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 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4715-4640>

University of Warsaw

Pilate as the Legal ‘Other’ in the N-Town Cycle Passion Plays

Abstract

In the late medieval N-Town Cycle Passion Plays, the trial of Jesus is presented in the context of a medieval courtroom, where Jesus is brought by Annas and Cayphas to be judged by Pontius Pilate. However, while the priests through abuses of the legal procedures attempt to ensure Jesus’s demise, Pilate opposes their intent by remaining true to his judicial duties, which presents him as a lonely Other in the presented world of legal misconduct. This paper explores the concept of otherness in a legal context of the plays, as well as the legal and social significance of Pilate’s actions.

Keywords: medieval literature, medieval theatre, law, legal procedures, the Other/Otherness

1. Introduction

In the Passion Plays from the English late medieval N-Town cycle Jesus is subjected to a series of legal trials that result in his conviction and crucifixion.¹ The late medieval setting of the plays presents this as a result of a plot inspired by personal agenda of the Jewish priests and judges. To secure the desired outcome the accusation against Jesus is based on the manipulation of the law, faulty evidence and false testimony. However, when brought for final sentence and execution, Jesus finds an unsuspected defender in the person of the local lay justiciar, Pontius Pilate. He opposes the accusers and undermines the legitimacy of their accusation, its collected evidence, and justification for Jesus’s conviction. This paper will show how, in procedural terms of the late medieval legal practice in criminal trials, Pilate’s judicial integrity turns him into the moral and legal Other in the world of the N-Town Passion Play.

2. The Other and the Dominant 'I' of the N-Town Passion Play

The idea of the Other derives primarily from the psychological and philosophical distinction “between the self and the beings outside” and is utilized by psychoanalysis, structuralist, or postcolonial thought, with its “imperial convention to cast the native as other” which “serves as a shorthand for the colonized, the exotic, and the alien” (Myers 345; Rowe 133). Ted Honderich describes the Other to be “primarily understood as the other human being in his or her differences” (673), while Ernest Boesh in his essay “The Enigmatic Other” (2007), states that “‘other’ simply means ‘not like I’” (5). The difference can be based on anything that distinguishes and differentiates the minority of the Other from the dominant majority of the ‘I,’ and it is this emphasized difference between the ‘I’ and the Other where the true function of the latter appears – as the element “challenging [...] self-assurance” of the ‘I’ group which, through the Other’s actions and features different from those of the ‘I,’ “opens the question of ethics” of what the ‘I’ represents (Honderich 673; Simão 12–13).

Similarly, in medieval studies the term is used towards “outsiders within or at the margins of the dominant society” (Rowe 131), since the Middle Ages defined the Other, as well as itself, through the distinction between who is, and who is not ‘us’ (Jakobsson 216; Stantchev 69; Classen xlvi). In this regard the representation of the Other in medieval literature is similar to the modern, e.g. postcolonial concepts, as it can be seen in contemptuous descriptions of Slavs in Germanic chronicles during the twelfth century colonizing movement towards Prussia, East Prussia and Baltic lands, or in other Western descriptions of non-Western European cultures as “barbarian or primitive [...] not privy to the standard Western European courtly culture” (Classen xxii). At the same time, in medieval romances the Other represented “a challenge to be overcome for the self to find itself” in a form of a foreign or supernatural opponent (Classen xvi), which could have also pointed towards personal or social “faults [...] which might otherwise go unnoticed and uncorrected” (Classen xviii), as it can be seen in the character of the Green Knight who puts to the test not only sir Gawain, but also “the validity of courtly values and ideals” of Arthur’s court in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Classen xxxix – xl).

In the Middle Ages the “distinction between the familiar and the exotic” was mostly identified on the grounds of either being a part of Christendom or coming from the non-Christian world (Jakobsson 216; Stantchev 69). Interestingly, the religious grounds of Otherness at the same time negated its permanence, since a pagan could always convert and accept the ‘true faith,’ especially if found worthy (Jakobsson 237; Stantchev 70). For example, the recurring character of sir Palomides, a Saracen who appears as Tristan’s competition for Isolt’s heart, a protagonist in *Roman de Palamede* (13th c.), and in Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur* (15th c.), is eventually baptized after showing knightly virtue and near Christian integrity (Classen xxx).

