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Pseudo-Bodin's *Colloquium heptaplomeres* and Bodin's *Démonomanie*

There is convincing evidence that the *Colloquium heptaplomeres*, long attributed to Jean Bodin, is not by him. Drawing inspiration from the work of Karl Faltenbacher, Jean Céard, and Isabelle Pantin, I will show that a comparison between the texts of the *Colloquium* and Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (1580; revised ed., 1587) suggests that key passages of the *Colloquium* were lifted from the *Démonomanie* by someone other than their original author.¹ In addition to this evidence regarding authorship, I provide new arguments in support of Karl Faltenbacher's claim that the *Colloquium* was written some considerable time after Bodin died; I maintain it was certainly written after the beginning of the Thirty Years War, and probably after publication of Herbert of Cherbury's *De veritate* (1624).

Introduction: The text and its history

The *Colloquium heptaplomeres* is a mysterious text which had been attributed to Jean Bodin for as long as we have a record of its existence. Several early manuscripts bear the inscription H.E.J.B.A.S.A.Æ. LXIII, which has been plausibly interpreted as signifying *Haec ego Joannes Bodinus Andegavensis scripsit anno aetatis LXIII* («I Jean Bodin of Angers wrote this when I was 63 years old», i.e. in 1593).² The *Colloquium* consists of a discussion between seven fictional people: Paulus Coronaeus, a Venetian Catholic; Salomon Barcassius, a Jew; Fridericus Podamicus, a German Lu-

1 Jean Céard's work became known to me only after this paper was completed in draft; but for the work of Faltenbacher and Pantin it would not have been written. I am also grateful to Justin Champion for discussing this paper with me on several occasions, to Julia Griffin for corresponding with me about Blount, and to Miri Rubin.

2 Roger Chauviré ed., *Colloque de Jean Bodin des secrets cachez des choses sublimes* (Paris: Librairie de la société Recueil Sirey, 1914), 3–4.

theran; Antonius Curtius, a Calvinist; Octavius Fagnola, a convert from Christianity to Islam; Hieronymus Senamus, a pagan sceptic prepared to pay outward respect to any religion; and Diegus Toralba, a philosophical monotheist. Between them Salomon, Octavius, Senamus, and Toralba mount a devastating attack on orthodox Christianity, an attack which is unsparingly driven home in the final book. It is not easy to tell if the author identifies with any one of his speakers in particular, though the majority of readers have concluded that it is Toralba who speaks for him (a minority claim Salomon, or both together, do so; and one authority, somewhat surprisingly believes that it is Coronaeus who speaks for the author).³

In her introduction to the English translation (1975) M. L. D. Kuntz wrote that »The ideas which are expressed in the first three books of the *Colloquium heptaplomeres* are paralleled by the same ideas in the *Universae naturae theatrum* ... In fact many passages are so similar that only a few words are changed.«⁴ Isabelle Pantin, in her study of »L'ordre du monde naturel dans le *Colloquium heptaplomeres*«, has placed these nearly identical passages (all from book 2 of the *Colloquium*) side by side. In doing so she has presented her readers with an intriguing puzzle, for the evidence she has collected shows that the *Colloquium* plagiarises the *Theatrum*. Moreover the passages she identifies come from five of the seven speakers in the *Colloquium* – so that the obvious explanation, that one of the speakers represents Bodin, and is being given Bodin's own words to speak, does not fit the facts. In an appendix to this article I follow Isabelle Pantin's lead by demonstrating that numerous passages from *De la démonomanie des sorciers* are also copied more or less word for word in the *Colloquium*, particularly (though not only) in book 2. Moreover, I argue that there is unambiguous evidence, in the form of slips and errors, that the person who copied the *Démonomanie* had not fully understood the text on which he was working, and therefore must have been someone other than Bodin.

Before we address the new evidence, it is worth pausing to think about plagiarism. It is easy to identify some straightforward motives which normally lead to plagiarism. An author may be idle and copy from his or her own earlier work or someone else's work. It is hard, however, to imagine a lazy author writing a work as original and complex as the *Colloquium*. An author may seek to improve the quality of his or her work by incorporating

3 Jean Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*, ed. Marion L. D. Kuntz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), xlv.

4 Bodin, *Colloquium* ed. Kuntz, xl–xli.

someone else's work. If this were true in this case it would follow that the *Colloquium* has a different author from the *Theatrum* and the *Démonomanie*; but it is hard to see how an anonymous author would benefit from plagiarizing Bodin, while claiming to be Bodin – plagiarists are normally concerned to ensure that you should know their identity, not that of the authors from whom they are copying. Finally, an author may »plagiarize« (though this is not the term we would usually use in the circumstances) in order to assume someone else's identity. A satirist, for example, will adopt the turns of speech that characterize someone he wishes to mock in order to seem like them, just as a forger will adopt another's handwriting in order to pass for them. Plagiarism may thus be an indication of fraud, for it may be evidence that the later text has been written by someone who is trying to assume the identity of the author of the earlier text.

Isabelle Pantin's and my evidence is most easily explained by the hypothesis that the author of the *Colloquium* was seeking to assume the identity of Jean Bodin, and that in order to do so he slipped passages that were genuinely by Bodin into his text so that any well-informed reader would be confident that the book reminded them of Bodin's authentic work. When we read the *Colloquium* we need to understand that we are dealing with a fake. This claim has been repeatedly advanced by Faltenbacher; first Céard's and then Pantin's textual analysis gave it new weight; my comparison between the *Colloquium* and the *Démonomanie* leaves little room for doubt. I need hardly add that this has significant implications. It requires us to reinterpret one of the most important philosophers of the sixteenth century, for all existing interpretations of Bodin have been contaminated by the assumption that he is the author of the *Colloquium*; and it requires us to reinterpret one of the most important, and earliest works of clandestine irreligious philosophy. The *Colloquium* was so widely read in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that more manuscript copies survive than of any other clandestine text, with the sole exception of the *Traité des trois imposteurs*, but it is only now that we can see that it has always been read anachronistically, as the work of a sixteenth-century Renaissance philosopher rather than a seventeenth-century *libertin érudit*.⁵

Of course no indirect evidence that someone else had written the *Colloquium* would be convincing if Bodin had declared the text to be his own. It is therefore crucial that no »autograph« (that is no manuscript written or cor-

5 Jonathan Israel, *The Radical Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 690.

rected by Bodin) exists, and that Bodin never referred to the *Colloquium* during his lifetime. Naudé describes the *Colloquium* in his *Bibliographia politica* of 1633.⁶ Grotius wrote to Jean Descordes on the subject of the *Colloquium* on 12 February 1632.⁷ One manuscript (Bibliothèque Nationale Latin 6566) bears the date 1627 which may (or may not) be authentic.⁸ These are the earliest known references to a book supposedly written in 1593 (according to most manuscripts, or 1588 according to one)⁹ by Jean Bodin, who died in 1596. Chauviré (1914) believed that four of the manuscripts he had consulted belonged to the sixteenth century, but there is no hard evidence to support this claim; Berriot (1984) dates what he takes to be the oldest copy to the end of the sixteenth century, but it is clear that this is simply a mark of respect for a copy whose physical appearance suggests it could equally well belong to the early seventeenth century; Chauviré's other »sixteenth-century« manuscripts Berriot redates to the »early« seventeenth century.¹⁰ On the surviving evidence the *Colloquium* certainly existed by early 1632, and may have existed in 1627. Any claim that it existed before that date depends simply and solely on its attribution to Bodin.

There thus exists a gap of at least thirty years between the supposed composition of the *Colloquium* and reliable evidence of its existence. Where had the manuscript been in the intervening period? According to Diecman, in a work published in 1684, but claiming the authority of a letter written by Gabriel Naudé to Guy Patin, the original had been given by Bodin's heirs to the Président de Mesmes. On the other hand, according to a letter written by Claude Sarrau on 3 Feb 1651, the original was given by Jean Descordes to Hugo Grotius.¹¹ Both claims appear to authenticate particular manuscripts.

