

*The Woman Hater*.<sup>1</sup> The second, Richard Levin, claims that the desperate response of Lazarello, the 'Hungry Courtier', to the possibility that he has missed his chance of tasting an extremely rare fish called an Umbrana (invented by Beaumont) provides evidence that *Antony and Cleopatra* must have been composed no later than July 1606, when the Children of Paul's were disbanded. However, despite an allusion to a posthumous encounter in the 'Elizian shades', the passage quoted shares no precise words or phrases with *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. xiv. 50–4, in which Cleopatra hopes to meet Antony again 'Where souls do couch on flowers'. Rather, the passage alludes specifically to *King Lear*, and perhaps more broadly to *Julius Caesar* and the suicides of Cassius and Brutus. Lazarello's speech needs to be quoted once more:

If it be eaten, here a stands, that is the most dejected, most unfortunate, miserable, accursed, forsaken slave, this Province yeeldes: I will not sure outlive it, no, I will die bravely, and like a Roman; and after death, amidst the Elizian shades, Ile meet my love againe.<sup>2</sup>

The clear Shakespearian allusion here is in the phrase 'no, I will die bravely, and like a Roman'; with which compare *King Lear*, IV. vi. 194, 'I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom.' The words are spoken by Lear in the scene in which the old king is vigorously resisting the attempts of Cordelia's gentlemen to capture him for his own good. The epithet 'smug' is only in the Folio text. If what early audiences heard was simply 'I will die bravely, like a bridegroom', Beaumont's line offers a clear echo, with a metrically exact substitution of 'Roman' for 'bridegroom'.

The play seems also to offer parallels to *Measure for Measure* in its depiction of the relationship between the Duke and a 'foolish statesman' called Lucio. Like the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, Beaumont's

Duke is interested in spying, unseen, on his subjects; and like Shakespeare's gadfly Lucio, Beaumont's busybody Lucio thinks he knows something about this:

*Lucio* I thinke your grace  
Intendes to walke the publique  
streetes disguised,  
To see the the streetes disorders.  
*Duke* It is not so.<sup>3</sup>

There is little doubt that Beaumont alludes to *Lear* and *Measure for Measure*, but the case for an allusion to *Antony and Cleopatra* seems to me 'not proven'. We cannot therefore use *The Woman Hater* to provide a date for *Antony and Cleopatra*. It is even possible that some influence went the other way, since Shakespeare may have taken a particularly close interest in a play that contained allusions both to his recent plays and hurtfully, to himself, as the overweeningly ambitious 'heire apparent to a glover'.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 158–9; cf. *Measure for Measure*, IV. iii. 156.

<sup>4</sup> See Gurr, 'A Jibe at Shakespeare'; and cf. also Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'A companion for a King?', *TLS*, 14 April 2006, 14–16.

## SIR THOMAS NORTH AS SIR JOHN DAW

BEN JONSON always felt that a person's language and his true nature were intricately intertwined—that language was the key to identity. The Senecan proverb, 'Man's speech is just like his life' was, according to T. Cain, the editor of Jonson's *Poetaster*, 'a cornerstone of Jonson's credo'.<sup>1</sup> And it is through the use of Crispinus' verse in *Poetaster* that scholars have been able to identify John Marston as one of Jonson's targets. Crispinus' verse includes numerous words and phrases found only in the works of Marston, confirming this discovery.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Gurr, 'A Jibe at Shakespeare in 1606', *N&Q*, cclxvii (2002), 245–7; Richard Levin, 'More Jibes at Shakespeare in 1606, and the date of *Antony and Cleopatra*', *N&Q*, ccl (2005), 207–8.

<sup>2</sup> Fredson Bowers (ed.), *Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, I (Cambridge, 1966), 195.

<sup>1</sup> T. Cain, *Poetaster* (by Ben Jonson), (New York, 1996), 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Poetaster*, 237–241.

