Authority of Expression in Early Modern England

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Edited by

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A working Mom can forget where her purse is, where her next class is, or where her brain is, but she never forgets where her heart is. We dedicate this book to Lea and to Viktor.

Nely Keinänen and Maria Salenius

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE PURSUIT OF AUTHORITY

NELY KEINÄNEN AND MARIA SALENIUS

The early modern period in England was a time of vast exploration, of mind as well as of space. European Humanism set the framework for philosophical thinking and the sense of self. In religious life, along with sovereigns constantly asserting (or, in some cases, renouncing) their authority with respect to the church and God as well as concerns about the necessity and limits of a state church, the Reformation prompted a new concern with personal salvation. In addition to questions of the monarch's authority over the church and in other religious matters, there were also issues raised regarding the monarch's temporal authority. After the more authoritative rhetoric employed by Elizabeth I, the monarch "with the heart and stomach of a King,"[1] the Stuart reign started to feel doubts over the monarch's unquestionable authority in temporal matters—doubts which eventually led to the execution of Charles I. In what we might anachronistically call "science," theorists and practioners rediscovered, and then slowly moved beyond, their classical forebears with their new empirical methods, challenging established ideas about the universe, the natural world and the human body. In travel and commerce, explorers and merchants opened up new trade routes, creating a situation where the English increasingly defined themselves in opposition to racial or ethnic others. All these ideas are reflected in the literature of the period, with its focus on the individual subject, and the ways these subjects experienced their bodies, as well as their relationships within the state, family, social community, and God.

The articles collected in *Authority of Expression in Early Modern England* focus primarily on the *strategies* writers adopted to cope with this changing world. In Part I, the articles focus on different *expressions of authority*, on different ways of taking control, or attempting to take control,

[1] From the Tilbury speech, 1588 (77).

given that authority itself was so elusive and that many of the familiar concepts and strategies of control were changing. On many different levels, the body was the central arena where issues of power and control were played out. On a very basic level, individuals interacted with their environment based on their physical experiences of the world, encompassing sensory perception most importantly, but also the ways they experienced emotions or pain in their bodies.[2] Early moderns questioned whether the senses could be trusted, and not only because appearances could be deceptive, a dilemma which William Shakespeare (1564–1616) staged so masterfully in characters like Richard III or Iago, whose celebrated quip, "I am not what I am" (1.1.67), may stand for a host of other instances.[3] In a topsy-turvy world, the senses, too, become topsy-turvy. When the blinded Gloucester says that he can see the world "feelingly" (4.5.152), Lear counters: "What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears" (4.5.153–54). Lear himself points to the important political consequences of having rulers with senses which perceive what they want to perceive, telling Gloucester to:

> Get thee glass eyes,
> And like a scurvy politician seem
> To see the things thou dost not.
> (4.5.170–72)

In the same scene, Lear also raises the important issue of language as a means of asserting power and control. Writers turned to the lessons of classical rhetoric, primarily through Philip Melanchthon's *Institutiones* (1521) and Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1533),[4] considering how best they could mold their expressions to sway or move others and thus become instruments of authority and control. Indeed, Wilson states as a purpose of the speaker that he must "persuade, and move the affections

[2] Critical interest in the body has largely been informed by feminist criticism. Earlier work focused on the Petrarchan habit of celebrating the female body in parts, e.g. Vickers (1981), which looks at Petrarch, and Vickers (1985), which examines poetic blazon in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*. See also Paster (1993) and the excellent collection edited by David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (1997). There are also some noteworthy recent discussions of aspects of body, the subject and self in devotional contexts, e.g. Pender (2003) and Kuchar (2005).

[3] All references to Shakespeare plays in this chapter are from the RSC Shakespeare (2007), and cited according to act, scene and line number(s).