Additionally, since the Other can be an individual whose difference exists in the contrast to the 'I,' one cannot be perceived without the other, thus creating a dual system of dependence where "there is no other without an 'I'" (Boesh 5). According to João Salgado, this dialogical in nature relation of dependence between the 'I' and the Other "implies a relation with an Other (person, group, community, society) with whom a person relates" (Salgado 55), and as such, it must take place "within a specific sociocultural context that creates a specific intelligibility for the exchange" (Salgado 56). In the case of the Passion plays from the N-Town cycle, this sociocultural context appears to be the medieval courtroom and the contrast is the legal one.

Although the late medieval English N-Town Passion Plays retell parts of the Gospels, as a medieval adaptation they are heavily amplified and contextualized. The dialogues are extended and, in the case of the trial segments, use legal terminology of the time, the setting mirrors the medieval courts of law with additional characters such as clerks, doctors of the law and court officials, while the costumes depict the priests and Pilate as the members of the medieval ecclesiastical and lay justice (Spector II, 493). This provided a connection with contemporaneity, where familiar elements allowed the audience to have a better understanding of a spectacle that ultimately had an educational purpose (Walker 79–82). However, this recognizable setting allows the circumstances of the trial to bear strong resemblance to the late medieval court procedures in the cases of crimes against religion, therefore treating Jesus as a criminous clerk, a priest accused of heresy by the representatives of the ecclesiastical justice who, after having his guilt established, deliver him to the secular arm to receive punishment (Kelly 2008, 879). Moreover, the procedures that accompanied such a legal process in real life, in the Passion Plays are intentionally abused and circumvented in order to achieve the desired sentence.

The 'I' that represents the dominant legal reality of the world of the Passion Plays, which allows for such legal malpractice, is established in the prologue of Play 26, where the devil claims the world to be under his complete control:

I, Sathan, with my felawus þis werd hath sowth,
 And now we han it at houre plesawns.
 For synne is not shamfast, but boldnes hath bowth
 þat xal cause hem in helle to han inerytawns. (Spector I, 26.97–100)

Sin is not to be shied from, and boldness is the virtue. In the remaining lines of his speech Satan promotes abandonment of virtues in favour of vices, declaring sinful and immoral conduct to be a norm. He specifically focuses on numerous intentional legal misconducts which would grant various benefits, at the same time unsettling the social order. For example, to "a beggerys dowtere" who desires to advance in the society, Satan's advice is that the girl should "cownter-

fete a jentylwoman, dysgeysyd as she can” (Spector I, 26.102), i.e. change her attire into that of a noblewoman, while the money necessary for purchasing such costly garments she should “gett [...] of sum man” through “prevy plesawns” (Spector I, 26.103–104). This promoted not only deception and prostitution, but also incurred the violation of the medieval sumptuary laws, which ensured clear class division. Clothes identified one’s place in the community, his or her function and authority, and “marked dishonorable and lower status persons,” such as prostitutes, preventing them from “dressing like ‘honest’ women” (Cosman and Jones 288; Posner 15–16; Shaus 147, 376, 677). Additionally, legal veracity of an individual was based on social status; therefore, pretending to be someone of good repute could enable fraud or allow the court to accept a deposition from a party that would normally be considered unreliable (Bryson 59; Helmholz 1983, 17; Helmholz 2013, 418).

This was extremely destructive to maintaining the legal order in the late medieval society, since in general the medieval legal system depended on depositions of witnesses who had to be of good repute and, therefore, reliable (Bryson 59–61). Depositions were delivered under an oath before God, and since the given law was considered an extension of divine law, felonies like perjury were not only criminous in particular, but also sinful in general (Alford 942–943). A proven perjurer was not only a person of ill repute, untrustworthy and without legal veracity, but also a sinner. Moreover, Satan promotes undermining the main principles that ensured late medieval legal order by encouraging, in lines 93–94, a disregard of any codes of common or canon law when the need arises: “þu sett not be precept nor be comawndement/ Both sevyle and canoun sett þu at nowth” (Spector I, 26.93–94). He condones “perjory” in the court of law and “brybory” to “maynteyn [one’s] astate,” and when this fails, he allows gathering a “felachep” and “fyth” for one’s private interests (Spector I, 26.114, 89–92). As a result, the devil creates an image of the world where the dominant ‘I’s idea of and approach to law is to bend it, circumvent it, or break it for one’s gains, and in such a world the dominant ‘I’s representatives are eager to prepare grounds for Jesus’s “persecucion,” devised not in the spirit of justice, but by “new engynes of malycyous conspiracy” and “false [...] wordys þat [...] pepyl doth testify” (Spector I, 26.49–52).

