 105: 'The Poems of Dr. Watts were by my recommendation inserted in the late Collection; the readers of which are to impute to me whatever pleasure or weariness they may find in the perusal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden'.

<sup>95</sup> *Lives*, II, p. 104.

<sup>96</sup> *Lives*, II, pp. 82 and 111.

<sup>97</sup> *Lives*, I, p. 247.

<sup>98</sup> *Lives*, II, pp. 121 and 102-03.

After Johnson's death it would look like a choice needed to be made again between two different Johnsons, or two kinds of literary historian belonging to separate intellectual genealogies: one liberal, humanist, antidogmatic, and the other High Church, patristic, intolerant. In his own work, however, he was caught between an attraction to the humanist ideal of literature and the realisation that its unreality had already been exposed. To put this claim slightly differently, Johnson gave himself the task of writing the history of a tension within late humanism that was still unresolved in his own day. Howard Erskine-Hill has already observed that his claim (borrowed from Horace) at the end of the life of Addison, that he felt himself 'walking upon ashes under fire which is not extinguished', makes an especially apt motto for the *Lives* as a whole, reflecting Johnson's sense that the religious and political debates of the seventeenth century had lasted until well into the eighteenth.<sup>99</sup> But what had also lasted was an indecision about whether it was the place of the man of letters to intervene in these debates. Like Cave (and also Lipsius, Melancthon, and Leland in their different ways) Johnson was a professional recommender: remarks like 'I will however venture to recommend Cowley's first piece' are typical of his prefaces.<sup>100</sup> Unlike Cave, he never completed his disenchantment with the humanist ideal of giving praise first and foremost to learning.

### **'the gloom of superstition': histories of learning and poetry**

In the second volume of *Rasselas* (1759), Johnson entrusted the poet-scholar Imlac with the Harleian Catalogue's Baconian set-piece about literary history. 'There is no part of history so generally useful', Imlac suggests, than 'that which relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning

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<sup>99</sup> Howard Erskine-Hill, 'Fire under the Ashes: Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* as Narratives of History', in *The Interpretation of Samuel Johnson*, ed. by Clark and Erskine-Hill, pp. 120-64.

<sup>100</sup> Johnson, *Lives*, I, p. 214. On commendation as *the* practice of seventeenth-century literary criticism, see Michael Gavin, *The Invention of English Criticism*, pp. 11-35.

and ignorance’ and ‘the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and all the revolutions of the intellectual world’.<sup>101</sup>

William Keast, in a seminal article in 1959, took this passage seriously as a statement of Johnson’s own attitude to the value of works of history in general.<sup>102</sup> There are compelling reasons for questioning this assumption, however. As Fred Parker has suggested, Johnson’s key mode in his tale is sceptical and subversive.<sup>103</sup> Many of its characters’ boldest proclamations about how to lead their lives turn out to be hollow, naïve, or platitudinous. Why should this set-piece – which already verged on being a commonplace – be an exception? The first clue is that although this passage is almost a quotation of Johnson’s earlier description of *historia literaria*, Imlac is not thinking about ‘literary history’ at all. The objects that have called up his encomium are the ancient pyramids of Egypt – a very different kind of artefact from written texts. A shift like this (even one that is hardly signposted) is striking in a narrative whose central concern is the way in which objects of attention keep slipping and shifting without resolution, as Rasselas and his companions test different walks of life with the same questions of value: pastoral, bourgeois, aristocratic, scholarly, decadent and so on.

At just this moment, the questions that Francis Bacon had hoped that the historical study of ‘literature’ could answer were looking like they might need to be applied to new objects too, as its definition began to shift: Richard Terry has pointed to important turning-points for this lexical change in the 1750s.<sup>104</sup> Nor had this change passed Johnson’s contemporaries by: as has recently been argued, Adam Ferguson was alert to his century’s reconceptualisations of

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<sup>101</sup> Samuel Johnson, *The Prince of Abissina. A Tale*, 2 vols (London, 1759), II, p. 35. The first paragraphs of this section lightly adapt the discussion of *Rasselas* in my forthcoming chapter on the Harleian Catalogue in *Libraries, Books, and Collectors of Texts*, ed. by Annika Bautz and James Gregory.

<sup>102</sup> William R. Keast, ‘Johnson and Intellectual History’ in *New Light on Dr. Johnson: Essays on the Occasion of his 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, ed. by Frederick W. Hilles (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 247–56 (p. 250).

<sup>103</sup> Fred Parker, ‘The skepticism of Johnson’s *Rasselas*’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Samuel Johnson*, ed. by Greg Clingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 127–42.

<sup>104</sup> Terry, *Poetry and the Making*, p. 18.

'literature' in his *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, published in 1767.<sup>105</sup> But the process was by no means complete, and it can hardly have seemed certain to mid-eighteenth-century authors that they were in the midst of a permanent intellectual alteration, given the persistence in the mainstream of the traditional definition until well into the nineteenth century in works like *The Literary Policy of the Church of Rome* (1830) and *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (1817-58). Imlac's encomium for a Baconian literary history whose object was no longer literature seems to reflect the shift, as well as the possibility that it could reverse at any moment.

For the time being, the history of learning was relatively safe. Mark Salber Phillips has traced its eventual transformation into the history of literature, in the modern sense, as a new interest in manners and opinions gave a new advantage to medieval poetry as a special source of insights into the inner life of the past.<sup>106</sup> But at least until the nineteenth century, as Phillips has also shown, the older form was still popular. The 'history of the revival of learning in Europe' that John Hawkins suggested Johnson considered writing would have been a contribution to this genre.<sup>107</sup> It is worth pointing out that the late eighteenth-century version of literary history was not quite as traditional or Baconian as Phillips makes out. The professionalization of librarianship, the growing prestige of book catalogues, and the creation of public or national collections had helped to specialize *historia literaria*, at least in its traditional form, into bibliography.<sup>108</sup> Criticism of the genre as uncritical, unphilosophical, and merely cumulative solidified this development and made scholars cast around for alternative, often

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<sup>105</sup> Stefan Hoesel-Uhlig, 'Ferguson's School for Literature', in *The Poetic Enlightenment: Poetry and Human Science, 1650-1820*, ed. by Tom Jones and Rowan Boyson (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013), pp. 43-58 (pp. 45-46).

<sup>106</sup> Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, chapter 10, pp. 259-321.

<sup>107</sup> Hawkins, *Life of Johnson*, p. 167.