6 *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 2. An undated letter of Naudé's to Claude Peiresc may slightly predate this reference: Jean Bodin, *Colloque entre sept scavans*, ed. François Berriot (Geneva: Droz, 1984), xxiv.

7 *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 4; Bodin, *Colloque entre sept scavans*, ed. Berriot, xxiv. The source is *Grotii epistolae* (Amsterdam: Blaeu, 1687), letter 292, p. 106. The claim (Berriot, xxiv) that Grotius was interested in the *Colloquium* as early as 1630 depends on a manuscript inscription which contains false information, and which would appear to be itself a forgery: see below n. 12. Chauviré believed another manuscript reference to the *Colloquium* was early (7), but it is anonymous and undated. Berriot dates this manuscript to »around 1650« (xxvii).

8 Bodin, *Colloque entre sept scavans*, ed. Berriot, li.

9 Bodin, *Colloquium* ed. Kuntz, xxxvii–viii.

10 *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 11; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, li–lii.

11 *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 4.

But in each case the manuscript turns out not to be the original. In the case of the supposed de Mesmes manuscript this proves to be a copy which, judging by its marginalia, was written by someone hostile to Bodin.¹² The letter from Naudé to Patin which Diecman relies on no longer survives, if it ever existed. In the case of the supposed Grotius manuscript, the text is defective and corrupt, so that it seems unlikely that it is even a copy of the original.¹³

Thus we have two conflicting stories regarding the history of the text, and both appear to be false. Neither establishes a reliable provenance for the texts known to Naudé and Grotius in the early 1630s. It is easy to guess at the motive behind these stories, for at a time when copies of the *Colloquium* were rare and much sought after one would expect to find an active trade in copies derived from the autograph. In the absence of any genuine autograph, there must have been a considerable temptation to invent one, along with the documents required to authenticate it.

I should mention here a further tradition regarding the history of the text. According to Diecman (1684), Bodin's *Colloquium* was based on a manuscript by Guillaume Postel which had come into Bodin's hands after Postel's death in Paris in 1584 (a mistake, for Postel died in 1581). This manuscript was a verbatim record of discussions about religion which had taken place in Venice. Diecman claimed to be relying on a letter from Guy Patin to Julius Hackeburg, reporting the views of Gabriel Naudé, but this letter also, if it indeed existed, no longer survives.¹⁴ So it now appears that not only is Bodin's autograph missing, but Postel's as well. Frankly, this story seems altogether too convenient, for it serves to explain away the immediate problems which would puzzle a reader encountering the *Colloquium* as a work by Bodin. Why is it set in Venice, where Bodin had never been? How does its author know so much about matters Italian, when Bodin had never been to Italy? How does he know, to take one example, so much about the edition of the Koran published in Venice?¹⁵ Why is its author so interested in comparing and conciliating religions, a subject not previously addressed by Bodin? The

12 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, lxviii.

13 *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 4–5.

14 *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 2; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, lxi. The source is Ludovicus Diecman, *De naturalismo* (Leipzig, 1684).

15 Joannis Bodin, *Colloquium Heptaplomeris*, ed. Ludovicus Noack (1857; repr. Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1966), 225; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, p. 352. Kuntz gives in the margin page references to the Noack edition, so that I do not give separate references to her edition. Karl Faltenbacher has established the accuracy of the *Colloquium* at this point.

story of the missing Postel manuscript dissolves these problems. But again, there is no independent evidence to confirm the truth of this story. And we, for our part, can afford to be much more sceptical than early-modern readers when faced with the suggestion that the discussion recorded in the *Colloquium* had actually taken place. Octavius tells us he has seen with his own eyes men turn into asses and wolves. Federicus has seen nuns tossed in the air by demons; he has seen a magician eat a cart laden with hay and float high in the air, with his wife and serving girl hanging from his heels.¹⁶ These are the experiences of fictional, not real people.

I started with Isabelle Pantin's textual evidence which suggests that the *Colloquium* may have been faked to appear as if it were by Bodin. We have now reviewed the history of the manuscripts, and discovered that there is no surviving autograph, and no reliable evidence of the existence of any manuscript before 1632. The evidence, both internal (the testimony of the text) and external (the testimony of contemporaries) is exactly as we would expect it to be if the *Colloquium* was forged after Bodin's death, and not at all what we would expect if an irreligious manuscript had been discovered amongst Bodin's papers on his death. Since the whole point of producing a forgery is to have it pass as authentic, we could reasonably assume that the author of the pseudo-Bodin *Colloquium* would have put the text into circulation fairly soon after writing it. We could thus reasonably hypothesise that since (as I will show) the text is almost certainly a fake, then it dates to the late 1620s. I will be adducing further evidence in due course which shows that this hypothesis is well-founded.

It might be objected that the enterprise of falsely attributing a text to Bodin is so peculiar that we should hesitate (no matter how strong the evidence) to adopt this thesis. But, on the contrary, in the world of irreligious texts nothing is more normal. Thus d'Holbach and Naigeon falsely claimed that a number of the irreligious texts they published were by the deceased Boulanger.¹⁷ Such a cover story provides valuable protection to the true author, for even if he is found by the authorities with a manuscript in his possession, he is merely a reader, an intellectual connoisseur. And it even provides a measure of protection for every reader, since his interest in irreligion can be presented as historical and scholarly, rather than impious and blasphemous. In this way the *Traité des trois imposteurs* was discussed, written,

16 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 15, 17, 32; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 26, 30, 53.

17 Jerom Vercruysse, *Bibliographie descriptive des écrits du Baron d'Holbach* (Paris: Minard, 1971).

printed, and circulated as an historical curiosity, though it was in reality (and functioned as) a contemporary critique of religious belief.¹⁸

What matters in such cases is that one should have a plausible attribution: Boulanger had indeed been irreligious; the *Traité des trois imposteurs* was already rumoured to exist. It is thus of fundamental importance that Bodin had an existing reputation for being no Christian, a reputation which is entirely independent of the *Colloquium*. We must assume that our author felt a particular affinity for the beliefs (an almost pagan preoccupation with demons, a sympathy for Judaism, a disbelief in Christ) attributed to Bodin in the years that followed his death.¹⁹

Moreover, the evidence produced by Isabelle Pantin and myself implies that at least one major section of the *Colloquium*, that is book 2, is in effect a collage of other, unacknowledged texts. It is worth noting that this makes the *Colloquium* like a number of other clandestine texts – the *Traité des trois imposteurs* is the best-known example – which are similarly effectively a scrapbook of pre-existing texts. Indeed this is also true of some published works, such as Blount's *Religio laici* (1683) plagiarised from Herbert's (at the time still unpublished) *Religio laici*.²⁰ Now we have discovered how book 2 was composed we must obviously wonder how far the rest of the *Colloquium* is drawn from pre-existing texts, and this is an important line of enquiry for future research.

We may helpfully compare the problem of the attribution of the *Colloquium* with that of the attribution of *A Dialogue Between a Tutor and a Pupil*.²¹ This work was first published in 1768 as being by Lord Herbert of Cherbury. There was no trace of such a work amongst the papers of Herbert, who had died in 1648. The only date on the manuscript was 1704. The text gives every indication of being by Herbert in that ideas and phrases to be found in Herbert's works are repeated in it. It is, thus, either a genuine work by Herbert or a careful fake: and the best scholars have disagreed as to which it is (both the fact that it is in English rather than Latin and its dia-

18 *'The Treatise of the Three Impostors' and the Problem of Enlightenment*, ed. and trans. Abraham Anderson (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997).

19 Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, xviii–xxiv.

20 See Harold R. Hutcheson's introduction to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, *De Religione Laici* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), 70–4.

21 Edward Herbert, *A Dialogue Between a Tutor and His Pupil* (1768; repr. New York: Garland, 1979).

logue form would lead me to suspect it is a fake).²² Pantin's work places the *Colloquium* in a position comparable to that of the *Dialogue*: the very material that Marion Kuntz saw as confirmation that the *Colloquium* was by Bodin is now reinterpreted as indicating that Bodin had nothing to do with it. The evidence to which we now turn makes the case against attribution of the *Colloquium* to Bodin far stronger than the case against attribution of the *Dialogue* to Herbert.

