PLAYING PENTECOST IN YORK AND CHESTER: Transformations and Texts

Pamela M. King

Pentecost or Whit, coming close to midsummer and to Corpus Christi, is a traditional time of feasting, sports, and merrymaking, accompanied by plays.[1] The feast commemorates the Descent of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles fifty days after the Resurrection of Christ. Since the first century it has terminated the Paschal season: St Paul refers to his intention to stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost in I Corinthians 16:8. Its origins are also associated with an ancient Jewish feast, the 'feast of weeks', an occasion for making thank-offerings to God referred to in Exodus 34:22 and Deuteronomy 16:10. The alternative popular name for the feast, 'Whitsunday' arose because it was one of the traditional occasions of baptism in the liturgical calendar of the early Church, and those presenting themselves for baptism wore white garments. Pentecost has special liturgical rank second only to Easter, and the Monday and Tuesday in the week are, like those of Holy Week, both Double feasts of the First Class.

Rosemary Woolf, admirable in a number of respects but not notable for her theatrical imagination, remarked that the episode is 'difficult to dramatise'.[2] Accordingly she believed that the N.Town dramatist was 'prudent' in compressing the entire event into forty lines of doxology recited by the Apostles, the expression of scepticism by attendant Jews, and a sermon by Peter. Woolf's approach was rigorously comparative, based on the now discredited premise that the English Mystery Plays of her title constituted a coherent genre of dramatic writing. Her simple model, privileging and homogenising mystery-play cycles, is now rejected as a consequence of the work on manuscripts and records which has been undertaken in the intervening thirty-five years. This does not mean that a comparative approach is no longer viable, but it does mean that any comparison has to attend to what is known of the discrete circumstances of production of each text. In what follows, I propose to explore how the treatment of Pentecost in York's Corpus Christi Play and Chester's Whitsun Play reflect the distinct devotional contexts and climates from which they survive.[3] Fortunately, for the purposes of this paper, there is

no Pentecost pageant in the Towneley manuscript, or this essay would be a great deal longer.

The brief N.Town episode need not detain us long either except in distinction to York's. Both are fifteenth-century survivals, and both reflect liturgical practice. The N.Town episode is decorously constructed from the core fabric of liturgical worship — prayer and preaching — as counters to scepticism. It thus, like the rite of worship, simply bears witness to the effect of the intervention of the Spirit as it is understood to have operated since Pentecost, rather than recreating the moment. In York, on the other hand, a pageant evolved which sets out to re-enact the historical moment of the Descent of the Holy Spirit comprehended through mainstream theological commentary and mediated to the audience through the deployment of scriptural and liturgical textual resonances, as well as by theatrical effect.

In the climax to his *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, Nicholas Love calls Pentecost a 'swete and louely feste. For þis is þe feste of him þat is loue properly, as seynt gregour seiþ þat þe holi goste is loue.'[4] He tells of how the Trinity determined to send the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, how it was done with 'a wondirfull noys in brennyng tonges vpon a hundret & twenty disciples' strengthening and empowering them, and of how through loving prayerfulness the individual can come to emulate the Apostles' condition. In an earlier section of the book, in his counter-blast against Lollards and their doubts about transubstantiation, Love also connects the feeling of taking the sacrament of the altar with the influx of the Holy Ghost:[5]

> And it semeþ þat ioyful felyng in þe body is like to þat þat holi chirch singeþ of þe Apostles & disciples at þe feste of Pentecost, when þe holi goste was sent to hem sodeynly in þe likenes of fire withoutforþ, & vnspekable ioy in hir bodies withinforþ, þat is þat hir bowels fillede with þe holi goste ioyede souereynly in god.

Love offers a cue, apt in time, place, and ecclesiastical politics, to the significance of Pentecost in the York Corpus Christi play. In the play, it is a bridge between the pageants which recollect apparitions of Christ in scriptural history, and Corpus Christi itself which occurs only eleven days after the Whitsun feast in the annual festal calendar. It emphasises the transformational powers of the Holy Spirit.