<sup>108</sup> For the context of some of these changes, see Graham Pollard and Albert Ehrman, *The Distribution of Books by Catalogue, from the Invention of Printing to A.D. 1800, Based on Material in the Broxbourne Library* (Cambridge: Printed for Presentation to Members of the Roxburghe Club, 1965); Archer Taylor, *Book Catalogues: Their Varieties and Uses*, 2nd edn, rev. by W. P. Barlow Jr (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1986); P. R. Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library, 1753-1973* (London: The British Library, 1998); and David McKitterick, 'Bibliography, Bibliophily, and the Organization of Knowledge', in *The Foundations of Scholarship: Libraries and Collecting, 1650-1750*, edited by David Vaisey and David McKitterick (Los Angeles: University of California, 1992), pp. 31-61.

essayistic, modes of description.<sup>109</sup> But its survival in any form suggests that the practices and concerns of Cave and his contemporaries were still relevant.

Take two examples, Thomas Warton's dissertation 'On the Introduction of Learning into England' at the front of his *History of English Poetry* (1774-81) and Robert Henry's *History of Great Britain* (1771-85), where the fourth chapter of each volume gave an account of developments in the world of learning. Both writers made extensive use of Cave's work. Henry cited him in the footnotes beneath his discussions of, for instance, whether Boniface had been born in the south or north of England, what kind of books the medieval scholastics had written, and how reliable Eadmer's works of history were.<sup>110</sup> Warton checked his facts and dates with Cave in the same way and also frequently borrowed the sweeping generalisations in Cave's 'conspectuses' introducing each new century in the *Historia Literaria*: the sixth century was when most European countries had been converted to Christianity, learning had reached the Anglo-Saxons in the eighth, and so on.<sup>111</sup>

However, the use made of Cave's learning by late eighteenth-century historians was more complicated than this sketch suggests. Henry and Warton were not reading him all that closely, and in particular they were also oversimplifying or overlooking aspects of his work that made him different from other literary historians like John Leland. Henry was prepared to elide Cave and John Bale with Leland and Thomas Tanner, making them into a single native tradition, 'the writers of our literary history'.<sup>112</sup> Neither he nor Warton saw a contradiction in using Cave's book to help tell Leland's story of the survival of eloquence and classical literature, the centrality of late antique Rome, the creep of barbarous scholasticism, and even – in the farthest stretch

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<sup>109</sup> For late-century critiques of *historia literaria*, see Chad Wellmon, *Organizing Enlightenment*, pp. 123-50; Hoesel-Uhlig, 'The Historical Formation', pp. 111-12; and Martin Gierl, 'Historia literaria', pp. 126-27.

<sup>110</sup> Robert Henry, *The History of Great Britain, from the First Invasion of it by the Romans under Julius Caesar. Written on a New Plan*, 5 vols (Edinburgh, 1771-85): II (1774), p. 335; III (1777), p. 419; and IV (1781), p. 421.

<sup>111</sup> Thomas Warton, *The History of English Poetry, from the Close of the Eleventh to the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century*, 4 vols (London, 1774-81), I (1774), 'Dissertation II', sigs. A2<sup>v</sup> and C2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>112</sup> Henry, *History of Great Britain*, V, pp. 416.



from Leland – the admission of ‘others besides ecclesiastics to the profession of letters’.<sup>113</sup> Their interests coincided with Cave’s, but only the Cave of the early 1670s, a phase that he had repudiated, more or less consciously, as his career wore on. As a result they were uninterested in the *Historia Literaria* on its own terms or as the culmination of his life’s work. A sign of this is that they were both working from the out-dated 1688 and 1698 volumes of his book rather than the innovative Oxford edition of the 1740s.<sup>114</sup> Even so, it is possible to see their use of Cave’s work as the logical development, or generalisation, of Waterland’s editorial presentation of Cave as a resource, an author for the footnotes.

The continuities between late humanist and Enlightenment literary histories were therefore real, if also attenuated. The next question to ask is what happened in the second transition, if we want to call it that, from the history of learning to the history of poetry. Warton’s dissertation will repay a closer look here, since its uncertain relationship to the main book – the history proper – summarises larger uncertainties in the relationship between the two modes. Roughly at the same time, Johnson was hinting that the histories of learning and poetry might be incommensurable, even though they ostensibly had the same object, literature. His Dryden, for instance, never made ‘any great advances in literature’: he was not scholarly in a traditional or classical sense and, Johnson said, he would never have made a figure in the history of learning like Milton or Cowley.<sup>115</sup> His status in the history of poetry was a different story: in Johnson’s words, he was venerated by ‘every cultivator of English Literature’ for refining the native metre.<sup>116</sup>

Warton, by contrast, started out implying that poetry was a category of learning: hence his dissertation would provide a framework for the rest of the book.<sup>117</sup> But this traditional

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<sup>113</sup> Warton, *History*, sig. f<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>114</sup> As their page references prove: see Henry, *History of Great Britain*, II, p. 335.

<sup>115</sup> Johnson, *Lives*, II, p. 121.

<sup>116</sup> *Lives*, II, p. 123.

<sup>117</sup> Warton, *History*, ‘Preface’, viii.

reassurance, rooted in a humanist commonplace, must have left his readers unprepared for the spectacular change of direction that came at the end of the dissertation. Up to this point it had been about the endurance of humanist discernment, reason, solidity, elegance, and eloquence even in times of barbarism. More than his focus, Warton's sympathies seemed to have lain in this perspective. Then in the final paragraph his point of view changed entirely: the decline of learning was necessary for the survival of 'inventive poetry', which relied on 'the gloom of ignorance and superstition'.<sup>118</sup> As he put it, 'Had classical taste and judgment been now established, imagination would have suffered, and too early a check would have been given to the beautiful extravagancies of romantic fabling'. The familiar image of Warton as self-divided by his neoclassical tastes and his instincts for the gothic might help us to explain this switch, but it also points to the discovery of inadequacies in Leland's polite model of history, or its unadaptability to the new interest in early and medieval British poetry.<sup>119</sup>

This might look like evidence of a profound break: if the first turn, towards the history of learning, was also a turn away from the full complexity of early-modern *historia literaria*, the second, towards the history of poetry, was a turn away from even the attenuated, Lelandesque version that Warton and Henry had preserved. Eventually this episode seems to point towards the complete exclusion of *historia literaria* from modern genealogies of literary studies. It points forward, for instance, to the disappearance of the *Historia Literaria* from Godwin's *Life of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1803).<sup>120</sup> Although Godwin borrowed a detail about Aquinas's early life from Cave's book in the now traditional way, it would hardly be worth suggesting that he found in it any models for writing literary history, even the bio-bibliography for Chaucer at the back of the

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<sup>118</sup> Warton, *History*, sig. k4r.