3. The Trial of Jesus in Satan’s Dominant ‘I’s Jurisprudence

The agents of the dominant ‘I’ of Satan’s legal world are the two conspirators, Annas and Cayphas, who perceive Jesus to be in their “lawys [...] varyable” and further “perverte þe pepyl with his prechyng ill” (Spector I, 26.217–218), thus becoming a threat to their rule. As they are unable to eliminate Jesus by force, since only the Romans had the right to perform executions, their only possible course

of action is to retaliate judicially. For that reason Annas and Cayphas decide to “take good counceel in þis case / Of þe wysest of þe lawe þat kan þe trewthe telle / Of þe jewgys of Pharasy” (Spector I, 26.221–223), and of various doctors of the law and together they intend to create a case against Jesus, gather evidence of his ‘vile’ practices, perform a ‘fair’ trial, condemn him and abandon to the Roman administration for the affirmation of their judgment and subsequent execution. As a result, first they ask “eche man inqwere on his syde: / Send spyes about þe countré wyde / To se, and recorde, and testymonye” (Spector I, 26.336–338) of Jesus’s alleged trespasses and transgressions, initiating a standard for ecclesiastical courts practice of pre-trial inquest (Helmholz 1983, 14). However, when they realize they will not be able to organize a legitimate body of proof against Jesus, they begin to follow Satan’s advice about perjury from the prologue, and decide to “put on hym som fals dede” (Spector I, 27.94). To achieve this, the conspirators decide to manipulate the words Jesus allegedly said before in order to have a legitimate cause to initiate the judicial procedure. For that purpose they use a second hand rumour stating that Jesus wished “þe gret tempyl mythytyly ovyrthrow” (Spector I, 27.119) as a pretext for accusation of preaching against the established order. Grounds for an additional charge aimed at forcing the lay justice to execute Jesus is provided by another of the conspirators, Leyon, who allegedly “herd [Jesus] sey / þat he was Kyng of Jewys alle” (Spector I, 27.113–114), a statement which, when properly presented before the lay courts, can result in accusation of inciting rebellion against the Roman rule. This choice of articles allows the conspirators to take action as the spiritual court and apprehend Jesus.

Finally, in order to secure Jesus’s sentence, the conspirators manipulate him into self-incrimination. When brought before the priests, Annas and Cayphas do not inform Jesus that his trial is taking place, nor that he is officially accused of any crimes. Instead, they ask a blanket question: “what is þi doctryne þat þu dost preche?” (Spector I, 29.131), followed by a vague suggestion that if he clarifies his words and brings them “out of doute,” they would be able “to othere men [his] prechyng forth teche” (Spector I, 29.132–133). However, an answer to even one of these questions would give Annas and Cayphas the reason not only to officially accuse, but sentence Jesus. Unfortunately, Jesus answers that he is “Goddys sone” (Spector I, 29.169), and with this statement, he admits to Annas and Cayphas to blasphemy in accordance to the Jewish law, thus providing a proof of his guilt. This deception allows the accusers to triumphantly declare Jesus guilty (Spector I, 29.173–176), and allows them to believe in inevitability of his demise when presenting him before the secular arm for verification of their judgment and execution. But at that moment, Pontius Pilate enters the stage and thwarts their intentions.

4. Pilate vs. the Dominant 'I'

In the N-Town Passion plays the obvious Other is of course Jesus, as the one whom the dominant 'I' of that world opposes and seeks "to expel, reject, abject, or exclude what is taken as other, outsider, or different" (Myers 345). However, the Other is subjective as it is "seen in the perspective of an individual," and as such may vary (Boesh 5). Therefore, as the critic points out, the Other can be many things, e.g. "the shouting politician, the glib banker, the dreaming poet, the harsh policeman, the cruel torturer, the compassionate healer, the Mother Theresa, [...] the Eskimo in his snow igloo, [...] the insane in the asylum, the beggar in the slum" (Boesh 5). And while the perspective changes, so does the image of the Other (Boesh 5). Therefore, from the postcolonial perspective, the different, subjugated native Other could be the Jews, while Pilate can be seen as the dominant force of a conquering civilization, the Roman Empire (Rowe 133). From the religious perspective Jesus is the Other to the pre-New Testament world of the old Mosaic law, and as such has to be expelled by the Jewish priests. However, from the legal perspective, the Other who opposes the dominant legal 'I' of the world of Satan in the Passion plays is Pontius Pilate.