The York Pentecost pageant is attributed to the Potters in both the 1415 *Ordo Paginarum* and in the later Register from which the texts of the pageants as we have them are derived.[6] The association between craft and

subject is apt. The *Golden Legend* calls the Apostles 'clean receptacles',[7] drawing on long patristic tradition, including for example Chrysostom's commentary on how the effect of the influx of the spirit at Pentecost is to 'make men of gold of men of clay'.[8] St Ambrose, a particular authority on the Holy Spirit, comments:

> *Unde et illud quando Gedeon superaturus Madian, trecentos viros jussit hydrias sumere, et in hydriis faces accensas habere, et in dextris tenere tubas (Judic. VII, 16); ita nostri acceptum ab apostolis servavere majores, quod hydriae sunt corpora nostra, figurata de limo quae timere non norunt, si fervore gratiae spiritalis ignescant, et Jesu Domini passionem canora vocis confessione testentur.*
>
> For the same reason was it that when Gideon was about to overcome the Midianites, he commanded three hundred men to take pitchers, and to hold lighted torches inside the pitchers, and trumpets in their right hands. Our predecessors have preserved the explanation received from the apostles, that the pitchers are our bodies, fashioned of clay, which know not fear if they burn with the fervour of the grace of the Spirit, and bear witness to the passion of the Lord Jesus with a loud confession of the voice.[9]

The guild attribution supports an understanding of the episode, characteristic of the York Play, as one of the series of theophanies which drives the cycle.

A focus on transformation of course makes some demands on special effects in staging, about which it is fun to speculate. The moment of epiphany is, however, most clearly marked out by music, as angels sing *Veni creator spiritus*, a hymn commonly attributed to Hrabanus Maurus, with special Pentecostal resonances. This was the seminal commentary on the account in Acts of the Descent of the Holy Ghost, 'assigned in the Roman Breviary to Vespers (I and II) and Terce of Pentecost and throughout the octave'. The hymn is one of the most enduring in the liturgy, associated with any occasion on which the special intervention of the Holy Spirit to assist human judgement was sought, most notably the ordination of priests.[10]

What occurred during the singing in the Potters' pageant we can only guess at, but Peter says:

> I myght no3t loke, so was it light 111

and

His holy goste here haue we hente;
Like to þe sonne itt semed in sight. 114–15

The producers of indoor Latin plays of the Church used incense to create clouds of smoke and sparks, and sometimes released live doves.[11] All these effects would be considerably more challenging to produce on a pageant waggon in broad daylight. Moreover doves were not strictly necessary, as the manifest epiphany at Pentecost properly involves only tongues of flame. *The Golden Legend*, digesting earlier commentaries, is most particular on the point: the dove belongs to the Baptism:

> It is to be noted that the sending of the Holy Spirit was shown by five kinds of visible signs. Firstly, he appeared in the form of a dove over Christ at his baptism ... Secondly, he came as a shining cloud around Christ transfigured ... Thirdly, he came as a breath ... Fourthly, as fire, and fifthly, in the shape of a tongue; and in this double form he appeared on this day.[12]

Rushing wind and fiery tongues are the subject of commentaries illustrating the vehemence of the action of the spirit at Pentecost.[13] The York *Pentecost* thus belongs to the list of pageants which somehow contrived lighting effects in broad daylight at midsummer in the streets — mirrors, candles, oil-lamps, or flares — if no birds![14]

The effect of the influx of the spirit is the gift of tongues. In a number of liturgies, though not in the York Use, this was represented by the addition of Greek and Hebrew words to the Latin.[15] The pageant intersperses the English verse-text with Latin quotations from the liturgy of the Pentecostal season to produce macaronic stanzas, but this effect is not confined to the moment after the Descent of the Holy Ghost. Some of the Latin, written in red ink in the Register, is integrated into the stanza form, whereas at other times the lines are hypermetrical. Peter speaks the words of the Gospel reading for the Tuesday following Pentecost, Acts 10:42–8:[16]

> *Nobis precepit dominus praedicare populo, et testificare quia prope est iudex viuorum et mortuorum.* 13–14
>
> 'And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that ... the Judge of the living and of the dead [is at hand].'