<sup>119</sup> For this view of Warton, see Joseph M. Levine, *Humanism and History: Origins of Modern English Historiography* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987), chapter 8, pp. 190-213; and Terry, *Poetry and the Making*, pp. 295-311.

<sup>120</sup> For the citation about Aquinas, see William Godwin, *Life of Geoffrey Chaucer, The Early English Poet*, 2nd edn, 4 vols (London, 1804), I, p. 312. For claims about the importance of Godwin's biography to the development of literary history, see Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, p. 277.

second volume of the Oxford edition (1743).<sup>121</sup> This three-page entry by Henry Wharton was an outgrowth of his research into the history of attitudes towards clerical celibacy: earlier on in his career he had gathered quotations from the *Canterbury Tales* about the sexual depravity of medieval clergymen, storing them in a notebook alongside related extracts from patristic and late antique sources.<sup>122</sup> Chaucer was a kind of belated Father, a witness to doctrinal corruption, a standard figure of Christian learning; a recent essay by Mark Vessey suggests that this was a typical early-modern way of thinking about him.<sup>123</sup> In contrast, the Chaucer of Godwin's two-volume biography was a guide to the mental landscapes of an exotic medieval past.

Before deciding whether the early nineteenth century represents a new age, the first post-Cave or modern age of literary history, there is a third history of learning to consider. In summer 1803 Robert Southey contracted with the publishing company Longman to produce an encyclopaedic *Bibliotheca Britannica*.<sup>124</sup> When he then wrote to invite Coleridge to contribute, Coleridge responded by proposing a dismayingly ambitious plan for a seven-volume 'History of British Literature, bibliographical, biographical, and critical'. This would deal with the history of the Welsh, Saxon, and Gaelic languages, English poetry and poetical prose, English prose, medieval learning and Roman Catholic theology, English religious life since the Renaissance,

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<sup>121</sup> William Cave, *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*, ed. by Daniel Waterland, 2 vols (Oxford, 1740-43), II (1743), 'Notae MSS. & Accessiones Anonymi', pp. 13-15. In this edition the entry was wrongly ascribed to Tenison, possibly deliberately: Cave's editors had found the bio-bibliography for Chaucer in Warton's hand in his annotated copy of the *Historia Literaria* and may not have wanted to give new life to the old rumour about who had contributed what.

<sup>122</sup> LPL MS 586; the several pages of notes on Chaucer are between the pages numbered 112 and 113 in this volume.

<sup>123</sup> Mark Vessey, 'Classicism and Christianity', in *The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature, Volume 2: 1558-1660*, ed. by Patrick Cheney and Philip Hardie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 103-28.

<sup>124</sup> See Southey's letter to William Taylor, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1803, no. 806, in *The Collected Letters of Robert Southey*, ed. by Lynda Pratt, Tim Fulford, and Ian Packer. Romantic Circles Online (2009). <[https://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/southey\\_letters](https://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/southey_letters)> [accessed online 10<sup>th</sup> December 2017]. For a brief account of this project in the context of nineteenth-century encyclopaedism, see the introduction to *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture, 1776-1832*, ed. by Ian McCalman and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

and the ‘arts and sciences’ since the Reformation.<sup>125</sup> Coleridge promised to write the sections on metaphysics himself.

Had this project not petered out, there is every indication that it would have made frequent and traditional appeals to Cave’s authority. Both men knew his work well. Around the same time Southey was writing to a correspondent to find out if Cave was correct when he said that a manuscript containing the works of the twelfth-century antiquarian Gerald of Wales was in the Dean and Chapter Library at Westminster; in another letter of 1804, less conventionally, he compared his struggles to complete his history of Portugal to Cave’s difficulties finishing his *Historia Literaria*, quoting a sentence from its preface and observing, ‘There is a lamentable truth in the complaint of poor Cave’.<sup>126</sup> Coleridge seems to have approached Cave by a more circuitous route in 1801. In one of his notebooks, a memo clearly copied from Robert Henry’s *History of Great Britain* – ‘Leland, Bale, Pits, Cave, & Tanner the writers of our literary History’ – is then followed, a few folio leaves later, by detailed bibliographical notes clearly from Cave about medieval authors like Peter Lombard and John of Salisbury.<sup>127</sup> A typical entry looks like this: ‘Robertus Pulleynus (1144) Sententiarum de Trinitate Libros 8. – Paris. 1655’.

So far, so conventional. We are now entering a new phase in Cave’s reception, however. Two eighteenth-century traditions in particular stopped with Coleridge. First, unlike Henry and Warton, he was aware of Cave’s tendentiousness. His copy of the 1740-43 edition of the *Historia Literaria* has been lost, but the single annotation to have survived, after it was printed in the *British Magazine* in 1837, makes it clear that he reacted to it much more viscerally than any of his contemporaries. As we have seen, the revised preface in Waterland’s edition included a new

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<sup>125</sup> See Coleridge’s letter to Southey, July 1803, in *The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by Earl Leslie Griggs, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956-71), II (1956), no. 507, pp. 955-56.

<sup>126</sup> Southey to William Taylor, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1804, in *Collected Letters*, no. 879. See also his letter to Grosvenor Charles Bedford, 1<sup>st</sup> December 1804, no. 994.

<sup>127</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Volume 1: 1794-1804*, ed. by Kathleen Coburn (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957; repr. 2002), 1000D, 1006, 1070, 1071 and 1080.

section in which Cave had sharpened his life-long distaste for scholasticism into a historical thesis about the decline of learning. Coleridge responded angrily to this, calling it ‘mere vulgar common-place’, an ‘unjust and calumnious’ attack: it was untrue that the scholastics had relied exclusively on bad translations of Aristotle, and their thinking was profound even if their style was barbarous. In short they were ‘the true dawn of the restoration of literature: they were the first restorers of it’.<sup>128</sup> Coleridge’s account of medieval metaphysics in the projected *Bibliotheca Britannica* would almost certainly have been unprecedentedly antagonistic to Cave’s literary history.

