

THE YORK PLAYS IN PERFORMANCE:
Civitas versus Templum

Pamela M. King

Medieval York was a city in which a huge proportion of the population, particularly the male population, was in holy orders of some kind, yet a cycle of religious plays developed there which was, in production if not authorship, the autonomous property of the city's well-to-do lay population. If the generic descriptor 'mystery cycle' still holds up in the English context, the production of the plays in question was indisputably in the control and ownership of the craft and trade population of the owning city. It seems worth reconsidering what this meant in the context of York, how the regular and secular clergy interacted with the lay population, and how or whether that relationship is encoded in the performance of the cycle itself. The Register, which provides our fullest and easiest access to the nature of the cycle, was written when the plays had settled into the form in which they are familiar to us, but it is rather the early fifteenth-century, the period in which both structures of civic government and performance at Corpus Christi were relatively recently evolved, when the interaction between city and church provides particularly rich and complex territory for investigation.

In addition to its Minster, sixty-odd parish churches and small guild chapels such as the one dedicated to St Anne on Foss Bridge, medieval York hosted a number of houses of the endowed and mendicant religious. Just outside the walls was the huge Benedictine Abbey of St Mary's. Benedictines also lived in Holy Trinity Priory in Micklegate, an alien dependency of Marmoutier near Tours. There was a small house of Benedictine nuns at St Clements, with an accompanying house of Gilbertine canons at St Andrews. Of the hospitals, St Leonard's was of considerable size and there was also a leper house, St Nicholas, just outside Walmgate bar. Beyond this there were around thirty small endowed *maisons dieu*. For the mendicant orders there was a Franciscan friary near the castle, a house of Dominicans at Les Toftes, a Carmelite priory at Hundgate, and a house of Austin friars in the city centre.¹ Considering how many established religious houses there were in York, one is forced to conclude with Maud Sellers that 'the rarity of allusions to those who held office or dwelt in them is remarkable'.²

Of the thirty-four mayors who held office between 1380 and 1430, we have twenty-one surviving wills.³ What is remarkable about these wills is how little they leave to the religious institutions with whom they lived cheek by jowl. Of course the vast majority make charitable bequests, as is conventional for the good of the soul and its passage through purgatory, to the poor of the city and/or to prisoners, and for the mending of roads and bridges. Elsewhere I have speculated that this sort of bequest from wealthy members of the aldermanic group develops according to the model set for lay piety by the corporal works of mercy set out in Matthew 25 and the focus of the York Mercers' *Doomsday* pageant.⁴ Bequests to the friars are not uncommon, but amount to very trivial sums of money cursorily included, possibly on the advice of the clerk drawing up the will. Those with stronger pious sentiment, or more money to dispose of, tend to concentrate on their parish church. This is not surprising, given the occupational organisation of the medieval city. The parish church functioned both as the focus of worship for close-knit members of family and occupation, and, on the evidence of the York-generated *Lay Folk's Catechism*, the provider of basic education for future generations of lay trades and craftsmen.⁵ Three of the wealthier mayors in the period leave money to their parish churches but then go on to leave more for the foundation of a chantry for themselves in the Minster, where they seek burial. Others leave money to individual family members who are in holy orders, including friars, but not to the houses in question, but only four mayors who have clearly given some thought to the religious houses which will receive special bequests, and the omissions and inclusions are interesting.

John De Gysburne, mayor at the beginning of the sample period, in 1380 for the third time, is the only one to leave money to St Mary's Abbey, a substantial 100s, but this is just one of a formidable array of religious houses all over the north of England who benefit from this will.⁶ Each house of friars in York receives £20, and there are bequests of 40s to various orders in Scarborough, Yarm, Allerton, Beverley, Hull, Doncaster, Tickhill and Carlisle. He then leaves 18s to the nuns of St Clements, and the same sum to eighteen other houses of nuns in the north. Then he goes on to leave bequests to St Mary's Gisburne, Jervaux Abbey, Kirkham, Meaux, Selby, and Bridlington. The hospital of St Leonard's in York benefits, as do all lepers, anchorites and maisons dieu in York and its environs. No other mayor's will compares with this startling demonstration of comprehensive charity to organised religion without any