According to Lawrence M. Clopper, in the tradition of Christ's Passion, Pilate appears in two versions – either as a magistrate who tries to somehow help Jesus, or as a co-conspirator with Annas and Cayphas (Clopper 13). The Passion plays from the known town cycles on most occasions tend to present Pilate more in the former fashion, as a judge and a proud man, eager to help but prone to manipulation of the Jews (Clopper 13–16). However, unlike in the other cycles, the Pilate of the N-Town Passion Plays does not seem to be so prideful and boastful. On the contrary, he seems to be a thoughtful and concerned justiciar, not hasty in actions and aware of his authority and legal capabilities.

In the N-Town Cycle, Pilate differs from the representatives of the dominant 'I' in many ways. Unlike Jesus, he represents a different culture, as the only non-Jew involved in this trial, and a different legal system, for he represents the lay, not spiritual justice, with its greater focus on punishing actual criminal conduct rather than religious felonies. Most importantly, however, he seems to represent different legal morality from the one described by the Devil in the prologue. Therefore, when presented by the accusing priests with the charges against Jesus, which stated that he claimed to be the King of the Jews, contrary to the priests' expectations and instead of immediately sentencing Jesus to death, Pilate begins a trial of his own and, unlike Annas and Cayphas, follows his judicial duty by allowing Jesus for the first time to defend himself (Spector I, 30.57–60). As a result, Jesus informs Pilate that "Of here acusyng [he] rowth nowth" (Spector I, 30.61), that these charges of undermining the old laws are unknown to him, and proceeds with declaration that God is his father and sent him to this world "For to seke þat was forlorn" (Spector I, 30.72), meaning, the humanity's salvation.

Upon hearing this, Pilate rightfully identifies the case to be of strictly religious character, and as such not needing his assistance, nor his punishment (Spector I, 30.77–80). He declares that he found in Jesus “non obecyon” as “the lawe” he represents does not deem Jesus’s words or teachings a capital offense and therefore he decides that “withowte defawth [Jesus] xuld be spylt” (Spector I, 30.81–84), which surprises Annas and Cayphas.

According to Ernest Boesh, the dominant ‘I,’ or the self, initially assumes that the Other “feels and thinks as we do” until “we inevitably encounter experiences which contradict [such] projections” (6). As a result, the actions of the Other in relation to the ‘I’s expectations “may frustrate [...] or obstruct” (Boesh 7; Simão 13). In this regard Pilate, while being the legal Other, follows the law and proves unwilling to bend it for the private interests of the priests that represent the dominant ‘I’s legal world of Satan, and makes them realize this by obstructing their designs.

Not expecting such a declaration from Pilate, the accusers hastily respond with an argument that “yf he had not an evyl-doere be, / [They] xuld not a browth hym” to Pilate (Spector I, 30.93–94). When Pilate hears this bizarre statement, he rebuffs it and declares that they should “Takyth hym þan aftyr [their] sawe, / And demyth hym aftyr [their] lawe” (Spector I, 30.95–96). Seeing that religious cause will not secure Jesus’s execution, the accusers use their final option, as well as their newfound knowledge of Pilate’s adherence to the letter of the law, and present the accusation of sedition, stating that Jesus declares himself to be their king, and, as Pilate is aware of this, “kyng [they] have non / But [...] emperour alon” (Spector I, 30.101–102). This forces Pilate to treat the matter as no longer a religious affair but that of the state. Still, Pilate once again stands in opposition to instrumental treatment of the law and allows Jesus to address these claims. After asking Jesus “Where is þi kyngham?” he hears that Jesus’s “kingham is not in þis world” (Spector I, 30.106–107), and once again realizes that this is still a religious matter and confirms that he “can fynde no defawth in þis man” (Spector I, 30.112).