John's speech which follows is also completed by two hypermetrical lines, John 14:26, the Gospel reading for Mass at Pentecost which is taken up as the verse antiphon for the following Sunday:

'Cum venerit paraclitus
Docebit vos omnia'. 35–6

'But the Comforter [when he shall come] will teach you all things.'

James then speaks the first fully macaronic stanza, incorporating the adaptation of John 16:7–8 which forms the Vespers antiphon for both the Ascension and Pentecost:[17]

3a, certaynely he saide vs soo,
And mekill more þanne we of mene:
'*Nisi ego abiero*',
Þus tolde he ofte-tymes vs betwene.
He saide, forsoth, 'But if I goo
Þe holy goste schall not be sene,
Et cum assumptus fuero
Þanne schall I sende 3ou comforte clene' 37–44

Immediately after the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the First Apostle glosses the nocturn sung by the angels:

'Veni creator spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita'.
Þei praied þe spirite come till vs
And mende oure myndis with mirthis ma 135–8

The Third Apostle continues by glossing the words of one of the weekday antiphons that follow after Easter, again an adaptation from John 16: 20–21:[18]

'Tristicia impleuit cor vestrum' —
Firste sorowe in herte he vs hight;
'Sed conuertetur in gaudium',
Sen saide he þat we schulde be light. 147–50

Thus the York dramatist foregrounds the text from John 16 which is embedded in the Pentecostal liturgy, giving a particular emphasis to the pageant's interpretation of the episode. This is the text in which the Evangelist reports the effect of the coming of the Holy Spirit and affirms that Christ has ascended to the Father. The significance of Pentecost as recounted by John is as the fulfilment of Christ's promise of enlightenment, too burdensome to be taught by the Son but to be made known through the agency of the Spirit. The Apostles decorously use the

Latin of the liturgy to confer a flavour of the gift of tongues, but also simultaneously recount and enact Christ's promise as reported by John.

As in the N.Town play, it is left to the Jewish 'Doctors' to comment on how the Apostles 'leris langage of ilk a lande' (158). The sequence is completed by Peter who explains their error, finishing with Joel's prophecy (2:28) of the events which the audience has just witnessed, also taken from the liturgy of the season:[19]

> '*Et erit in nouissimis diebus, dicit dominus,*
> *effundam de spiritu meo super omnem carnem'.* 193–4
>
> 'And it shall come to pass after this, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh ...'

The Golden Legend discusses why the Holy Spirit should have taken the form of tongues of flame.[20] The tongue is the member that is particularly difficult to control, but 'because the tongue is very useful if well-controlled, it needed to have the Holy Spirit as its controller'. Voragine in turn quotes Bernard's explanation of the tongues of fire as arming the Apostles with the confidence to speak fierily, to modulate what they say according to the different capacities of their hearers, to speak usefully for edification and for benefit. Translated by the Church from which the York Play emanates, this amounts to the power to use the Latin of the scriptures and to gloss it intelligibly in the language of the audience. There are examples elsewhere in the pageants of unruly tongues, notably in the inspired dialogue of Herod's court in Pageant 31. The use of liturgical Latin on the other hand pervades the York Play. Its function is as a proleptic and authorising sign of enlightenment throughout the pageants. To speak the Latin of scripture and liturgy *is* to bear witness to the Resurrection and to have received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

York's Pentecost pageant has, then, a characteristic liturgical lyricism, which combines with special visual effects and music to create a version of the episode redolent of the transformational powers of the sacral. But it is the Chester pageant of Pentecost which earns special mention from Rosemary Woolf. Like York's pageant it opens with the replacement of Judas with Matthias, which draws on Acts 1. It also incorporates the composition of the Creed, a translation of the hymn *Veni creator spiritus*, and, to Woolf, most 'startling', a scene in the heavens in which the whole Trinity organises the Descent of the Holy Ghost.[21]