[4] For a comprehensive introduction to the tradition of European rhetoric in England, see Conley (1990).

of his hearers in such wise that *they shall be forced to yield unto his saying*" (48; emphasis added). As a former king, Lear, too, understands that with a mere word, he has had "the power / To seal th' accuser's lips" (4.5.169–70). For others, the costs of speaking, or not speaking, could be very high indeed. In a particularly poignant expression, Richard II's queen, listening to the gardeners discussing the probable deposition of her husband, says "O, I am pressed to death through want of speaking!" (3.4.76). Controlling the tongue, and using the tongue to control, are themes running through many of the articles in this book.

In Part II, the articles concentrate more on *conceptions of the self* and the strategies individuals adopt to cope with changes in their frameworks of authority and power. At issue are the ways in which human beings were defined and re-defined in relation to authority and the self, but each article approaches the issue from a slightly different angle. During the time of the authors discussed here, ranging from Edmund Spenser (1552–1599) to Andrew Marvell (1621–1678), the relationship between authority and the self was played out in at least three significant contexts: the religious, the political and the familial. Throughout the period there was the belief that ultimate authority derived from God, and that, conversely, ultimate obedience was due to God. Unlike the other forms of authority discussed below, this basic God/man hierarchy to a very large extent remained an article of faith, and indeed forms the bedrock for the other models. The relationship between God and man was figured metaphorically as master/servant, parent/child, or king/subject, as in these lines from John Milton's (1608–74) Sonnet 19, "When I consider how my light is spent":

> God doth not need
> Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
> Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
> Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
> And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
> They also serve who only stand and wait.
> (9–14)

Likewise, George Herbert (1593–1633) demonstrates the same hierarchical structure in an illustration of even more submissiveness before God's authority in his poem "Discipline":

> Throw away thy rod,
> Throw away thy wrath:
> O my God,
> Take the gentle path.

For my hearts desire
Unto thine is bent:
I aspire
To a full consent.
(1–8)

Furthermore, with images from the realm of exploration and conquest, John Donne (1572–1631), in his most prominent declaration of surrender to God, turns his plea for mercy into an appeal for physical affirmations of God's authority:

Batter my heart, three person'd God; for, you
As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow mee, and bend
Your force, to break, blowe, burn and make me new.
I, like an usurpt towne, to'another due,
Labour to'admit you, but Oh, to no end,
Reason your viceroy in mee, mee should defend,
But is captiv'd, and proves weake or untrue,
(*Holy Sonnet* "Batter my heart" 1–8)

While the fundamental hierarchy as such was accepted, the significance for humans of God's ultimate authority was nevertheless constantly debated, especially in connection with the concepts of free will and predestination, which were central in Reformation theology. In *Paradise Lost*, discussing the fall of Adam and Eve, Milton's God summarised the issues as follows:

Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
. . . . . .

If I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.
(Book 3, 96–119)

The idea of free will worked to transform a master/servant relationship based on unquestioning obedience into one based on informed, even joyful, consent, opening a space for human action and agency. But this example shows, too, the complex emotional world within which the God/man relationship was being experienced. Milton's God calls man an "ingrate,"

here meaning at least "ungrateful" and possibly also having shades of "disagreeable" or "unpleasant" (OED definitions 3 and 1, respectively). In parallel with the negative attitude of God to man, religious poetry of the period is full of examples of terrified men prostrating themselves before God, before being granted the gift of grace, of renewed faith. A typical example can be found in George Herbert's "The Collar." Throughout the poem the poet despairs over the various constraints in his life, but then finds relief through Christ at the end:

> But as I rav'd and grew more fierce and wilde
> At every word,
> Me thoughts I heard one calling, *Child*:
> And I reply'd, *My Lord*.
> (33–36)

Complicating matters still further was the emphasis in Christianity on the existence of evil, on the idea that good and evil authority were sometimes indistinguishable, that through the guile of Satan good Christians would all-too-easily be led astray due to their inherent weakness, pride, and inability to reconcile reason and faith. Man had once defied God in plucking the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, with dire consequences, and now he was left to learn the way to salvation anew. The relationship between authority and the self in the religious context was thus highly complex, offering both comfort and security, but also pointing to human weakness and the inability to ever meet the high expectations of the authority figure.