Although resembling the late medieval ecclesiastical trials for heresy or crimes against religion, especially in the procedure where the accusation and processing by the ecclesiastical court of law was followed by the abandonment of the defendant to the secular arm for execution, the abuse of the necessary elements of the due process represented by the conspirators presents the trial in a complete opposition to the ideas of the late medieval theory of law and justice (Kelly 1993, 992–993). As St Thomas Aquinas stated in his *Summa theologiae*, “Law shall be virtuous, just, [...] framed for no private benefit, but for the common good” (*Sum.* I–II, Q.95, Art.3, arg.1).² To Aquinas “the proper effect of law is to lead its subjects to their proper virtue: and since virtue is ‘that which makes its subject good,’ it follows that the proper effect of law is to make those to whom it is given, good, either simply or in some particular respect” (*Sum.* I–II, Q.92, Art.1, co.). Therefore law was an instrument not of repression, but order and correction. To use it for other purposes denied its character and made it no longer the means

of achieving “common good regulated according to Divine justice” (*Sum.* I–II, Q.92, Art.1, co.). However, the conspirators as the dominant ‘I’ do not share this perception of law, are not motivated by a genuine concern for justice, but they utilize the law for their own selfish means, as established by Satan. In this regard, the Other to such approach is Aquinas’ idea of the law, while what they represent St Thomas characterizes as “a tyrannical law,” aimed at one’s own interests, which in turn makes it “not a law [...] but rather a perversion of law” (*Sum.* I–II, Q.92, Art.1, ad.4).

5. Pilate as the Legal Other

St Thomas Aquinas wrote that law should be “virtuous, just, [...] framed for no private benefit, but for the common good” (*Sum.* I–II, Q.95, Art.3). To uphold this idea a special breed of individuals was needed, people who would represent these ideas and prevent their corruption. “A judge [judex],” Aquinas writes, “is so called because he asserts the right [jus dicens] and right is the object of justice,” and “judgment, which denotes a right decision about what is just, belongs properly to justice” (*Sum.* II–II, Q.60, Art.1, co.). However, the accusers in their legal activities follow the attitude to law and justice pertinent to the dominant ‘I’ established by Satan in his prologue to play 26 of the N-Town Passion Plays. If the trial of Jesus followed the due process, the evidence would have been collected and analysed during the pre-trial stage and the defendant would not have been called until the articles of accusation have been properly prepared (Kelly 1993, 992–993). During the first presentment the reasons for his summon would have been made known to the accused as well as the charges and accusations against his person, thus allowing the accused to challenge the evidence, for example by undermining the reputation of witnesses or providing additional evidence to prove his or her innocence (Helmholz 1983, 15). Skipping one element of the above, or modifying it, made the accusation void and the conviction could not incur punishment, since, according to the medieval legal doctrine, without the official accusation no one was bound to reveal his own shame (Kelly 1993, 998–999). Canon law forbade prosecution of thoughts and secret crimes, which are not indicated by previously gathered body of evidence or verified and acknowledged public fame about the accused (Kelly 1993, 995). Justice reacted, not acted, and there had to be a proven reason for that reaction (Helmholz 1983, 14–15; *Sum.* II–II, Q.67, Art.3). Even Thomas de Torquemada was dogmatic about gathering evidence before the trial and presenting the charges to the defendant, since he knew that neglecting this could lead to an unsuccessful prosecution (Kelly 1993, 999).³

The accusers, however, aimed at making the defendant perform a self-incriminating statement, usually exploiting the fact that whatever was said during the proceeding was considered a proof, and acted very much against the due process

in ecclesiastical trials, since this particular legal abuse could give the defendant, especially the one with a skilled legal counsel, an opportunity to contest the result of the trial with considerable ease through various forms of appeals, recusals or even complete annulment of the final sentence, e.g., arguing after Aquinas that there cannot be condemnation without accusation (*Sum.* II-II, Q.67, Art.3).