Colloquium and Démonomanie: Preliminary Comparisons

With these preliminaries completed, we can now turn to a comparison between the *Colloquium* and the *Démonomanie*. It must be said that it is somewhat surprising that no such comparison has been made until now. Marion Kuntz evidently had little patience with the *Démonomanie*, which she dismisses as »this often tedious book«. ²³ Roger Chauviré, by contrast, carefully noted in his edition of selections from the *Colloquium* points at which it appears to draw on the *Démonomanie*.²⁴ Unfortunately his edition reproduces only book 4, along with substantial selections from 5 and 6. Given his familiarity with the texts, it is puzzling that he did not identify the peculiarities of book 2, from which three-quarters of my examples of »recycling« are drawn.

The first point to make is that there are fundamental differences between the intellectual commitments of the *Colloquium* and the *Démonomanie*, differences sufficient in themselves to make one wonder whether they can indeed be by the same author. The author of the *Démonomanie* is a philosopher of history who at every turn wishes to make clear the care with which he handles evidence. When describing something which has not previously

22 Ronald D. Bedford, *The Defence of Truth: Herbert of Cherbury and the Seventeenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979), 189. The case for believing it to be genuine is made by Justin Champion in *The pillars of priestcraft shaken: the Church of England and its enemies, 1660–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 143–7.

23 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, xxxvi.

24 Since the index does not list these references here are some of the more important: *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 39, 46–9, 53, 54, 69, 70, 72, 73, 75, 76, 79, 81–6, 90, 91, 93, 94, 97, 99, 101, 102, 108, 120, 126, 138, 139, 144–6, 148, 151, 152, 154, 161, 163, 179, 191, 195, 197–9.

been reported in print he usually tells us when it happened, where it happened, and who witnessed it. Thus the opening words carefully refer to a particular trial at a specific date, one at which he himself was present. »Le iugement qui a esté conclud contre une Sorciere auquel je fus appellé le dernier iour d'Avril mil cinq cens septante & huict, m'a donné occasion de mettre la main à la plume pour esclarcir le subiect des Sorciers ... La Sorciere que i'ay dict s'appelloit Ieanne Haruillier, natisve de Verbery près Compiègne.«²⁵ On another occasion he describes how, when he was at Poitiers in 1567, in the company of Jacques de Beauvais, his landlady described to him fifty different ways of putting a spell upon a couple's sexual relations. Or how, while he was writing his book, Charles Martin brought him news of the activities of a witch in Vaux, a suburb of Laon. Or how, in September 1578, the English ambassador reported that a witch in Islington, near London, had placed a curse on the Queen of England. With characteristic caution he adds that this claim has yet to be tested in court. Or how, on the 13 December 1558, an evil spirit had stolen some treasure from a Portuguese student in Toulouse; two days later Bodin himself inspected the damage done by the spirit – the broken bricks, the shattered windows, even the water pot let fall by a passing servant girl.²⁶ Similarly, when events are reported from published accounts careful references are given. Date, place and witnesses; or author, title, and chapter: these are the basic reference points of the *Démonomanie*. And out of them Bodin seeks to build an unanswerable case for the pervasiveness of witchcraft and the need for witches to be executed.

By contrast what one finds in the *Colloquium* is a quite puzzling lack of specificity when it comes to questions of time, although places are always clearly specified. Thus when Petrus Corsus was seeking auxiliaries from the king of the Turks he saw, in a mirror, his wife in Marseilles committing adultery. »This is a recent story.«²⁷ »Not so long ago in the monastery of Gertrude at Cologne a girl had a demon as her lover.«²⁸ »Not long ago« a legate of Pope Clement attended a *sabbat*.²⁹ »Not many years ago a certain Jew thought he was the Messiah, and for this so great sin he was burned at

25 Jean Bodin, *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (Paris, 1580; facsimily reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1988), Preface (aiiiv).

26 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 57v–58r, 149r, 116v–117r, 135v.

27 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 13 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 22.

28 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 33–4 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 55.

29 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 14 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 25.

the stake by the prefect of Boulogne.«³⁰ *His ipsis temporibus*, right now soothsayers turn themselves into wolves every year in Belgium.³¹ We can read numerous such remarks without having the slightest idea of the year in which our author is writing (or is supposed to be writing).

»In our age, that is, in 1519, Francisco Alvarez wrote ...«³² What does *nostra aetate* mean here? It is hardly surprising that the seventeenth-century translator of the *Colloquium* into French simply dropped this puzzling phrase. The discoveries of Regiomontanus were made »in the memory of our fathers«, which turns out to be in 1473.³³ »In the memory of our ancestors [*avorum*]« all the adult Jews of Cracow were killed³⁴ – that is, according to the French translator, in 1401. »I remember« an event which took place in 1548 (the execution of a priest who had falsified the ceremony of the Mass).³⁵ Reading such references one becomes very uncertain exactly when our author is (or pretends to be) writing: one might easily imagine that one is dealing with a text of Bodin's youth, of 1560 (Bodin was born in 1529 or 1530) not 1593.

This vagueness about dates is matched by an equal vagueness about witnesses and published authorities. Marginal annotations guide one to the works of Aristotle and Duns Scotus; but no authority is quoted to authenticate the story of Petrus Corsus or the legate who attended a *sabbat*. Either the *Colloquium*'s author is much less interested in the testing of evidence than the author of the *Démonomanie*, or he is afraid that if he refers to dates and books he will slip up, and mention something that has happened since 1596.

Such slips are rare, almost non-existent. We cannot (or at least I cannot) prove that the *Colloquium* is a fake by showing that its author was familiar with books written after Bodin's death. Kuntz believes that a reference to Mornay in book 6 is a reference to Mornay's *L'institution, usage et doctrine du saint sacrement* (1598), a claim incompatible with the claim that the *Col-*

30 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 204 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 321.

31 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 17; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 29.

32 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 240 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 376.

33 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 85; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 137; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, 110n.

34 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 357 (my translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 568.

35 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 338; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 537.

loquium is by Bodin.³⁶ In fact Kuntz has made a mistake: it is surely a reference to Mornay's *De la verité* (1581). In the absence of a proper scholarly edition one cannot say for sure that there are no references in the *Colloquium* to books which Bodin could not have known, but I must confess that I will be surprised if any can be found. The nearest we have to a scholarly edition is Chauviré's selection. Over and over again Chauviré traces details and references which are common between the *Colloquium* and other works by Bodin (especially the *République* and the *Démonomanie*) and between the *Colloquium* and works that Bodin had certainly read (especially Weir's *De praestigiis daemonum* and Mornay's *De la verité*). Only once does he appear to hesitate, when he notes a similarity between the *Colloquium* and the 1595 edition of Montaigne's *Essais*, but he is happy to conclude that the *Colloquium*'s author has drawn directly from Montaigne's source.³⁷ Judging by Chauviré's footnotes a strong argument in favour of the attribution of the *Colloquium* to Bodin is that the learning of the *Colloquium* is Bodin's learning.

However what this approach conceals is the extent to which the two authors have different interests. Bodin is preoccupied with witchcraft, and endlessly reports the cases of witches who have been burned alive. The author of the *Colloquium* mentions witchcraft in passing, and only once refers to a witch being executed. Bodin constantly cites the classic works of the demonologists: Sprenger, Nider, Danneau. The author of the *Colloquium* makes only a passing reference to Sprenger, and no mention at all of the other demonologists.³⁸ Although Fridericus claims to have read all the books on demonology he has been able to lay his hands on, it is not clear that the author of the *Colloquium* has actually read anything on this subject beyond Bodin's *Démonomanie*.³⁹

The *Colloquium*'s author has foreseen and guarded against our questions. There is a telling moment when Octavius, one of the seven involved in the discussion, dismisses the idea that the book on the Trinity attributed to Justin Martyr is authentic:

A clear consideration of the times convinces one that this little book is not genuine. He flourished when Marcus Aurelius was emperor, and the apology is addressed to him. Yet in one hundred twenty-four questions to the orthodox the author of that book asks why

36 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, 354-5.