The second break with tradition was forced by Southey’s choice of title, *Bibliotheca Britannica*. In August 1803 Southey wrote to tell Coleridge that the multi-part history that he had sketched out was ‘too good, too gigantic, quite beyond my powers’. In his view the only practical option was a ‘bibliotheca’ in the conventional sense: ‘a book of reference, a work in which it may be seen what has been written upon every subject in the British language’.<sup>129</sup> Coleridge’s protest in his response a few days later – ‘An encyclopaedia appears to me a worthless monster’ – is significant because it is the second sign of his antipathy towards the kind of scholarship monumentalised by the Oxford edition of the *Historia Literaria*, which Waterland had wanted to present as a universal index of literary and ecclesiastical history. What is unexpected is that this hostility made Cave’s work more important to him, not less. Coleridge was ready to reject the late eighteenth-century Cave: resourceful, informative, neutral, Lelandesque, largely non-clerical. It was the intolerant, heresy-hunting, judgmental, ecclesiastical Cave who appealed to him instead.

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<sup>128</sup> *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Marginalia*, ed. by H. J. Jackson and George Whalley, 6 vols (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980-2001), II (1984), pp. 12-13.

<sup>129</sup> Southey to Coleridge, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1803, in *Collected Letters*, no. 816.

### **‘the complaint of poor Cave’: Coleridge and men of letters**

This final section starts with a simple proposition: Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria* (1817) was indebted to Cave’s *Historia Literaria*. Yet vanishingly few critics have considered this possibility. Even suggesting that its title alludes to Cave’s book is an innovation. None of the significant twentieth-century editions of the text make this link in their introductions.<sup>130</sup> The question of whether Coleridge’s title has a source has scarcely been asked, as if it is obvious to everyone involved that it is simply an erudite variation of the book’s subtitle, *Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. Of the scholars to have considered the title, Jon Klancher has persuasively suggested that its adjective alludes to the *respublica literaria*, the scholarly community that Coleridge called the ‘*Book-republi*’ in the first of his *Lay Sermons* (1816), expressing a desire to recall its ‘ex-dignitaries’ like Selden and Stillingfleet from oblivion.<sup>131</sup> I shall return to this suggestion later on. Only Mark Vessey, meanwhile, has speculated briefly that the *Biographia Literaria* looks back directly to Cave’s *Historia Literaria*.<sup>132</sup>

It will be helpful here to be reminded of what the *Biographia Literaria* wants to be, says it is, accomplishes, and regrets not doing. Coleridge’s interest from the early 1800s in tracing the growth of his theories about philosophy and poetics in a work of autobiography has been well told by Kathleen Wheeler.<sup>133</sup> By the early 1810s this exercise in life-writing was to take the form of a preface to a new edition of his poems, as the standard account of the *Biographia*’s genesis in the Bollingen edition has made clear.<sup>134</sup> Its final form, famously, was the product of

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<sup>130</sup> For instance: *Biographia Literaria*, ed. by John T. Shawcross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907); *Biographia Literaria*, ed. by Engell and Jackson Bate; and *Biographia Literaria*, ed. by Nigel Leask (London: Everyman, 1997).

<sup>131</sup> Jon Klancher, *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences: Knowledge and Cultural Institutions in the Romantic Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 155. See *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Lay Sermons*, ed. by R. J. White (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 107.

<sup>132</sup> Mark Vessey, ‘Literature, Patristics, Early Christian Writing’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, ed. by Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 42-65 (p. 49).

<sup>133</sup> Kathleen M. Wheeler, *Sources, Processes, and Methods in Coleridge’s Biographia Literaria* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 2-26.

<sup>134</sup> James Engell and Walter Jackson Bate, *Biographia Literaria*, I, introduction, li-lxvii.

compromise with his publishers, hasty plagiarisms from works of German philosophy, reprints of materials published elsewhere, and acts of misdirection, like the ‘letter from a friend’ written by Coleridge as a playful warning that if he included a long philosophical chapter on the imagination his work would cease to resemble what was described on his title-page – ‘My Literary Life and Opinions’ – and start to resemble George Berkeley’s miscellaneous *Siris* (1744), ‘announced as an Essay on Tar-water, which beginning with Tar ends with the Trinity’.<sup>135</sup>

Even without this Platonising chapter, the book was still sufficiently miscellaneous and philosophical – it also, like Berkeley’s *Siris*, ended with a section on the Trinity – and Coleridge differentiated it explicitly from the autobiography that he *would* write, ‘should life and leisure be granted me’.<sup>136</sup> But it was still recognisably autobiographical. Coleridge kept coming back to his education: his early classical training at Christ’s Hospital; his young fixation on metaphysics and scholastic theology before being rescued by his discovery of William Lisle Bowles’s sonnets; his absorption of the tradition of British materialism represented by Locke and Hartley; his exposure to neo-Platonist, neo-Kantian idealism; his studies of German literature in Göttingen in the 1790s; and his disillusioned retreat to religious and moral contemplation in Somerset. The larger arc that Coleridge traced in the book (and also partially suppressed, as Douglas Hedley has shown) was his slow return from Unitarianism to the Church of England, and thus from antitrinitarianism to orthodoxy.

Coleridge indicated that his trinitarianism was, or should have been, a core element of his *Biographia Literaria*. In the final chapter he indicated what he wanted ‘my personal as well as my LITERARY LIFE [to] conclude with’: that is, an exhortation ‘to kindle young minds, and to guard them against the temptation of Scorners’ by showing that Church of England beliefs, especially about the Trinity, were reasonable, just not discoverable through reason.<sup>137</sup> His

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<sup>135</sup> *Biographia*, I, p. 303.

<sup>136</sup> *Biographia*, II, p. 237.

<sup>137</sup> *Biographia*, II, p. 247.

phrasing leaves it open whether by ‘my literary life’ he meant his life as a man of letters (partly completed, partly to come) or the act of life-writing that he was just finishing. We are now more aware than ever that Coleridge spent much of his subsequent career criticizing the antitrinitarianism that he had publicly defended earlier on in his career, for instance in a set of lectures in Bristol in 1795.<sup>138</sup> But the controversial, theological concerns of his *Aids to Reflection* (1825) and unfinished *Opus Maximum* were already present in his *Biographia*. This was no less a polemic against the ‘psilanthropists’, the name he gave to the unofficial sect of antitrinitarians he had joined as a young man, at a time when he was still ‘one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real son of Joseph’.<sup>139</sup> This focus on his religious past could easily look like a digression away from ‘literary’ concerns like authorship, publishing, poetry, and criticism, and thus from the main purpose of his literary life. Yet there are reasons for thinking that, from Coleridge’s perspective, a literary biography was precisely the place to defend the Trinity.