What Woolf does not remark upon is the possible significance of the Pentecost pageant in a play cycle designed for performance at Whitsuntide,

both before and after the Reformation. The post-Reformation Banns of the Chester Play remark on Pentecost's special status as the final canonically sound episode:

> This of the oulde & newe testamente to ende all the storye
> which oure author meaneth at this tyme to haue in playe,
> yow ffishemongers to the Pageante of the holye goaste well see
> That in good order it be donne as hathe bine allwaye/ [22]

'Been always', that is, despite the objections of the Puritan watchdog of the play, Christopher Goodman, who in 1572 had noted the following 'absurdities' in the pageant:

> Peter onely is said to create Matthias an Apostle
> The Angell bringeth the Holy ghost to the Apostles
> The Creed made in 12 Articles by 12 Apostles every one their portion.
> Matthews words these. And I believe throgh godes grace soche beleffe as holy church has that godes bodie granted us was & to use in forme of bred
> Simons words. And I beleve with devotion, of syn to have remission throgh penance & contrition, & heven whan I am dead.[23]

The surviving text does indeed exhibit all these 'vices', so does not show signs of having been significantly protestantised. And yet it is very different in character from York's heavily liturgical version of the event.

For the Chester dramatist, *Pentecost* is both about the history of evangelism and a demonstration of evangelism. It works through lessons on the power of intercessory prayer and of the preaching vocation, on the gifts of the Holy Spirit and on the articles of the Creed. Prayer is particularly a driving mode within the pageant and is constructed from the Gospel passages which predict the coming of the Holy Ghost. The praying culminates in the singing of *Veni creator spiritus* which triggers the holy conversation in the Trinity, enacting the answer to the question, who sent the Holy Spirit? *The Golden Legend* cites Pope Leo's sermon for Pentecost as its authority, identifying the Father as merciful, the Son as profitable, but the Holy Ghost as sent to inflame humankind.[24] This is what supplies the cue to the author of the *Meditationes Vita Christi*, to Nicholas Love and to their Bernardine sources, to present the debate in heaven as an exemplum of pure love.[25] The heavenly debate in Chester is, however, not

notably affective, but is used as an occasion to reprise the cause of the Fall and Redemption and to itemise the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The debate is followed by a long stage direction:

> *Tunc Deus emittet Spiritum Sanctum in spetie ignis, et in mittendo cantent duo angeli antiphonam 'Accipite Spiritum Sanctum; quorum remiseritis peccata, remittentur eis' etc. Et cantando projicient ignem super apostolos. Finitoque Angelus in caelo dicat*
>
> Then God shall send out the Holy Spirit in the form of fire, and as it is sent, two angels shall sing the antiphon[26] 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them' etc. And as they sing they shall throw fire upon the apostles. And when this is done, an Angel in heaven shall say 238–9

Clearly, although we still have no idea how this was done, the effect was intended to be spectacular. Then angels tell the Apostles what is happening to them, and the Apostles respond by telling one another and the audience what has happened to them. Hence they bear witness to their own transformation rather than enacting it.

There is no attempt here to reproduce the gift of tongues directly, although it is reported both by the Apostles and by two observing 'foreigners'. There is, however, macaronic dialogue, this time not drawing on the Pentecostal liturgy but on the words of the Creed. For the episode finds a further didactic opportunity in the traditional understanding that the Creed was formulated by the Apostles at Pentecost.[27] Whatever its origins, which remain obscure, the Creed, delightfully described by Augustine as 'These words which you have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed'[28] is, with the Lord's Prayer and the Ave Maria, the mainstay of medieval catechesis.