Jonson may have employed the same device in *Epicene or The Silent Woman* with the verse of Sir John Daw. The following is one of Daw's madrigals:

Sir John Daw:  
Silence in woman, is like speech in man,  
Deny't who can.  
Nor, is't a tale,  
That female vice should be a virtue male,  
Or masculine vice a female virtue be:  
You shall it see  
Prov'd with increase;  
I know to speak, and she to hold her peace.<sup>3</sup>

Daw's verse appears to be a parody of stoic teachings, penned in an antithetical style, advising women and men on vices, virtues, and manners—which is to say, it appears to be a deliberate satire on the subject, style and language of Thomas North's *Dial of Princes*. Like Daw's verse, the *Dial* counsels women on the prudence of silence, especially regarding their husbands: 'For if she be quick of tongue to answer to every word that he shall speak, without doubt they will not live one day in concord.'<sup>4</sup> While one of *Dial*'s chapters discusses, 'How excellent a thing it is for a gentleman to have an eloquent tongue',<sup>5</sup> the *Dial* advises Women to be 'quiet, meek, patient, solitary, and honest'.<sup>6</sup>

But it is in the style and language that Daw's madrigal seems particularly reminiscent of *The Dial*. Four lines of Daw's verse include seven antithetical pairs: 'woman-man; silence-speech; female-male; vice-virtue; masculine-female; vice-virtue; speak-keep-her-peace'. The use of such antitheses reached its peak with Lyly's *Euphues* in the 1580s. But Daw's verse is not the ornate, alliterative style of euphuism; it simply exaggerates one aspect of it—the use of antitheses that was popularized by Sir Thomas North's *Dial of Princes*.

In the 1880s, F. Landmann became one of the first Elizabethan scholars to comment on

<sup>3</sup> *Epicene or The Silent Woman* by Ben Jonson, ed. Richard Dutton, (New York, 2004), 157. All quotes of *Epicene* are from this edition.

<sup>4</sup> Antonio de Guevara, *The Dial of Princes*, transl. by Thomas North (London, 1619), 197, EEBO, internet, 12 March 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Don Antonio de Guevara, *The Dial of Princes*, ed. K. N. Colville, (London, 1919), 13. All quotes from *Dial of Princes* that follow are from this edition.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

the debt of the euphuists to Sir Thomas North, particularly regarding their reliance on antitheses.<sup>7</sup> As noted by the classic 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 'North's version, with its mannerisms and its constant use of antithesis, set the fashion which was to culminate in Lyly's *Euphues*.'<sup>8</sup> The same source also states that 'The translation, however, which had most influence upon English literature was that by North, the well-known translator of Plutarch, in 1557, called *The Dial for Princes*. . . . The sententious and antithetical style of the *Dial for Princes* is substantially that of *Euphues*.'<sup>9</sup> While other scholars have since darkened the distinction between North's use of antitheses and 'Euphuism proper',<sup>10</sup> North's work is still widely accepted as the work that essentially introduced the frequent and sometimes overuse of antitheses into Elizabethan literature.

As shown below, North's *Dial of Princes* includes multiple examples of each of the antithetical pairs found in Daw's verse—*vice-virtue, woman-man, silence-speech, speak-keep-her-peace*. All quotes are from North's *Dial of Princes*, and emphasis has been added to highlight antitheses:

#### 1 Vice-Virtue

For the *praise* of *virtue* is *honor*, and the *pain* of *vice* is *infamy*.<sup>11</sup>

For if those of the *war* have truck with *vices*, the others of the common wealth cannot have *peace* with *virtue*.<sup>12</sup>

And so those fields should have *savoured* of the *bones* of the *virtuous*, which now *stink* of the *bodies* of the *vicious*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> F. Landmann, 'Shakespeare and Euphuism', *New Shakespeare Society Transactions*, ix (1884), 241–76.

<sup>8</sup> 'Sir Thomas North' *Online Encyclopedia*, From the original *Encyclopedia Britannica*, xix (1911), 760 [http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/NEW\\_NUM/NORTH\\_SIR\\_THOMAS\\_1535\\_1601\\_.html](http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/NEW_NUM/NORTH_SIR_THOMAS_1535_1601_.html), internet, 12 March 2007.