This tension between all-powerful yet potentially merciful authority and weak yet potentially redeemable subject is only one side of the equation, however. On the other side is the authority's dependence on the subject, what we saw in the example from *Paradise Lost* as God's anger at Adam and Eve's betrayal, his sense that mere obedience is not desirable if the subject has no choice in the matter. In the religious context the mutual interconnectedness of the authority/self relationship is, however, relatively minimal; there were not many who felt they could "justify the ways of God to men" (Milton, *Paradise Lost* 1.26) or who were certain with Abraham[5] that "at my death thy Sunne / Shall shine as it shines now" (Donne, "A Hymne to God the Father," 15–16).

The links between religious and political authority were exceptionally strong in the early modern period. Basing their claim to power on some version of the divine right of kings, the Tudor and Stuart monarchs worked

[5] Cf. Genesis 22: 16–18.

hard to consolidate power, creating a new nation-state amidst the turbulence of religious upheaval. Attitudes towards authority as personified in the monarch and monarchy changed over time, and, if anything, were even more complex than the relationship between God and man. Elizabeth I no doubt had a strong sense of her own political authority, and set clear limits on what topics could and could not be debated (for example her possible marriage). Yet, in the light of what came later, there is much about her rule which could be considered more subtle—even, perhaps, enigmatic—as she sought compromise and outward conformity rather than an inward bending to her will. She encouraged devotion in her subjects, adoration of her person in her role as "virgin mother" of the kingdom. With the ascension of James I came a hardening of positions. Prior to assuming the English throne in 1603, the Scottish King had written the *True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598) and *Basilikon Doron* (1599), both defending royal absolutism based on the divine right of kings. By the time of Charles I, the English people had had enough, and the king was condemned and executed in a conflict over whether authority resided ultimately in the monarch or in the people themselves, represented by Parliament. After eleven years of Interregnum, the English people were again ready for a monarch, though now one with much more limited powers.

Potential challenges to royal prerogative came from myriad directions, raising anxieties but also possibilities on all sides. During the Elizabethan period and later, the ever-present threat of a Catholic uprising created a political climate fraught with fear about how to maintain authority. Alan Haynes argues that the relatively small number of people with political power "paid for their advantages in nervous debility" and that there was indeed at court "the oppressive sense of enemies observing every move" (2001, xiv). In an essay on *The Tempest*, Stephen Greenblatt argues that in the early modern period there were indeed institutional efforts to arouse anxiety, and that these efforts had profound consequences on the creation of the self and subjectivity. Greenblatt analyses the "artful manipulation of anxiety" which is "not only the manifestation of aggression; it is also a strategy for shaping the inner lives of others and for fashioning their behavior" (1988, 143). Theatrical representations of anxiety, as in *The Tempest*, have the goal of providing pleasure, ensuring that playgoers come back for more, while the arousal of anxiety in the real world, through public punishments and so on, at least partially functioned as a means of social control. "Managed insecurity" in the political context "may have been reassuring both to the managers themselves and to those

toward whom the techniques were addressed" (Greenblatt 1988, 137).[6] Anxiety could be generated in a variety of contexts, not only in the political realm with the possibility of mercy, but also in the religious realm, with the possibility of salvation, as we saw above. The public display of mercy, or promise of salvation, could in turn generate "gratitude, obedience, and love" in the people (1988, 138). But as the example of Antonio and Prospero shows, "the strategy of salutary anxiety cannot remake the inner life of everyone" (Greenblatt 1988, 146), and therein lay the challenges for those who wished to remain in power, as well as the opportunities for those who sought to change the status quo.[7]

As Constance Jordan has argued in reference to the Jacobean period, political thought "was . . . pervasive in ways that are quite alien to us," as virtually all social relations were in some ways defined by "the concepts of an office, its authority and power, its obligations and limitations" (1997, 3). The institution of the family was also seen as a mini-kingdom, with the patriarchal father as the head, ruling over wife, children and servants. But as in the political realm, the rule of the father within the family was by no means unquestioned or secure.[8] Women mainly attempted to authorise themselves through their status as mothers, both within the power structures of the family and, through the literary genre of mothers' manuals, as writing subjects in their own right.[9] Writing for their children, however, provided early modern women with only a modicum of power: as Mary Beth Rose points out, in order to "assert themselves as

[6] Cf. the Bush administration's efforts after 9/11 to invoke anxiety in the United States in order to garner support for its war on terror.