accompanying overt request for masses. John de Northby (1416) is also deeply concerned with his parish church, *maisons dieu*, lepers and the York friars, but goes on to leave further bequests, specifically for masses, to Mount Grace, Watton, Kirkham, and to the nuns of St Clements.⁷ Richard Russell (1421 and 1430) was another very wealthy man, whose first thought was for the refurbishment of his parish church, St John the Baptist, Hungate, where he even names his chosen workmen.⁸ He leaves every individual in St Leonard's Hospital five marks, then goes on to make bequests to religious houses which are usefully glossed with reasons: ten marks to Durham Priory for help in his youth, his daughter's dowry to St Nicholas's hospital should she choose to become a nun there, All major houses in York receive bequests as do several Yorkshire monasteries, making St Mary's Abbey conspicuous by its absence. The last of the four very wealthy and benevolent mayors is Thomas Bracebridge, mayor in 1424, whose will is both wide-ranging and nit-picking in its range of religious bequests, most framed in terms of the purchase of masses for his soul.⁹ Each York friary receives a bequest for its fabric as well as a *per capita* sum for each friar. He also leaves money to nunneries, naming individual prioresses.

Taking the group as a whole, a couple of things stand out. The number of bequests to *maisons dieu*, as opposed to St Leonard's, the major hospital foundation in the city, is notable, as are the bequests to the new foundation at Mount Grace, more favoured than York's own St Mary's. This gives us a reasonable point of departure. St Mary's was the largest Benedictine house in the north throughout the middle ages, yet wealthy citizens signally did not choose to leave money to the great monastery on their doorstep, preferring to bequeath to houses further afield. Relations between abbey and city were not good, as their separation by fortified walls on both parts illustrates. The latter part of the fourteenth century inherited a legacy of recorded and reasonably constant dispute between city and abbey. The citizens complained that the abbot usurped the power of the city government, specifically objecting to the abbey's claim of jurisdiction over Bootham and the revenues from Bootham market. In 1354 Edward III attempted to resolve the issue by determining that Marygate belonged to the monks, Bootham to the city.¹⁰ But things rumbled on, because Marygate was the route from the Ouse to Bootham, and in 1377 the Memorandum Book records a dispute over the seizing of a ship's 'rother' by the bursar of the abbey.¹¹ Moreover, not only did abbey and city obstruct one another wherever possible, the civic authorities must

have been aware of various sharp practices of which the abbey was accused, as when, for example, the Patent Rolls 1405–1408 record the seizure of a plot of land from the abbey, endowed as the site of a chapel, but actually rented out to a layman for keeping pigs.¹²

The case of St Leonard's hospital is comparable, despite its fundamentally charitable function, receiving bequests in only six of the wills considered. Again there is a history of disputes with the city. Petercorn, the hospital's entitlement to one thrave of corn from every plough ploughing in the counties of Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Lancashire and Cumberland, and one of its principal sources of revenue, was unpopular and proved hard to enforce.¹³ The hospital was also in dispute with the city over territory, having to be granted special protection in 1380 and 1381 against incursions by angry citizens.¹⁴ In all these instances, York mayors and aldermen are named on the commissions appointed to settle matters.¹⁵ The Memorandum Book records that in 1401 the hospital aroused popular protest by annexing some common pasture at Tylymyre, and this time the mayor simply sent a man to pull down the fence and fill the ditch.¹⁶ The same mayor, William Frost, had been appointed in November 1399 to join a commission to inquire into what the Patent Rolls refer to as 'the dissipation of its lands, goods and possessions and the burden of excessive pensions, maintenances and corrodies ...'¹⁷ This seems to have followed a succession of corrupt masters who had left the hospital with debts of over £500. Any corruption, or even just bad book-keeping, would again be known to the aldermanic class within the city, so it is unsurprising if they preferred to entrust their own posthumous alms-giving to small independent *maisons dieu*.