Between 1471 and 1521 the annual performance of the Chester Play was moved from Corpus Christi to Whitsuntide, and, as David Mills has pointed out, there is in fact very little evidence of what it was like prior to this move.[29] The move of the play to Whitsun changed what he calls the 'weighting of the ceremonial year', giving it three 'mutually defining genres': Corpus Christi, which involved the Church and the City; the Whitsun plays, which belonged to the City but were devotional in content, and the Midsummer Show, which belonged wholly to the City and was secular in content.[30] The Post-Reformation Banns reassure the audience of the continuation of the plays, although, as David Mills points out, by this

time they alternated with the Midsummer Show. He concludes, 'The plays are thus nominally attached to a religious function, though not specifically directed to the period of Whitsun', and points out that the Proclamation of the plays does not mention either Corpus Christi or Whitsuntide, but 'the avowed spiritual aim is confirmatory and educational, an act of evangelism'.[31] The Chester pageant could, therefore, be the product of the cycle's re-orientation as a Whitsun celebration, and can, but need not, be read as a signature inclusion.

The Chester *Pentecost* pageant is clearly very different from the equivalent pageant from the York Corpus Christi Play, but it is important at this juncture to remember too that there is no evidence that this is because it is significantly later in date. The *terminus ad quem* for the latter is the date of the York Register, that is some time in the late 1460s, whereas the *terminus a quo* for the former, if it is connected to the move to Whitsun, is 1471, although we cannot discount the possibility that it could be earlier still. Certainly to connect its didactic elaboration with nascent Protestantism would be to misread anachronistically its theological emphasis.

Both Plays belong to the fifteenth-century vogue for vernacular gospel harmonies. In the case of York, as we have seen, Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Life of Christ* is a specific and localisable influence. York also shows the influence of elements of the very different *Stanzaic Life of Christ*, but not to the extent of the very close affinities between this text and the Chester play. David Mills has observed that the *Stanzaic Life* lacks 'the Franciscan empathy' of Love's *Mirror*, 'but offers a plain style that deals primarily in narrative and exposition and holds the audience at a contemplative distance from the account'.[32] To explain the character of Chester's *Pentecost* pageant further, rather than going into the methodological detail of the *Stanzaic Life of Christ*, I want to wind the clock back to Ranulf Higden, monk of St Werburgh's, one time candidate for authorship of both the Play and the *Life*. The author of the famous *Polychronicon* is no longer considered likely to have been the author of either, but Higden, immensely influential locally, offers some important clues to the textual environment from which the Chester Play emanated.

Higden's passage on Pentecost in the *Polychronicon* is brief but telling:[33] like all of his New Testament narrative and commentary, it is embedded in his account of imperial Rome. In chapter 5 he breaks off to provide definitions of the various appearances of Christ: Epiphania, Theophania (the Baptism), Bethphania (the Marriage at Cana), and Phagophania (the

Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes). The first three of these, and probably also the fourth, he notes following *The Golden Legend*, all occurred on the same date. Then, in chapter 6 he inserts into his discussion of the reign of the Emperor Augustus the following account of a further theophany:

> *Hoc quoque anno post electionem Mathiae, et etiam post missionem Spiritus Sancti, apostolic[i] antequam dispergerentur in mundum, convenientes apud Jerosolimam ediderunt symbolum apostolicum. Et Stephanus septimo kalendis Januarii lapidatus est …*
>
> Also in that year after the election of Matthew, and also after the sending-forth of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles, before they were dispersed into the world, gathering together in Jerusalem, published the Creed. And Stephen was stoned on the seventh day after the Kalends of January.

Higden selects from the events of the first two chapters of Acts, the dispersal of the Apostles and the composition of the Creed, both of which are the focus of the Chester pageant.[34]

Furthermore, the status of the *Polychronicon* is such that Higden's pastoral writings are not so well known. All belong to a particular evangelical tradition. In addition to an exposition on Job, and another on Canticles, he wrote an *Ars componendi sermones* ('Art of Composing Sermons') which has been described by its editor as a fool-proof manual for preaching in the thematic mode, with divisions and sub-divisions.[35] The same editor notes in particular his dislike for strident or emotional preaching. He also wrote a *Speculum curatorum* which belongs squarely within the movement for pastoral renewal, and leans on similar handbooks, especially the *Summa confessorum* of John of Freiburg, but also William of Pagula's *Oculis Sacerdotis* and the *Manipulis curatorum* of Henry of Ghent.[36] G.R. Owst noted reprovingly that Higden's debt to William of Auvergne amounts to shameless plagiarism. The *Speculum*, commonly dated to 1340,[37] deals with the Articles of the Faith, the Ten Commandments, vows, tithes, the Lord's Prayer, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, the Beatitudes, the virtues, the vices and their remedies, and the Sacraments.

