UNIT 3: USING AND REFERRING TO SOURCES

Critical apparatus

Critical apparatus is designed to show your readers what your primary and secondary sources are, so that they can assess the evidence for the claims that you are making and can see how you are positioning yourself in relation to the opinions of scholars in your field. To make this possible, it is vital:

- that you acknowledge all your primary and secondary sources;
- that you supply enough information for your readers to identify those sources, and reconstruct for themselves the route by which you have come to form your judgements;
- that you supply that information in a format that your readers can readily understand, which in practice means conforming to one of the standard conventions for referencing sources.

This is why you are expected to be careful about the presentation of footnotes and references in your assessed work, and why you will lose marks if you are not. This is not just pedantry on the part of examiners. The value of any piece of academic writing depends to a significant extent on the quality of its referencing. It is worth pointing out that professional academics are subject to the same discipline: other things being equal, a poorly-referenced article is much less likely to be accepted for publication in a learned journal than a carefully-referenced one.

When should critical apparatus be used?

You should include a reference:

- whenever you are directly quoting from a primary or secondary source, in which case you must make it clear that you are quoting, either by using quotation marks or by presenting the quotation as a separate indented paragraph (a 'block quote'), depending on its length;
- whenever you are making, in your own words, a claim that depends on evidence from a primary source — for example, the claim 'Aquinas held that human beings have three groups of natural ends or goals' would require a reference to *Summa Theologiae* I-II.94.3 to back it up;
- whenever you are presenting, in your own words, an idea that you have taken from a secondary source.

Since the purpose of references is to make your sources clear to the reader, you should make them as precise as possible. If you are citing an idea that is developed on pp. 147–51 of a 300-page book, it will be much more helpful to your readers if you cite those five pages specifically than if you simply cite the entire book.

Footnotes can also be used to insert incidental comments that are peripheral to the main argument, and points of clarification that would interrupt the flow of the argument if they were included in the main text. However, footnotes of these kinds should be used sparingly, and it is always worth asking yourself whether a comment that you are putting in a footnote could be included in the main text.

Formatting critical apparatus

As already noted, it is important to follow one of the standard conventions for referencing. Learning to do this accurately and consistently is an important academic skill. This is fairly mechanistic: it is a matter of getting to know the rules and then following them. But it is surprising how many students — and even some established scholars! — fail to do this, so it is worth spending a little time and effort learning the skill.

Two main systems of referencing are used in Theology, Religious Studies and related disciplines:

- the system in which references are given in *footnotes* or *endnotes*;
- the so-called *Harvard system* in which references are given in brackets in the text.

In any piece of work, you should choose one or other of these systems and stick to it consistently; it is not acceptable to shift from one to the other within one piece of work. In essays and dissertations, you are free to choose either. If you are writing for publication, your choice may well be dictated by the house-style of the journal or publisher for which you are writing. If so, you simply have to conform to their requirements: there are no prizes for originality or creativity in this respect.

Footnotes or endnotes

In this system, a number in the text after a quotation or citation (normally in superscript) directs the reader either to a footnote at the bottom of the page or to an endnote at the end of the essay, chapter or dissertation. Within one piece of work, you should use footnotes *or* endnotes, not both. Most word-processing packages have a function for inserting footnotes or endnotes. The note should contain all the information necessary for the reader to trace the quotation or citation: the author(s), title and publication details of the source, and where applicable, the page number(s) from which the quotation, information or idea has been taken. The information should be laid out according to one of the standard patterns, such as the following.

(i) For a reference to a book: author(s), *title*, (edition if second or subsequent, place of publication: publisher's name, year), page(s) cited.

For example:

Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: a Study in Moral Theory* (2nd edn., London: Duckworth, 1985), p. 187.

(ii) For a reference to a journal article: author(s), 'title of article', *journal title*, volume and part (year), page range of article (page[s] cited).

For example:

Franklin G. Miller and Howard Brody, 'A Critique of Clinical Equipoise: Therapeutic Misconception in the Ethics of Clinical Trials', *Hastings Center Report* 33.3 (2003), pp. 19–28 (p. 23).

(iii) A chapter in a multi-author book should be treated similarly to a journal article, except that the editor(s) and publication details of the book must also be given:

William F. May, 'The Medical Covenant: An Ethics of Obligation or Virtue?', in Gerald P. McKenny and Jonathan R. Sande (eds.), *Theological Analyses of the Clinical Encounter* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), pp. 29–44.

When you refer again to a source you have already cited, it would be a waste of space to repeat all the bibliographical details, so a shortened citation consisting of author's surname, shortened title and page reference is used:

MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 53.

Miller and Brody, 'A Critique of Clinical Equipoise', p. 26.