The mendicant orders too had their disputes with the city government. There is, for example, the celebrated ordinance of 1371 which attempted to settle the long-running dispute between the Friars Minors and the butchers in Shambles who customarily threw offal into the Ouse just upstream of the friary.¹⁸ Most tensions arose, however, over the right of sanctuary, coming to a head in 1391 when the Memorandum Book records that the king had to confirm the city government's power to seize debtors from within the friaries' precincts.¹⁹ Yet despite the customary tensions which grew up around any independent enclosures within the city's limits, we know that the friars contributed significantly to civic life, not least as preachers, educators and book-owners.²⁰ Friars appear time and again in secular contexts, as for example executors of wills and as members of religious confraternities like the late-formed Corpus Christi Guild.²¹ And

of course it was the Minorite, William de Melton, also a campaigner for the regulation of prostitution in the city, who in 1426 suggested that the mystery plays and the Corpus Christi procession be moved to consecutive days.²²

The relationship between city and Minster is another area for exploration. Three mayors between 1380 and 1430 chose burial in the Minster.²³ This was clearly a sign of social status. The denizens of the Minster made up another sector of the population of medieval York. Much of the evidence is that they operated as another distinct coterie, acting as one another's executors and choosing burial side by side, though perhaps relating, as their wills demonstrate, to their places of origin which were widely spread across the country.²⁴ As the home of an archiepiscopal see, York was also home to wealthy and learned clergy who were off-comers, not indigenous to the city in any true sense and who may have arrived there via lesser ecclesiastical appointments elsewhere in the country or from Oxford and Cambridge, as relatively mature adults. This is not to say that the wealthy laity were untravelled provincials; many were accustomed to travelling to and fro on business from Hull to the low countries, but freemen of the city were at least second generation York citizens and likely to have been born in the city.²⁵

There was, however, one occasion on which the solidarity of city and Minster is evident. In 1405, the city supported its own archbishop, Richard Scrope, in his rebellion against Henry IV. Scrope failed to secure the protection of benefit of clergy which caused general scandal, particularly among York's merchant elite whose support he had won by attacking Henry IV's record of excessive government. John Capgrave's near-contemporary partisan account demonstrates just how closely Scrope's rebellion was connected politically to the interests of the mercantile community:²⁶

Thei [Scrope, the Earl of Mowbray and the Duke of Northumberland] cleped onto hem þe cité of 3ork and mech of þe cuntré, and set up certeyn articles in cherch-dores, expressing what was her entent:

First þei desired þat þe puple of þe reme schuld haue fre elleccion of knytes of þe parlement aftir þe eld forme; the secunde, þat þer schuld be a remedie ageyns fals suggestiones, be which many men were disherid of her londis; the þirde, þat þere schuld be

ordeyned a remedye ageyn þese greuous taskes, and ageyne þe grete extorciones, and eke oppressing of marchauntis.

‘They called to them the city of York and much of the country, and set up certain articles on church doors, expressing their intentions:

First they desired that the people of the realm should have free election of the knights in Parliament following old custom; secondly that there should be a remedy against false accusations by which men were disinherited of their lands, and thirdly that there should be ordained a redress against these grievous taxes and against the great extortions and also the oppressing of merchants.’

The Latin chronicles of York detail the problems that the royal party encountered when they tried to secure a capital judgment on the archbishop:²⁷

Henry IV, king of England, in a chamber of the said archbishop’s manor, called Bishopthorp near York, gave instructions to Sir William Gascoigne, then Chief Justice of England, so that a death sentence could be pronounced on the said archbishop as traitor to the king. Gascoigne was reluctant to do this, replying:

Neither you, your Royal Highness, nor any of your lieges in your name, have the lawful power according to the justice of royal authority to judge any bishop to death.

Accordingly he emphatically refused to judge the archbishop. Whereupon the king completely lost his temper with the judge, whose memory be blessed forever more, and immediately he ordered Sir William Fulthorp, a knight but no judge, in order that that very day, namely the Tuesday in the week following Pentecost, the eighth of June, he might pronounce a sentence of death on the archbishop as a traitor, in the hall of the aforesaid manor. And since the same William Gascoigne, Chief Justice of England, completely refused, the said Sir William Fulthorp sat in place of the judge and ordered the archbishop to be brought. He pronounced the following sentence on the archbishop, the same standing bareheaded in his presence, listening, and for all standing around:

You, Richard, traitor to the king, we judge to death and order to be beheaded according to the king’s command.