In 1802, at the same time as he was ‘worming his way’ through Cave’s *Historia Literaria* – Kathleen Coburn’s words – Coleridge was also re-reading the controversial exchange of the 1780s and 1790s between the antitrinitarian Joseph Priestley and the trinitarian Samuel Horsley over the historical evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>140</sup> Coleridge, who by this stage was sceptical of the claims made on both sides, told his correspondents that he planned to write a review of this controversy for the *British Critic*, although nothing was ever published.<sup>141</sup> In 1790, Priestley had finished his blast against Horsley by criticizing his Anglican opponents for failing to appear on his chosen battlefield, the history of the early Church. As a ‘stimulus’ to Horsley

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<sup>138</sup> The standard accounts of his later orthodoxy are J. Robert Barth, *Coleridge and Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); Douglas Hedley, *Coleridge, Philosophy and Religion: Aids to Reflection and the Mirror of the Spirit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Jeffrey W. Barbeau, *Coleridge, the Bible, and Religion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). The best accounts of his earlier Unitarianism are Herbert Walter Piper, ‘Coleridge and the Unitarian Consensus’, in *The Coleridge Connection: Essays for Thomas McFarland*, ed. by Richard Gravil and Molly Lefebure (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1990), pp. 273-90; and Daniel E. White, *Early Romanticism and Religious Dissent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 119-51.

<sup>139</sup> *Biographia*, I, p. 181.

<sup>140</sup> *Notebook*, I, 1070n.

<sup>141</sup> See Coleridge’s letter of 26<sup>th</sup> July 1802 to John Prior Estlin, *Collected Letters*, II, no. 447, p. 821.



and his colleagues, he wrote, he would reproduce ‘the animated exhortation to the study of the christian Fathers with which Cave concludes the *Prolegomena* to his *Historia Literaria*’, in the 1698 second volume.<sup>142</sup> The gist of Cave’s argument was that now that certain ancient forms of antitrinitarianism had been revived in the present day, claiming their descent from early heretics like Ebion, Cerinthus, Theodotus, Paul of Samosata, and Photinus, it was necessary for ‘studious young men’ to be trained up to become patristics experts in order to show that trinitarianism had always been the mainstream teaching of the Church. These students would be the future Athanasiuses and Hillarys of the Church of England, the Trinity’s ‘hyperaspistas’, chief shield-bearers.<sup>143</sup>

Priestley translated this call to arms in the main body of his book and cited the original Latin in the footnotes, praising Cave as he did so as a ‘most excellent man, whose writings, allowing for his prejudices, I highly value, and endeavour to make the best use of’ – a claim given substance by his inclusion in another book against Horsley of a list of ecclesiastical writers taken, as he pointed out, ‘chiefly from Cave’s *Historia Literaria*’.<sup>144</sup> If the use of the trinitarian Cave by an avowed antitrinitarian looked surprising, that was the point: Priestley was availing himself of the old heterodox strategy – turned against Cave in the late seventeenth century by Isaac Newton and Stephen Nye – of taking writers with impeccably orthodox Church of England credentials, reasserting their orthodoxy, then showing how their work already contained the materials for a critique of that orthodoxy, in this case by proving that, despite Anglican claims about its novelty, there was already an antitrinitarian tradition in antiquity.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Joseph Priestley, *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (Birmingham, 1790), pp. 66-71.

<sup>143</sup> See Cave, *Pars Altera*, xii.

<sup>144</sup> Joseph Priestley, *Letters to Dr. Horsley, part II* (London, 1786), xxvii-xxix.

<sup>145</sup> For a variant of the same strategy, see Justin Champion, “‘To know the edition’: Erudition and Polemic in Eighteenth-Century Clerical Culture”, in *The Making of Marsh’s Library: Learning, Politics and Religion in Ireland, 1650-1750*, ed. by Muriel McCarthy and Ann Simmons (Scarborough: Four Courts Press, 2004), pp. 117-45.

Coleridge's wish to spend his literary life teaching young minds about the Trinity starts to look like a more studied programme in this light. By calling his book the *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge was making clear that it was a response to Cave's call to arms, the recruitment office if not the training camp for a new generation of trinitarian shield-bearers. More than just a title, Cave gave Coleridge a way of imagining himself: as the latest combatant in an age-old, almost mythic struggle between orthodoxy and heresy. This helps to explain why he called his nineteenth-century opponents 'psilanthropists'. According to the OED, no one had used this word or the noun 'psilanthropism' before Coleridge. The Bollingen editors of the *Biographia* imply that he coined it himself by putting together ψιλός (mere) and ἄνθρωπος (man) to stand for the heretical belief that Christ was not divine. This does not tell the whole story, however. For a start, the phrase ψιλός ἄνθρωπος was already a shorthand for a persistent heresy in antiquity: Eusebius of Caesarea seems to have been the first to use it, closely followed by Epiphanius of Salamis; their source was probably Irenaeus's reference to the notion current in his day that Christ was 'nude tantum hominem'.<sup>146</sup>

Coleridge probably first came across the Greek version of the expression in Priestley's *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* (1782), where Priestley provided it in brackets after using the English equivalent, 'mere man'.<sup>147</sup> Coleridge certainly associated the expression with Priestley and modern Unitarianism, referring more than once to 'Priestleyan Psilanthropism'.<sup>148</sup> But he only began to use it after his split from Unitarianism in the 1800s, and then only ever as a term of abuse – thus following Cave's practice in the *Historia Literaria*, where the Greek expression occurred in the biographies of, for instance, the early heretics Theodotus of

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<sup>146</sup> Irenaeus, *Adversus Valentini, & similibus Gnosticorum Haereses, Libri quinque*, ed. by François Feuardent (Paris, 1639), book 3, chapter XXI, p. 286. Epiphanius *Constantinae sive Salaminis in Cypro Episcopi Opera Omnia*, ed. by Denis Petau, 2 vols (Paris, 1622), I, chapter XXI or LI, p. 423. See Aloysius Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition. Volume I*, 2nd edn, rev. and trans. by John Bowden (London and Oxford: Mowbrays, 1975), p. 186.

<sup>147</sup> Joseph Priestley, *An History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, 2 vols (Birmingham, 1782), I, p. 16.

<sup>148</sup> *Marginalia*, VI (2001), p. 74.