<sup>9</sup> 'John Lyly', *Online Encyclopedia*, From the original *Encyclopedia Britannica*, xvii (1911), 162. [http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/LUP\\_MAL/LYLY\\_LILLY\\_or\\_LYLIE\\_JOHN\\_155316.html](http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/LUP_MAL/LYLY_LILLY_or_LYLIE_JOHN_155316.html), internet, 12 March 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Frances A. Yates, 'Italian Teachers in Elizabethan England', *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, i (1937), 103–16.

<sup>11</sup> *The Dial of Princes*, 67.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

## 2 Men (husbands)—women (wives)

...the *women* being *feeble, deformed, poor,* and *negligent*, should be better beloved of their *husbands* than the *diligent, fair* and *rich*.<sup>14</sup>

For if the *husband* do not accept the *just request* of his *wife*, the *wife* is not bound to obey the *unjust commandment* of her *husband*.<sup>15</sup>

... that the *husband* which condescendeth to all that the *wife desireth*, causeth his *wife* to do nothing of that her *husband commandeth*.<sup>16</sup>

## 3 Speak—silent

All women will *speak*, and they will command others be *silent*.<sup>17</sup>

If *men* are *silent*, they [women] force them to *speak*.<sup>18</sup>

## 4 Speak—hold—her—peace

...if the husbands will speak, they [women] will hold their peace.<sup>19</sup>

This last line above ‘...if the husbands will speak, they [women] will hold their peace’ is particularly similar to Daw’s line, ‘I know to speak, and she to hold her peace’.

The unmistakable sea-saw use of antitheses in Daw’s verse was a well-known characteristic of North’s *Dial of Princes*. Given the fact that Daw is also a knight, and the subject of the verse was a stoic counseling of manners, advising women to be quiet and men to speak, the possibility that Jonson may have used Sir John Daw to parody Sir Thomas North seems intriguing.<sup>20</sup>

Independent evidence for this possibility is not wanting, for *The Dial* is not the only

work of North referenced in a scene with Sir John Daw. In Act IV, Scene 1, Daw, La-Foole, and the Collegiate Ladies suggest the following literary cures for Morose:

*La-Foole*: Ay, and there’s an excellent book of moral philosophy, madam, of Raynard the fox, and all the beasts, called *Doni’s Philosophy*.

*Centaur*: There is, indeed, sir Amorous La-Foole.

*Morose*: O misery!

*La-Foole*: I have read it, my lady Centaure, all over, to my cousin, here.

*Mrs Otter*: Ay, and’tis a very good book as any is, of the moderns.

*Daw*: Tut, he must have Seneca read to him, and Plutarch, and the ancients; the moderns are not for this disease.<sup>21</sup>

It was Sir Thomas North who translated ‘Doni’s Philosophy’ (*The Moral Philosophy of Doni*), and Jonson’s reference to it is particularly telling. Only one drama in the entire Chadwyck-Healey Literature Online Database refers to North’s translation of *Doni* by its title—and that is *Epicene*, in this passage with Sir John Daw. If Jonson is indeed using Daw’s madrigal to refer to the *Dial of Princes*, as it seems, then this would be the second peculiar connection to Sir Thomas North.

Moreover, Daw’s comment above linking both Seneca and Plutarch is not the first time in the play that Daw links the Roman dramatist with the Greek Historian, and this provides another tie to Sir Thomas North. About six years prior to Jonson’s writing of *Epicene*, North had augmented the 1603 edition of *Plutarch’s Lives* with a translation of the study ‘of two famous philosophers Plutarch and Seneca’. In this last known work of North, the lives of Plutarch and Seneca were compared in parallel as Plutarch did with the various worthies of the Greeks and Romans. So Thomas North had linked Seneca with Plutarch just as Daw does twice in *Epicene*.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 47.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 59.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 69.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 56–7.