[7] In the last thirty years, there has been an impressive range of work analysing the manifestations of and resistance to state authority and control, and the role that discursive practices (including literature, and especially theatre) played in these struggles. Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980) was an important early work, followed by others such as his own *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988) referred to above. See also the excellent collection edited by Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier, *The Historical Renaissance* (1988), and H. Aram Veeser's *The New Historicism* (1989). New Historicism was criticised by feminists for its neglect of gender issues, e.g. Neely (1988), and later work has paid much more attention to the impact of gender, race, class and ethnicity in power relations.

[8] See for instance the essays collected in *Rewriting the Renaissance*, edited by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (1986).

[9] For an especially wide-ranging view of issues connected with motherhood, see the essays collected in *Maternal Measures*, edited by Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh (2000). On mothers' manuals, see Demers (2005, 176–180) and Poole (1995).

authoritative agents" mothers first had to "erase" themselves (1991, 312). Another area where women increasingly gained authority was in the education of their children, particularly with respect to religious education.[10] Interestingly, maternity provided an authorising discourse for both male and female writers: as Naomi J. Miller writes, "many men as well as women laid claim to the enabling spectrum of powers associated with maternity in the early modern period, whether to illuminate their own creative processes, to question the conventional parameters of domestic roles, or to authorise narratives of religious faith or historical conquest" (2000, 14).

Outside the immediate context of God, family and the state, there were other changes afoot affecting the relationship between authority and the self. As we pointed out above, the early modern period was a time of vast exploration. Geographical exploration played a crucial role in redefining the self in relation to these new others. Starting with the first publication of Richard Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations* (1589), the literature of travel increased remarkably in England, and the Anglocentric viewpoint of the world was increasingly challenged (Chambers 1996, 48). At the same time, however, the whole concept of mapping the world was also a "*cognitive mode of gaining control over the world*, of synthesising cultural and geographical information, and of successfully navigating both physical and mental space" (Gordon and Klein, 2001, 3; emphasis added), thus attempting to gain mental authority over the expanding world. While providing knowledge of/from the unknown parts of the world was one of the primary goals of early modern travel (together with trade and conquest), that knowledge as such was shaped by a number of factors, including prejudice and political aims (Kamps and Singh 2001, 5–7).[11] For early modern seafarers and writers alike, these were truly newfound lands, new peripheries to the old centre, extensions to the known world, and as such they had to be conceptualised. Indeed, C. S. Lewis has argued that "[t]he new geography excited much more interest than the new astronomy, especially, as was natural, among merchants and politicians" (1954, 14), while James Sutherland has claimed that the "various accounts of unknown lands and their inhabitants made a considerable impact on the contemporary imagination; and a little later . . . voyage to far countries was to have literary repercussions in the work of Defoe, Swift, and many

[10] See Charlton (1999). In addition to religious education, women also attempted to create a literary presence for themselves through the translation of religious texts; see e.g. Hannay (1985).

[11] For a discussion on the English presentation of a "degenerate" America, see Eaton (2001).

lesser men" (1969, 295). These explorations truly fed into the literary imagination of the early modern English, both in how they perceived the world and their metaphorical frameworks. Beyond such considerations, Bruce McLeod (in his discussion of John Milton) has pointed to an aspect of developing nationalism which can be seen already in 16th century writers, where the (English) nation represents a justification *per se* for imperial endeavours: "the elect nation of the English Protestant tradition embodies both an egalitarian *and* imperial mission" (1999, 134; emphasis original). These ideas reflect and form the framework of the changing world-view(s) of their authors (and their readers), and, due largely to the creation of the British Empire, English culture "only came to knowledge of itself" through the imperial effort (McLeod 1999, 9). The geographical conquests were largely accomplished through linguistic aims and means, both in ruling and in defining the new lands.[12]