Scrope's body, interred in York Minster, became the focus of a campaign to have the archbishop canonised which united the influential men of the city with the Minster clergy. Several accounts relate how, after the archbishop's defeat, the citizens of York had to make strenuous efforts to make their peace with the king, including coming out to meet him barefoot and, in Capgrave's version, with halters around their necks.²⁸ The field where the archbishop's blood was shed remained a place of miraculous crows and pilgrimage until, as Capgrave puts it, 'the tyme þat þe kyng forbade it, up peyne of deth', and all attribute that the later collapse of Henry IV's health to his collusion in the condemnation of the saintly archbishop.²⁹

The local sensitivity of the political context of these events is clear.³⁰ Scrope's rebellion may have come at a point when the Lancastrian succession's bid for legitimacy was fragile, but its impact in York was to last as long as the Lancastrian dynasty itself. Scrope had been condemned despite the pleadings of Archbishop Arundel, and the refusal of Gascoigne, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, to try the case. The royal pardon of August 1405 to the city of York for its part in the rebellion was extended to members of the crafts and trades of the city.³¹ Those whose sympathies Scrope courted in the city were precisely those who would have been intimately involved in the production of the mystery plays and who, would have had lay association with the Minster, possibly through their membership of the big religious confraternities of St George and St Christopher.

The York in which the mystery play cycle evolved was a highly ecclesiastically politicised one. And Corpus Christi, like all festive occasions, was a time of particular potential for tension. On the day itself there were three separate processions, all working to different timetables. The monks of St Mary's processed within the abbey precincts. The Minster clergy also had a procession around their precincts, and the civic procession for the secular clergy and laity of the parish churches and the city fathers began at Holy Trinity priory, going as far as the Minster, but probably not into its precinct, finally depositing the host at St Leonard's.³² The first we know in detail of the cycle of pageants which accompanied the lay procession comes from the 1415 *Ordo paginarum*, a list of pageants or single episodes rather greater, though simpler in individual content, than the forty-seven pageants in the 1460s Register which provides us with the scripts with which we are familiar.³³ The *Ordo* is itself a complex document, because a number of the items on the list show signs of having

been amended. From this evidence, it seems likely, as Meg Twycross has recently pointed out in a yet-to-be-published paper, that the cycle emerged from the procession gradually, and that we may not be looking at fully-fledged dramatic performance on stationary wagons, but at simpler speaking *tableaux vivants*. Certainly evidence from European exemplars, show biblical episodes in religious processions being represented by groups of walking figures carrying attributes and wearing labels round their necks, as *tableaux* of statues, and as *tableaux vivants* both speaking and non-speaking.³⁴ Without pursuing those lines of argument here, we can acknowledge the difference between the cycle at the time of the *Ordo* and the shape it took at the time of the Register, and look representations of the Church across both to determine whether the cycle reflects any of the political turbulences of the times through which it evolved.

The cycle demonstrates deference for some clerical educators, *doctores*, but is also prepared to poke fun at them. It is a learned doctor who bridges the gap between Old and New Testament in both *Ordo* and Register by introducing the prophecies of the Nativity to the audience just before the Annunciation, but it turns out that this is a later addition to the *Ordo*. In the pageant of *Christ before the Doctors* in the Register the 'doctors' don't know their Decalogue.³⁵ The way in which this episode is constructed, and later came to be common to a large degree to the York, Towneley, Chester, and Coventry cycles, suggests that it was embedded in the episode from the start, and that it clearly and playfully subverts the whole matter of catechesis of the laity by the clergy. The pageant presents a scene in which the adolescent son of artisan parents is examined in the basic tenets of his faith by a body of learned clerics; in this instance the boy turns out to know more than the men. What the child impresses the priests with is not arcane theology, but is something which all boys of his age and class were expected to know. The Doctors here were surely dressed to represent the organised church which is, in performance, comically undermined by a young York catechumen drawn from the ranks of the craft and trading classes.