Byzantium, Paul of Samosata, and Photinus. Although the phrase appeared once in the 1688 first volume, it was only in the revisions that he started making in the 1690s and 1700s, after the revival of what he saw as modern-day Photinianism in the antitrinitarian writings of Stephen Nye and others, that Cave began systematically adding it to his biographies, usually by swapping out the Latin equivalent ‘nudus homo’. In any case, the Oxford edition of the work (owned by Coleridge) portrayed psilanthropism as a major, recurrent heresy in the ancient world.<sup>149</sup> All that was needed for the pattern to repeat was the emergence of a new Photinus, one of the pseudonyms used by Priestley in his contributions to the *Theological Repository*. Coleridge could then step forward to meet him as the new Cave-Eusebius.<sup>150</sup>

We can take this argument a stage further: hearing Cave’s appeal, Coleridge turned his *Biographia Literaria* into an expanded version of the literary-biographical entries for the Fathers in Cave’s *Historia Literaria*. These lives were accounts of their subjects’ learning: where they went to school, who they studied under, when they progressed from secular eloquence to sacred divinity (as they usually did), what they had written and read, and what their theological beliefs were. Coleridge’s life illustrated the familiar trajectory of the early heretic who returned to orthodoxy. (The other half of Coleridge’s title may also be a sophisticated, ironic acknowledgement of his early flirtation with heterodoxy, since the most famous recent *Biographia*, the second edition of the *Biographia Britannica* (1778-1793) prepared by the Unitarians Andrew Kippis and Joseph Towers, was frequently criticized in the press for giving too much prominence to Dissenters).<sup>151</sup> Coleridge explicitly likened his re-conversion story to the best-known patristic narrative: Augustine’s recovery from Manichaeism, with the assistance of neo-

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<sup>149</sup> See Cave, *Historia Literaria*, ed. by Waterland, I, pp. 87, 134, and 209. George Bull also used the Greek phrase, but less systematically than Cave: see his *Defensio Fidei Nicaeni*, p. 491.

<sup>150</sup> For this and Priestley’s other pseudonyms, see Luisa Calé, ‘Periodical Personae: Pseudonyms, Authorship and the Imagined Community of Joseph Priestley’s *Theological Repository*’, *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 19.3 (2006), 1-25.

<sup>151</sup> See *Westminster Magazine* (August 1780), p. 437; *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 59.5 (November 1789), pp. 1027-30 (p. 1029); and *Critical Review: or, Annals of Literature*, 13 (February 1795), pp. 121-35 (p. 124).

Platonic philosophy.<sup>152</sup> The way Coleridge worded this account ('commenced the rescue of St. Augustine's faith from the same error') echoes Cave's description of the same episode ('ab erroribus revocari coepit'), raising the possibility that he was remembering Cave's book.<sup>153</sup>

The reasons why Coleridge was attracted to Cave's scholarship are relatively easy to discern, at least at first. One of the seeming paradoxes of Coleridge's portrait of himself as a man of letters is that he devotes so much energy to abusing the 'general diffusion of literature' in his own day and insisting that 'my acquaintance with literary men has been limited'.<sup>154</sup> As we have seen, Jon Klancher has offered one explanation of how he kept his balance: an appeal was being made in his title to an early-modern ideal of letters, the scholarly *respublica literaria*, because it offered Coleridge a contrast to what he perceived as the debased, over-commercialised, low-brow literary sphere of the early nineteenth century. Klancher has turned this allusion into a fairly general claim about the pre-eminence in Coleridge's mind of seventeenth-century Church of England érudits like Selden and Stillingfleet.<sup>155</sup> In light of this chapter's arguments it looks much more specifically like an evocation of early-modern literary life as Cave characterised it: heresiological, clerical, not always polite.

Many of the elements of that life were still available to Coleridge, but only as corruptions or caricatures of what they had once been. Letters of recommendation, for instance, were just as important in Coleridge's day as in Cave's, and he filled his correspondence with amusing anecdotes about Englishmen abroad waving them around and society figures spending so long reading and writing them that they had no time left for actual company.<sup>156</sup> But by now, as Coleridge saw it, the letters had become a kind of fetish: indispensable for would-be authors to

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<sup>152</sup> *Biographia*, II, p. 205.

<sup>153</sup> Cave, *Historia Literaria*, ed. by Waterland, p. 291.

<sup>154</sup> See *Biographia*, II, pp. 38-39 and 53.

<sup>155</sup> Klancher, *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences*, p. 155.

<sup>156</sup> See Coleridge's letters to Thomas Poole, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1802, and Washington Allston, 17<sup>th</sup> June 1806, in *Collected Letters*, no. 439, p. 799, and no. 620, p. 1172.

the point where it was simply the ability to produce them that qualified men for a career in letters, rather than the moral or scholarly qualifications that they were meant to enclose. In the *Biographia*, Coleridge had his life as a writer begin with a letter of recommendation, as if authorship and commendation were co-extensive or synonymous.<sup>157</sup> In other words, they were a badge of the literary professionalization that he thought beset his own day, an opinion culminating in his famous advice: 'be not *merely* a man of letters!'<sup>158</sup>

The argument needs pausing here, however. The image it presents of Coleridge looking back nostalgically to Cave's day is an unexpected one. The impression given throughout his work, especially in his annotations, is that rather than being attracted to Cave's methods and concerns he was deeply suspicious of them, as his reaction to the *Historia Literaria's* attack on scholasticism suggests. In particular it seems implausible that Coleridge should try to make sense of his own age by imitating the seventeenth century's appeal to primitive Christianity. First of all, Coleridge had a very low opinion of Irenaeus and Epiphanius, the writers who offered Cave not only an account of ancient heresy but also a mode for writing literary history in the present; as we have seen, Waterland's Oxford edition had made Cave look even more like a latter-day Epiphanius. For Coleridge the problem was not just that these Fathers were unreliable because their knowledge about earlier writers came from gossip, hear-say, slander, and anecdote. Much more troubling was their 'accursed appetite for making Heresies', which had led to 'the neglect or destruction of so many valuable Works!': they were the opposite of what good literary historians should be, guilty of causing 'the heaviest losses of ecclesiastical Literature' by casting suspicion on the Gnostics.<sup>159</sup> Second, Coleridge was cynical in general about what he called the

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<sup>157</sup> *Biographia*, I, p. 181: 'A person, to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed, was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first *stroke* in the new business I had undertaken of an author'.

<sup>158</sup> *Biographia*, I, p. 229.

<sup>159</sup> *Marginalia*, V (2000), pp. 624 and 638.