37 *Colloque de Jean Bodin*, ed. Chauviré, 106.

38 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 12; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 21.

39 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 29; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 48.

the superstition of the pagans has been uprooted and destroyed, although it was still quite flourishing in the age of Justin.⁴⁰

A few pages later Salomon, another interlocutor, rejects the authenticity of some works attributed to Jewish commentators: »It is easy to publish works with another's name added, as, for example, the books of the wise men published under the name of Solomon.«⁴¹ Where the *Traité des trois imposteurs* is ostentatiously anachronistic, claiming to be a medieval text while containing an obvious reference to Descartes, the author of the *Colloquium* is extremely careful to avoid showing his hand in this way.

Nevertheless, his guard slips. One learns as one reads the *Colloquium* to have particular respect for the views of Toralba and Salomon, and one comes to identify their views with the author's. If that author were Bodin, one would expect their views to coincide with Bodin's on issues where Bodin's view is known. And yet this is not always the case. A striking instance is Salomon's account of the Flood:

There is in the scriptures a marvelous secret hidden from all astrologers and physicists – namely the aqueous heaven, which is as far distant from the convex vault of heaven as the ocean is from the concave arch of this same heaven. Moreover, both Hebraic and Arabic astrologers confirm that it is 17,000 earth diameters distant. The following saying illustrates this: »He divided the waters from waters and established the heavens between each.« Hence the deluges of waters which poured from the open waterfalls of heaven filled up the lands; otherwise there would never have been any floods despite the opinion of the theologians and naturalists of all peoples. If the whole ocean and all rivers vanish into vapors and clouds, hardly a thousandth part of such a deluge would have resulted. The force of the waters did not pour over the earth from the ocean's shore, but rained from heaven for forty days so that the waters rose fifteen cubits above the peaks of the highest mountains.⁴²

This marvelous secret was certainly hidden from Bodin in 1580, for his cosmology is quite different. Where Salomon believes in a comparatively dry earth and a liquid heaven, Bodin believes in a watery earth:

40 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 278 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 434–5.

41 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 279 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 437.

42 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 93 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 149.

Aristote ... confesse que la terre doibt estre entierement couvertes des eaux comme plus pesante, et qu'elle est demeuree en partie decouverte pour la vie des bestes terrestres, et volatiles. La quelle confession sert du tesmoignage contre luy-mesmes, pour la gloire de Dieu, et qui est souvent repeté en la sainte escripture, quand il est dit pour un miracle, que Dieu a fondé la terre sur les eaux sur lesquelles elle nage, comme il a esté verifie de l'isle de Los, et de plusieurs autres: car combien qu'il se trouve de la terre au fonds de la mer, si est ce que en la plus haute mer, les Pilotes ne trouvent plus de terre, quand ils gettent le plomb: aussi void on la mer eslevee comme une montaigne au bord de la mer: et que Dieu a lyé par une puissance emerveillable, et posé bornes aux eaux, qui ne passeront point outre.⁴³

One believes the Flood can only have been an extra-terrestrial event; the other that we are in constant danger of being overwhelmed by the waters which pile up like mountains along the coasts.

Colloquium and Démonomanie: The edition of 1587

In the appendix I reproduce a series of passages where the text of the *Colloquium* is evidently based directly on the text of *Démonomanie*. The *Démonomanie* was first published in 1580, and in the following years it appeared in dozens of different editions, including translations into Latin, German, and Italian. Having noticed that passages from the *Démonomanie* appear in the *Colloquium* one naturally wonders in what language our author read the text, and which edition he used. Here we are fortunate: the publishing history of the *Démonomanie* has been closely studied.⁴⁴ Of the numerous editions, one, the revised French edition of 1587, differs from all the others in that it contains approximately 10% of additional material, the result of a substantial revision carried out by Bodin. Strangely, no later edition, and none of the translations, was based on this revised edition. At numerous points (as will be apparent from the appendix) it is clear that the author of the *Colloquium* draws on material which is present in this edition and no other. We can therefore say with confidence that it was this edition that he used. Consequently we know that he began work after 1587 and that he was

43 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 48v.

44 Roland Crahay, Marie-Thérèse Isaac, Marie-Thérèse Lenger, *Bibliographie critique des éditions anciennes de Jean Bodin* (Bruxelles, Académie Royale de Belgique, 1992), 221–84; Marie-Thérèse Isaac, 'De la *Démonomanie des sorciers*: Histoire d'un livre à travers ses éditions,' in *Jean Bodin: Actes du colloque interdisciplinaire d'Angers (24–27 mai 1984)* (2 vols., Angers: Presses de l'université d'Angers), vol. 2, 377–401.

Francophone, if not French. Since the edition of 1587 was comparatively rare, and superior to all others, we may suspect him of being a bibliophile.

Identification of the exact edition which our author had on his desk enables us to trace both the process of composition and the process of copying which transformed passages in the *Démonomanie* into passages in the *Colloquium*. Thus we may note that occasionally our author adds material which is not to be found in the *Démonomanie*, material which tells us about his own reading rather than Bodin's. Bodin, for example, tells us that under Pope Zachariah Bishop Virgilius was condemned as a heretic for believing in the antipodes; our author, perhaps after going back to Bodin's source, Aventinus, gives us the date, AD 745 (which is then misread by the French translator as 1245). He also adds a reference to one of his favourite authors, Moses Maimonides.⁴⁵ Bodin tells us that Ermolao Barbaro consulted a demon about the interpretation of Aristotle; it is our author, not Bodin, who tells us that this was »Hermolaus Barbarus, a patrician, who was exiled from Venice because on a mission to Rome he had accepted from the pope the rank of cardinal without the senate's approval.«⁴⁶ Bodin tells us the story of Guerin who appeared to his wife (as an image engraved on her hand) after his death; our author adds the information that Grignanus reported this event to Henri II.⁴⁷ These small changes suggest that our author is reasonably at home with French, Venetian, and ecclesiastical history, and that he is not dependent on Bodin for his knowledge of Judaism. On such topics he is able to draw on his own sources of information to supplement or complete Bodin's account.

Where magic and witchcraft are concerned, by contrast, Bodin usually appears to be his only source, though on one occasion Bodin tells a story from Agricola; our author picks it up and adds »George Agricola has many stories of this kind in which he relates that many people saw demons of pygmy size in the mines. The Pygmies hampered the digging of the ore by throwing dirt and rocks here and there, but they did not frighten away the miners provided they were not mocked.«⁴⁸ Our author seems to have read

45 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (rev. ed., 1587), 54r-55v; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 273-4; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 428.

46 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (rev. ed., 1587), 152v; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 45 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 75.

47 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (rev. ed., 1587), 79r; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 13; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 22.

48 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 67 (Kuntz's translation); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 108.

Agricola for himself: it is perhaps worth remark that where Bodin takes from Agricola a story of death-dealing demons, our author chooses for himself from the same source a much less alarming account of supernatural beings. Similarly, Bodin writes of magicians who sell favorable winds to sailors, referring to Herodotus and Olaus Magnus. Our author repeats Bodin's account from Herodotus (here Bodin's account of Herodotus is inaccurate, so clearly he made no effort to compare Bodin with his source)⁴⁹, and adds a reference to Homer and a further more detailed account which some manuscripts say is about *Sardinia*, others about *Scandinavia*.⁵⁰ In the present state of our knowledge either reading could be correct. Had our author turned from Bodin to his source in Olaus Magnus, as he turned from Bodin to Agricola?