It seems likely here that the 'doctors' would have been presented as just that, particularly given that their role is didactic. How the chief Scribes and Pharisees in the trial scenes, when the adult Christ comes into opposition with organised religion, were presented may have differed. Annas and Caiaphas are simply mentioned by name in the *Ordo*, but in the Bowyers and Fletchers' play in the Register, *Christ before Annas and Caiaphas*, they refer to themselves as bishops learned in the law.³⁶ What they wore seems critical to the effect of their presentation. It seems unlikely, however, that they

appeared as exotic eastern figures in the early life of the cycle, only to turn into 'bishops' when the, probably later, alliterative verse pageant was written. On the other, hand, there are numerous visual representations of them in headgear which would have singled them out as exotic. Whatever the precise visual codes, the confrontation between the by now adult artisan Christ and two representatives of ecclesiastical authority, that leaves the latter bemused, again contains potential for anti-clerical humour. The cycle, therefore, may in performance have situated the institutionalised church as the butt of parody, as churchmen are wrong-footed by the people's Christ and his followers.

Again, when the infant Christ is received in the temple by Simeon, it appears that the sacramental benefit is not conferred by the priest upon the infant but the other way around.³⁷ Simeon could be going through the process of crismation (anointing) and imposition (laying on of hands), which the bishop did when a child was confirmed, but equally it could be Simeon who is going through the sacramental experience as his speech replicates a liturgical process associated with communion, moving through greeting and receiving to offering thanks. Interestingly, the *Ordo* tells us that this episode was originally taken on by St Leonard's Hospital, so there is a possibility that Simeon was played by a cleric.

It is not so much the portrayal of churchmen *per se* that affords the opportunity for subversion, but their juxtaposition with the figure of Christ. In the present day *Misteri* of the Assumption of the Virgin in Elx (near Alicante, Spain), possibly the only surviving medieval biblical play for which there is a virtually unbroken tradition of local performance,³⁸ both Christ and St Peter must be played by ordained priest; there is however no indication that in York the succession of people who must have taken on the role of the Christ had to be in holy orders. The effect of a layman both being and enacting the sacrament of the altar is complex. This dimension to York's celebration of Corpus Christi was there from very early in the record-keeping. In the *Ordo* the Bakers and Waterleaders played:

*\agnus paschalis/ Cena domini: xij apostoli Iesus precinctus lintheo
lauans pedes eorum agnus paschalis institucio sacramenti corporis christi in
noua lege Communio apostolorum*

'the paschal lamb, the Lord's Supper, the twelve apostles, Jesus girded with a linen cloth washing their feet, the institution of the

sacrament of the body of Christ in the new law, the communion of the apostles.’

This is however a very problematic entry, which has been erased and overwritten, probably before 1436. It is clear that the foot-washing and the Last Supper were at some point (unrecorded) elided and the text rewritten. The description of the pageant in the Second List, written before 1421/22, simply says *Cena christi cum discipulis*, leaving its sacramental import uncertain.³⁹

The evidence is, then, divertingly inconclusive. In a city of some institutional rivalry between the economic and the ecclesiastical domains and power structures, the cycle of pageants probably written by clerics held the *potential* for subversion in performance, but that potential could, and can, be either realised or equally refused in performance. The authoring and performance of the Corpus Christi cycle involved a transdiscursive shift from the ecclesiastical to the economic domain. The pageants are not Bakhtinian grotesques although they are of the market place, but exist liminally. Nor is their liminality simply poised between official ecclesiastical culture and urban mercantile culture, because these two interpenetrated one another in the setting of the parish church or religious confraternity. Bequests to religious houses were often motivated, institutional tensions notwithstanding, by the individual’s having a family member in religious orders, and, despite other evidence of persistent town and gown tensions, York’s citizenry came out in favour of ‘their’ archbishop when he was threatened from the outside. The Scrope cause cast such a long shadow that there were still attempts to have him canonised in the 1450s, and York’s relationship with the Lancastrian dynasty was to remain forever uneasy.