‘predilection for *patristic* Learning & Authority’ among Caroline divines, especially as it led them to neglect early-modern Reformers like Luther and Calvin.<sup>160</sup>

These attitudes would seem to suggest that Coleridge was heir to the long and influential antidogmatic critique of Cave’s work. The vignette that he gave in his notebook in 1828 of Cave being read by pious old ladies drew its terms unmistakeably from Le Clerc, Thomasius, and Jortin, depicting him as saint-worshipping, credulous, superstitious, romantic, over-fond of the Fathers, unhistorical, and finally crypto-Catholic.<sup>161</sup> It also dovetailed with his dislike of seventeenth-century Laudianism, and possibly its nineteenth century revivals too, which found frequent expression in his annotations to books like Jeremy Taylor’s *Unum Necessarium* (1655) and John Hackett’s *Scrinia Reserata* (1693). For Coleridge the flaws in Cave’s work were clearly characteristic of the ‘soaring High-Church Men and Ultra-Royalists’ of his day: their persecuting dogmatism against Calvinists, sacerdotal clericalism, monkish over-emphasis on ‘what Luther calls Werk-heiligkeit’, Arminian or Pelagian indifference to grace, desperation for every one of their religious practices to be proven *de jure divino*, and so on.<sup>162</sup>

The *Biographia Literaria* as a parody of early-modern High Church scholarship: as attractive as this idea is, it raises more problems than it solves. How was Coleridge able to ridicule Cave’s practices and yet also appeal seriously to his defence of Nicene trinitarianism? A detailed study of his interest in Caroline divinity in the mould of Peter Nockles’s discussions of how the Oxford Movement ‘used’ the seventeenth century would be extremely helpful here.<sup>163</sup> That said, there is possibly an easier way to escape the bind. The way that Coleridge used Cave’s work immediately recalls the classic antidogmatic technique that allowed his critics to benefit

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<sup>160</sup> *Marginalia*, V, pp. 526 and 661-62. For an account of Coleridge’s nuanced views about the varying levels of authority to be assigned to the Bible, ‘tradition’, the Fathers, and the Reformers, see Barbeau, *Coleridge, the Bible, and Religion*, especially pp. 116-23.

<sup>161</sup> Coleridge, *Notebooks*, V, 5856-7.

<sup>162</sup> See *Marginalia*, V, pp. 496-97, 578, 596-97, 661-62.

<sup>163</sup> E.g. Nockles, ‘Anglicanism “Represented”’, pp. 308-69, and *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship 1760-1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 113-28.

from his learning while dismissing his judgments. If so, Coleridge might have had another incentive for giving his book its name. In 1777 the physician John Berkenhout had published the first (and only) volume of his *Biographia Literaria: or, A Biographical History of Literature*. Looking back at earlier literary historians in his preface, Berkenhout mentioned Cave's defence of Christ's letter to Abgar and offered a familiar appraisal of his work: 'Mr Cave was a man of great learning and christian piety; but pious credulity is not a recommendatory qualification in an historian, who ought to be of no country, and of no religion'.<sup>164</sup> The title *Biographia Literaria* therefore came pre-associated with a kind of Jortin-inspired historiography defining itself in opposition to Cave's credulity and dogmatism but slyly appreciative of his erudition.

At the risk of stopping this point in its tracks without giving a reason, the aim of this section is to take a different view of Coleridge's uses of Cave. Consider again Coleridge's warning, 'be not merely a man of letters'. This was not a new complaint: Johnson was recorded making a similar remark at the expense of 'mere literary man'.<sup>165</sup> But it also had a more immediate resonance. Paul Keen has suggested that the final decades of the eighteenth century saw a 'crisis of literature' in which print culture – 'literature' in its older, most expansive sense – was increasingly identified with the aggressively reformist politics that had recently unleashed such violence in France.<sup>166</sup> In response, conservative thinkers tried to neutralise 'literature' by depoliticizing it, transforming it into a site for imaginative expression, especially in verse. It is clearly in this context of disenchantment that the radical-turned-loyalist Isaac D'Israeli suggested in 1796 that 'the concerns of mere literature, are not very material in the system of

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<sup>164</sup> John Berkenhout, *Biographia Literaria: or, A Biographical History of Literature. Volume I. From the Beginning of the Fifth to the End of the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1677), vii-ix (vii-viii).

<sup>165</sup> *The Life of Samuel Johnson, by James Boswell*, ed. by John Wilson Croker, 5 vols (London, 1831), V, 'General Appendix', p. 415: 'A mere literary man,' said the Doctor, 'is a *dull* man; a man, who is solely a man of business, is a *selfish* man; but when literature and commerce are united, they make a *respectable* man'.

<sup>166</sup> Paul Keen, *Crisis of Literature*.

human life'.<sup>167</sup> D'Israeli thought that he had found an ally in Erasmus, 'that amiable literary character' who had consistently argued that in its essence 'Literary investigation is allied neither to politics nor religion'.<sup>168</sup>

If Coleridge agreed with conservatives like D'Israeli that nineteenth-century literary culture was crashing, it was to Cave rather than Erasmus that he went for a diagnosis. What Cave taught him was that defusing 'literature' would have dangerous consequences. It is striking that none of the *Biographia*'s commentators so far have noticed that Coleridge's phrase 'mere literary man' was a pun on psilanthropism, the belief that Christ was 'mere man'. The point of linking these two heresies was not to suggest, simplistically, that everyone who championed a deconfessionalized 'literature' was a psilanthropist, although many of the most influential theorists of the early-modern ideal of letters had also, not uncoincidentally, been skeptical about the doctrine of the Trinity, from Erasmus to Jortin. It was more that, as Coleridge saw it, a culture where literature was neutralised would also provide new sanctuaries for heterodoxy to thrive uncontested. From this perspective, the antidogmatic approach to Cave's work was part of the problem: its use of the *Historia Literaria* as a resource, as merely a reserve of learning, anticipated the nineteenth-century separation of 'learning' from belief or confession and eventually risked making 'literature' unfit for addressing political and religious crises. By retrieving Cave's dogmatic trinitarianism despite being averse to many of his judgments, Coleridge was parodying antidogmatic methods much more than seventeenth-century High Church scholarship.

Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* was therefore a moment of late resistance to the increasing specialization or secularization of literature into its restricted modern sense of

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<sup>167</sup> Isaac D'Israeli, *Miscellanies: or, Literary Recreations* (London, 1796), vii. On D'Israeli, see April London, 'Isaac D'Israeli and Literary History: Opinion, Anecdote, and Secret History in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Poetics Today*, 26.3 (2005), 351-86.

<sup>168</sup> D'Israeli, *Miscellanies*, xx-xxi.



imaginative writings – that is, assuming we want to retain this idea of a ‘modern’ sense at all. This chapter has made it clear that it is impossible to talk about the literary culture of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in terms of a decisive or lasting break between early-modern and modern practices or ambitions. The onus will be on students of later periods to prove that this break actually happened. What we have seen here instead is a contest between two early-modern traditions that had still not been settled by the 1820s. The definition of literature articulated by an antidogmatic tradition appealing to (and partly imagining) the irenicism of Erasmus appears the more likely ancestor to the ‘modern’ concept. But every time it looked like asserting its dominance in the long eighteenth century it was pegged back by its rival, a confessionalising tendency given monumental expression for future generations in Cave’s works of literary history. Nor can the representatives of this tradition be dismissed as marginal or merely reactionary: very few historians would want to tell the story of how mainstream literary criticism developed into the twentieth century and beyond without considering Johnson or Coleridge.