It is clear that (with a few exceptions to which we will return) our author worked closely and accurately from the *Démonomanie*. Thus to take one amongst many examples, unlike the 1580 edition, the 1587 edition spells the name *Matthias* with two »t«s, and this same spelling occurs in the *Colloquium*.⁵¹ This has important implications for anyone working on the many surviving manuscripts of the *Colloquium*. We can state as a general rule that the best manuscripts must be those which have readings which are close to the text of the *Démonomanie*, and that those manuscripts which depart from the *Démonomanie* are likely to be generally unreliable. Thus Bodin tells the story of a demon who obsessed a young girl in the village of Leon in the county of Juilliers. Some manuscripts have *obsidebat, Leoni, Juliancenses*; others have *possidebat, Laemi, Julianenses*.⁵² Since we now know that the first three readings are right and the second three wrong we have a very simple test of the reliability of any particular manuscript. Again, Bodin writes of ghosts known in Greek as *cathecanes*, or ravens, a word which our author wrote in Greek script, but which is misread in one manuscript as *korakinas*.⁵³ A final example of this sort: Bodin tells the story of a young man who finds himself at a sabbat, but is rescued because he insists on having salt (which demons fear as a symbol of purity) with his meal. He cries out, according to

49 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, p. 82.

50 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 98v–99r; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 64; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 103–4.

51 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 163v; Bodin, *Démonomanie* (rev. ed., 1587), 182v; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 135.

52 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 134. Another possible example is the reading *Vigilius*, for *Virgilius* (Noack, p.274), but this may well be an error introduced by Noack.

53 Bodin, *Colloquium*, trans. Kuntz, 104.

Bodin, *Laudato sia Dio, pure venusto questo sale*. Now this is not good Italian, and so our author (or an early copyist) improved it to *Laudato sia Dia, pure evenuto questo sale*, and a further correction was made in the French translation, which reads *Laudato sia Dio, per che è venuto questo sale*. Here, where the original error is Bodin's, a defective text is a sign of accuracy.

Colloquium and Démonomanie: Imperfect identity

We now know that the author of the *Colloquium* had in front of him as he worked either the *Démonomanie* itself, or extensive and, for the most part, careful notes drawn from the *Démonomanie*. Such a method of working seems unlikely if the *Colloquium*'s author is Bodin, for Bodin would have had no difficulty in finding his own, different words with which to present evidence and arguments that he had previously discussed in the *Démonomanie*. Moreover, Bodin would not have hesitated to refer to his own works; he would have declared, not concealed, his source.⁵⁴ The more examples I found of passages copied from the *Démonomanie* into the *Colloquium* the more I felt sure that Faltenbacher and Pantin were right to question the attribution of the *Colloquium* to Bodin.

Such evidence, however, cannot be conclusive. If we come across a painting in the style of Raphael that contains figures apparently identical to figures in a painting known to be by Raphael then we may suspect it of being a fake, for we may reasonably believe that Raphael would not paint two paintings that repeated each other. But to prove that one of our paintings was a fake we would need to show that Raphael could not have painted it. Perhaps some apparently insignificant detail (an ear lobe perhaps) could be shown to be painted in a style quite unlike Raphael's.⁵⁵ The different accounts of the flood to be found in the *Colloquium* and the *Démonomanie* are an example of a textual detail that similarly suggests something is amiss. A later artist might well make errors as he attempted to portray a world with which Raphael was familiar, but he was not; he might misunderstand the construction of a soldier's armour, or misrepresent the finer details of a flower's structure. As we shall see next, what is most important about the passages in the *Colloquium* and the *Démonomanie* which at first sight appear

54 See, for example, Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 29v.

55 See Carlo Ginzburg, *Myths, Emblems, Clues* (London: Hutchinson, 1990).

to be virtually identical to each other is not the ways in which they are similar, but the ways in which they are different. Concealed amongst the evidence that the two works are disturbingly alike are apparently insignificant details which suggest that they are not in fact by the same person. Finally we might even hope to be able to show that our suspect work was painted on top of work by a later artist – we will come to evidence of chronological distortion later.

On seven occasions the differences between the *Colloquium* and the *Démonomanie* are at least as interesting as the similarities. I will go through these cases by beginning with the least important; I will then explore two false trails, and I will end with the most significant, and in my view virtually conclusive examples. First, why is the story of Simon Magus, who was cut into pieces by Nero and then came back to life, told with a different emphasis in the two books? In the *Démonomanie* Simon comes back to life after three days, as if he were competing directly with Christ; in the *Colloquium* there is no suggestion of any delay between execution and resuscitation.⁵⁶ The difference is puzzling, but inconclusive; this is precisely the sort of minor difference you might expect between two different tellings of the same story by the same author. Next, the *Colloquium* uses the story of the son of Anthoine Huguët, whose child was stolen from its mother's womb by a witch, to suggest that the father may have dedicated his child to the devil; but it is not this story, but another one, which the *Démonomanie* suggests can be interpreted in this way – the author of the *Colloquium* seems to be trying to make one story do the work that Bodin thought only two could do.⁵⁷ Bodin seems to have been slightly misrepresented by someone seeking to express his views in a compressed space.

My third example is puzzling, but it seems to be no more than a false trail. It is worth pausing over because it appears to involve a conceptual error of a sort which could not merely be the result of haste in composition; it would be conclusive if the error was that of the author of the *Colloquium*, but in the end it seems likely that he is not to blame for the failings of his translators. According to Bodin demons of male and female appearance have sex with women and men. Demons that appear female are called *succubi* in Latin, or *hyphialtes* in Greek. Demons that appear male are called *incubi* in

56 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 102v; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 18; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 30.

57 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 161v; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 33; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 54.

Latin, or *ephialtes* in Greek. He gives a number of examples: Gertrude, who wrote love letters to a demon; Magdalena de la Cruz, who had sex with a demon in the form of a Moor; and Benoist Berne, who had sex with a demon called Hermione. All perfectly straightforward. But the translators of the *Colloquium* have misunderstood the meaning of their text, which was intended to be a fairly straightforward reworking of Bodin. They think there is a succubus which goes by the name of Hyphialtes, and an incubus which goes by the name of Ephialtes. So they tell us the demon Magdalena de la Cruz had sex with was called Ephialtes, and the demon Benoist Berne had sex with was called Hyphialtes (not Hermione).⁵⁸

The translators of the *Colloquium* have confused »the word for something« (e.g. artist) with »the proper name of someone« (e.g. Raphael). It would seem that they have misinterpreted the text and that our author meant to say that Magdalena slept with *an* Ephialtes, and Benoist with *a* Hyphialtes; since Bodin uses the terms repeatedly he took it for granted that they would be comprehensible to any educated reader. In favour of this view is the fact that our author never tells us explicitly that Hyphialtes is a demon, a clarification which would have been necessary if Hyphialtes was merely a name; the lacuna is filled by a marginal annotation in the French translation: »Hyphialtes est Daemon Succubus; Ephialtes Incubus.« And we may note that a few lines later the French translator makes a similar error, mistaking *Sciolus* for a proper name.

We could reasonably have expected the author of the *Colloquium* to do what Bodin does in the *Démonomanie*, which is explain the meaning of his terms. Thus, on the first occasion he introduces them, Bodin writes: »Saint Augustin ... dict, qu'il ne faut aucunement doubter et qu'il seroit bien impudent, qui voudriot nyer que les Daemons et malings esprits n'ayent copulation charnelle avec les femmes, que les Grecs pour ceste cause appellent Ephialtes, et Hiphialtes, les Latin, Incubes, Succubes et Sylvans: Les Gaulois, Dusios ... les uns en guise d'homme, les autres en guise de femme ...«;⁵⁹ and again when he reintroduces the terms, »Incube, ou Ephialte«, »Hyphialte, ou Succube.« The author of the *Colloquium* by contrast introduces Ephialtes and Hyphialtes first, without explanation, and then later introduces and explains the much commoner terms *incubus* and *succubus*, »daemones utriusque sexus incubus et succubus.« Much later (so much

58 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 106v–107r; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 33–4; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 55–6.

59 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), preface (eivr).

later that the translators never connected the two passages) he does what he should have done in the first place, which is line up his terms unambiguously: »Fridericus has maintained that there were demons of each nature and sex, ephialtes and hyphialtes, in the union of witches with incubi and magicians with succubi.«⁶⁰

This is not the only example of this sort. According to the *Colloquium*, at least as it has been understood by its French and English translators, there is a monastery called Gertrude near Cologne. There a young girl wrote love letters to a demon. According to the *Démonomanie* the monastery is called Nazareth, and the young girl is called Gertrude.⁶¹ Once we compare the text of the *Colloquium* with its source, we realise that the translators have been misled by an ambiguity in the Latin: »in monasterio Coloniensi Gertrudis puella daemonem habuit concubinum«. *Gertrudis* may either be genitive, in which case there is a monastery called Gertrude, or nominative, in which case it was a girl called Gertrude who had sex with the devil. It is the second reading which is correct.