To conclude, one may wish to see the York cycle, following the highly politically and ecclesiastically unstable final decade of the fourteenth century, flowing into the space left by the return to religious orthodoxy following the period of Arundel’s constitutions and the suppression of Lollardy, a play in which biblical and liturgical text is reproduced in English verse, and where a succession of laymen Christs pit their wits against representatives of ecclesiastical authority, and one distributes the first sacrament of the altar, appropriating the inception of the sacrament to the lay domain. Equally there is a potential narrative of how York, a peculiarly priest-ridden city, used its various celebrations of the feast of Corpus Christi to assert division between abbey, Minster and city. But on both counts the argument fails quite to stack up, as the various records

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leave across time a more detailed, nuanced and ultimately inscrutable impression of how and whether the cycle articulates any consistent ideological divide between *civitas* and *templum*.

St Martin's College, Lancaster.

NOTES

1. T.M. Fallow and others 'Religious Houses' in *The Victoria History of the County of York* 3 vols (The Victoria History of the Counties of England; London: Archibald Constable, St Catherine Press, 1907–1925) 3 106–7 (St Mary's Abbey), 283–96 (friars), 336–52 (hospitals), 375–86 (collegiate churches), 389–91 (Holy Trinity priory). Holy Trinity Priory was naturalised in 1426 (389).
2. *York Memorandum Book Part 2* edited Maud Sellers (Surtees Society 125; Durham: Andrews, and London: Quaritch, 1915 for 1914) lxxvii.
3. York District Probate Register (1389–1514), University of York, Borthwick Institute of Historical Research. The following analysis of the religious bequests of York mayors draws on work done a number of years ago for an essay I wrote as an MA student in York under the tutelage of Barrie Dobson, resurrected for the purposes of this study.
4. Pamela M. King 'York Plays, Urban Piety, and the Case of Nicholas Blackburn, Mercer' *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 232 (1995) 37–50.
5. *The Lay Folks' Catechism* edited T.F. Simmons, and H.E. Nolloth EETS OS 118 (1901).
6. Published in R. B. Cook *Some Early Civic Wills of York*, 3 (Yorkshire Architectural Society Monograph; Lincoln: for the Society, 1914; published as 6 parts in one volume for the Associated Architectural and Archaeological Societies) 16–17.
7. Published in R.B. Cook *Some Early Civic Wills of York*, 4 (Yorkshire Architectural Society Monograph, 1915) 14–15.
8. Probate Register 3, folio 439.
9. Published in R. B. Cook *Some Early Civic Wills of York*, 5 (Yorkshire Architectural Society, 1916), 7–10.
10. Francis Drake *Eboracum* (London : [W. Bowyer? for the author], 1736) 581.
11. *York Memorandum Book* edited Sellers 126.
12. Calendar of Patent Rolls 1405–08 249.
13. See for example, *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1377–81* 465; *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1381–85* 137; *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1413–16* 111 and others.

14. *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1377–81* 488; *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1381–85* 137.
15. For example, the commission set up in 1381 included Simon de Quixley, Thomas Graa, and Robert Sauvage, who were appointed to ‘compel the persons who in late tumult broke the closes walls and doors of the hospital of St Leonard’s, York ... to repair the same before midsummer ...’
16. *York Memorandum Book* edited Sellers 179–80.
17. *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1399–1401* 131.
18. Escheators’ Accounts Enrolled, E357, no. 3, m 46d, quoted in A. G. Little ‘A Royal Enquiry into Property held by the Mendicant Friars in England’ in *Franciscan Papers, Lists and Documents* (Manchester UP, 1943) 144–55. The ordinance in question requires *quod carnifices non jacent feces inter pontem et Fratres Minores*; *York Memorandum Book* edited Sellers 15.
19. *York Memorandum Book* edited Sellers 2 27.
20. The catalogue of the library of the Friars Preachers is well known, published by M.R. James ‘The catalogue of the Library of the Augustinian Friars at York now first edited from the manuscript at Trinity College, Dublin’ in *Fasciculus Ioanni Willis Clark dicatus* (Cambridge UP, 1909) 2–96, and two notable scholar friars lived there, John Ergholme and John Waldeby. In 1429, John Bate, writer and Greek scholar, was prior of the Carmelites. In this context, Mayor Robert Sauvage’s bequest to his son Fr. Thomas Sauvage, to see him through Oxford University, is unsurprising: *Testamenta Eboracensia Part 1* (Surtees Society 4; London: J.B. Nichols, William Pickering, 1836) 157.
21. For membership lists see *The Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi in the City of York* edited Robert H. Skaife (Surtees Society 57; Durham: Andrews, London: Whittaker etc, Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1872 for 1871).
22. Fallow ‘Religious Houses’ 289.
23. William de Selby, John de Craven, Nicholas Blackburn Senior.
24. For the nature and habits of the Minster clergy, see R.B. Dobson ‘The Residentiary Canons of York in the Fifteenth Century’ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 30 (1979) 145–74.
25. See Meg Twycross ‘Some Aliens in York and their Overseas Connections: up to c. 1470’ *Essays in Honour of Peter Meredith* edited Catherine Batt *Leeds Studies in English* NS 29 (1998) 359–80.
26. John Capgrave’s *Abbreviacion of Chronicles* edited Peter Lucas *EETS* 285 (1983) 227. I am grateful to Meg Twycross for her help in assembling details of the Scrope case which I have published previously in ‘Contemporary Cultural Models for the Trial Plays in the York Cycle’ *Drama and Community: People and Plays in Medieval Europe* edited Alan Hindley (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999) 200–216.