## Coda

### Literary History after Cave

One of the most memorable passages in the *Biographia Literaria* is Coleridge's description of Shakespeare as 'myriad-minded', the focal-point of an equally celebrated passage of 'practical criticism', as Coleridge called it. It would be a century before I. A. Richards borrowed this term to name the method of close reading that he was trialling in lectures at Cambridge in the 1920s before reporting on the results of his experiment in his book *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgment* (1929). The story of how this method was institutionalised in English departments across the world does not need re-telling here, but Coleridge's role in the process would be worth reconsidering.<sup>1</sup> His adjective 'myriad-minded' already seems to describe the kinds of text that twentieth-century criticism would prefer to practise on and thus enshrine as characteristically literary: ambivalent, elusive, sympathetic, imaginative, re-readable, close-readable, and so on.

Twentieth-century Coleridgeans knew that the compound adjective as he used it in the *Biographia* had its origins in a notebook entry from around 1801, where he had written out the Greek equivalent, ὁ μυριάδωνος, alongside a series of other Greek terms under the tag 'hyperbole from Naucratus's Panegyric of Theodorus Studites'.<sup>2</sup> The provenance of this note puzzled scholars for a long time, although Coleridge's explanation in the footnotes of the *Biographia* made the question seem less important: in his words, he had 'reclaimed, rather than borrowed it' from a Greek monk, since 'it seems to belong to Shakespear, de jure singulari, et ex privilegio

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<sup>1</sup> See Chris Baldick, *Criticism and Literary Theory 1890 to the Present* (London: Longman, 1996) and Nicholas Birns, *Theory after Theory: An Intellectual History of Literary Theory from 1950 to the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Boulder, Colorado: Broadview Press, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> *Notebooks*, I, 1070.

naturae'.<sup>3</sup> So here was just another example of Coleridge's quick-silvered ability to transform apparently unpromising, obscure materials into resources for philosophy or literary criticism.<sup>4</sup>

Eventually, by a combination of luck and perseverance, in the 1950s Coleridge's editor Kathleen Coburn found Coleridge's source: Cave's *Historia Literaria*, where the Greek text of Naucratus's funeral oration was printed in the entry for the ninth-century Byzantine cleric Theodore the Studite.<sup>5</sup> By now we should probably not be surprised by another example of Coleridge using Cave's book, or indeed by the hint of antipathy in his insistence that he is reclaiming 'myriad-minded' from it, rather than simply borrowing it. However, it is still striking to find the apparently unmodern Cave reappearing at such a decisive moment in the history of literary studies, when the avowedly modern method of practical criticism is taking shape for the first time. The episode thus offers a neat way of rounding off this dissertation's account of Cave's presence in later periods. Time after time Cave can be discovered unexpectedly in the mainstream of English criticism and poetry.

The final chapter of this thesis should also serve as the first chapter in a new history of how English literary studies developed up to the present. In the first place there is much more to say and discover about the influence of Cave's popular biographies of the Fathers in his trilogy of books, *Antiquitates Apostolicae* (1675), *Apostolici* (1677), and *Ecclesiastici* (1683). Goldsmith's abridgement of this body of work, printed in 1764 as *Lives of the Fathers*, and Wordsworth's allusions to key phrases from Cave's life of Basil of Caesarea in the so-called 'Tuft of Primroses' fragment that he wrote for his long unfinished poem the *Recluse* in around 1808 suggests that there was a richer, longer interplay between patristics and vernacular literary culture than we might have anticipated.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Biographia*, II, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Humphrey House, *Coleridge* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1967), pp. 32-33.

<sup>5</sup> The story of Coburn's discovery is told in House, *Coleridge*, Appendix III, p. 167.

<sup>6</sup> See R. W. Seitz, 'Goldsmith's "Lives of the Fathers"', *Modern Philology*, 26.3 (1929), 295-305; and Joseph F. Kishel, ed., *The Tuft of Primroses, with other late poems for the Recluse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986),

At the same time it would also be rewarding to look beyond specific debts to Cave's work in later periods and consider instead the ways in which the tensions that shaped his career in letters reproduced themselves and were altered in new contexts, like the decline of Latin teaching in schools and universities, New-Critical claims about the autonomy of the literary artefact, the institutionalisation of close reading, and the interplay between 'specialist' and 'non-specialist' writers.<sup>7</sup> Topics that immediately present themselves for study are the status of Erasmus in George Saintsbury's histories of literature and criticism, the combination of intellectual and literary biography in Mark Pattison's work on Isaac Casaubon and John Milton, and William Empson's attempt to create an antitrinitarian poetics, where the defining faculty of verse-practice, the imagination, was necessarily heterodox in ways that explicitly recalled the early, Unitarian Coleridge and quietly overlooked the Trinitarian of the *Biographia Literaria*.<sup>8</sup>

Stefan Collini has recently suggested that modern culture has long been in a state of near-permanent nostalgia for the 'man of letters', who always looks like the last survivor of his tradition but never is.<sup>9</sup> This thesis has not meant to suggest that Cave was the last or indeed the first of his kind, let alone to induce a new kind of nostalgia for scholars like Cave and Coleridge who wanted to show that the appeal to mere literature, as well as the appeal of mere literary man, were much more complex than they appeared. What it has demonstrated is that our account of English literary history will be much richer if we remember books like Cave's *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*.

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introduction, p. 21; and Simon Jarvis, *Wordsworth's Philosophic Song* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 111-32.

<sup>7</sup> See Stefan Collini, *Common Writing: Essays on Literary Culture and Public Debate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) and *Common Reading: Critics, Historians, Publics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> For studies of Saintsbury, Pattison, and Empson that suggest how rewarding this line of approach would be, see Mark Vessey, "'Nothing if Not Critical'", pp. 427-55; Anthony Nuttall, *Dead from the Waist Down: Scholars and Scholarship in Literature and the Popular Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Seamus Perry, 'Coleridge, Christ, and Contradiction in Empson', in *Some Versions of Empson*, ed. by Matthew Bevis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 104-30.

<sup>9</sup> Collini, *Common Reading*, p. 1.

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