The next three examples, however, represent genuine errors on the part of the author of the *Colloquium*. According to the *Démonomanie* »Georges Agricola au livre qu'il a fait des Esprits subterrains, escript que à Aneberg en la mine nommee Couronne de roze, un esprit en forme de cheval tua douze hommes: tellement qu'il fit quitter la mine pleine d'argent.« But in the *Colloquium* this story is attributed to Melancthon, not Agricola; moreover the mine is at Roze, not Aneberg; no mention is made of a horse; and the number twelve is transferred to an earlier story.⁶² What has happened here? One wonders if the author of the *Colloquium* was working, not directly from the text of the *Démonomanie* but from notes he had made earlier, notes which he then misinterpreted. In any case, one can scarcely imagine Bodin making so many errors in such a simple story.

60 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 69; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, 88 (whose translation I give); and Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 111 (where the reference to ephialtes and hyphialtes is missing). Kuntz's failure to make the connection is apparent from the index which has separate entries for 'Ephialtes' and 'epihialtes' (the latter under 'demons'). I concentrate on this passage merely because both translators have misinterpreted it; other errors in translation are not common to both texts.

61 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 107r; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 33–4; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 55.

62 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 135v; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 67; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 108.

The *Colloquium* tells us that Weir and Paulus Jovius both report that Agrippa had a dog who could speak, and who was in fact a demon. The account in the *Démonomanie* is sharply at odds with this, for Bodin tells us that Weir carefully and explicitly denied this story – the dog was a perfectly ordinary one which Weir himself had held on a lead. It would seem that the translator of the *Colloquium* was familiar either with Weir or with the *Démonomanie*, for he suppresses the mistaken reference to Weir.⁶³ What has happened here? Again, one wonders if the author of the *Colloquium* was working from notes which he misinterpreted. In any case, one can scarcely imagine Bodin claiming that Weir and Jovius were in agreement, for he knew very well that they were not. Nor were the details of Weir's views insignificant to Bodin, for the *Démonomanie* ends with a lengthy refutation of Weir where Bodin makes capital of those few points (such as the possibility of magical transportation from one place to another) on which he and Weir agreed, and lays great stress on Weir's relationship with Agrippa (which he insinuates was homosexual).⁶⁴

We come to the final discrepancy, one which, it seems, must have originated with the author of the *Colloquium*, and one which Bodin would surely not have made. According to Bodin, »L'interprete Caldean, dict, que l'Ange Raziel se faict entendre par tout le monde, et le sacrificateur Elia a decouvert à tous les habitans de la terre, les choses qui se sont a couvert.« According to the *Colloquium*, »Chaldaeus paraphrastes haec Salomonis verba interpretabatur de angelis Raziele et Elia, quos occultissima quaeque scelera patefacere scribit.«⁶⁵ Now one can scarcely imagine Bodin mistaking the High Priest Elias for an angel, nor is it easy to see how a simple scribal error would have resulted in *angelis* in the plural. It is interesting that in one manuscript »sacerdote magno« appears after or alongside Elias's name, but if *angelis* is indeed always in the plural this must be an attempt at a correction rather than the original reading of the autograph. This appears to be an error introduced by the author of the *Colloquium* through a misunderstanding of his own notes; it seems hard to conceive of it occurring through a sim-

63 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 220r; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 12; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 21.

64 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 219v–220r.

65 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (rev. ed., 1587), 69v–70r; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 77; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 125. Kuntz seems to be uncomfortable with the idea of an angel Elias, for the High Priest Elias appears in her index (which is generally invaluable), as does the angel Raziel; the entry for »angel« cross-refers to »Elias, as angel«, but there is no such entry.

ple scribal slip, and Bodin (who was preoccupied with the interpretation of the Old Testament) would not have forgotten the true identity of Elias.

These last three examples amount to the strongest possible evidence that someone other than Bodin wrote the *Colloquium*. In each case the simplest explanation is that the errors were made by the author of the *Colloquium*, and would not have occurred had he been Bodin. It is hard to see how anyone familiar with the sources would have attributed a story taken from Agricola to Melancthon, or claimed that Weir had supported a story about Agrippa which he had denied, or described Elias as an angel. There appears to be no straightforward way in which these errors could have been introduced by a copyist. These are the mistakes of a plagiarist who is working carelessly, and working with material with which he is insufficiently familiar.

Thus the presence in the *Colloquium* of extensive passages drawn directly from the *Démonomanie* is in itself suspicious. The pattern of mistakes which becomes apparent when one examines these passages closely is complicated. Two are minor and may not be significant; two prove in the end to be mere ambiguities in the Latin. But this leaves three mistakes which appear to betray the presence of a forger, mistakes which would not have been made by a copyist, nor by Bodin himself.

Dating and Context

Karl Faltenbacher has long argued that there are passages in the *Colloquium* which make sense only if one understands that they were written in the seventeenth century. One passage which has escaped his attention occurs when Coronaeus is discussing public worship: »It has been the practice of the Roman church since the time of Pope Pelagius to worship God with praises seven times a day and with prayers and songs day and night ... The Jews do not do this, nor do the Lutherans and the Zwinglians, who have so pared their public worship (I except those English who have separated themselves from the Puritans) that they allow prayers to be offered only twice in the whole week.«⁶⁶ There was a long history in England of tensions between the Church hierarchy and Puritan reformers over the conduct of Church worship.

66 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 161; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 255. The Latin is »excipio Anglos, segregatos a Puritanis«.

But it was really only after 1625 that there developed an unreconcilable separation, in doctrine and practice, between »those English who have separated themselves from the Puritans« (the followers of Laud) and those who felt they had more in common with the continental Reformation. Here, momentarily, our text's origins in the late 1620s are (perhaps) apparent.

Another passage has caught his attention, but his argument is much strengthened when one compares the text in the *Colloquium* with the analogue text in the *Démonomanie*. The passage in the *Démonomanie* is as follows:

Melanchthon escript qu'il a veu en Saxe une femme demoniaque, qui ne sçavoit ny lire, ny escrire: Et neantmoins elle parloit Grec et Latin, et predict la guerre cruelle de Saxe en ces mots, *Œ* *Æ* <V(i O u&BÂJ-H(-Hi " ÂÛD: ~ ¥< Jè 8 à JbJT. C'est à dire, qu'il y aura de terribles choses en ce pays et rage en ce peuple.

In the *Colloquium* it is reworded (I quote the French translation) as follows:

Philippe Melanchton faict mention d'une certaine famelette laquelle, estant tourmentée des Diabes, avoit accoustumé de parler grec, et qu'elle a predict la guerre qui depuis a desolé toute l'Allemagne par ce vers: *Œ* *Æ* <V(i O ¥BÂJ-H(-Hi " ÂÛD: ~ ¥< Jè 8 à J@Uâ. [id est: fatalis erit quaedam necessitas in hoc regione et violentiain hoc populo futura]⁶⁷

In other words, a prophecy about a war in Saxony has been transformed into a prophecy about a war which devastates the whole of Germany. It is hard to imagine anyone making this change before the outbreak of the Thirty Years War in 1618.

I have sought to argue that the balance of probability is that the *Colloquium heptaplomeres* was written, presumably in France, in the late 1620s. Its author had evidently travelled widely, being familiar, for example, with both Italy and the Low Countries. In order to pass the work off as being by Bodin our author not only stressed elements (such as demonology) which were characteristic of Bodin's thought, but incorporated whole passages from the *Theatrum* and the *Démonomanie*. Can we go further in specifying our author's motives and beliefs?

