B2 The Great Archpapist Learned Curio

Notes. This epigram, heavily endebted to late Elizabethan and early Jacobean literary trends, is headed in one source "In Curione" (Huntington MS HM 198). At the beginning of James I's reign, the Catholic Henry Howard was given the title of Earl of Northampton, the office of Warden of the Cinque Ports, and a place on the Privy Council. He formally conformed to the Protestant Church at this point, but remained widely suspected as a crypto-Catholic. This verse is typical of a broader scepticism about the motivation and sincerity of his "conversion", a scepticism that was expressed at even higher levels of intensity during the period of Northampton's greatest influence at court, from around 1612 to the time of his death in 1614.

"Upon Henry Howard Earle of Northampton. 1603"

The great Archpapist Learned Curio[1]

Is nowe perswaded to the Church to goe

Hee nowe discernes their jugling fopperies

Wherewith the Shaveling Antiques[2] blear'd his eyes

Hee nowe perceives that Romes Ambition   5

Is Author of Romes superstition

Thanked be God, and the Basilius[3]

Whose Exhortation hath prevailed thus;

For to thy power full Argumentes alone

Curio attributes his conversion.   10

He nought respecteth Luther,[4] Zuinglius,[5]

Melancthon,[6] Martyr,[7] Oecolampadius,[8]

Ursinus,[9] Calvin,[10] Buchanan[11] or Knox[12]

Our English Jewell,[13] Whittaker[14] or Fox[15]

Nor any graybeard prelates of these tymes   15

Thoughe wee Accompt them reverend divines

Their Argumentes hee saith, are sleight & weake

Onely Basilius cann to purpose speake

True, Curio true, Basilius on this theame

Cann say much more of this, then all of them

For hee hath power to say recant thyne error

And thou shalt be A Privie Counsellour.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 1

Other known sources. BL MS Harley 3910, fol. 11r; Folger MS V.a.339, fols. 189r and 208r; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.164; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 153

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[1] *Curio:* the curio was the Roman priest of the curia, a subdivision of the Roman patriciate.

[2] *Shaveling Antiques:* i.e. shaveling antics; "mad monks". "Shaveling" was a derogatory term for a Catholic priest or monk, derived from their distinctive ecclesiastical tonsures.

[3] *the Basilius:* the name derives from "basilieus", the Greek for "king", and refers here to James I; a variant reads, more pointedly, "and great Bassilius" (Huntington MS HM 198). But there is also perhaps an allusion—made more explicit in the Huntington MS HM 198 reading—to the character Basilius in Sir Philip Sidney's prose romance *Arcadia*. Sidney's Basilius, the Duke of Arcadia, is an ineffective, effeminate and foolish ruler, whose flaws constitute a kind of tyranny, "exercised not by the stong but by the weak" (Worden 213). Moreover, there is another layer of implied critique of the King here. The poem explicitly mocks Northampton's claims that it was James's arguments that won him from Rome, and this mockery implicitly undercuts James's own, much cherished, reputation as a Protestant controversialist and intellectual foe of "Romes Ambition".

[4] *Luther:* Martin Luther (1483-1546), the founder of Lutheran Protestantism.

[5] *Zuinglius:* Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), Swiss Protestant reformer.

[6] *Melancthon:* Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), German Lutheran reformer.

[7] *Martyr:* Peter Martyr, or Piermartire Vermigli (1500-1562), Italian Protestant.

[8] *Oecolampadius:* Johannes Hussgen, known as Joannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531), Protestant leader in Basle.

[9] *Ursinus:* Zacharias Beer, known as Ursinus (1534-1583), German Calvinist theologian.

[10] *Calvin:* John Calvin (1509-1564), French Protestant reformer and founder of Calvinism.

[11] *Buchanan:* George Buchanan (1506-1582), Scots Calvinist, humanist and former tutor to James I.

[12] *Knox:* John Knox (c.1513-1572), Scots Calvinist reformer.

[13] *Jewell:* John Jewel (d.1571), English Protestant reformer and Elizabethan Bishop of Salisbury.

[14] *Whittaker:* William Whitaker (d.1595), English Protestant theologian, anti-Catholic polemicist and Elizabethan Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge.

[15] *Fox:* John Foxe (1516-1587), English Protestant martyrologist and historian of the Church.