May, 'The Medical Covenant', pp. 33–4.

Various Latin abbreviations are also sometimes used to refer back to previous citations. Among the most frequently used are:

ibid. (short for *ibidem*, 'in the same place'). This is used to refer the reader back to the reference *immediately before* the present one, thus:

[24]Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: a Study in Moral Theory* (2nd edn., London: Duckworth, 1985), p. 187.

[25]*Ibid.*, p. 191.

idem ('the same'). This is sometimes used for citing a second work by the same author in the same footnote:

[26]Duncan Forrester, *The True Church and Morality: Reflections on Ecclesiology and Ethics* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1997); *idem*, *Christian Justice and Public Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

There are a number of other Latin abbreviations which you might encounter in your work. You are discouraged from using these as they have tended to fall out of favour with academic publishers in recent years. However, to familiarise you with some of those most frequently used, here is a short list of definitions and examples:

op. cit. (short for *opere citato*, 'in the work cited'), usually used to refer the reader back to references *before* the previous one, thus:

[27]MacIntyre, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

Others sometimes encountered include *loc. cit.* (*loco citato*, 'in the place cited') and *art. cit.* for articles.

When you are referencing older sources, such as ancient or mediaeval texts, that exist in several modern editions, they often have standard subdivisions (for example, into books, chapters, verses, etc.) that are sometimes used instead of page references in one modern edition. This has the advantage that your reader can trace your source even if he/she is using a different edition. For example, the citation from Thomas Aquinas given earlier:

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II.94.3

directs the reader to the *prima secundae* (i.e. the first subdivision of the second part), question 94, article 3 of this work. If you are writing for publication, some publishers will require only this kind of reference; others will also require bibliographical details of the modern edition that you have used. If in doubt, the guiding principle (as always in using critical apparatus) is *to supply enough information to enable your readers to re-trace your steps.* If you reference older sources of this sort, it is in any case good practice to state somewhere (usually when you first cite the source) which edition you have used.

If you are using the footnote or endnote system in an essay or dissertation, you should also give a bibliography at the end of the work in which you list, alphabetically by author, all the works cited in your text, plus any others that you have used significantly, even if you have not cited them directly. This enables the reader to tell at a glance what your main sources have been. In some fields and some kinds of work (particularly longer works such as dissertations) it is often good practice to give separate lists of

primary and secondary sources. The format of the bibliography should be basically the same as that of the footnotes, except that it is often helpful to give the author's surname first:

> MacIntyre, A., *After Virtue: a Study in Moral Theory* (2nd edn., London: Duckworth, 1985).
>
> May, W. F., 'The Medical Covenant: An Ethics of Obligation or Virtue?', in McKenny, G. P., and Sande, J. R. (eds.), *Theological Analyses of the Clinical Encounter* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), pp. 29–44.
>
> Miller, F. G., and Brody, H., 'A Critique of Clinical Equipoise: Therapeutic Misconception in the Ethics of Clinical Trials', *Hastings Center Report* 33.3 (2003), pp. 19–28.

Harvard System

In this system, all the works that you have cited or used are listed in a bibliography at the end of the essay or dissertation. The format is very similar to that described above, except that (for reasons which will become obvious) the publication date is often given directly after the author's surname:

> MacIntyre, A., 1985. *After Virtue: a Study in Moral Theory* (2nd edn., London: Duckworth).
>
> MacIntyre, A., 1988. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth).
>
> May, W. F., 1994. 'The Medical Covenant: An Ethics of Obligation or Virtue?', in McKenny, G. P., and Sande, J. R. (eds.), *Theological Analyses of the Clinical Encounter* (Dordrecht: Kluwer), pp. 29–44.
>
> Miller, F. G., and Brody, H., 2003. 'A Critique of Clinical Equipoise: Therapeutic Misconception in the Ethics of Clinical Trials', *Hastings Center Report* 33.3, pp. 19–28.

Where two or more works by the same author are listed, they are placed in chronological order, oldest first. If there are two or more works with the same author *and* date, they are usually distinguished using lower-case letters, thus:

> MacIntyre, A., 1988a. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth).
>
> MacIntyre, A., 1988b. 'A Made-up Article', *Fictitious Journal* 1.1, pp. 3–5.

When one of the works listed in the bibliography is cited, the source of the quotation or

citation is identified by author's surname, date and page reference in brackets immediately following the quotation or citation:

> According to one critic, Comte's opposition of altruism to egoism is characteristically modern: on the view of the human good that prevailed up to the seventeenth century, '[t]here is no way of my pursuing my good which is necessarily antagonistic to you pursuing yours because *the* good is neither mine peculiarly nor yours peculiarly' (MacIntyre 1985:228).
>
> According to MacIntyre (1985:191–192), the virtues are qualities that we need in order to achieve the goods internal to practices; some virtues at least, including courage, justice and truthfulness, are essential to sustain any practice.