In this trial, under these circumstances, presenting Pilate as the Other further emphasizes his actions as those of the one who is a single representative of true Justice in the plays. He legally and procedurally, but most importantly morally, stands in opposition to the accusers and conspirators. In this regard he resembles the noble heathens of medieval romances, a non-Christian character, but virtuous and just. He is not motivated by personal interests, but the need to be true to the letter of the law and to the procedure that was to ensure that the idea of just law, its proper conduct and outcome is guaranteed. When he decides to interrogate Jesus himself to verify his guilt, he does not blindly succumb to the accusers' demands for swift punishment, but allows the other side to speak in the vein of yet another legal scholar, Hostiensis, who wrote that "a judge should be so impartial that he injures no one" and allow "neither hatred nor favor, fear nor money [to] sway his judgment or cause him to do anything detrimental" to either side of the legal conflict (Brundage 383). Additionally, a judge "should deny justice to no one, not a slave or an excommunicate, or to anyone at all, however detestable they may be, not even to the devil himself" (Brundage 383). True to this approach, Pilate hears claims of Annas and Cayphas and takes action when they accuse Jesus of inciting rebellious sentiments. But as the Other, he also allows Jesus to explain himself and prove the accusations to be groundless.

6. Conclusion

The legal perspective and the Devil's presentation of the world of the Passion Plays reverse the traditional postcolonial division between the colonized and the colonizer. As a result, it is not Pilate who is in "the position of mastery," even though he represents the conquering Roman Empire, but sin and injustice (Rowe 133). Instead, he is turned into the lonely Other in the legal realities described by the plays, the 'exotic' which shows that world's faults and flaws. He is not motivated by private interests like the accusers, but by his duty to uphold justice. He does not treat the law carelessly and is not selective in accepting given evidence. Most importantly, he does not see the law as the means to condemn the innocent for political reasons, but, if the accused should be guilty, the law is to be seen "in the character of medicine, conducing either to the amendment of the sinner, or to the good of the commonwealth" (*Sum.* II-II, Q.68, Art.1, co.). His radical stance provides a moral contrast to the behaviour of the priests, thus fulfilling one of the functions of the Other as a mirror in which the ethics of the 'I' can

be reflected and assessed (Boesh 6; Salgado 59), proving St Thomas Aquinas' words that "as human acts conduce to virtue, so far does law make men good" (*Sum.* I–II, Q.92, Art.1, ad.1). Unfortunately, unlike other noble heathens who are converted for their actions, Pilate, although morally and legally just, does not receive a similar reward since his legal victories are only temporary. Pilate's moral stance in the world of the N-Town Passion Plays, ruled and influenced by Satan, is doomed to surrender and, like in all the remaining Passion plays from other town cycles, he succumbs to external pressure and finally condemns Jesus to death following the original biblical script. But before that comes to pass, for all to see he is the lonesome Other, a representative of law in a lawless reality that challenges the dominant majority and questions the ethics of their actions, becoming an individual towards whom "men have recourse [...] as to one who is the personification of justice" (*Sum.* II–II, Q.60, Art.1, co.).

Notes

- 1 The N-Town cycle is a collection of forty two plays inspired by numerous biblical events ranging from the Creation to the Judgment Day. The plays discussed in this paper are part of the sequence called the Passion Play, which consists of plays 26–34 and describes Christ's Passion. The titles of the plays quoted and cited for the purpose of this paper are: Play 26 "Prologues of Satan and John the Baptist; The Conspiracy; The Entry to Jerusalem"; Play 27 "The Last Supper; The Conspiracy with Judas"; Play 29 "Herod; The Trial Before Annas and Cayphas"; Play 30 "The Death of Judas; The Trials before Pilate and Herod." For the sake of brevity and clarity, the citation format to each play from the cycle will consist of the surname of the editor of the edition used in this paper, the number of the volume (all plays are in volume I of the Stephen Spector edition), and the number(s) of lines, e.g. 'Spector I 26.96-100' (vol. 1, Play 26, lines 96–100). For further details on the N-Town cycle see: Stephen Spector, "Introduction" to *The N-Town Play: Cotton MS Vespasian D. 8. E.E.T.S. S.S. 11/12*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), xiii–xliv; Alan J. Fletcher "The N-Town Plays" in Richard Beadle and Alan J. Fletcher (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre* (2nd edition) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 183–210.
- 2 All citations and references to *Summa Theologica* follow the standard citation form when referring to Aquinas's manuscript, i.e. the division into parts, questions, and articles.
- 3 Jesus's fate was shared by some defendants in several well-known and politically motivated trials. For example, similar practice was used in initial attempt to condemn John Hus at the Council of Constance in 1414 where,

after being summoned, he was asked to explain his views on the teachings of Wycliffe (Kelly 1993, 1008).

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