Roman R. Dubinski, ed. *English Religious Poetry Printed 1477–1640: A Chronological Bibliography with Indexes*. Waterloo: North Waterloo Academic Press, 1996. Pp. xxix, 844.

The impulse for Dubinski's reference work began with a "desire to discover the historical and literary context out of which the religious poetry of Donne and Herbert emerged," and resulted in a compilation intended not only to "facilitate contextual studies of better known poets like Donne and Herbert, but also [to] make available the materials for the study of a huge body of poetry previously little studied or known" (p. x).

This bibliography attempts to list all English and Scots religious poetry printed up to 1640, excluding "the drama and other quasi-dramatic forms such as interludes, masques, triumphs, processions and the like" (p. x). "Religious poetry" is used as a fairly inclusive category; perhaps the term should have been "verse." It includes biblical paraphrases, narratives based on the Bible, "devotional works such as prayers, hymns, spiritual songs, canticles, meditations," the versified lives of saints and martyrs, historical narratives, and satirical and polemical writings. Dubinski has tried to distinguish between "primarily religious" works and mainly moral ones, and concentrate on the former. In order to be comprehensive, he includes also quotations and excerpts from poems (p. xi).

The decision to exclude dramatic works makes sense, since both the task and the resulting product are sufficiently large, but those working with the literature of this period are well aware that religious and literary concerns and interests cross the boundary thus set up. Some scholars might like to compare the differences across the line; one suspects that anti-puritan satire, for example, would bulk somewhat larger in the dramatic than in the non-dramatic verse of the seventeenth century.

Significant features of this bibliography are its relative completeness (covering almost a million lines of verse) and its chronological ordering, which should certainly facilitate historical and contextual studies. For example, it will now be easier to examine poems published before 1633 to see whether any of them anticipate elements in the poetry of Herbert and Donne published in that year, or to explore the effects of religious and political changes such as the accession of James I or Charles I on the kinds of poetry written at given times.

The entries which constitute the main part of this book supply information for consulting the revised *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed ... 1475–1640*, and also the University Microfilms reel and position numbers for the enormous collection available in a number of university libraries. Facsimiles and modern (nineteenth- and twentieth-century) editions are also noted. Each entry gives (among other details) a title, the first line of the poem, the verse form and the number of lines, as well as cross-references to earlier and later editions listed in the bibliography.

The eight indexes included in the volume add in varying degrees to its usefulness. Author / Translator and first-line indexes have obvious value. (I was intrigued to discover that Bishop George Carleton and conforming puritan Robert Hill, a lecturer at Magdalen Herbert's London church, ventured into verse.) The title index will supplement the subject index, and could help in assessing claims such as that made for George Herbert's innovative use of titles (but Dubinski has omitted from this list unimaginative titles like "Epigram" or "Sonnet"). The index of metrical paraphrases of the Bible will interest scholars aware of the vital role that biblical literary patterns had on writers of the English Renaissance. Students of liturgical and Roman Catholic writings will find here indexes of verse in Hours and Primers, and in works on the Rosary. (It is perhaps with such readers in mind, and forgetting others, that Dubinski employs the unexplained abbreviation "BVM" [pp. 707, 754], which must refer to the Blessed Virgin Mary.)

The Subject index will be useful, but in some ways its title is puzzling, because it does not deal so much with subjects as with literary kinds. In fact, Dubinski seems to have drawn many of his headings here from William Ringler's earlier *Bibliography and Index of English Verse Printed 1476-1558* (1988). Ringler does not call his a subject index, and Dubinski seems to have taken many generic headings from Ringler's index sections on "Kinds" and "Religion." Dubinski's own additions, such as the substantial "MEDITATION" and "OBSERVATION" categories, are sometimes rather inclusively vague; also, he appears unwilling to recognize that a poem could fit into more than one category. For instance, although Ted-Larry Pebworth and Claude Summers have argued that some of Herbert's poems engage in controversy, Dubinski puts most of the lyrics under the category "Meditation," and lists some of them under "Satire" or "Controversy" — or under such other likely headings as Allegory, Emblem, Lamentation, Praise, and Thanksgiving. Herbert's poems on "The H. Scriptures" are not listed under Bible, nor "Prayer" (I) and (II) under Prayer. Dubinski's procedures in this index have no doubt simplified his labours, but rendered it less fully helpful to users of the reference work.

In this time of electronic advances in publication, some readers will ask why there is no reference to the Chadwick-Healey collection or other electronic versions of some of these poems, or wonder whether the bibliography should, alternatively, be made available in CD form, where more detailed searches could supplement the indexes.

This book is a handsome, stout volume of 844 + xxix folio pages in a Class A library binding, and can be purchased for \$390 in Canadian funds. It will make a valuable addition to any university library where Renaissance literature studies are taken seriously.

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