The structure of this book follows a kind of geography as well, starting in Part I with chapters focusing on the body and the senses, proceeding to language (literally the sounds emanating from the body), and particularly the links with language, gender and power. In this section, the articles focus mainly on the ways in which individuals express authority. The first two articles focus on cognition, on assuming control through sensory means, and particularly the textual rendering of a personal and bodily experience of control. Nigel Mapp considers how Andrew Marvell uses the (pagan) concept of sight to gain authority in his text. Mapp begins by discussing the perception of nature in Marvell's "Upon Appleton House" (1651), linking the concept of knowing and the creation of meaning into a larger epistemological and ontological framework. Mapp's aim is to "dislodge conceptual configurations [in reading the poetry] that are now second nature" (25). Mapp argues that pagan nature, and especially vision, is central to Marvell's conceptual context, apart from the obvious link to the circumstances of Lord Fairfax in this particular poem. There is also a specific emphasis on the relationship between the soul and the body, related to a discussion of Marvell's poem "A Dialogue between Soul and Body" (29). Finally, Mapp argues how, for Marvell, "a nature and freedom unloosed from social or cognitive positioning and interests may not be nature, or freedom, at all" (40).

David Robertson discusses William Shakespeare's use of olfaction in *The Winter's Tale* and *King Lear*. While previous scholarship has mainly focused on the links between sight and cognition in these plays, Robertson

[12] Unfortunately, "linguistic nationalism" was often accomplished primarily by the sword rather than the pen (Palmer 2001, 122).

demonstrates that smells and smelling also provide key sensory data which must be integrated with the other senses to form true knowledge of the world and trustworthy moral assessments. In the Western tradition, smell has been "denigrated as a source of reliable cognition" (44), considered a lower sense. In addition to their emphasis on sight, however, both plays display a strong interest in the knowledge provided by both good and especially bad smells, which are linked to moral corruption, the stench of the human body, and emotional states. Intriguingly, there seems to be a class distinction in the ability to use olfactory data to acquire knowledge. Robertson demonstrates that in these two plays "upper class characters find it hard to smell out corruption, whereas the marginal characters of the courts, Autolycus and the Fool, are the ones that can literally smell out plots, ploys and corruption" (60).

The following three chapters expand from a focus on the links between sense perception and cognition to consider expressions of physical violence as an aspect of power control within the family and/or state. These chapters explore the ways that sexuality, violence, gender relations and language are implicated in expressing and responding to authority. Gregory Wilson examines the distinctive dramatic effect of Thomas Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy*: while revenge tragedy typically results in the restoration of authority, culminating in some kind of "moral cleansing" (64), Middleton's play lacks a central authority figure, and so its vengeance consequently feels more abstract, with power shifting quickly and unpredictably from one character to the next. In tracing these power shifts, Wilson finds that power stems not from social position or moral authority, but rather from the domain of sexuality: "it is the characters in the play who exert the greatest sexual power who also possess the greatest social and political influence; as sexual potency shifts, so too does the political and social status of the play's characters" (65). Wilson explicates how the "confusing shifts in political power among the play's characters, which arise from corresponding shifts in sexual strength and purity, give the play its unique tone, and the destruction of all of its participants, through their own corruption and lack (or loss) of virtue, provides the unforgiving quality of the work that sets it apart from other revenge plays" (74).Through a discussion of the nature of vengeance and sexual power *vis-à-vis* the character(s) of the revenger, Wilson shows how the play is ambiguous about who the revenger really is and whose tragedy we are ultimately dealing with. Wilson demonstrates how "vengeance, always rooted in a call for justice, cannot maintain its just origins and inevitably leads in its fulfillment to the destruction of those who pursue it"

(73). Finally, then, Wilson argues that Middleton's play is the tragedy of many revengers and, even more, a "tragedy of revenge itself" (73).