The *Speculum* demands closer inspection in relation to the detail of the Chester Play and the *Stanzaic Life* because all appear to share a particular evangelical approach to scriptural material. One side-effect of this was to set Higden up as a candidate for proto-Protestantism in the post-Reformation Banns, although the pre-Reformation detail of none of these

works would have passed the gimlet eye of Christopher Goodman. What all three hold the secret to is not, ultimately, shared authorship, but shared reading, probably the contents of the now lost library of St Werburgh's Benedictine Abbey. It is known that there were twenty-six monks in the abbey in 1381 at a period of decline, so it is surmised that in Higden's day the number would have been greater. It is also known that many of the works Higden drew on came from the bequest of Richard of Chester.[38] What Richard of Chester's will testifies to is a predominant taste in works within the standard pastoral tradition.[39] A copy of the will (28 April 1343) survives in the Chapter Acts of York Minster, where he ended his life as a canon. After making provision for the burial of his body in the Minster and attendant elaborate funerary arrangements, he swiftly moves on to itemise the books destined for the abbot and monks of St Werburgh's: books of decretals and glosses; a Bible; the *Moralia* on Job, *Moralia* on Ezekiel, homilies and the *Pastoral Care*, all by Gregory; the *Meditationes* of Bernard; Paul's Epistles with glosses; a book called *Catholicon* (possibly the *Catholicon* or *Summa Grammaticalis* by the Italian grammarian John of Genoa, alias Johannes Balbus, who died c. 1298); Hugutio of Pisa (*floruit* 1200)'s *Derivationes*; Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*; a book called 'Bruitone' (probably Radulphus Brito, c. 1270–1320) on grammar; a concordance of the Bible; a work recorded as *summam de vices et virtutibus*, possibly the very manuscript of William of Auvergne which Higden had at his elbow as he worked.[40] Finally there follow a number of books of *Sentences*, presumably by Peter Comestor (one of them abbreviated into a little volume bound in red leather), and a copy of Augustine's *De civitate dei*. This core collection of itself provided Cestrian authors with much of what Pantin characterised as the typical reading materials of a fourteenth-century religious community.

To summarise, then, we appear to have an argument to account for the different treatments of Pentecost in the near contemporary pageants from York and Chester. York's mediation of the theophany of Pentecost is heavily dependent on the Whitsun liturgy, and offers opportunities to read the event as another transformation, analogous with the Play's central theme of transubstantiation. Chester's draws its inspiration from evangelical writings, particularly those associated with the Creed. That difference cannot be tied to a particular date, chiefly because we have no idea at what date either pageant was written, certainly in their present form. York's text is a product of the period between the 1415 *Ordo Paginarum* and the York Register, but as such is unattested prior to the

1460s, whereas Chester's although surviving in late manuscripts could date from the 1470s or earlier. Attributing the difference to the occasion of performance, Corpus Christi as opposed to Whitsun, is more attractive, but requires caution: although Chester's elaborate Pentecost pageant provides a fitting signature episode for a Whitsun cycle, it is not invoked as such until the excuses of the post-Reformation banns — *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. And York's pageant on its own would work equally well at Whitsun. The only secure ground for discussion of the distinction between the two, and for the apparent, though illusory, more Protestant 'feel' of the Chester *Pentecost*, rests in reading them as products of particular intertextualities born of the available reading materials in the respective locations of composition. In the case of York, although we know of major medieval library collections in that city,[41] we need look no further than at the influence of Nicholas Love, the practices of vernacular theology, and the scriptural texts mediated in the liturgy. Chester's is the more 'bookish' pageant, but again behind that may lie the mediation of one influential local luminary, Ranulf Higden, magpie of the pastoral tradition. In other words we, like Rosemary Woolf, really need look no further than at the sources, but in more material terms than she conceived, by considering which books were actually available locally to the likely authors of the plays. That is surely most likely of all to account for the particular take on fifteenth-century theological orthodoxy that each digests for audiences which were relatively comparable in character.