<sup>20</sup> One of the works that may be suggested as an alternative is: ‘Penelopes Web...a Christall Myrror of Faeminine Perfection (1587)’, Robert Greene’s semi-euphuistic work that, at one point, describes the three virtues of women as: ‘Obedience, Chastitie, and Sylence’. However, it does not really display the antitheses made famous by North.

<sup>21</sup> *Epicene*, 221–2.

*The Dial of Princes*, *The Moral Philosophy of Doni* and the linking of Plutarch with Seneca in *Plutarch's Lives* all have one writer in common, the translator Sir Thomas North. Given that Daw is also a knight who penned a Stoic advisory, instructing the nobility on speech and silence, the identification of Daw as North may seem compelling. Fortunately, Jonson also provides at least one more clue that may remove all doubt.

After Daw criticizes Plutarch and Seneca, Dauphine asks Daw who are his favorite authors. Daw responds, 'And then there's Vatablus, Pomponatius, Symancha; the other are not to be received within the thought of a scholar.'<sup>22</sup> These three names refer to an extraordinarily peculiar trio of minor continental figures, who would appear to have little in common: Diego de Simancas (Symancha) was a Spanish Bishop;<sup>23</sup> Francois Vatable (Vatablus) was a French scholar and Abbot of Bellozane;<sup>24</sup> Pietro Pompanazzi (Pomponatius) was an Italian, progressive, religious philosopher.<sup>25</sup> Jonson certainly seems to be making some sort of point, but the allusion seems frustratingly esoteric even for Jonson. The history of Thomas North, however, helps shed some light.

North is known for only three translations of three continental works: Antonio de Guevara's *The Dial of Princes* from the Spanish, Anton Francesco Doni's *The Moral Philosophy of Doni* from the Italian, and Jaques Amyot's rendition of *Plutarch's Lives* from the French. Evidently, Jonson believed it would be too obvious if Daw referenced Guevara, Doni, and Amyot as his favorites, so Jonson used the three most likely substitutes. The three relate to the others as follows:

- Antonio de Guevara (like Symancha) was a Spanish Bishop.
- Jaques Amyot (like Vatablus) was a French scholar and Abbot of Bellozane.
- Anton Francesco Doni (like Pomponatius) was an Italian, progressive, religious philosopher.

<sup>22</sup> *Epicene*, 155.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> 'Francois Vatable,' *The New Advent, Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15276a.htm>, Internet, 12 March 2007.

<sup>25</sup> *Epicene*, 155.

By having Daw criticize Plutarch and praise an Abbot of Bellozane as more worthy, Jonson appears to be referencing the fact that North did not translate Plutarch from the original Greek but instead chose to translate Amyot's French version of Plutarch instead. North did indeed seem to prefer an Abbot of Bellozane (and a Spanish Bishop and an Italian religious philosopher) over Plutarch, and this, perhaps, scraped Jonson's classical sensitivities.

Regardless, the frequency, specificity, and peculiarity of the allusions to Thomas North certainly seem to indicate that Jonson had him in mind when developing the character of Sir John Daw.

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#### FISHERMEN'S LORE AND THE SALMON-DOGFISH FABLE IN WEBSTER'S *THE DUCHESS OF MALFI*

IN the third act, scene v of John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1623), the duchess despairs over her brother the duke's resolve to rid himself of the shame of her attachment to a commoner, by whom she has borne children. She conveys her grief—and also the folly of her brother's obsession with family honour, an obsession that would deny her a future of true love and happiness—by telling a small fable. The fable involves fishes and evidently is a story of Webster's own invention. The salmon of the fable represents the scorned duchess herself, and the dogfish her arrogant brother. In actuality, as we know, the salmon is a valuable fish that breeds in 'shallow rivers' (see below) before dying or returning to the sea, whereas in Webster's time, as today, the spine-finned dogfish (in truth a small shark, a nuisance to commercial fishermen who found them in their nets) remained offshore amid the 'high . . . floods' of the sea.

Sad tales befit my woe: I'll tell you one.

A salmon, as she swam unto the sea,  
Met with a dog-fish, who encounters her  
With this rough language: 'Why art thou so bold  
To mix thyself with our high state of floods,