Whereas Wilson highlights the importance of sexual power, the body itself, in expressing authority, both Nely Keinänen and Mari Pakkala-Weckström as well as Alisa Manninen, pay closer attention to the linguistic expression of gendered authority. Keinänen and Pakkala-Weckström examine the linguistic survival strategies applied by female and male characters dealing with jealousy in two Shakespeare plays, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *The Winter's Tale*. Using the tools of discourse analysis and politeness theory, Keinänen and Pakkala-Weckström examine turn-by-turn sequences in which female characters in particular attempt to diffuse male jealousy, avoid violence and restore marital harmony or, in other words, negotiate the relationships between masculine authority and the female self in marriage. They show that both female and male characters employ impersonalisation or distancing techniques, though their forms differ slightly: while Mrs Ford and Hermione appeal to the heavens or the divine as a way to garner authority and avoid speaking directly of their feelings, Mr Ford and Leontes increasingly ignore their wives, appealing instead to the men around them, and in Leontes' case, to his own institutional authority as king. Keinänen and Pakkala-Weckström also demonstrate that female characters are especially creative in their use of both positive (for example compliments, in-group markers) and negative (deferential address terms, self-deprecation) politeness strategies. Given that infidelity is a powerful threat to both positive face (the need to feel loved) and negative (the need to act independently, to not be laughed at by others), the challenge for these female characters is to find the right balance between strategies redressing both. In the comic worlds of these plays, reconciliation is indeed possible, though it is telling that neither play affords women the opportunity to respond verbally to the husband's apology for his mistaken fears.

Finally, Alisa Manninen considers the expressions of kingship and sovereignty in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, focusing particularly on the nature of authority as expressed by the female characters (Lear's daughters). Manninen begins with a wider discussion of the ways authority is contested in the world of the play, where traditional hierarchies—king/subject, father/child, male/female—are being challenged, and where monarchial violence and other forms of absolutism are the most dependable means of asserting power. She then turns to a more specific analysis of the differences in the ways Lear's three daughters exercise power and self-government, which she considers an integral aspect of sovereignty. Manninen demonstrates that Regan is the least able to wield

authority due to her lack of self-control, her frantic veering between aggressive violence and (feminine) passivity, and her inability to plan ahead. Cordelia is capable of wielding moral authority, but not political, for like Regan (and Lear) she sometimes allows her emotions to triumph over reason. Goneril, by contrast, is shown to be the most authoritative of the three sisters, for she possesses the highest levels of self-government. Goneril is the most secure in her royal authority and wields power to her best advantage; even her suicide can be understood, like Cleopatra's, as a "means to transform disaster into triumph" (116).

Part II deals with conceptions of power and of the self in relation to that power. Swen Voekel introduces the juxtaposition of self and other in discussing the social and interpersonal aspects of power structures as seen in the expression of hospitality in Edmund Spenser's *Fairie Queene*. Voekel situates his arguments in the tradition of classical epic poetry, showing how hospitality is a ritual element in a central position of the genre and how it is closely related to the perception of authority. Voekel shows how Spenser "deploys the dynamic of authority" in the scene where Una and Redcrosse Knight are received by Archimago "in order to reshape and interrogate his classical, Christian, and Renaissance antecedents" (121). Later in his text, Voekel discusses Spenser in the framework of the chivalric romance, referring especially to de Troyes and Ariosto. Voekel shows how Spenser, like Ariosto in *Orlando Furioso*, uses the hermit to create the "typically romance conjunction of errancy and misdirected passion" (135), and concludes by linking Spenser's application of the hospitality theme to the religious dialogue of the early modern period.