In this system, footnotes or endnotes can be used for clarificatory or incidental comments, as described earlier, but should not be used simply to cite sources: you do that in the text.

More detail can be found in the style guides produced by some publishers, journals and organisations such as the Modern Humanities Research Association. There are many minor variants of both systems, differing in such details as punctuation and the precise ordering of information. Some conventions, however, are almost universal in English-language scholarly work in the arts and humanities; for example:

- book and journal titles are set in italics (underlining is sometimes used instead of italics; one or the other, but not both, should be used, and bold is almost never used);
- titles of articles and chapters in edited books are placed in inverted commas, *not* italicised or underlined.

Sometimes, a publisher's or journal's style sheet will specify details such as punctuation and layout, in which case you must simply conform to their requirements. If you are writing an essay or dissertation, you are free to make your own choices about these details, but it is important to *be consistent* with the choices you make. It is poor style and potentially confusing to the reader, for example, if you vary the order in which you give the information — if, for instance, in footnotes you sometimes place authors' surnames, but at other times their given names, first.

A relatively recent question, which offers almost limitless entertainment to the writers of style manuals, is how to cite internet sources such as websites. The conventions are less well-established than for print sources, though some of the same ones still apply: for example, book titles should be italicised, article titles placed in inverted commas. The guiding principle, as always, is to supply enough information to enable your readers to follow your tracks. For internet sources, in addition to author, title and publication

date (if known), this information is likely to include the URL (the 'address' of the web page cited) and the most recent date on which you accessed it (since web pages are frequently taken down or re-located). The following examples illustrate the kind of information that should be given:

> United States Office of Science and Technology Policy, 'Federal Policy on Research Misconduct', online at http://www.ostp.gov/html/001207_3.html (accessed 5 August 2005).
>
> Thomas Henry Huxley, *Man's Place in Nature: Collected Essays, Vol. VII*, (London: Macmillan, 1894), pp. vi–ix, online at http://aleph0.clarku.edu/huxley/CE7/ (accessed 14 December 2005).

Examples of how to cite from other sources such as Electronic Sources or Audio Visual resources may be found in the UWL Undergraduate Study Skills online guide at: http://www.lamp.ac.uk/trs/study%20skills/

Acknowledging your sources and avoiding plagiarism

As well as enabling your readers to assess your arguments, it is important as a matter of both honesty and courtesy to give due credit to those authors who have informed your arguments and helped you to develop them. Some kinds of failure to do so can constitute *plagiarism*, which is in effect a form of academic theft. Plagiarism can be defined as *intentionally or unintentionally presenting the work of others as if it were your own.* Academics are experienced at detecting it, and because it undermines the very nature of the academic enterprise, it attracts severe penalties. Students in this School have in the past failed modules, and in the most severe cases been deprived of their degrees, on the grounds of plagiarism. (Remember once again that professional academics are subject to the same discipline: it has not been unknown for academics to lose their reputations and even their jobs when caught plagiarising.)

Plagiarism occurs, for example:

- when part or all of an essay is copied without acknowledgement from another source, such as a book or a website;
- when a student attempts to pass off as his or her own an essay, published or not, written in whole or in part by someone else;
- when words written by another author (whether published or unpublished) are presented as if they were the student's own;
- when a student presents an idea taken from another source as if it were his or her own, without acknowledging the source.

There is no excuse for deliberate plagiarism, and as already noted, it attracts severe sanctions. It is possible to plagiarise unintentionally, and some students get very

anxious about this. There is no need for undue anxiety; the most effective way of avoiding unintentional plagiarism is to develop habits of good scholarly practice, such as the following:

- *never* use another author's exact words without presenting them as a quotation (in inverted commas, or for longer quotations, as a block quote) and identifying the source;
- when you have gleaned a significant idea, opinion or piece of information from another source, cite the source;
- avoid excessive quotation — try as far as possible to assimilate ideas from your sources and express them in your own words;
- develop good note-taking habits — for example, rather than spending hours writing very lengthy notes on sources, it is often more effective to photocopy the extracts you need (when this is permitted), highlight or underline key passages in the photocopy (NOT the original!) and note key arguments briefly in your own words;
- avoid undue dependence on one or a few secondary sources — if the entire structure and substance of your argument are dependent on one book (even if you cite that book), your essay is likely in any case to receive a poor mark, and you will also increase your risk of unintentionally plagiarising words or ideas.