It may be helpful to start by noticing what the *Colloquium* does not do. Naudé, in his study of those who have falsely been accused of magic, notes the credulity that underlies Bodin's approach to stories of witchcraft: there seems not to be a single story that he is prepared to reject as false. It would

67 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 154r; Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 34; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 56.

be possible, he says, to turn this against this author, by arguing that since some stories are known to be false, we may be entitled to dismiss all of them.⁶⁸ Indeed a strategy rather like this had been adopted by Reginald Scot in his attack on Bodin in 1584.⁶⁹ One might expect an irreligious author to adopt a strategy of this sort.

But pseudo-Bodin, as I shall now call the author of the *Colloquium*, channels his scepticism in certain directions only. In book 6 he mounts a sustained attack on belief in the virgin birth, the incarnation, and the Trinity because it is impossible for God, who is immaterial and infinite, to be made human and finite. But at the same time he seems quite happy to accept all sorts of stories about demons because demons are material and finite. Thus in Book Two:

Octavius: Many people wonder at many things in the vast realm of nature, but nothing is more amazing than this, namely, the prevalence of lycanthropy and shape-shifting. Formerly I had considered ridiculous what was being reported in Cairo – that men were changed into asses and did incredible things in public view. Also I thought fabulous the story about Ammonius who had an ass that was a student of philosophy, as well as the golden ass of Apuleius and Lucian. But when I sailed from the port of Arcione, which is now called Kneza, and was coasting the shores of Arabia, frequently I saw the magic of sorceresses who turned men into asses or wolves, and then restored them to human form. Therefore, I considered not only probable but virtually certain and verified the things that Homer wrote about Circe, Herodotus about the Nervii, Varro, Pausanius, Plato, and Pomponius Mela about the lycanthropy of Arcadia and Lycaonia.⁷⁰

Far from mocking this view, far from questioning the authenticity of Octavius's eye-witness testimony, our author seems to agree with Bodin that such events, which can only be explained by the pervasive presence of demons, are well-attested. Our author's arguments do not rely on the sort of scepticism about the possibility of supernatural events which we encounter in the Enlightenment, or indeed in Scot. They appear to be quite different in character.

Belief in demons rests in large part on the claim that their activities are recorded in every time, in every place, and by members of every religion. It

68 Gabriel Naudé, *Apologie pour tous les grands personnages qui ont été faussement soupçonnés de magie* (1625), in Jacques Prévot ed., *Libertins du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), 139-382, at p. 193.

69 Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (n.l., 1584).

70 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 15-6; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 26-7 (Kuntz's translation).

is a matter of universal consent. What then to make of the Epicureans, who refuse to believe?

Senamus: If as great a power of demons and angels as you imagined existed, it seems strange to me why the Epicureans removed the substance of demons from nature.

Curtius: We ought to remove the Epicureans from the register not only of philosophers but also of human beings, first because they differ very little from the opinions of beasts, next because they rely only on the senses.

Coronaeus: Since philosophers and theologians, or rather all mortals agree there are demons...⁷¹

And this view that the Epicureans are something other than natural recurs:

Senamus: What is the reason then that many leave other sects for the Epicureans, but none returns to other sects from the Epicureans?

Coronaeus: This is no more strange than the fact that men can become eunuchs, but no eunuch can become a man.⁷²

In this discussion, where so many points of view are heard, no one speaks for the Epicureans. They exist outside the pale of human discourse.

We also need to note something strange about our seven interlocutors. In almost every case it is easy to recognize them as speaking for an actually existing intellectual position. Five of them belong straightforwardly to specific religious communities. Senamus expresses views that are reminiscent of those of a sceptical Roman, but might perhaps be those of a disciple of Montaigne or Charron. Toralba, however, presents a problem. One reason for thinking he speaks for the author (apart from the fact that his arguments are particularly trenchant and convincing) is that it seems impossible to see him as representing anyone other than the author. And yet this, it seems to me, is at the same time rather difficult to accept. Our author seems to be setting up a discussion between established intellectual positions, one that could take place almost anywhere where a sufficiently cosmopolitan group of people could gather together. The notion that the discussion might depend on his own presence seems contrary to the drama which is presented to us, in which each of the characters must stand for a recognizable point of view. Who does Toralba represent?

As long as one assumes that the *Colloquium* was written prior to Bodin's death in 1596 there is no answer to this question. But a *Colloquium* written

71 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 29; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 48 (Kuntz's translation).

72 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 4; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 6 (Kuntz's translation).

late in the 1620s would belong to a very different intellectual context. For in 1624 Lord Herbert of Cherbury had published, in France, his *de Veritate*, a work often identified as the first intellectual formulation of deism and sometimes said to be comparable to the *Colloquium*.⁷³ Those who have noticed the similarities between the two works have assumed that Herbert was influenced by the *Colloquium*; but we are under an obligation to consider the possibility that it was Herbert who influenced pseudo-Bodin. Is it not likely that the deist Toralba is modelled on Herbert, the founder of philosophical deism? As we shall see, if we reverse the chain of causation the *Colloquium* becomes what it claims to be, a discussion between a range of actually-existing views on the question of religious belief. Placed in the late 1620s it acquires precisely the intellectual context that it lacks when read as if written in the 1590s.

We may summarise the arguments of *de Veritate* as follows.⁷⁴ The bulk of the work consists of a discussion of the general conditions and definition of truth, in which considerable stress is placed on the idea of universal consent, and in which neo-Platonist influences are apparent. In what was evidently originally a mere postscript Herbert applied the idea of universal consent to religion, asserting that the sole standard of religious truth lies in the beliefs common to all times and places, which constitute the only true Catholic Church (true catholic beliefs are therefore non-Christian beliefs). Herbert identifies five Religious Common Notions:

- 1) there is a supreme God, who is infinite, omnipotent, and free;
- 2) the supreme deity ought to be worshipped, although true religion has everywhere been corrupted by the priests;
- 3) the essential features of religion are virtue and piety;
- 4) sin must be expiated by repentance (a view Herbert holds to be incompatible both with belief in predestination and with the view that only the members of a particular religion can be saved); and
- 5) reward and punishment exist after this life.

Whether human beings »in any age or place« have indeed identified the five Common Notions and rejected »the inferior and trifling portions of religion« Herbert does not seek (at least in *de Veritate*) to establish.⁷⁵ Indeed, the mat-

73 e.g. Bedford, *Defence of Truth*, 225–6.

74 Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, *De veritate*, ed. and trans. Meyrick H. Carré (Bristol: University of Bristol, 1937).

75 Herbert, *De veritate*, 305

ter does not concern him greatly, since he is satisfied that salvation is possible within any and all religions. Since these beliefs are universal we can be sure that atheists do not exist – those taken to be atheists are either idiots, or misguided opponents of false beliefs.⁷⁶

What then of revealed truth? Revelation must be direct (reports of revelation are merely traditions or histories) and it must recommend what is good, that is it must conform to the Religious Common Notions. Religions which appeal to revelation are simply appealing to tradition or history, »and since the truth of history or of tradition depends upon him who recounts, its foundations lie outside us, and in consequence it is, so far as we are concerned, mere possibility.«⁷⁷ Thus the truth of a revealed religion can never be conclusively established. Herbert claimed to accept the authority of the Christian Church, but only on his own terms: »provided that is, that all contradictions are avoided or recognised, and only those doctrines are impressed on men's minds which promote universal peace and concord, and make for purity of life.«⁷⁸

But if the scope of revelation is restricted, it is not dismissed, particularly as God may reveal himself to any individual. God's action in the world has not ceased: particular providences occur, and the age of miracles may not be past. Herbert himself only published *de Veritate* because he received a sign from heaven telling him to do so.⁷⁹ The source of this sign (a gentle noise like nothing on earth) was presumably a demon, for:

As for the means of revelation, it is generally held that revelations are most frequently made with the medium of spirits which have been recognized in all ages as a special order of beings, invisible, impalpable, free of physical substance, endowed with rapid movement, and variously called angels, demons, intelligences and geniuses. Some doubt, however, exists concerning their nature. Some people imagine them to be good, others think they are evil, so that we can reasonably leave their real nature an open question. But this need not disturb us...⁸⁰

It is this short discussion which, I would suggest, sets the intellectual agenda of the *Colloquium*. What are the fundamental religious truths? How far have they been recognized by the different religions? How far can Christianity be

76 Herbert, *De veritate*, 295

77 Herbert, *De veritate*, 308

78 Herbert, *De veritate*, 304

79 *The Life of Edward, First Lord Herbert of Cherbury*, ed. J. M. Shuttleworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 120–1.