Anthony W. Johnson and Maria Salenius present alternative readings of Ben Jonson (1574–1637) and John Donne respectively, where the literary application of the concepts of scientific and geographical explorations are given a sense-making purpose in the writer's process of obtaining control of life (and death) in a changing world. In his discussion, Johnson links themes in Ben Jonson's *The Magnetic Lady* to the opening up of previously unchartered scientific horizons, demonstrating how Jonson uses both his knowledge of Renaissance exploration and his extensive reading to create "striking new discursive discoveries" (143). Johnson grounds his arguments in the scientific discourse of the times as well as reflecting over the actual circumstances of Jonson's life at the time of this later play, showing how the author's connection with the Gresham Academy and its new discoveries in navigation, geography and mathematics were crucial to the way in which the playwright shaped the text. Furthermore, Johnson illustrates the "curious collusion of monetary, mercantile, mathematical and magnetic forces" (149) that add to the

complete image of the play, against the backdrop of the mercantile companies and naval explorations as well as the scientific discoveries, finally pointing to how the ageing Ben Jonson attempted to self-fashion the metaphor of his own theatrical career according to the mathematical image of a "circle" (Jonson, "Induction," 97).

Maria Salenius argues for an allegorical reading in texts relating to John Donne's literal encounters with, and literary control of, death. Salenius discusses Donne's *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (1624), as well as some of Donne's verse, and shows how Donne illustrates his struggle against human weakness and "assumes the role of a Jove, or of a Prospero, in order to rule the world with words" (164), and thus to challenge the authority of God. Through this alternative level of reading, Salenius argues, Donne "(re)-negotiates his own position in the universe" (165), and "creates an illusory world in which he can reach into, and make sense of, his inner chaos" (165). Salenius shows how Donne employs the metaphorical framework of geographical exploration and mapping as well as of the scientific discoveries of the time. As with the case of Jonson in the preceding chapter, these metaphors eventually become emblematic for Donne's own life, too.

Finally, Frank W. Brevik concludes our discussion of the authority of expression by focusing on the relationships between textual authority and literary criticism in the present day, at the same time returning to issues of the body, of the human subject acting in the world, discussed in the previous essays. Over the last fifty years, in particular, Caliban has "undergone a dramatic and semiotic metamorphosis" (181), as critics and theatre practitioners have sought to locate Caliban in a New World/Old World dichotomy. Based on a close reading of the play itself, however, Brevik questions these post-colonial readings, suggesting that Caliban "may better be understood within an Old World (inter)textual and mythological context rather than one particular interpretation that relies on the island's discursive (or fixed) location in the New World" (182). Brevik discusses Caliban in the context of the period's fascination with monsters and mythological figures, the Judeao-Christian framework, and also explores links with precursors in the Shakespearean canon. Brevik concludes that "*The Tempest* has undergone an interpretative odyssey that has taken us from text to self" (197), to an "emotional *kinship*" (190) with Caliban made possible by the text, but which also develops independently, and sometimes in contradistinction, to that text. When considering the authority of expression, Brevik reminds us, we must analyse the ways that

texts speak to us across time, and the ways in which our concerns in the present shape our readings of the texts of the past.[13]

The early modern period was a time when the written word was becoming more and more widely available, and when the status of the (divine) Word was enhanced in the vernacular. Yet although the English language was gaining precedence both at home and, more gradually, abroad, some scholars have argued that this is a period when the sign itself was becoming disrupted, when authority figures could no longer control linguistic or other manifestations of power. William C. Carroll notes that "the general crisis of authority in this period was simultaneously also a crisis of the sign, and especially a crisis of those semiotic systems designed to enforce and regulate social and class distinctions" (1997, 212), such as through regulations on dress and weaponry. Scholars point to the instability of representational systems themselves, particularly the theatre, as Robert Weimann has persuasively analysed.[14] In the division between role and actor, a "king" who was not a king, or indeed a "woman" who was not a woman, a space opened to question the links between the essence of power, of man or woman, and its/his/her mere portrayal. Jaques's comment in *As You Like It* that "All the world's a stage, / And all the men and women merely players" (2.7.142–43) resonated widely, suggesting especially in the political and religious contexts that power and authority could indeed be negotiated in ways that would have been unheard of a few generations before.

The exercise, as well as the experience, of authority is dependent on its expression. From a literary-ideological point of view, a meaningful reading of any early modern text must attempt to answer the question "what ideological functions do [texts] perform" (Miller, O'Dair & Webber 1994, 8). A number of texts were written to justify the rightful ascension of the Tudors—for example Thomas More's *The Tragicall Historie of King Richard the Third* (1513)—as well as in support and celebration of the rule of Elizabeth I, the once-bastardised daughter of Henry VIII. Later, much force went into debating, for example, the project of Jacobean unionism, in writing as well as on stage, not least significantly in William Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1606) (Schwyzer 2004, 158–69). Likewise, the geographical explorations of the early modern English, too, were linguistic efforts, strongly reliant on the word. These could take the form of

[13] See Terence Hawkes (2002) for particularly astute discussions of this theme.

[14] Robert Weimann develops these ideas in a series of articles (e.g., Weimann 1988, Weimann 1992), which were later developed into *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse* (1996). For an excellent analysis of Weimann's thoughts, see Drakakis (1998).

authority gained via trade and the conquest of new lands, as in the case of the Virginia Company, which according to John Donne was primarily an "Apostolicall function" (*Sermons*, vol. IV, 271) with a "purpose to propagate the Gospell of *Christ Iesus*," (*Sermons*, vol. IV, 280) and "to transport [God] […] *unto the uttermost parts of the Earth*"[15] (*Sermons*, vol. IV, 266; emphasis original). Or they could be embodied within literary expression, for example with the first non-European performance of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* on board an English merchant ship off the coast of Africa in 1607.[16]

Today we can still see some of the effects of these linguistic efforts, for example in the continuing importance of English as a *lingua franca*.[17] As the world moves towards a more multi-polar political system, however, the emphasis on multi-lingualism, already so strong in some parts of the world, will, most likely, increase. Indeed, in some sense we are returning *en masse* to the situation of the well-educated elite in early modern England, who prided themselves on their linguistic skills in Latin, French and other European languages.

Authority of expression, along with the expression of authority, is constantly changing. The Internet and YouTube, in particular, have in a very short time rewritten the rules of political interaction, providing unprecedented amounts of information to an increasingly politically de-aligned (or disinterested) populace, where politics is reduced to the face-of-the-month (or issue-of-the-month), and where the level of political discourse is sometimes reduced to angry invective.[18] The advent of electronic media is also changing interaction at the personal level, as younger people especially spend more and more time interacting online. Old rules of politeness and restraint do not function in the same ways in cyberspace, and for some, virtual violence seems to lower the threshold for actual violence. At its best, the Internet allows individuals to transcend the

[15] Cf. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

[16] For an intriguing essay on this performance, see Taylor (2001).

[17] Both of us are translators and translation teachers working into or out of English (and in Salenius' case, other languages as well), so we are accutely aware of the practical consequences of such global linguistic domination. Incidentally, four contributors to this volume are writing in a language which is not their mother tongue.

[18] The election of Barack Obama as president in the United States in 2008 was something of an exception, although even there just over 53% of the voting age population registered and voted.

self, to bond with others, while at its worse, it hardens these divisions, offering individuals support for their worst prejudices.

Religion, too, plays a complicated role today in negotiations between the self and other. The early modern period saw the awakening of an individual's personal relationship with God, which informs so much of the period's religious poetry, yet it was also a society wracked by doctrinal differences and religious power struggles. Today the focus has shifted to conflicts between world religions. But as the former Finnish president Martti Ahtisaari cautions in his lecture accepting the 2008 Nobel Peace Prize, we must not allow religion to be used to explain or perpetuate conflict:

> For many people, tensions between religions have provided an easy explanation for the intractability of the Middle East crisis. I cannot accept this view. During my career I have seen many crises in which religion has been used as a weapon or as an instrument for prolonging the conflict. Religions themselves are, however, peace-loving. They can also be a constructive force in peace-building . . .

We hope, finally, that this book sheds further light on the issues and struggles involved in negotiating the relationships between authority and the self, on the ways authority is expressed, and challenged. Perhaps if we better understand the pursuit of authority, we can better manage its consequences, and "carry gentle peace."[19]

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[19] In the words of Cardinal Wolsey in a conciliatory moment (Shakespeare, *The Life of King Henry the Eighth*, 3.2.518).

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