27. *The Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops* edited James Raine, 3 vols (Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages – Rolls Series 71; London, Longman, 1879–1894) 2 (Rolls Series 71B; 1886) 306. For accounts of the Scrope rebellion and/or the ‘martyrdom’ of Scrope, see *Historians of the Church of York, Volume 2* (Rolls Series 71B; 1886) 306–310; 431–433; *Volume 3* (Rolls Series 71C; 1894) 288–91; Thomas Walsingham *Historia Anglicana in Chronica Monasterii Sancti Albani* edited Henry Thomas Riley, 12 vols (Rolls Series 28; 1863–1876) 2 (Rolls series 28B, 1864) 268–71, and Johannis de Trokelow & Henrici de Blanforde *Chronica et annales in Chronica Monasterii Sancti Albani* 3 (Rolls series 28C, 1866) 403–411.
28. For the self-humiliation of the citizens, see Capgrave *Abbreuiacion* 229, who mentions the halters; *Historians of the Church of York* 3 290: the mayor and citizens *quasi nudos cum cordulis in manibus ante regem in praesentia archiepiscopi prostraverunt juxta muros Eboraci*; *Chronica Monasterii Sancti Albani* 3 408.
29. Capgrave *Abbreuiacion* 229.
30. Capgrave *Abbreuiacion* 291–92.
31. E.F. Jacob *The Fifteenth Century, 1399–1485* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978 reprint of 1961 edition) 58–62.
32. Douglas Cowling ‘The Liturgical Celebration of Corpus Christi in Medieval York’ *REED Newsletter* (1976) 2 5–9.
33. *Records of Early English Drama: York* edited Alexandra Johnson and Margaret Rogerson (Toronto UP, 1979) 21.
34. See for example the procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges. Although this is a late development, the mechanics of the present day procession demonstrate the feasibility of performing spoken text from a moving waggon. In Valencia’s Corpus Christi procession, by contrast, biblical history is represented entirely by processing figures wearing or carrying attributes.
35. Pageant 20, The Spurriers and Lorimers, in *The York Plays* edited Richard Beadle (London: Arnold, 1983). All references to the York Corpus Christi Play as recorded in the Register are taken from this edition.
36. Pageant 29 4–6.
37. Pageant 17, latterly attributed to the Labourers (and possibly the Hatmakers), a late addition to the Register, inserted out of sequence some time after 1567. The pageant passed to the Masons before 1477 to ensure its regular performance. The (original 1415) *Ordo* description of the episode includes a midwife and two sons of Simeon.
38. Pamela M. King ‘La Festa d’Elx: the Festival of the Assumption of the Virgin, Elche (Alicante)’ *Medieval English Theatre* 8:1 (1986) 21–50.

39. My thanks to Meg Twycross, who is engaged in a study of the alterations to the *Ordo*, for verifying this. See her 'The *Ordo paginarum* revisited, with a digital camera' in 'Bring furth the pagants': *Studies in Early English Drama presented to Alexandra F. Johnston* edited David Klausner (University of Toronto Press, 2006).