University of Bristol

NOTES

1. See further F.G. Holweck, at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15614b.htm>.
2. Rosemary Woolf *English Mystery Plays* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972) 284.
3. Respectively *The York Plays* edited Richard Beadle (London: Edward Arnold, 1982) Pageant 43, 380–5, and *The Chester Mystery Cycle* edited David Mills (East Lancing: Colleagues Press, 1991) Play 21, 357–73. All references are to these editions.
4. Nicholas Love *The Mirrour of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Full Critical Edition* edited Michael G. Sargent (Exeter University Press, 2005) 218–20.
5. Love *Mirrour* 153.

6. Notably *Records of Early English Drama: York* edited Alexandra F. Johnston and Margaret Rogerson, 2 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978) *1* 23, 26; *York Plays* edited Beadle 380–85.
7. Jacobus de Voragine *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* translated William Granger Ryan, 2 vols (Princeton University Press, 1993) *1* 306.
8. St John Chrysostom *Homily 4 on the Acts of the Apostles* translated Kevin Knight, **at** <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/210104.htm>.
9. St Ambrose of Milan *De Spirito Sancto* lib. 1, cap. 14, para. 147, in *Sancti Ambrosii Mediolanensis Episcopi Opera Omnia vol. 2* edited Migne *PL 16* (1845) col. 738; Ambrose *Three Books … On the Holy Spirit* translated H. de Romestin and others, Book I Chapter 14.167, in *St. Ambrose: Select Works and Letters* edited Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers 2:10; New York: Christian Literature Company and Oxford: Parker, 1896) 112, on-line at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/34021.htm>.
10. Hugh Henry on *Veni Creator Spiritus* in the on-line *Catholic Encyclopaedia* at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15341a.htm>; or see 'Veni Creator Spiritus' in *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* 17 vols (1964) *14* 600.

    Breviarum ad usum insignis Ecclesiae Eboracensis (York Breviary) edited S.W. Lawley, 2 vols *Surtees Society Publications 71* (1880 for 1871), and *75* (1883 for 1882) *1* col. 503; and see further Henry at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15341a.htm>.
11. See e.g. Karl Young *The Drama of the Medieval Church* 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933) *1* 489–91; Eamon Duffy *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400–1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992) 459–60.
12. Voragine *Golden Legend* translated Ryan, *1* 300.
13. E.g. St John Chrysostom *Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles: Homily 4*, on-line at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/210104.htm>.
14. Though the dove does not appear in the written sources, it often appears in the iconography of Pentecost, presumably as a generalisation of the dove from the Baptism.
15. Young *Drama of the Medieval Church 1* 489; but see *Manuale et Processionale ad usum insignis Ecclesiae Eboracensis (York Manual and Processional)* edited W.G. Henderson, *Surtees Society Publications 63* (1875) 187–8.
16. *Missale ad usum insignis ecclesiae Eboracensis (The York Missal)* edited W.G. Henderson, 2 vols *Surtees Society Publications 59* (1874 for 1872) and *60* (1874 for 1872) *1* 154; Acts 10: 42:

    > And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was appointed by God, to be judge of the living and of the dead.

17. *York Breviary 1* cols 475, 497, translated as:

    Unless I go away the Holy Ghost will not come: when I have ascended He will be sent to you.

18. *York Breviary 1* col. 457.

19. *York Missal 1* 161.