80 Herbert, *De veritate*, 309

reconciled with them? How can we aspire to peace, concord and purity of life in a world of religious division? Herbert addresses only the first of these questions, but points clearly at the others (and indeed went on to discuss the second and third at length in his later works, *De religione laici* [1645] and *De religione gentilium* [posthumous, 1663]). The *Colloquium* in many respects simply develops the enquiry he had begun.

It may be worth at this point simply listing some similarities between the views of Herbert and those of the author of the *Colloquium*:

- a) a culture shaped by Neoplatonism,⁸¹
- b) a stress on the unity and infinity of God which is in tension with the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation – here the last book of the *Colloquium* develops a line of thought that is implicit in *De veritate*,⁸²
- c) the conviction that knowledge of the true God is universal, and to be an atheist is to be other than human,⁸³
- d) not only a preoccupation with demons, but a willingness to concede that there is some difficulty in classifying demons as either good or bad.⁸⁴ This (sharply at odds with Bodin's views in the *Démonomanie*)⁸⁵ places in question the traditional Christian teaching on Satan and the Fall.⁸⁶ And it implies that, thanks to the actions of demons, seeming miracles may be commonplace and often occur to support false beliefs,

81 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Kuntz, liv-lv; Bedford, *Defence of Truth*, 87–129.

82 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 228–33, 247–345; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 356–65, 387–547 (Noack, 296; Berriot, 465: »Toralba: If there is no sin unless it is voluntary, as indeed all the theologians confess, original sin is not possible, because there is no will for sinning at birth. But if this is so, the troublesome question about the Trinity and much more difficult question about the incarnation of divinity, likewise about the ascension of god as man into heaven and other questions are solved as contrary to divine laws and the laws of nature« [Kuntz's translation]); Herbert, *De veritate*, 291-3.

83 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 29; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 48; Herbert, *De veritate*, 291.

84 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 28–30; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 46–50; Herbert, *De veritate*, 309.

85 Bodin, *Démonomanie* (1580), 14r–20v.

86 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 289-330; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 452–524; Herbert, *De veritate*, 204-5 (»do not imagine there is any evil in the soul but only this liberty«).

- e) an insistence on the free will of both God and man.⁸⁷ The second is regarded as a necessary foundation of any doctrine of divine punishment,
- f) a belief that souls are immortal, and that reward and punishment occur after this life; but, implicitly or explicitly, the doctrine of eternal damnation is brought into question,⁸⁸
- g) a concern to further toleration in a world of religious division and to seek consensus on questions of religious faith,⁸⁹
- h) an interest in the history of religious belief. This interest in history goes hand in hand with scepticism about the history to which religions (including Christianity) lay claim,⁹⁰
- i) a belief that sincere worship within a false religion is acceptable to God. Although the true religion would appear to be deistic, yet priests and ceremonies are necessary aspects of worship.⁹¹

Thus there are important respects in which the religion of the *Colloquium* (and particularly of Toralba, whose views are often taken to be the views of the *Colloquium*'s author) is Herbert's religion.

What are we to make of the similarities between the *Colloquium* and the *de Veritate*? There are three possibilities: First, the two works are entirely independent of each other, although they may share a common cultural and intellectual environment: on the conventional dating of the *Colloquium* this would seem the most likely possibility. Or, second, we can imagine that Herbert was the earliest known reader of the *Colloquium*, a view which is unsupported by any evidence. Finally, there is the possibility that the *Colloquium* is an attempt to think through the implications of the *de Veritate* and that Toralba is intended to represent Herbert's views. This is the only hypothesis which makes Toralba a representative figure in the same sense as the other six participants in the discussion.

87 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 19–25, 313–7; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 32–42, 496–503; Herbert, *De veritate*, 204–5, 293, 300.

88 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 340–9; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 539–554; Herbert, *De veritate*, 300–1.

89 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 354–8 (the end of the book); Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 561–9; Herbert, *De veritate*, 304.

90 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 224–5, 235–7, 281–2; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 350–1, 367–72, 440–1; Herbert, *De veritate*, 314–8.

91 Bodin, *Colloquium*, ed. Noack, 182, 320–1, 355; Bodin, *Colloque*, ed. Berriot, 287–8, 508, 563–4; Herbert, *De veritate*, 293–6

Of course one might object that the *Colloquium* nowhere addresses Herbert's doctrines in a form or a terminology which indisputably derives from him: the five Religious Common Notions are not listed, Herbert's distinction between probability and possibility does not appear, and so on. But then, in a book claiming to have been written in the sixteenth century, any transparent reference to Herbert would have been obviously anachronistic. Any discussion of Herbert's ideas would have been inherently dangerous (his ability to publish must have owed a good deal to his privileged position as an ambassador, and to the fact that religious issues did not appear to be the central topic of *de Veritate*). But if one transported such a discussion back into the sixteenth century, made no mention of Herbert, and attributed the work to Bodin, a dangerous intervention in contemporary debates would be transformed into a text of interest to scholars and bibliophiles.

Here then is my suggestion: the *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* was written shortly after 1624 by someone pretending to be Bodin, someone familiar not only with Bodin's works and many of the books most carefully studied by Bodin, but also with Herbert's new neo-Platonic deism. This hypothesis is the only one which accounts for all the facts as we have them. I see no reason to think the author was Herbert himself, for (Julia Griffin advises me) there is no trace of the *Colloquium* amongst Herbert's surviving papers, and in the 1620s Herbert did not have a scholarly knowledge equal to that of the author of the *Colloquium*, although he was to acquire such learning later in life.⁹² We can feel virtually certain that the author was not Bodin: the evidence of plagiarism, the pattern of mistakes (as in the cases of Agrippa's dog and Elias the angel) and revisions (such as in the Saxon prophecy), the history of the manuscripts, the narrative's location outside time and in the wrong place, and the uncertainty the author of the *Colloquium* expresses about the existence of a clear distinction between good and evil spirits all tell against Bodin's authorship.

I believe that I have almost conclusively proved that the *Colloquium* was not written by Bodin, and that it was written after 1618. Anyone who accepts the traditional attribution to Bodin is going against compelling evidence. One day we may succeed in identifying the master forger who produced this extraordinary work: someone who (if I am right in thinking that he has read Herbert) was alive in 1625, conversant with French culture, extremely learned and widely travelled, but careless with dates and not always meticulous in matters of detail. Someone who, unlike Bodin, had a close friend

92 Letter from Julia Griffin, 21 May 2000.

with the initials N. T.⁹³ Someone who, perhaps, was familiar with Peiresc's efforts to ship a Mummy out of Egypt to Italy, and was inspired as a result to write the striking story with which the *Colloquium* begins.⁹⁴ A full understanding of the *Colloquium* may have to wait until we can identify this mysterious *libertin érudit*, but we can begin right away to re-read Bodin, excluding from our minds any reference to the *Colloquium*.

93 A search in the Copac database for an author with the initials N T, writing in French or Latin, and publishing between 1580 and 1630, produces only Nicolas Camusat (1575–1655), who publishes *Mélanges historiques* in 1617, and signs himself Nicolas Camusat Tricassinus.

94 See Karl H. Dannenfeldt, »Egypt and Egyptian Antiquities in the Renaissance«, *Studies in the Renaissance* 6 (1959), 7–27, p. 22: »About 1630 the antiquary Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1637) sent Theophilus Minutius, a Franciscan friar, on an expedition to the east ... Minutius returned with two excellent mummies.« By the same author, »Egyptian Mumia: The Sixteenth Century Experience and Debate«, *Sixteenth Century Journal* 16 (1985), 163–80.