20. Voragine *Golden Legend* translated Ryan, *1* 306.

21. Woolf *English Mystery Plays* 285–6: 'while there is an unexpected touch of sublimity in the design, the execution is clumsy'. There are two starting points, Christ's words in John 14:16, part of a lectio and response in the liturgy for the vigil at Pentecost; and the Pseudo-Bonaventurian *Meditationes* in which this text is developed into a brief scene.

22. *Records of Early English Drama: Cheshire including Chester* edited Elizabeth Baldwin, Lawrence M. Clopper, and David Mills. 2 vols (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press and the British Library, 2007) *1* 339.

23. *REED: Cheshire including Chester 1* 148.

24. Voragine *Golden Legend* translated Ryan, *1* 299.

25. Love *Mirrour* 218.

26. The antiphon, from John 20:22–3,

    22. 'When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost.
    23. Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.

    occurs not only in the liturgy for Lauds at Pentecost (York *Breviary* col. 502), as the antiphon for the Gospel, but is also part of the sacrament of Ordination to the priesthood: see <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11279a.htm>.

27. According to St Ambrose, the Creed was 'pieced together by twelve separate workmen', the probable origin of the legend of its composition by the Apostles at Pentecost. Herbert Thurston *Origin of the Creed*, in the on-line *Catholic Encyclopaedia* at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01629a.htm> quoting Migne *PL 17* col. 671; *Arbitror illam duodecim artificum operatione conflatam; duodecim enim apostolorum symbolo fides sancta concepta est, qui velut periti artifices in unum convenientes, clavem suo consilio conflaverunt.*

28. I*sta verba quae audistis, per divinas scripturas sparsa sunt: sed inde collecta et ad unum redacta, ne tardorum hominum memoria laboraret …* Augustine of Hippo *Sermones: De Symbolo Ad Catechumenos* Migne *PL 40* cols 627–36, at 627; *A Sermon to Catechumens on the Creed (De Symbolo ad Catachumenos)* translated Rev. C.L. Cornish, in *St. Augustin: On the Holy Trinity, Doctrinal Treatises, Moral Treatises* edited Philip Schaff (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1:

3; Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887) 369–375, at 369. On-line at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1307.htm>.

29. David Mills *Recycling the Cycle: The City of Chester and its Whitsun Plays* (University of Toronto Press, 1998) 111.
30. Mills *Recycling the Cycle* 111.
31. Mills *Recycling the Cycle* 115–16.
32. Mills *Recycling the Cycle* 47.
33. *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis; together with the English translations of John Trevisa and of an unknown writer of the fifteenth century volume 4* edited J.R. Lumby (Rolls Series 41D; London: Longman & Trübner and others for HMSO, 1872) 334–7.
34. *Polychronicon* 356.
35. *The 'Ars componendi sermones' of Ranulph Higden OSB*, edited Margaret Jennings (Davis Medieval Texts and Studies 6; Leiden and New York: Brill, 1991) xxxvi.
36. The text is commented on in detail in G.R. Owst '*Sortilegium* in English Homiletic Literature of the Fourteenth Century' in *Studies presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson* edited J.C. Davies (London: Oxford UP, 1957) 272–303, and in Leonard Boyle 'William of Pagula' (unpublished PhD thesis; Oxford, 1956).
37. W.A. Pantin *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge UP, 1955) 203. In the surviving manuscript of the *Speculum*, Durham Cathedral MS B iv 36, there is a two-column index on fol. 3^{r} contemporary with the manuscript's compilation, which itemises the full pastoral agenda covered by the MS.
38. York Minster Library MS f. H1/2, The Chapter of Acts, fols 17^{r} and ^{v}.
39. York Minster Library MS f. H1/2, fol. 17^{r}.
40. Owst '*Sortilegium*' 287.
41. I am not here disputing the value of Alexandra F. Johnston's ongoing work on the putative connections between the library collections of York and the York Play, as outlined, for example, in her important paper 'John Waldeby, the Augustinian Friary, and the Plays of York' delivered at the 2000 International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo.