

**Readers of Erasmus:
Humanism and the English Reformation, 1500-1550**

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Short Abstract

This dissertation is a study of the reception of Desiderius Erasmus (d.1536) in England in the first half of the sixteenth century, spanning the period between his first visit to the country (1499-1500) and the landmark publication of the English *Paraphrases* (1548-52). In these years, Erasmus was transformed from an obscure Augustinian canon into Europe's most celebrated writer. Yet his rise to fame occurred just as the continent descended into religious turmoil. As a result, Erasmus' reputation, scholarly methods and faith came under increasing scrutiny. In few regions was this process as complex as in England, where the Dutchman had long been in contact with the royal family, patrons and scholarly community. This thesis thus explores Erasmus' changing place in English intellectual life in the sixteenth century, asking how his status as a humanist and theologian shifted against the backdrop of the English reformation.

This thesis primarily investigates these transformations from the perspective of Erasmus' readers. The heart of this study is an analysis of several hundred surviving editions of the scholar's works in repositories across the UK and elsewhere, tracing the ownership, circulation and annotation of his writings by English men and women in the early sixteenth century. Erasmus' readership was extremely varied and this survey looks at a wide cross-section of readers, from kings, queens and courtiers, to scholars, clerics and members of the religious orders.

This thesis argues that readers took a far more critical approach to Erasmus' writings than usually supposed. Challenges emerged from both within and outside the humanist community. Working from the margins, they sought to improve the scholar's books, often reworking his ideas in the light of different scholarly and confessional agendas. These processes led to the fragmentation of his writings and the application of ever more sophisticated historical and scholarly techniques for understanding his work.

Long Abstract

Desiderius Erasmus (d.1536) has a claim to being the most widely read author of the sixteenth century. The scholar's success was built on his sheer variety as a writer and editor. His educational writings helped contemporaries to master fluent, classically inspired Latin and Greek. His *Adagia* – a vast compendium of classical sayings first published in 1500 – offered readers literary polish while acting as a primer to the philological methods of the humanists. In treatises such as the *Enchiridion* (1503), Erasmus likewise developed a programme for religious revival, grounded in the scriptures and a renewed focus on the life of Christ. The *Praise of Folly* (1511) and other satires lampooned those who opposed this message of scholarly and religious improvement. Crowning all of these achievements were Erasmus' labours on the New Testament. Five editions of his Greek New Testament (with accompanying Latin translation and notes) were published in his lifetime (1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, 1535). These were founded on the premise that true theology could only be erected on a proper understanding of the scriptures in their original language. Shortly thereafter, he began writing a series of biblical commentaries – the *Paraphrases* (1517-24) – which aspired to a similar harmony of gospel and doctrine in refined Latin prose. Erasmus also edited the writings of several Church Fathers, contributing to landmark editions of Jerome, Chrysostom, Origen and many others. Literary production on this scale required Erasmus to maintain relations with an army of printers, patrons and scholars across Europe. It also necessitated a large degree of image management. Erasmus had his portrait painted, cast and engraved by some of Europe's leading artists and developed a sophisticated network of allies to suppress his critics. By the 1530s his works had been produced in their millions and he was a familiar object of praise for the learned in their poems, letters and rhetoric.

Erasmus has often been hailed as a major force in the spread of renaissance humanism. By the end of his life, however, the scholar was also a deeply controversial figure. Erasmus' rise to prominence occurred just as Christendom was splitting at the seams. Many, in fact, were convinced that Erasmus had laid the groundwork for the reformation. The scholar himself tenaciously denied any connection between his brand of Christian humanism and the evangelical ideas of Luther, Zwingli and others. In his later years, he penned a series of pamphlets rebutting critics on either side of the emerging confessional divide. Neither these, nor Erasmus' death in 1536, however, succeeded in quashing debates about his religious loyalties and they have remained a source of controversy up to the present day.

This thesis explores Erasmus' contested legacy against the backdrop of the English reformation. Erasmus had deep links in England. He had lived on and off in England between

1499 and 1517 and maintained relations with the royal family, courtiers, clerics and scholars throughout his life. Several newly founded schools and colleges drew on Erasmus for inspiration and his works filled private and institutional libraries as the century wore on. He assisted in the English campaign against Luther in the 1520s and, in the following decades, Henry VIII and his councillors repeatedly aligned Erasmus' writings with official changes to religious doctrine and practice. These efforts reached their peak in the late 1540s with the publication of the English *Paraphrases* under Edward VI. As a result, historians have often argued for the importance of Erasmus' religious and scholarly programme to the course of English affairs. They have generally explained Erasmus' influence with reference to changing educational and religious statutes and by comparison with the writings of English contemporaries of the scholar. More often than not, they have proposed that it was Erasmus' moderate vision of religious reform that triumphed in England. Such arguments have usually stripped the Dutchman of any real theological or methodological meaning, presenting him instead as a bland proponent of the study of Greek or the reform of Christian life.

In contrast, the present survey is primarily concerned with explaining Erasmus' reception from the perspective of his readers. It was in books, after all, that the majority of English men and women encountered Erasmus' ideas. While historians have long been aware of the value of such bibliographical evidence to the study of intellectual processes in the sixteenth century, this dissertation marks a first significant attempt to grapple with this material on a large scale. Drawing on contemporary bindings, ownership inscriptions and manuscript marginalia from hundreds of surviving copies of Erasmus' writings, it charts the circulation and interpretation of the scholar's works in a variety of literate communities in the first half of the sixteenth century. The picture that emerges is of a far more complex and contested process. The period, I suggest, saw the steady fragmentation and confessionalisation of Erasmus' works. Contemporaries approached the scholar's ideas with an increasingly forensic lens and developed a series of historical, literary and scholarly techniques for navigating his writings in the context of the reformation.

This thesis returns Erasmus to his place in the humanist and theological landscape of early modern Europe. It jettisons the idea of a cohesive body of Erasmus' ideas – what scholars have generally called Erasmianism – in favour of a more diverse story, drawn out of direct evidence of how the Dutchman's works were being read in England. Erasmus provided only one model of humanist scholarship and contemporaries often used their knowledge of Latin, Greek and Hebrew writings to supplement, adapt and challenge his conclusions. This study also proposes that contemporaries viewed Erasmus as a theologian in his own right, not simply as a middle way between religious extremes. English readers were intensely interested in understanding Erasmus'

response to the reformation. They pored over his apologies, defences and other theological writings for matter related to the Mass, justification and other points of contemporary debate. In England, there remained a strong conservative line of interpretation for Erasmus' works well into the 1550s. While evangelicals often drew inspiration from Erasmus, they were usually forced to suppress elements of his thought which jarred with their own outlook or to read the scholar's works with a historical or rhetorical lens. As the period wore on, humanism and the reformation were increasingly viewed as inseparable, since readers recognised the necessity of establishing sound doctrine from philological, codicological and patristic sources.

This thesis is divided into two parts. Part I suggests that Erasmus' reception in England should be understood within two broader frameworks: the production, circulation and survival of Erasmus' writings in England and Europe; and the scholar's own efforts to manage his reputation and interpretation through a network of friends, patrons and fellow scholars. The marketplace for Erasmian books was shaped not only by the printers, scribes, booksellers and readers who produced, sold and circulated his writings, but also by the efforts of Erasmus and his critics to interpret that body of work.

Chapter 1 examines the changing form of Erasmus' books and its implications for his English readers. It demonstrates how the production of Erasmus' works expanded rapidly in the 1520s and that European printers remained the primary producers of Erasmian texts in England, even as local output increased in the 1530s. Likewise, it argues that manuscript and printed copies of Erasmus co-existed rather than competed, often with important consequences for the reception of his works. By considering the circulation of various Erasmian volumes, we can also begin to explain where and why Erasmus' books were read. Finally, this chapter details how the differing rates of survival of Erasmian volumes have come to shape our understanding of his reception.

Chapter 2 explores Erasmus' own efforts to shape his reception in England, primarily through his correspondence with friends and patrons in the country. It charts the creation and subsequent disintegration of a complex network of English supporters of Erasmus who promoted and defended his work. By the early sixteenth century, England already had a vibrant and, at times, contentious humanist community. Erasmus was remarkably adept at harnessing English support in the 1510s and 20s, even if he never succeeded in suppressing all his critics. Erasmus' departure to Basel, his ambiguous response to the reformation, and the varied fortunes of his friends at court made co-operation increasingly difficult in the 1520s, as did the politics of the royal divorce in England. These factors, along with the death of several of Erasmus' closest friends, made Erasmus' efforts to defend his reputation in England increasingly futile.

Part II turns to the evidence of individual readers and explores how English contemporaries grappled with Erasmus' complex intellectual legacy in translations, printed tracts and the margins of their books.

Chapter 3 considers the circulation and interpretation of Erasmus' works in and around the Tudor court and government. In the reign of Henry VII, Erasmus' writings were shaped by existing models of humanist conduct. His works were presented in fashionable italic scripts and often read alongside the work of better-known contemporaries. Under Henry VIII, the scholar was increasingly the object of private and public discussion. The king himself pored through Erasmus' works, searching for material relating to his kingly status, the cultivation of faith and the reform of the church. His children were also compelled to model themselves around Erasmian notions of good governance. By the 1530s, nonetheless, the court was riven by political and religious disagreements. These disputes were reflected in contrasting interpretations of Erasmus' works among Henry's queens, courtiers and councillors, who variously aligned the scholar with a defence of orthodoxy, the reading of vernacular scriptures and the wider Break with Rome. Such efforts exposed a number of fissures in Erasmus' legacy, from his relationship with the English reformation to his wider motives and historical circumstances. The scene was thus set for a series of increasingly public and fractious debates about Erasmus' life and legacy in the 1540s and 50s. The translators of the English *Paraphrases* attempted to find agreement between Erasmus and various tenets of evangelical faith. Yet they also worried about Erasmus' failure to support the reformation and the suitability of his writings for a lay audience. Likewise, when councillors, scholars and bishops debated the Eucharist under Edward VI, they could not agree on how Erasmus had interpreted the problem but fell into debate about his religious leanings and scholarly intentions.

Chapter 4 examines the confessionalisation of Erasmus' writings in England. It begins by investigating the fate of the Erasmian New Testament in England. This section proposes that readers did not view the book as a static or authoritative achievement, but rather as a work in progress, one to which they offered their own translations or manuscript readings. Attention to the workings of Erasmian books also made readers more aware of the interdependence of humanist scholarship and their own confessional viewpoints. The chapter then considers a range of reactions to Erasmus' work among conservatives and evangelicals in England, arguing that both were subject to a similar impulse to confessionalise Erasmus' writings. While some conservatives were exasperated at Erasmus' tepid response to Luther, others re-edited his writings in accordance with orthodoxy or presented his devotional writings as laments for the changing religious landscape. Evangelicals created harmony between Erasmus and continental reformers by drawing

on similar techniques, often taking a particular interest in the scholar's Pauline texts and commentary. A close analysis of the working papers of Thomas Cranmer reveals that while Erasmus was increasingly marginal to the archbishop's theological outlook, he remained a significant example of how to conduct scholarship in the reformation era. A final section assesses how readers approached Erasmus' writings in translation and the different political reactions his religious writings provoked.

Chapter 5 ponders Erasmus' reception among England's humanist community, particularly those who had studied Greek and Hebrew at university. These figures formed a natural audience for Erasmus' works but they often drew on their own knowledge to criticise or rework Erasmus' principles for their own ends. This section starts by asking how the members of educational institutions founded on humanist principles read Erasmus' works. While George Day and John Toker closely scrutinised Erasmus' literary writings, they approached his texts through a range of other authors and commentaries. Through the books of John Claymond and John Caius, I demonstrate how an immersion in a deeper tradition of philological scholarship helped to foster a more critical approach to Erasmus, especially towards a work such as the *Adagia*. Likewise, I suggest that three scholars who gained a knowledge of Hebrew – the brothers, Robert and Thomas Wakefield, and William Tait – also challenged Erasmus on a variety of fronts, not least his grasp of the language and his editorial decisions. Throughout, I emphasise that Erasmus' close attention to manuscripts, philology and other scholarly criteria provided his readers with the tools to both improve and reject his writings.

Finally, Chapter 6 surveys the impact of Erasmus' writings on members of the religious orders. It looks in detail at the reading of Benedictines and Austin Canons – two orders with close connections to Erasmus, the English court and universities – and demonstrates that Erasmus' works were by no means incompatible with the religious vocation. In fact, Erasmus was often used to express a desire for reform or to reimagine the religious orders along humanist lines, either by close attention to his literary and biblical writings, or by exploring devotional writings Erasmus had penned in earlier years.

Erasmus generated very little agreement in sixteenth-century England. Readers understood that he was an authority on a range of matters from education, to literature, to theology and philology. His writings, however, were increasingly broken down into more manageable units which reflected different scholarly pursuits or confessional agendas.

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historians of the wealth of material tucked away in our cultural institutions and the need to defend them.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>A&M</i>	John Foxe, <i>Acts and Monuments</i> < https://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe/ >
<i>ACAD</i>	<i>A Cambridge Alumni Database</i> < venn.lib.cam.ac.uk >
Ampleforth	Ampleforth Abbey
<i>ASD</i>	<i>Opera Omnia Desiderii Erasmi</i> (53 vols Amsterdam, 1969-)
ASL	Albert Sloman Library, Colchester
BL	British Library
Bodleian	Bodleian Library, Oxford
BRUO	A. B. Emden, <i>Biographical register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500</i> (3 vols, Oxford, 1989)
BRUO: 1501-40	A. B. Emden, <i>Biographical register of the University of Oxford, A.D. 1501 to 1540</i> (Oxford, 1974)
Carley, <i>Libraries</i>	James Carley (ed.), <i>The Libraries of King Henry VIII</i> (London, 2000)
CCC, Oxford	Corpus Christi College, Oxford
<i>CCEd</i>	<i>Clergy of the Church of England Database</i> < theclergydatabase.org.uk >
CHBB	Lotte Hellinga, J. B. Trapp, et al (eds), <i>The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain</i> (7 vols, Cambridge, 1999-2019)
CHLGBI	E. Leedham-Green, Teresa Webber, Giles Mandlebrote, et al (eds), <i>Cambridge History of Libraries in Great Britain and Ireland</i> (3 vols, Cambridge, 2006)
CSP	<i>Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers, Relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain: Preserved in the Archives at Simancas and Elsewhere</i> , ed. G. Bergenroth, et al. (13 vols in 20, London, 1862-1954)
CUL	Cambridge University Library, Cambridge
CWE	<i>Collected Works of Erasmus</i> (89 vols, Toronto, 1974-)
CWM	<i>The Complete Works of St Thomas More</i> (15 vols in 21, New Haven, 1963-97)
Devereux, <i>Checklist</i>	E. J. Devereux, <i>A Checklist of English Translations of Erasmus to 1700</i> (Oxford, 1968)
EE	<i>Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami</i> , ed. P.S. Allen, Helen Allen, H.W. Garrod (12 vols, Oxford, 1906-58)
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>

ERSY	<i>Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook.</i>
ESTC	<i>English Short Title Catalogue English Short Title Catalogue</i> < http://estc.bl.uk > [2 nd ed. ref. number]
Foster	<i>Alumni Oxonienses 1500-1714</i> , ed. Joseph Foster (Oxford, 1891): < www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714 >
G&C	Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HL	The Huntington Library, California
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
LadC	<i>Litterae Virorum Eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium, 1522-1528: A Collection of Original Letters</i> , ed. Henry de Vocht (Louvain, 1928)
LadC: More	<i>Morus ad Craneveldium Litterae Balduiniana Novae</i> , ed. H. Schulte Herbruggen (Louvain, 1997)
L&P	<i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII: preserved in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, and elsewhere in England</i> , ed. J. S. Brewer <i>et al</i> (23 vols in 35, London, 1862-1932)
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library, London
MLGB	<i>Medieval Libraries of Great Britain</i> < http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ >
NC	New College, Oxford
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> < www.oxforddnb.com >
Oldham, BPEB	J. B. Oldham, <i>Blind Panels of English Binders</i> (Cambridge, 1958)
Oldham, EBSB	J. B. Oldham, <i>English Blind Stamp Bindings</i> (Cambridge, 1952)
PLRE	<i>Private Libraries of Renaissance England</i> < https://plre.folger.edu/ > [with reference number]
Rummel, <i>Catholic Critics</i>	Erika Rummel, <i>Erasmus and His Catholic Critics</i> (2 vols, Nieuwkoop, 1989).
Schoeck, <i>Erasmus</i>	Richard Schoeck, <i>Erasmus of Europe</i> (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1990-93)
SJC, Cambridge	St John's College, Cambridge
SJC, Oxford	St John's College, Oxford
SP	State Papers
TCBS	<i>Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society</i>
TNA	The National Archives

Ushaw	Ushaw College, Durham
USTC	<i>Universal Short Title Catalogue</i> < www.ustc.ac.uk > [with USTC number]
WA	Westminster Abbey, London
WCFL	Winchester College Fellows' Library
YM	York Minster

Introduction



Erasmus: A Contested Legacy

Desiderius Erasmus (c.1467-1536) was the pre-eminent scholar of his generation. By the time of his death in 1536, more than one and a half million copies of his work had been produced for the European market, with a further million printed in the following decade.¹ Erasmus' rise to fame was all the more remarkable for its suddenness. He first appeared in print in 1497, at the relatively late age of thirty. In early life, Erasmus had barely left the Low Countries.² The illegitimate offspring of a priest and a widow, he had received a fairly rigorous education in Gouda, Deventer and 's-Hertogenbosch, before entering the Augustinian monastery of Steyn in 1487. In these years the young Dutchman had felt the pull of scholarship. For Erasmus to pursue his studies, however, he had to seek opportunities elsewhere. In 1492, he was appointed as the secretary to the bishop of Cambrai. A few years later he travelled to Paris to study and thereafter never returned to the cloister.

What followed was a remarkable outpouring of literary activity. In the first decade or so of the sixteenth century, Erasmus authored grammatical handbooks, poetry, satires and adages, alongside more traditional works of Christian piety. These were written while Erasmus travelled widely through Europe, developing links with several printers, scholarly communities and patrons who would support him in the years to come. His educational writings helped contemporaries to master fluent, classically inspired Latin and Greek. His *Adagia* – a vast compendium of classical sayings first published in 1500 – provided readers with literary polish and acted as a primer to the linguistic and historical methods of the humanists. Erasmus also developed a programme for religious revival, based on a renewed focus on the figure of Christ and the bible, and publicised this in treatises such as the *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (1503). The *Praise of Folly* (1511) and other satires lampooned those who opposed this message of scholarly and religious improvement.

¹ Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven, 2010), pp. 82-6.

² The most important recent interpretations of Erasmus' life are: Richard Schoeck, *Erasmus of Europe* (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1990-3); Cornelis Augustijn, *Erasmus: His Life, Works and Influence* (Toronto, 1991); J. K. McConica, *Erasmus* (Oxford, 1991); James Tracey, *Erasmus of the Low Countries* (London, 1996); Erika Rummel, *Erasmus* (London, 2004). Christine Christ-von Wedel, *Erasmus of Rotterdam: Advocate of a New Christianity* (Toronto, 2013). For the early life in particular: Richard Schoeck, *Erasmus Grandescens: The Growth of a Humanist's Mind and Spirituality* (Nieuwkoop, 1988).

His European renown reached new heights in 1516 with the completion of two landmark editorial projects. The first was a Greek New Testament with accompanying Latin translation and notes which would eventually run to five editions in Erasmus' lifetime (1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, 1535). A few months after the New Testament came a nine-volume edition of the writings of St Jerome. In the coming years he would come to edit a vast array of writings by the Church Fathers including Ambrose, Basil, Chrysostom and Origen. In the meantime, he had begun to write a set of biblical commentaries – the *Paraphrases* (1517-24) – which aspired to a harmony of gospel and doctrine in refined Latin prose, alongside several tracts on marriage, justification, the creed and preaching. Publishing on this scale required an army of printers, editors and compositors. Erasmus eventually relocated to Basel in 1521 to work in closer collaboration with his chief printer, Johann Froben. Up until his death in 1536, Basel and the Froben printing house remained the centre of the Erasmian publishing industry, even after the scholar's acrimonious departure from the city in 1529.

Testimonies of Erasmus' importance both during and after his lifetime are legion. Jacopo Sadoletto described Erasmus as 'the father of us all in this age' who had restored 'sacred letters to their antique beauty and splendour'.³ In his compendium of all known writers, Conrad Gessner styled the Dutchman as the 'preeminent restorer and illuminator of literature' who had spread his influence in 'the most celebrated cities and universities of Germany, France, England and Italy'.⁴ For the Lutheran chronicler, Johann Carion, Erasmus was 'a special instrument of God', sent to 'restore the Greke and Latine tonges agayne to their puritie'; a judgement repeatedly echoed by evangelicals in the period.⁵ Protestant reformers, however, did not hold a monopoly on Erasmus' reputation. Writing to condemn Henry VIII's break with the Roman Church, Reginald Pole praised 'the most expert man in letters' and noted that there was barely an ancient writer's works 'in which there does not exist some monument to the industry of Erasmus'.⁶ Erasmus himself encouraged such sentiments.⁷ Indeed, he was an unrivalled self-promoter, who assiduously managed his personal relations with patrons and had his image propagated through print, poems, medallions and portraits.⁸

³ Ep. 2385, EE, ix, pp. 48-50: '*quanto tu quidem in sacris litteris ad antiquum decorem splendoremque revocandis et omnium nostrum et huius seculi es pater.*' Quoted from Thomas Scheck, *Erasmus' Life of Origen: A New Annotated Translation of the Prefaces to Erasmus of Rotterdam's Edition of Origen's Writings* (Washington, DC, 2016) p. 227.

⁴ Conrad Gessner, *Bibliotheca universalis, sive catalogus omnium scriptorum locupletissimus* (Basel, 1545), fo. 197v: '*literariae instaurator ac primarius illustrator, in celeberrimis Germaniae, Galliae, Angliae et Italiae civitatibus et gymnasiis vitam egit...*'.

⁵ Johann Carion, *The thre bokes of cronicles* (London, 1550), pp. 216-17.

⁶ Reginald Pole, *Pro ecclesiasticae unitatis defensione* (Rome, 1538), fo. 64v: '*virum in literis exercitatissimum... qui denique cum nullus fere scriptor sit ex antiquis, cuius sanctitas & doctrina ab ecclesia probetur, in quo non extet monumentum aliquod ipsius industriae.*'

⁷ Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, 1993).

⁸ Harry Vredeveld, "Lend a Voice": The Humanistic Portrait Epigraph in the Age of Erasmus and Dürer', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 66:2 (2013), pp. 509-67. John Rowlands, 'Terminus, the Device of Erasmus of Rotterdam: A

Despite his best efforts, however, Erasmus' life gave birth to a contested legacy.⁹ As the popularity of his books grew, so his writings were increasingly subject to criticism. These disagreements intensified in the Reformation, as Erasmus was accused of impropriety and heresy from either side of the confessional divide.¹⁰ Several Catholics felt that he had inspired Martin Luther and others to break with traditional dogma and the Church. Yet to many evangelicals Erasmus had proved intractable. He had refused to leave the Catholic fold and had tenaciously defended conservative doctrine. Erasmus never ceased appealing for Christian unity, but he also quietly edited controversial passages of his works, producing sometimes contradictory statements on contentious issues in the hopes of appeasing his critics. Even his funeral became a delicate balancing act, featuring both a Catholic mass and a sermon from the reformed cleric, Oswald Myconius.¹¹ But while the authorities in Basel might have been willing to accommodate Erasmus, others were less forgiving. Luther remarked with characteristic charity that his Dutch counterpart was almost certainly suffering the torments of hell.¹² The papacy, too, would have little sympathy. By 1559, every word Erasmus had written had been placed on the papal index of prohibited writings, even those which 'contain absolutely nothing contrary to or concerning religion'.¹³ Such blanket statements concealed rather than clarified the myriad of problems with Erasmus' work in Reformation Europe and it was often left to individual readers to try to piece together a picture of the scholar from a mass of disparate writings.

Humanism, the Reformation and an Erasmian England?

Much like his contemporaries, historians have frequently disagreed about Erasmus' influence on early modern thought. The scholar has been hailed as a major influence on both Protestant and Catholic reformations¹⁴; as either a cheerleader for authoritarian princes or a

Painting by Holbein', *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, 67:2 (1980), pp. 50-54. Stephen Scher (ed.), *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance* (London, 1994), pp. 349-50. For an English example: Susan Foister, 'Humanism and Art in the Early Tudor Period: John Leland's Poetic Praise of Painting', in Jonathan Woolfson (ed.), *Reassessing Tudor Humanism* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 129-50.

⁹ Bruce Mansfield, *Phoenix of His Age: Interpretations of Erasmus c.1550-1750* (Toronto, 1979), p. 3.

¹⁰ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*. Idem, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford, 2000).

¹¹ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, pp. 357-61. Craig Thompson, 'The Return to Basel', *CWE* 40, pp. 1122-36.

¹² Thompson, 'The Return'.

¹³ Scheck, *Life of Origen*, pp. 246-7.

¹⁴ Good surveys of this terrain are: Tracey, *Erasmus*, pp. 183-203. Greta Grace Kroeker, 'Theological and Humanistic Legacies of Erasmus in the Age of Reform', in Martin Wallraff, Silvana Seidel Menchi, Kaspar von Greyerz, *Basel 1516: Erasmus' Edition of the New Testament* (Tübingen, 2016), pp. 255-66.

powerful voice of political critique¹⁵; and as both a sceptic¹⁶, with no regard for the achievements of the middle ages, and as the final flowering of late-medieval devotional writing. Modern historians, in fact, have extended the frontiers of Erasmian influence into almost every aspect of sixteenth-century thought, from literature, art and education, to politics, religion and radicalism.¹⁷

Almost all of these surveys have been concerned with Erasmus' role in two related movements: humanism and the reformation. Humanism – the reassessment of classical culture, literature and languages throughout Europe from the fourteenth century onwards – is often disparaged as a term, partly for its lack of technical precision, but also on account of its connotations of secularism and individualism. Humanism in the sixteenth century was less a coherent ideology than a programme of study: a desire to purify contemporary scholarship by returning it to what humanists saw as its more authentic origins in the classical world.¹⁸ In order to carry out this work of cultural restitution, humanist scholars challenged existing educational practices and developed a range of new technical skills with which to assess ancient writings. They compared manuscripts in the hopes of solving errors or inconsistencies in texts and they developed sophisticated philological and rhetorical techniques to analyse an author's writing. Many soon realised that these same methods could be applied to the Christian canon, for the bible and the writings of the Church Fathers had likewise emerged from the classical world. Erasmus was a pioneer in the latter regard, extending the philological and codicological principles of Angelo Poliziano, Ermolao Barbaro and Lorenzo Valla, and applying them with often iconoclastic effect to the letters of St Jerome or the Apostolic Epistles.¹⁹

Humanism proposed radical new approaches to texts and has often been linked to the outbreak of the reformation. Luther and others, after all, wanted to cut away years of ecclesiastical corruption and restore Christian doctrine and practice to its biblical and apostolic origins. They

¹⁵ Quentin Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1978), i, pp. 213-43. James Tracey, *The Politics of Erasmus: A Pacifist Intellectual and His Political Milieu* (Toronto, 1978). Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely Education in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2015).

¹⁶ Richard Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes* (Berkeley, 1979).

¹⁷ Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford, 1985). Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge, 1996), esp. pp. 19-65. Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric, 1380-1620* (Oxford, 2011). A. G. Dickens and Whitney Jones, *Erasmus the Reformer* (London, 1994). Peter Bietenholz, *Encounters with a Radical Erasmus: Erasmus' Work as a Source of Radical Thought in Early Modern Europe* (Toronto, 2016). Darren Williamson, 'The "Doctor of Anabaptism" and the Prince of Humanists: Balthasar Hubmaier's Contact with Erasmus', *ERSY*, 27:1 (2007), pp. 37-58. See also n.8.

¹⁸ Good surveys of some of this vast historiographical landscape are: Albert Rabil, Jr. (ed.), *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy* (3 vols, Philadelphia, 1988). Charles Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge, 2006). Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From 1300 to 1850* (Oxford, 1976). Jill Kraye, *Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy* (London, 2000).

¹⁹ Werner Schwarz, *Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation: Some Reformation Controversies and their Background* (Cambridge, 1955). Jerry Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1983). Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship* (2 vols, Oxford, 1983-1993), i, pp. 9-45. Jill Kraye, 'Pagan Philosophy and Patristics in Erasmus and His Contemporaries', *ERSY*, 31:1 (2011), pp. 33-60.

often relied on methods and rhetoric which closely resembled those of the humanists.²⁰ Whether humanism contributed to the reformation or whether both were symptomatic of the same crisis of faith and meaning remains a source of fervent debate.²¹ The present study asks instead how contemporaries envisaged the relationship between the two, particularly how they related Erasmus' works to the religious schism emerging in Europe. As such, it explores not only how humanism assisted the formation of new religious identities, but also how humanism was itself confessionalised and reshaped by the reformation.²² It thus joins a growing body of work which understands Erasmus (particularly in his later years) not only as a forerunner of the reformation, but also as a participant.²³

Historians have often explained the reception of Erasmus as a national phenomenon. Such investigations have made it clear that the response to Erasmus' writings was deeply affected by local conditions. In Spain and Italy, initial enthusiasm for his ideas was soon eclipsed by the machinery of Catholic reform, especially the Inquisition.²⁴ By contrast, regions with more idiosyncratic paths through the reformation – say, Poland – have often been considered hotbeds of Erasmianism.²⁵ This dissertation is similarly concerned with Erasmus' impact at a national level. It considers his reception in England in the first half of the sixteenth century, roughly spanning the period between his first visit to the country (1499-1500) and the publication of the English translation of his *Paraphrases* (1548-52).

Erasmus knew England well. He lived there on three occasions (1499-1500, 1505-6, 1509-14) and made three shorter visits in 1515, 1516 and 1517.²⁶ During these stays, he found several fellow enthusiasts for humanist studies such as John Colet and Thomas More. He met the future Henry VIII and attracted the attention of other patrons who would support him in the coming years. While Erasmus never returned to England after 1517, he remained in regular contact with them and frequently called on their expertise and advice. In his will of 1527, he made special arrangements for the distribution of his works to English friends.²⁷ The connection was more than reciprocated in England. From the 1520s, Erasmus' books appeared with increasing regularity in

²⁰ John Schneider, *Philip Melanchthon's Rhetorical Construal of Biblical Authority* (Lewiston, NY, 1991).

²¹ Two stimulating discussions are: Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford, 2002); Richard Rex, 'Humanism', in Andrew Pettegree (ed.), *The Reformation World* (London, 2000), pp. 51-71.

²² Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism*, pp. 3-4.

²³ Greta Grace Kroeker, *Erasmus in the Footsteps of Paul* (Toronto, 2011).

²⁴ Marcel Bataillon, *Érasme et L'Espagne: Recherches sur L'Histoire Spirituelle du XVIe Siècle* (Paris, 1937). Geoffrey Nuttall, 'Erasmus and Spain: The Vision of Marcel Bataillon', *JEH*, 45:1 (1994), pp. 105-113. Silvana Seidel Menchi, *Erasmus in Italia: 1520-1580* (Turin, 1987).

²⁵ Howard Louthan, 'A Model for Christendom? Erasmus, Poland, and the Reformation', *Church History*, 83:1 (2014), pp. 18-37.

²⁶ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, i, pp. 223-34; ii, pp. 51-60, 86-94, 109-25.

²⁷ *Ibid*, ii, p. 384.

library catalogues, household inventories and booksellers' accounts (see Chapter 1). By 1547, it was obligatory for priests and their parishes to own copies of Erasmus' work. A growing number of his writings also became available in English in these years.²⁸

It is with some justification, then, that historians have given Erasmus a starring role in narratives of humanism and the reformation in early modern England. Perhaps the most far-reaching interpretation was offered by James McConica in his still influential 1965 monograph, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI*. McConica argued that between 1500 and 1550 intellectual life in England was 'dominated by one man, Desiderius Erasmus'.²⁹ Even if there was a nascent humanist community in England prior to the scholar's arrival, it was Erasmus' distinctive brand of Christian humanism that came to define it in McConica's eyes. In this regard, he was primarily concerned with Erasmus as a devotional or pietist writer, whose emphasis on the bible, lay piety and the cultivation of interior faith found ready support among the educated. Moreover, where a previous generation of historians had argued for the eclipse of humanism in the reformation, McConica stridently presented Erasmus as the guiding spirit of England's religious changes. The 'Erasmian gospel', in his view, was the thread that connected the reformation under Henry VIII with 'the peculiar climate of the Elizabethan settlement'.³⁰

McConica's work has come in for a great deal of criticism in the nearly sixty years since its original publication. Like much of the scholarship of the period, it contended that humanism had only really begun in England around the year 1500. McConica inherited that view from the work of Roberto Weiss, who famously concluded that 'pure humanists did not exist in England' in the fifteenth century and that the country remained by and large a cultural backwater.³¹ It was easy to conclude from such a starting point (as McConica did) that English intellectual life needed Erasmus to inject it with new vitality and that his visits to the country from 1499 were the catalyst for change. In recent years, however, a variety of scholars have done much to undermine Weiss' judgement of humanism in England prior to Erasmus' arrival.³² These accounts have generally

²⁸ Edward Devereux, *Renaissance English Translations of Erasmus: A Bibliography to 1700* (Toronto, 1983).

²⁹ J. K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 1-2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 12. The case is reiterated in McConica, 'The English Reception of Erasmus', in M. Mout, Heribert Smolinsky and J. Trapman (eds), *Erasmianism: Idea and Reality* (Amsterdam, 1997), pp. 37-46.

³¹ Roberto Weiss, *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century* (Third ed., Oxford, 1967), p. 275.

³² J. B. Trapp, *More, Colet and Erasmus: The Early Tudor Humanists and Their Books* (London, 1990). Trapp, 'The Humanist Book' in *CHBB*, iii, pp. 283-315. David Carlson, 'Royal Tutors in the Reign of Henry VII', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22:2 (1991), pp. 253-79. Carlson, *English Humanist Books: Writers and Patrons, Manuscript and Print, 1475-1525* (Toronto, 1993). Clare Carroll, 'Humanism and English Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', in Jill Kraye (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 246-268. Daniel Wakelin, 'England: Humanism Beyond Weiss', in David Rundle (ed.), *Humanism in Fifteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 265-306. David Rundle, *The Renaissance Reform of the Book and Britain: The English Quattrocento* (Cambridge, 2019). See also Rundle's introduction to the fourth edition of Weiss' *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford,

jettisoned the idea of humanism as an Italian cultural export, preferring instead a more interactive, though sporadic model of cultural exchange, one that involved actors across Europe.³³ Stricter definitions of the movement have also given way to concepts of experimentation and hybridity. Parallel to this has been a growing awareness of the diversity of humanism in the reigns of Henry VIII and his children.³⁴ These advances beg a number of questions about Erasmus' legacy in England. What impact did Erasmus have on his arrival in 1500? How was his reputation affected by his rising prominence in Europe? And how did his brand of humanism co-exist with other authors and models? In Chapter 2, I suggest that historians ought to pay greater attention to the changing dynamics of Erasmus' relationship with the English humanist community. Despite a large amount of collaboration between Erasmus and his English colleagues in the years up to 1520, efforts to support him often exposed rivalries or differences of opinion. By paying closer attention to the technicalities of scholarship such as philology or the comparison of manuscripts, this thesis proposes that Erasmus was only one model of humanist learning. It was often those who had drunk deepest at the well of classical learning who felt compelled to challenge the scholar's conclusions (Chap. 7).

If dissatisfaction with McConica's view of humanism has long been evident, his argument for the importance of Erasmus to the course of the English reformation has had a more enduring effect. McConica's suggestion that Erasmus drove religious change by providing a doctrinal *via media* or point of compromise in a divided nation has been pursued by a variety of later historians. Lucy Wooding has proposed that Erasmus' stress on the bible, inner faith, godly kingship and a rejection of superstition were the defining features of Henrician reform and the bedrock on which future Catholic identities would be built.³⁵ The Dutchman's stress on Christ as the focal point of religious life has also been considered an important bridgehead from which evangelicals could influence change in the church.³⁶ Extending the chronological frame further, Gregory Dodds has contended that 'Erasmian styles of religious discourse' continued to shape the Elizabethan and Jacobean churches, especially in their emphasis on 'peace, unity and consensus'.³⁷ Last but not least, the Erasmian label has provided a flexible vehicle for discussing the religious allegiance of England's monarchs. George Bernard and Aysha Pollnitz have suggested in different ways that it

2010). I am grateful to Jessica Crown for sharing her work on this seminal period: Crown, 'Renaissance Humanism in England, c.1490-c.1530' (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2019).

³³ Crown, 'Renaissance humanism in England'. Wakelin, 'Humanism beyond Weiss', p. 272.

³⁴ Jonathan Woolfson (ed.), *Reassessing Tudor Humanism* (Basingstoke, 2002).

³⁵ Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2000).

³⁶ Susan Wabuda, *Preaching during the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2002). Christine Peters, *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Cambridge, 2003).

³⁷ Gregory Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus: The Erasmian Legacy and Religious Change in Early Modern England* (Toronto, 2009), pp. xiii, xvi-xvii.

was Erasmus' vision of a royally led reform movement that shaped Henry VIII's priorities in the early reformation.³⁸

Critics of this Erasmian reformation have not been in short supply either. Debate continues about the true religious loyalties of the various Tudor monarchs. Where some have considered Henry VIII an Erasmian, others have seen little but a 'ragbag of emotional preferences'.³⁹ Others have resisted the effort to equate English Catholic opinion with Erasmus, looking instead to a broader range of continental contacts.⁴⁰ Such complaints have gone hand-in-hand with broader developments in the field of intellectual history, where scholars have grown increasingly uneasy about the supposed 'influence' of a given author and have instead focused on the processes by which ideas are received. In the case of Erasmus, this has meant rejecting the idea that 'wherever one finds Greek, theology linked to humanism, attempts at mediation between various confessional orientations, there is Erasmianism'.⁴¹ Alistair Fox has cautioned against the tendency to play 'fast and loose' with Erasmus' ideas, especially the ways in which his writings have become a shorthand in England for forms of moderation or compromise.⁴² At the heart of debates about the English reformation, of course, is also a deeper historiographical division between those who wish to see it as a coherent intellectual project and those who explain its results as the product of a messy, often factionally-driven set of compromises.⁴³ Exponents of the latter persuasion have tended to portray Erasmus as a symptom of the energies and tensions running through late-medieval Christianity that would eventually unravel in the sixteenth century.⁴⁴

Whether they consider Erasmus as central to or symptomatic of the reformation, historians of early modern England have usually been content to generalise Erasmus as an advocate for biblical reading and translation, for the refocusing of devotional life on Christ and the gospels as opposed to ceremony, and for peace and unity in the midst of confessional division. Such a view

³⁸ George Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven, 2005). Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely Education in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2015).

³⁹ Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Henry VIII and the Reform of the Church' in Diarmaid MacCulloch (ed.), *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety* (London, 1995), p. 178. See also: Richard Rex, 'The Religion of Henry VIII', *HJ*, 57:1 (2004), pp. 1-32.

⁴⁰ C. Armstrong, 'English Catholicism Rethought?', *JEH*, 54:4 (2003), pp. 714-28.

⁴¹ Silvana Seidel Menchi, 'Do We Need the "Ism"? Some Mediterranean Perspectives', in M. Mout, Heribert Smolinsky and J. Trapman (eds), *Erasmianism: idea and reality* (Amsterdam, 1997), p. 49.

⁴² Alistair Fox and John Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician Age: Humanism, Politics and Reform 1500-1550* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 9-33. Andrew Pettegree, 'A. G. Dickens and His Critics: A New Narrative of the English Reformation', *Historical Research*, 77:195 (2004), pp. 39-58. Rex, 'The Religion of Henry VIII', pp. 1-32.

⁴³ One interesting balancing act in this regard is: Carl Trueman, *Luther's Legacy: Salvation and English Reformers, 1525-1556* (Oxford, 1994).

⁴⁴ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700* (London, 2004), pp. 97-105. Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 69-73, 126-7, 130-5, 167-9. Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (New Haven, 2017) pp. 3-40. Eamon Duffy, 'Thomas More and the Strange Death of Erasmian England', in *Reformation Divided: Catholics, Protestants and the Conversion of England* (London, 2017), pp. 19-49.

stands in stark contrast to recent explorations of the scholar himself which have stressed the changes in his outlook over time – especially the impact of the religious change on his writings – and the need to grapple with Erasmus as a reformation theologian, not simply as a proponent of a synthesis of Christian and pagan values.⁴⁵ After all, several of his most important works – the *Paraphrases*, four editions of the *Annotations*, and various treatises on free will, confession and preaching, to name only a few – were published after the emergence of Luther’s challenge. While he often treated his critics with contempt, Erasmus also edited or reframed several of his writings in response to their attacks.⁴⁶ We might crudely characterise this as a shift in historiographical focus from the scholar’s devotional writings to his more technical works of religious exegesis and controversy.

In what follows, I would like to propose a similar shift in approach to Erasmus in England. This dissertation argues that Erasmus’ readership was far more engaged in the scholarly and theological implications of his works than usually suggested. They devoted significant labour to understanding his methods for editing the bible and Church Fathers and weighed the merits of his apologies against their own religious loyalties. Contemporaries wanted to know what Erasmus thought of the religious changes happening around them and eagerly sought out his opinions on questions of controversy. Very few looked to Erasmus to bridge the religious divide. Nor did questions about his loyalties cease at his death; rather, readers seem to have applied ever more focused confessional, historical and literary lenses to his works in the hopes of making and remaking Erasmus as a reformation thinker. Erasmus was certainly not the inspiration for the English reformation, but neither was he entirely disregarded in the process. Indeed, we might characterise Erasmus’ reputation in England around the year 1550 as something of paradox. While his works were ever more ubiquitous, the scholar himself was increasingly peripheral to the humanist and reformation movements more generally. Only by charting the complex and often contradictory arguments about Erasmus *through* the reformation, then, can we truly understand his place within it.

Readers of Erasmus

Erasmus and his fellow humanists were convinced that learning in Europe could be revived by returning to its roots in classical and Christian antiquity. A similar desire for more authentic sources has also gripped the study of Erasmus in early modern Europe. Where a previous

⁴⁵ Christ-von Wedel, *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, pp. 3-7. Kroeker, *Erasmus in the Footsteps of Paul*, pp. 1-8.

⁴⁶ E.g. Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, ii, pp. 29-60.

generation of historians had been content to trace the impact of the scholar's writings through changing educational statutes or the writings of his contemporaries, studies in the last thirty or so years have turned to more direct evidence of engagement, such as translations, commentaries, paratexts and inquisition records.⁴⁷ As Karl Enenkel has noted, much of this has been inspired by developments in reception theory and the history of the book, and has resulted in the analysis of a kaleidoscope of individual responses to Erasmus' works.⁴⁸

This thesis follows suit, building on the work of scholars like James Carley, David Selwyn, Elisabeth Leedham-Green and others, by exploring Erasmus' reception as a broader encounter between a writer and his readership.⁴⁹ After all, it was in books that most English men and women encountered the Dutchman's ideas. The backbone of this study is a survey of hundreds of surviving editions of Erasmus' works in collections across the UK and elsewhere. Historians have become increasingly aware of the importance of this material in understanding both the place of reading in early modern life and the impact of various intellectual and cultural movements. Books, Natalie Zemon Davis long ago pointed out, are carriers of social information.⁵⁰ Ownership inscriptions, bindings and other provenance information provide important clues as to where, when and how writings circulated in the period. Contemporaries were instructed to read actively: to make notes in the margins or to compile material in commonplace books.⁵¹ Far from straightforwardly conveying its contents to the reader, a book often required systems of interpretation or navigation, from the correction of printers' errors, to commentaries and indexes, to higher forms of literary or scholarly intervention. Nor was reading a solitary pursuit. Contemporary men and women often sought out information from teachers, scholars and other books to help them better appreciate what they were reading.⁵² The evidence of books, then, reminds us of the broader interpretive culture in which Erasmus' works were read.

⁴⁷ Menchi, *Erasmus in Italia*, pp. 11-15. Ann Blair and Maryam Patton, 'A Quantitative Study of the Paratexts in Erasmus-Froben Imprints', *ERSY*, 41:2 (2021), pp. 99-181. J. Austin Gavin and Thomas Walsh, 'The *Praise of Folly* in Context: The Commentary of Girardus Listrius', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 24:2 (1971), pp. 193-209.

⁴⁸ Karl Enenkel, 'Manifold Reader Responses: The Reception of Erasmus in Early Modern Europe', in Karl Enenkel (ed.) *The Reception of Erasmus in the Early Modern Period* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 1-21.

⁴⁹ Carley, *Libraries*. David Selwyn, *The Library of Thomas Cranmer* (Oxford, 1996). Idem, *Edmund Geste and His books: Reconstructing the Library of a Cambridge Don and Elizabethan Bishop* (London, 2017). Leedham-Green, *Inventories*.

⁵⁰ Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Beyond the Market: Books as Gifts in Sixteenth-Century France', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 33 (1983), pp. 69-88.

⁵¹ Ann Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven, 2010). See, Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven, 2000).

⁵² Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, "'Studied for Action': How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy", *Past and Present*, 129:1 (1990), pp. 30-78. William Sherman, 'The Place of Reading in the English Renaissance: John Dee Revisited', in James Raven and Naomi Tadmor (eds), *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 62-76. Anthony Grafton, 'Is the History of Reading a Marginal Enterprise? Guillaume Budé and His Books', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 91:2 (1997), p. 152.

That is not to say, however, that physical books are straightforward witnesses. Marginalia remain a controversial medium. Notes left in books are usually anonymous and even when we do know their author, we are usually left to speculate on when they were active. Annotations, underlining and manicules are often cryptic and have sometimes succumbed to trimming, water damage, worming and deliberate erasure. Very seldom are they personal reactions to texts, but rather more formal records of study. Similar problems of chronology and uncertainty could be raised with other aspects of book history, such as bindings or provenance. An obsessive focus on reading may also lead us to ignore the book's other uses.⁵³ Moreover, studies of reading generally lend themselves to rich case studies, rather than precise chronological surveys of intellectual change.

Challenges of evidence and interpretation, I would suggest, are hardly unique to the study of the codex. If the physical book remains a complex object, it still represents our best evidence of the history of reading and reception of authors in early modern Europe.⁵⁴ Wherever possible, I have justified my attributions of hands, bindings or provenance in the body of the text. Readers seeking more information can turn to the bibliography where they will find further notes on the volumes in question. Moreover, by studying a large quantity of readers and setting them against more traditional forms of evidence, this thesis follows the lead of Jason Scott-Warren and others who have called for a more blended approach to the study of reading practices, one which sets individual case studies against larger historical backdrops.⁵⁵ This project, then, joins a growing body of work which seeks to site intellectual history more firmly within the developments of book history and the history of scholarship. In what follows, I try to provide fuller answers to some of the more basic questions regarding the reception of Erasmus in England: Who owned which of his works and where did they read them? In what format were they acquired? What materials or note-taking strategies did contemporaries use to make sense of them? And how might England's tumultuous affairs have affected the interpretation of Erasmus' life and works?

This dissertation is divided into two parts. In Part I, I argue that the reactions of individual readers can only be understood in relation to two broader structures affecting the author's reception in the early modern period. Chapter 1 explores how the production, circulation and survival of Erasmian books impacted readers in the period. It details how the printed production of Erasmus' writings expanded rapidly in the 1520s and continued to be dominated by European printers, even after English printers began to print his works in English. Manuscripts remained a

⁵³ David Pearson, *Book Ownership in Stuart England* (Oxford, 2021), p. 16.

⁵⁴ Grafton, 'Is the History of Reading a Marginal Enterprise?', pp. 155-7.

⁵⁵ Jason Scott-Warren, 'News, Sociability, and Bookbuying in Early Modern England: The Letters of Sir Thomas Cornwallis', *The Library*, 1 (2000), pp. 381-402. Grafton, 'Is the History of Reading a Marginal Enterprise?'.

viable means of circulating Erasmus' works, albeit one often related to networks of political or confessional allegiance. It then explains how the circulation of Erasmian books varied depending on the type of book and the context in which it was acquired and that these in turn shaped how books were used. Finally, I contemplate how the use and uneven rate of survival for books has shaped our picture of Erasmus' reception in England. Chapter 2 examines the efforts of Erasmus to manage his reputation in England. It charts the creation and subsequent disintegration of a complex network of English supporters of Erasmus who promoted and defended his work. Erasmus proved remarkably adept at harnessing the support of his English friends. In the 1520s and 30s, however, this system broke down as politics, religious differences and geography increasingly divided Erasmus from his English acquaintance. Readers, these two chapters suggest, were subtly impacted by the types of books they used and the efforts Erasmus had made to explain, defend and retract parts of his writing.

Part II looks at the evidence of individual readers themselves. Rather than treat each reader independently, case studies have been arranged into a series of what might loosely be described as 'interpretive communities'.⁵⁶ These range from institutional settings – the university, monastery or court – to other forms of association in the period, such as confessional outlook or scholarly agenda. It will be evident from the chapters themselves that these reading communities are neither comprehensive nor entirely satisfactory. Members of the religious orders, for instance, frequently studied at university, benefitted from royal or noble patronage and went on to play significant roles in the reformation. Likewise, little space is devoted here to other important sites of literary culture such as the City of London, the Inns of Court or the noble household. Nonetheless, the communities under discussion here do provide a set of common problems and experiences from which to analyse the humanist and reformation reputation of Erasmus in England.

Chapter 3 surveys the circulation and interpretation of Erasmus' work in and around the English court. It traces the increasingly public discussion of Erasmus' authority and legacy from the reign of Henry VII to that of Edward VI. Despite the best efforts of figures connected to the English government, Erasmus was not decisively won for the English reformation. Instead, debates had only grown fiercer about the scholar's true religious outlook and its implications for future reform. These debates played out in a number of forums, from Henry VIII's bedchamber to discussions in parliament. Chapter 4 looks in greater detail at the impact of the reformation on the reading of Erasmus, especially among those intimately involved in resisting or supporting religious change. This section stresses that readers on both sides of the emerging confessional

⁵⁶ Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?: The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), pp. 14-16.

divide developed a range of strategies to reject, reframe or align Erasmus with their own notions of religious orthodoxy. As such, there remained an interest in the scholar's works among both conservatives and evangelicals, even as Erasmus became increasingly out of step with Protestant and Catholic theology. Most importantly, he remained a significant example of how to conduct scholarship in the reformation era and the interdependence of humanist methods and right belief. Chapter 5 ponders Erasmus' reception at English universities, particularly among those who studied Greek and Hebrew. These figures formed a natural audience for Erasmus' works but they often drew on their own knowledge to criticise or rework Erasmus' principles for their own ends. Erasmus' close attention to manuscripts, philology and other scholarly criteria, therefore, provided his readers with the tools to both improve and reject his writings. Finally, Chapter 6 considers the impact of Erasmus' writings on members of the religious orders, concentrating on readers among the Austin Canons and Benedictines. Though Erasmus has often been presented as an opponent of the religious life, this section demonstrates that Erasmus' works were by no means incompatible with the religious vocation. In fact, Erasmus was often used to express a desire for reform or to reimagine the religious orders along humanist lines.

In what follows, comparatively little will be said about Erasmus' impact on educational or literary ideas. This is not because I consider these to be peripheral to the scholar's interests or unimportant in England. A number of scholars have shown precisely the opposite.⁵⁷ Practical and polemical reasons have nevertheless caused me to exclude them. Doing justice to these themes would require a considerably longer thesis. Literary ideas, in particular, would necessitate a more balanced discussion of reading materials with the actual practice of writing. More importantly, this thesis seeks to explore the relationship of humanism and the reformation through the prism of Erasmus' writings. As such my interests could be said to be more broadly in Christian or biblical humanism than in its other offshoots. In focusing on this facet, I am making a larger claim about humanism and the reformation in England and how they should be studied. The desire for good Latin and a devout frame of mind were undoubtedly important motivations for contemporaries. Interest in humanism and the reformation, however, was also driven by a curiosity in the technical, theological and scholarly aspects of these movements. Contemporaries took a leaf out of Erasmus' books in more ways than one, then. They appreciated that Erasmus had compared manuscripts, collated other textual witnesses and unravelled the deeper implications of words and phrases, and they wished to do likewise, often to very different effect. It is with this more hands-on vision of

⁵⁷ Joan Simon, *Education and Society in Tudor England* (Cambridge, 1979). Pollnitz, *Princely Education*. Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric*.

the sixteenth century, therefore, that we can embark on a journey through the period with Erasmus' readers.



Part I
The structures of reception

Chapter 1

The production, circulation and survival of Erasmian books



The reading of Erasmus in England in the sixteenth century was shaped by the practices of the early modern book trade. The decisions of scribes and printers helped to mould the market in Erasmian ideas, as did shifts in overall production and format. How and why Erasmus' books were acquired and the environments in which they circulated were also significant for his long-term reception. This chapter provides an overview of the different forms the scholar's writings took in England. It demonstrates how the production of Erasmus' works expanded rapidly in the 1520s and that European printers remained the primary producers of Erasmian texts in England, even as local output increased in the 1530s. Likewise, it argues that manuscript and printed copies of Erasmus co-existed rather than competed, often with important consequences for the reception of his works. By considering the circulation of various Erasmian volumes, we can also begin to explain where and why Erasmus' books were read. Finally, this chapter explores how the differing rates of survival of Erasmian volumes have come to shape our understanding of his reception. Taken together, the forces of production, circulation and survival provide a broad structure in which to understand the changing interpretation of Erasmus between 1500 and 1550.

(i) Print and manuscript production

No account of Erasmus' reception in the sixteenth century could fail to acknowledge his success as a printed author. In his lifetime alone, approximately 1,600 separate editions of his writings made their way into print. Erasmus had spent time in some of Europe's finest printing houses and recognised the potential of the medium as both a means of widening the appeal of humanism and of projecting his own personality onto the European stage.¹ Scholars are only now beginning to unpack the importance of the print shop to early modern humanism.² Likewise, the

¹ S. Shaw, 'A Study of the Collaboration between Erasmus of Rotterdam and His Printer Johann Froben at Basel during the Years 1514 to 1527', *Erasmus Studies*, 6:1 (1986), pp. 31-124. Oren Margolis, 'Hercules in Venice: Aldus Manutius and the Making of Erasmian Humanism', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 30 (2019), pp. 97-126. P. S. Allen, 'Erasmus' Relations with His Printers', *The Library*, 13:1 (1913), pp. 297-322.

² Ann Blair, 'Erasmus and His Amanuenses', *ERSY*, 1 (2019), pp. 22-49. Anthony Grafton, *Inky Fingers: The Making of Books in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 2020). John Gerritzen, 'Printing at Froben's: An Eye-Witness

full story of Erasmian printing is still emerging as regional and national bibliographies are compiled and collated.³

Two facets of the Erasmian print production, nonetheless, should be emphasised. The first is that, as David McKitterick has suggested, ‘the geography of production was very different from the geography of use’.⁴ Between 1500 and 1550 production was dominated by the major printing centres of Europe (see Table 1). Between them, Paris, Basel and Cologne produced 43% of all printed editions of the scholar’s work. England was never a major centre of Erasmian production and its output was similar to that of middle-ranking cities of the Empire such as Augsburg and Nuremberg.⁵ Most of England’s output served specific markets and the majority of demand for Erasmus’ writings was met by imports. Almost all the readers surveyed in this study were using books printed on European presses. It was primarily the printers of Europe, then, who shaped the market for Erasmus in England.

Table 1: Total number of printed editions of Erasmus’ works by location of production (top ten cities)
Source: Editions listed in USTC between 1500-50.

<i>Paris</i>	<i>Basel</i>	<i>Cologne</i>	<i>Lyon</i>	<i>Antwerp</i>	<i>Strasbourg</i>	<i>Leipzig</i>	<i>Venice</i>	<i>Augsburg</i>	<i>London</i>
628	528	387	334	325	259	180	141	108	94

Secondly, the story of Erasmian printing was not one of relentless growth. Instead, production fell into three distinct phases (see *Fig. 1*). Up to the year 1514, production of Erasmus’ works was modest. From 1515, however, Erasmus entered into a closer partnership with Johann Froben of Basel and the latter decided to significantly increase the production of Erasmus’ works. A boom in Erasmus’ works was sustained by the entry of several major print houses into the market from the mid-1520s and ended with the completion of Erasmus’ *Omnia Opera* at Basel in 1540. Judged purely on the basis of the number of editions, the highpoint of Erasmian production came around 1520 when around 170 editions of his work were published across Europe. Print runs, however, may have been larger in the later 1520s such that more copies of each edition were produced in later years, though fewer editions. The ripple effect of this boom on other markets can be seen in the growth of printed production in England from the 1530s. For the final ten years under survey, production of Erasmian works was in decline in Europe.

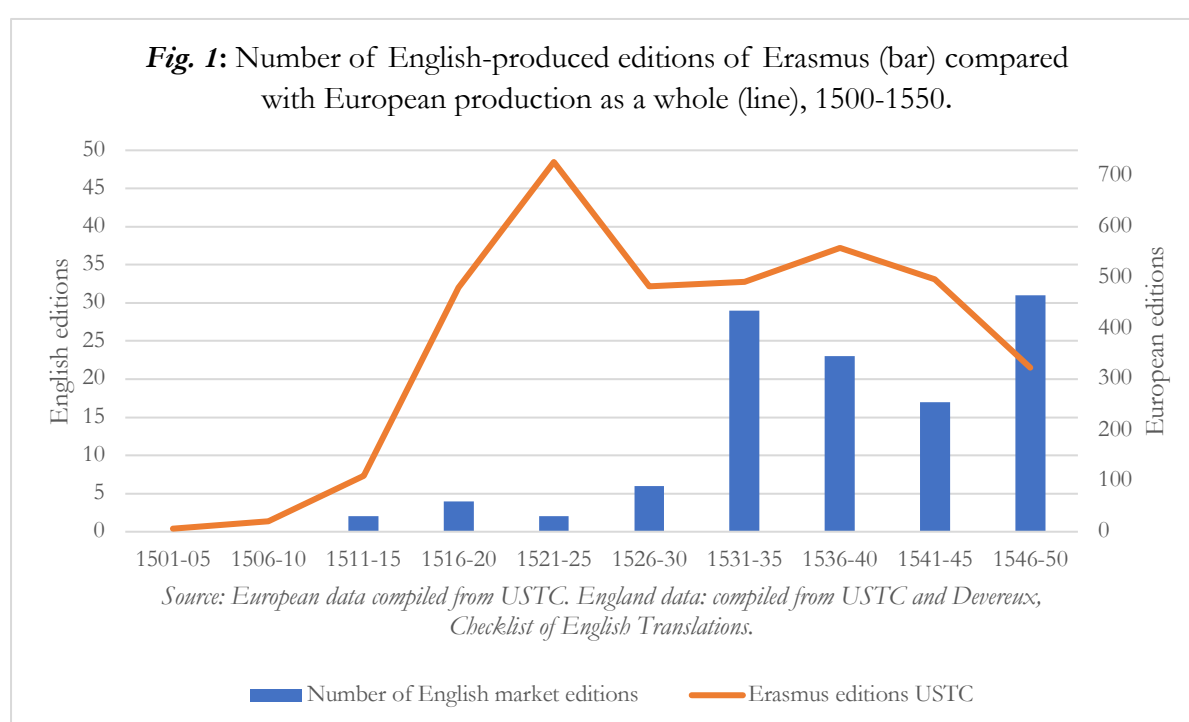
Account’, *Studies in Bibliography*, 44 (1991), pp. 144-63. Ann Blair’s unpublished Panizzi Lectures (2019) are essential guides to Erasmus’ printing practices.

³ The first effort at a complete bibliography of Erasmus’ works was undertaken by Ferdinand van der Haeghen, *Bibliotheca Erasiana* (3 vols, Ghent, 1893).

⁴ David McKitterick, *The Invention of Rare Books: Private Interest and Public Memory, 1600-1840* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 43.

⁵ USTC lists 88 editions for the period 1500-50 for Nuremberg.

Across the whole period, the majority of Erasmus' works were printed in quarto or smaller, with folio reserved for large and expensive volumes such as the New Testament. Some works outgrew their smaller formats. The *Adagia*, for example, had grown from a small quarto of around 800 adages in 1500, to a monumental folio of over 4000 adages in 1533.⁶ Printers occasionally chose to produce larger volumes. The Froben printing house produced a nine-volume, 9,500-page folio edition of Erasmus' complete works between 1538-40, intending to gather the author's writings into a single monumental collection. Readers, therefore, encountered an image of Erasmus which had by and large been created in the 1520s and 30s and could choose from a diverse range of books in different formats and serving different functions.



The nature of Erasmus' writings changed over time. Erasmus had first appeared in print in 1495 when one of his letters was used to fill a blank leaf at the end of Robert Gaguin's *Compendium de origine et gestis francorum*.⁷ The majority of Erasmus' output in the opening decade of the sixteenth century was aimed at an educational market and reflected his connections with humanist communities in cities like Paris and London. The *Lucubratiunculae* (printed by Thierry Martens in 1503 and 1509), for instance, was marketed as 'extremely useful to adolescents', even though it contained the scholar's debate with John Colet and the *Enchiridion*.⁸ The rarity of the

⁶ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, i, pp. 235-40.

⁷ Robert Gaguin, *De origine et gestis Francorum compendium* (Paris, 1495). USTC 760882.

⁸ Erasmus, *Lucubratiunculae aliquot perquam utiles adolescentibus* (Antwerp, 1503).

1503 edition suggests that the print run was small. Erasmus was likewise uncertain of sales of a hundred copies of the *Adagia* he had sent to England around this time.⁹ The decision to keep enlarging the *Adagia* and to have it printed by Aldus Manutius, however, helped to build Erasmus' reputation and 22 editions had been produced by 1515.¹⁰ More instant success was found with the *Moriae Encomium*. In its first year alone (1511) it went through four editions. Erasmus also began to develop a more sophisticated print persona. As Schoeck observed, from 1515 onwards Erasmus provided far more autobiographical detail in the *Adagia* and his letters began appearing in print around this time.¹¹

The quantity and scope of Erasmus' printed output grew markedly from 1515. In 1516, he completed his landmark editions of the New Testament and the writings of Jerome. Works which had previously circulated in manuscript such as the *Julius Exclusus* (1517), *Antibarbari* and the *De conscribendis epistolis* (both 1520) were printed for the first time.¹² Older writings were also given a new lease of life. The *Enchiridion* was printed twice up to 1514, but then went through six editions in the next four years and a further 40 in the decade after.¹³ Not all of Erasmus' writings were instant hits. Erasmus' New Testament, for example, sold slowly. Of the initial print run of 1,200, Froben still had four hundred copies to sell in 1518 and delayed work on a new edition until the following year in the hopes of selling his existing stock.¹⁴

Erasmus had not created this boom alone. As Valentina Sebastiani has shown, it was driven in large part by his enterprising printer, Johann Froben.¹⁵ Between 1517 and 1519, Froben produced just under a hundred works in total, 45 written, edited or compiled by Erasmus.¹⁶ After Erasmus' relocation to Basel in 1521, the proportion grew still higher, such that 70% of Froben's output in the years 1521 to 1527 was written, translated or edited by Erasmus.¹⁷ The print runs of the 1520s were also considerably larger than those Froben had used in the 1510s. Whereas the New Testament had a second issue of 2,000 copies in 1519, for instance, by 1524 6,000 copies of the *Paraphrases*, half in octavo and half in folio, were produced.¹⁸ After Froben's death in 1527, a number of other printing houses helped to sustain this level of production, most notably Sebastian

⁹ Ep. 181, *CWE* 2, p. 88.

¹⁰ *USTC* lists 10 in Paris, 8 in Strasbourg, 1 each in Erfurt, Ferrara, Cologne, Tübingen.

¹¹ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, i, p. 240.

¹² Erasmus remains the likeliest candidate for authorship of the *Julius*. The most comprehensive discussion is Silvana Seidel Menchi, 'Introduction', *ASD* 1:8, pp. 5-131.

¹³ Charles Fantazzi, 'Introductory note', *CWE* 66, p. 4.

¹⁴ Ep. 801, *CWE* 5, p. 351.

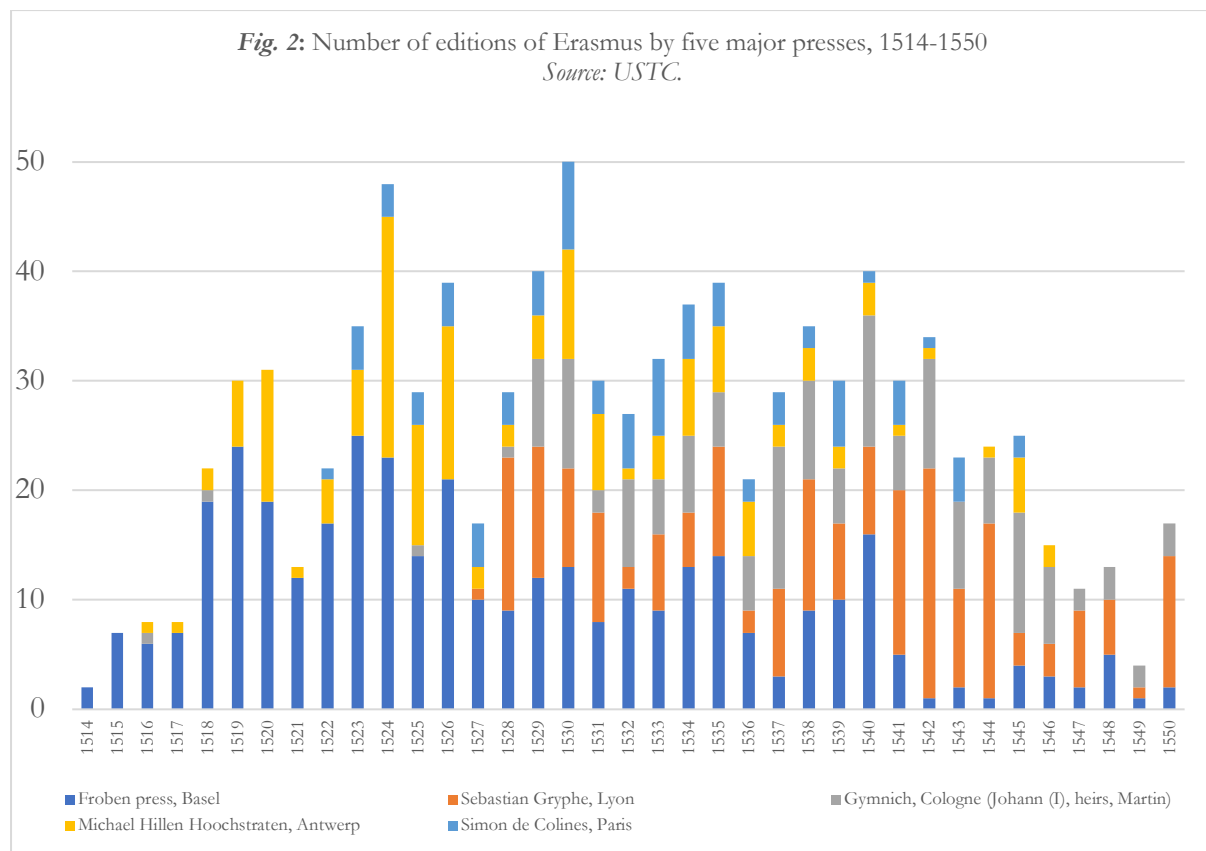
¹⁵ Valentina Sebastiani, *Johann Froben, Printer of Basel: A Biographical Profile and Catalogue of His Editions* (Leiden, 2018), pp. 39-79.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

Gryphe of Lyon, who on average published eight works by Erasmus a year between 1528 and 1550 (see Fig. 2).¹⁹



This boom was largely fuelled by reprints, reissues and revised editions of Erasmus' works. In 1526, for example Michael Hillen printed two editions of Erasmus' latest attack on Luther and the newly written *Lingua* along with 11 older Erasmian pieces, including six volumes of *Colloquies* and an epitome of the *Adagia*.²⁰ Throughout the 1520s, Erasmus was mired in religious disputes and continued to revise and, occasionally, retract, portions of his writing. While the 1520s gave rise to an impressive Erasmian printing industry, therefore, it also ensured that multiple variant editions of his works were in circulation. Managing Erasmus' reputation and interpretation, therefore, became significantly harder as the decade wore on and even his close friends were chastised for failing to keep up with the latest publications.²¹

The English production of Erasmus was only ever a fraction of the European market. Printers in England lacked the skilled craftsmen and finance to produce the elaborate Greek and

¹⁹ William Kemp, 'Printing Erasmus in Italic in Lyons: Jacques Moderne to Sebastian Gryphius', *Yale University Library Gazette*, 75:1 (2002), pp. 22-36.

²⁰ USTC: 403755, 437323, 437324, 437301, 441948, 442286 and 437320

²¹ Ep. 2263, *CWE* 16, pp. 165-9.

Latin editions of the mainland.²² The business of a printer like Wynkyn de Worde relied on both producing and importing books and he received 29 shipments of foreign books between 1501 and 1530.²³ Prior to 1525, therefore, English printers (most of whom were foreigners) concentrated on fulfilling demand for cheap Latin translations and educational texts. Richard Pynson produced an edition of William Lily and Erasmus' *Libellus de constructione* and some of Erasmus' Plutarch translations in 1513.²⁴ Wynkyn de Worde printed multiple editions of the *Colloquies* (1519, 1520), Cato's *Disticha moralia* (perhaps six editions) with Erasmus' commentary, and the *Institutio christiani hominis* (1520).²⁵ The latter was perhaps copied by Henry Pepwell in 1520.²⁶ The Cambridge printer John Siberch also pirated an edition of *De conscribendis epistolis* (1521).²⁷ In the mid-1520s, more of Erasmus' religious works became available in the vernacular. In the 1530s, around 50 editions of the scholar's works came off the English presses. That rate of production was only matched again in Edward's reign with the *The first tome or volume of the Paraphrase upon the Newe Testamente* (1548) by Edward Whitchurch which alone had eight different editions or settings.²⁸ *The first tome* was also the first Erasmian text to be produced in folio in England. The rise in English production cannot be straightforwardly equated with a jump in demand for Erasmus' works, especially given the sponsorship of several translations by Thomas Cromwell and the Edwardian government. The larger number of translations, in fact, reflected the growing debate over Erasmus and his place in the reformation in England in the 1520s and 30s.²⁹ Figures in the More and Pole families, for example, became patrons of conservative translation.³⁰ A flurry of publications attempted to present Erasmus in an evangelical light by emphasising his distaste of ecclesiastical traditions and desire for biblical translation.³¹ Printers in Antwerp such as Michael Hillen and Steven Mierdman also produced works for the English market, including several translations of Erasmus.

Erasmus' death in 1536 deprived the printers of new works by the scholar and European output gradually fell in the years up to 1550. Erasmus had made plans for the posthumous editing and publication of his complete works at Basel and these were joined by other efforts to heroise

²² Andrew Pettegree, 'A. G. Dickens and His Critics: A New Narrative of the English Reformation', *Historical Research*, 77:195 (2004), p. 45.

²³ C. Paul Christianson, 'The Rise of London's Book-Trade', in *CHBB*, iii, pp. 139-40.

²⁴ *ESTC*: 15601.3, 20060.

²⁵ *ESTC*: 4839.7, 4840, 4841, 4841.3.

²⁶ *ESTC*: 10450.3.

²⁷ *ESTC*: 10496.

²⁸ *ESTC*: 2854. Devereux, *Checklist*, pp. 23-4.

²⁹ Lucy Wooding, 'Erasmus and the Politics of Translation in Tudor England', *Studies in Church History*, 53 (2017), pp. 132-45.

³⁰ Elizabeth McCutcheon, 'Margaret More Roper's Translation of Erasmus' *Precatio Dominica*', *Moreana*, 52 (2015), pp. 235-48. Hazel Pierce, *Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, 1473-1541: Loyalty, Lineage and Leadership* (Cardiff, 2003).

³¹ William Roy, *An exhortation to the diligent studye of scripture* (Antwerp, 1529). *An epystell unto the reverende father & excellent prince, Christofer bysshop of Basyle, concernyng the forbedyng of eatynge of flesshe, and hyke constitutyons of men* (London, 1533).

his achievements in prose and poetry.³² Equally important, however, were various efforts to epitomise, excerpt and comment upon Erasmus' work, especially from the 1530s onwards. Johannes Velcurio, for example, produced a commentary on *De duplici copia*, while Miles Coverdale epitomised the *Enchiridion* for an English audience.³³ Richard Taverner freely adapted, translated and excerpted passages of Erasmus for his countrymen.³⁴ Translations also reflected shifting theological debates. Nicholas Lesse took it upon himself to translate Erasmus' annotation on divorce around the time that the Edwardian establishment was debating the question.³⁵

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Print and manuscript were not rival enterprises; they were part of a single ecosystem of texts in the early modern world. Erasmus himself extensively used manuscript circulation during his time in England. MS Egerton 1651, a compilation of his verse, may originate from copies of his poems circulated at Oxford between 1499 and 1500.³⁶ Erasmus' papers frequently passed between his friends and manuscripts made elegant gifts for patrons. The scholar had a scribe prepare a lavish copy of his translation of Plutarch for Henry VIII.³⁷ Other manuscripts were generated in the households of his close associates. French translations of three of Erasmus' devotional works were translated for Henry VII in the household of William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, by two of the latter's clients, Henry Haute and Gervasius Amoenus.³⁸ Pieter Meghen, a sometime messenger for Erasmus, produced two deluxe editions of the Erasmian New Testament in the 1520s, though who commissioned the works in England remains unknown.³⁹

It was, therefore, more than possible for texts to pass back and forth between manuscript and print. Erasmus' *De conscribendis epistolis* is a prime example. Erasmus had first composed the work in Paris in the 1490s, giving a copy to his pupil, Robert Fisher, and then revising the text on

³² e.g. the collection of epitaphs for Erasmus: *Epitaphiorum libellus cum clariss. virorum aliquot epistolis* (Antwerp, 1537).

³³ Lawrence Green and James Murphy (eds), *Renaissance Rhetoric Short-Title Catalogue 1460-1700* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 390-2. Heinrich Plett, *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* (Berlin, 2004), p. 36. Coverdale, *A shorte recapitulacion of Erasmus enchiridion* (Antwerp, 1545).

³⁴ Ágnes Juhász-Ormsby, 'Erasmus' *Apophthegmata* in Henrician England', *Erasmus Studies*, 37:1 (2017), pp. 45-67.

³⁵ ESTC: 504455.

³⁶ BL, MS Egerton 1651, *Poems by Erasmus*, c.1499. David Carlson, 'Erasmus, Revision, and the British Library Manuscript Egerton 1651', *Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies*, 15:3 (1991), pp. 199-232.

³⁷ CUL, MS Add. 6858, Plutarch, *De discrimine adulatorio et amici*, 1513. Ep. 272, *CWE* 2, pp. 250-2.

³⁸ BL, Royal MS 16E XIV (c.1508-9).

³⁹ The volumes are now: BL, Royal MS 1 E v (2 vols); CUL, MS Dd.vii.3; Hatfield House, Cecil Papers Ms. 324; CCC, Oxford, MSS 13-14. See, Andrew Brown, 'The date of Erasmus' Latin Translation of the New Testament', *TCBS*, 8 (1984), pp. 351-380. J. B. Trapp, *Erasmus, Colet and More: The Early Tudor Humanists and their Books* (London, 1991), p. 81. David Rundle, *The Renaissance Reform of the Book and Britain. The English Quattrocento* (Cambridge, 2019), pp. 147-63.

and off throughout the succeeding decades, eventually printing the text in 1522.⁴⁰ In the meantime, unofficial versions of the text circulated in manuscript and print. Editions based on Erasmus' notes were released in 1520 in Erfurt, Leipzig and Mainz, before the budding Cambridge printer, bookseller and binder, John Siberch, published a full pirated version in 1521, likely based on a draft from 1499.⁴¹ Even after the publication of the official Basel edition, manuscript versions, like the excerpt copied onto a set of binding leaves around 1539, continued to be produced or circulated.⁴² Sometime in the middle of the century, Roger Ascham in Cambridge acquired the original draft of Erasmus' *Antibarbari*, thought to have been lost by Richard Pace many years previously, using it for a year before alerting Jerome Froben to its whereabouts.⁴³

If Erasmus increasingly turned his back on manuscript presentation, English readers nonetheless continued to find reason to circulate his writings in this form. Erasmus' epistles found an audience in manuscript. A copy of one such letter can be found among the State Papers, presumably because its contents – a savage rebuttal of any links between Erasmus and the eucharistic views of Conrad Pellican – were of use to a figure within government.⁴⁴ Martin Tyndale certainly thought that Erasmus' letter recounting the life of Colet would be of value to Thomas Cromwell.⁴⁵ Sometimes readers felt it necessary to supplement Erasmus' printed works with manuscripts. Leonard Dulse, physician to Mary Tudor, dowager queen of France, came into the possession of a *Sammelband* containing printed copies of Erasmus' *Ratio* and his text of Romans, alongside a stridently evangelical manuscript of Galatians.⁴⁶ Richard Rex and David Butterfield uncovered three poems by Erasmus in a contemporary edition of *Utopia*, all of which were probably circulating in manuscript.⁴⁷ William Bowerman added several Erasmian prayers to his manuscript psalter around the year 1553, though these elements were somehow separated at a later date.⁴⁸ One contemporary reader of an epitome of *De duplici copia* likewise used the space between the work's end and the colophon to write a list of suitably Erasmian adjectives under the heading '*Vocabula bona*'.⁴⁹ This is to say nothing of the humanist penchant for improving Erasmus' books with material gleaned from manuscripts. John Caius, for example, added readings from

⁴⁰ Charles Fantazzi, 'On the Writing of Letters', in *CWE* 25, pp. 2-9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3. *De conscribendis epistolis libellus* (Cambridge, 1521). Judith Rice Henderson, 'The Enigma of Erasmus' *Conficiendarum epistolarum formula*, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 13:3 (1989), pp. 313-30.

⁴² WCFL, MS 33.(7), Erasmus, *De ratione conscribendi epistolas*, s. xvi, fos. 110-5. Neil Ker and A. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* (5 vols, Oxford, 1969-2002), iv, p. 625, no. 7.

⁴³ Ep. 13, *Rogeri Aschami Epistolarum, Libri Quatuor* (Oxford, 1703), p. 252.

⁴⁴ TNA, SP 1/235, fos 79r-80v. Ep. 1637, *CWE* 11, pp. 345-50.

⁴⁵ TNA, SP 1/77, fos 132r-v.

⁴⁶ ASL, Harsnett I.a.12. See Chap. 6.

⁴⁷ CUL, Rel.c.51.3, *De optimo reip. statu deque nova insula Utopia* (Basel, 1518). Richard Rex and David Butterfield, 'A Newly Discovered Poem by Erasmus', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 65 (2016), pp. 165-178.

⁴⁸ WA, CD.38, Erasmus, *Manuscript prayers*, c.1553. Originally a part of WA, MS 9, *Psalter*. xv cent. See chap. 4.

⁴⁹ ASL, Harsnett, I.a.13.(1), Erasmus, *Epitome libri de copia verborum* (Paris, 1535), pp. 86-7.

manuscripts to his edition of the *Adagia*.⁵⁰ In all of these cases, manuscript allowed producers to create texts which more intimately served their purposes, making books more navigable or acceptable to the reader's taste.

It was translation, however, which provided the greatest impetus towards manuscript production. Manuscript translations made ideal gifts for patrons, family and other associates. Several scholars including Leonard Cox and Martin Tyndale courted the attentions of Thomas Cromwell by sending him manuscript translations of Erasmus.⁵¹ John, Lord Lumley, recently married to the daughter of Henry Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, produced an English abstract of the *Institutio principis christiani* for his new father-in-law in 1550.⁵² Since manuscripts had a more limited circulation, they allowed for the confirmation of more delicate political and religious bonds. John Caius produced a now lost translation of the *Paraphrase of Jude* that was probably motivated by his conservative leanings in the 1520s or 30s.⁵³ That *Paraphrase*, after all, castigated those who 'under the disguise of religion... have crept like wolves into the Lord's sheepfold' and who 'take the spontaneous kindness of our God, through which he freely forgave us our sins once and for all and freed us from the harsh severity of the Law, and turn it into an occasion for lewdness'.⁵⁴ Henry Parker, Lord Morley, presented Princess Mary with a translation of the *Paeon virgini matri dicendus* (c.1537-47) which bemoaned the declining worship of the Virgin.⁵⁵ Morley's *Paeon* thus subtly conveyed his continuing loyalty to both Marys.

Some manuscripts defied narrow confessional or political groupings to find a wider audience. Tyndale's English version of the *Enchiridion* (c.1523) was originally produced for his patrons, Sir John and Anne Walsh of Little Sodbury.⁵⁶ After his arrival in London, however, Humphrey Monmouth ensured that several further copies were made.⁵⁷ Demand for the work could soon be found outside of this evangelical clique and Monmouth later admitted that copies had passed through the hands of such orthodox bastions as John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, the abbess of Denney and the confessor of Sion Abbey.⁵⁸ If the recently recovered translation of the *Enchiridion* (now BL, Add. MS 89149) is by Tyndale, the quality of its composition suggests it may have been produced at speed to serve a wider readership.⁵⁹

⁵⁰ G&C, H.16.24, Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1541), sig. bb3r: discussing the proverb, *diluvre salsum auditum*, Caius noted: 'Citatur ab auctore quidam graeco peri sarcophagias fol cod. nostri manuscripti 205. proverb. in fo. huius 696.20.'

⁵¹ See Chap. 4.

⁵² BL, Royal MS 17 A XLIX, *A certaine treatise cauled the institution of a christen prince or ruler*, 1550.

⁵³ John Caius, *De libris propriis liber unus*, in Ernest Roberts (ed.), *The Works of John Caius, M.D.* (Cambridge, 1912), p. 70.

⁵⁴ Erasmus, *Paraphrase on Jude*, CWE 44, pp. 125-6.

⁵⁵ BL, Royal MS 17 A XLVI, *The laude or prayse to be saide vnto the Virgyn Mary, mother of Chryste Jesu*, c.1537-47.

⁵⁶ David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 63-74.

⁵⁷ John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (3 vols in 6, Oxford, 1822), 1:2, pp. 364-7. Lc&P 4:2, 4282.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ See Chap. 6.

By 1550, then, the production of Erasmus was increasingly fragmented, varied in form and language and confessionally controversial. If the emergence of an Erasmian print industry had allowed the scholar to project his fame and influence far and wide, it had also created multiple competing versions of his work. Readers would increasingly have to navigate these issues. First, however, they would have to get their hands on his writings.

(ii) Buying, circulating and collecting Erasmus

How did readers acquire Erasmus' books? The most obvious early channel was through the author himself. Erasmus distributed a number of works to his friends and patrons in England, many of which were lavishly written, printed or bound.⁶⁰ A larger proportion of his works evidently reached English readers through the market, though only a handful of bookseller's inventories have survived. The remaining stock of the lawyer and printer John Rastell was catalogued in 1538 and revealed that he had been selling works such as *De immensa misericordia* in both Latin and English, along with *De libero arbitrio* and 'Epistola erasmi de modestia'.⁶¹ Those titles certainly suggest that, prior to his conversion to evangelism, Rastell's conservative outlook impacted the books he sold, though whether these titles were popular or remained unsold is impossible to know.⁶² Beyond London, Neville Mores was selling an edition of Erasmus' *De duplici copia* and Lucian's dialogues in York in 1538.⁶³ Thirty years later, Robert Scott had the latest edition of the *Colloquies* for sale in Norwich from the Antwerp press of Christopher Plantin.⁶⁴ Prior to the expansion of the local book trade, it was relatively common for buyers to purchase works while in London. The notes in the books of John Claymond, president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, show that he purchased books in Oxford and London, while the Benedictines of Worcester Cathedral regularly sent to the capital for volumes.⁶⁵

The best records for the sale of Erasmus come from the two booksellers in university towns: Garrett Godfrey of Cambridge and John Dorne of Oxford. Dorne's accounts date from

⁶⁰ e.g. the lavishly written: CUL, MS Add. 6858. Or the texts printed on vellum for Fisher and Tunstall: SJC, Cambridge, T.7.7-8, *Novum Testamentum omne* (2 vols, Basel, 1527); Rosenbach Library and Museum, Philadelphia PA, C2.B582 519, Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1519).

⁶¹ R. Roberts, 'John's Rastell's Inventory of 1538', *The Library*, 6:1 (1979), p. 36.

⁶² Cecil Clough, 'Rastell, John, c.1475-1536', *ODNB*.

⁶³ D. Palliser and David Selwyn, 'The Stock of a York Stationer, 1538', *The Library*, 27:3 (1972), p. 217, nos 45, 48. The authors ascribe no. 48 '*Item copia verborum*' to Cicero Victurius; an attribution to Erasmus seems more probable.

⁶⁴ Jennifer Winters, 'The English Provincial Book Trade: Bookseller Stock-Lists, c.1520-1640' (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2012).

⁶⁵ See Chap. 5. *CMBLC: English Benedictine Libraries* (London, 1996), B117, p. 665. J. M. Wilson, 'The Library of Printed Books in Worcester Cathedral', *The Library*, 2 (1911), p. 31.

1520, the year in which over 170 editions of Erasmus' work were printed in Europe.⁶⁶ Godfrey's accounts are not a complete list of sales but of money owed on certain purchases, roughly accounting for the period between 1527 to 1533.⁶⁷ Unlike Dorne, Godfrey thus recorded the names of his clientele, most of whom were associated with the university or living in the near vicinity of the city. In both cases, Erasmus' books account for more than a tenth of sales. The most popular work in both shops was Erasmus' *Colloquies* in its various editions. Dorne shifted 49 copies, from presses in London, Paris and Louvain, while Godfrey sold around 20.⁶⁸ Access to new works was quick. Erasmus' *Apologia in principio erat sermo*, first published in February 1520, could be bought from Dorne two months later.⁶⁹ Dorne's accounts are especially revealing of the size and binding of the books on sale. Most of the books he sold were in smaller formats. Though the *Adagia* eventually grew to be a substantial folio volume with thousands of entries, Dorne's copies were all 'parva', that is, quartos.⁷⁰ Dorne also offered many copies of Erasmus in loose sheets or with a cheap parchment or paste binding. This was particularly true of works such as *apologia* which were often simply a few sheets and sold for as little as 2d.⁷¹ Dorne's clients may not have envisaged owning such works for long periods. Only larger items like the New Testament or volumes comprising several imprints were bound for his clients.⁷²

Elsewhere our picture of the formats and types of Erasmian items sold is more fragmentary. A London stationer in the reign of Mary sold copies of Erasmus' editions of Cato's *Disticha*, bound in paper and parchment, and copies of the *Parabolae* and Taverner's English *Apophthegmata* in vellum.⁷³ One crude barometer of the Erasmian market in London can be gleaned from surviving copies of his work bound by the London stationer, John Reynes. Reynes' bindery was active from the early sixteenth century until his death in 1544 and is often considered the most prolific workshop of the period.⁷⁴ Estimates of the total number of surviving bindings by Reynes differ: J. B. Oldham claimed to know of 336 works while a year later Hobson estimated that there

⁶⁶ *John Dorne's Day-Book*, ed. Falconer Madan, *Collectanea*, 1:3 (1885) and 3 (1890). Hereafter *Dorne*, with reference to the item numbers in Madan's edition.

⁶⁷ Elisabeth Leedham-Green, Dennis Rhodes and Frank Stubbings (eds), *Garret Godfrey's accounts, c. 1527-1533* (Cambridge, 1992). Hereafter *Godfrey*, with reference to item number.

⁶⁸ *Dorne*: 17, 105, 177, 209, 250, 272, 274, 295, 328, 342, 360, 363, 485, 587, 619, 637, 658, 688, 695, 701, 835, 914, 980, 985, 1108, 1119, 1195, 1201, 1261, 1266, 1272, 1284, 1320, 1387, 1411, 1536, 1584, 1599, 1601, 1680, 1739, 1752, 1783, 1832. *Godfrey*: 9, 53, 148, 191, 192, 194, 245, 304, 346, 347, 710, 713, 793, 935, 976, 1046, 1063, 1072, 1089, 1100.

⁶⁹ *Dorne*: 636. Denis Drysdall, 'The two versions of Erasmus's *Apologia de In principio erat sermo* and the role of Edward Lee', in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Upsaliensis*, (2 vols, Uppsala, 2009), i, pp. 363-372.

⁷⁰ *Dorne*: 42, 139, 384, 699, 858, 966, 996, 1090, 1399, 1582. A quarto copy with sixteenth-century English notes is BL, 1075.m.3, *Collectanea adagiorum* (Hagenau, 1519).

⁷¹ *Dorne*: 636, 670, 739, 769, 1170.

⁷² *Dorne*: 410, 698-701, 1053, 1116.

⁷³ John King, 'The Accounts of a Marian Bookseller, 1553-4', *British Library Journal*, 13 (1987), pp. 42-4, nos 1, 12, 66, 103.

⁷⁴ Oldham, *EBSB*, pp. 31-2.

were only 130.⁷⁵ I know of at least 15 imprints authored or edited by Erasmus with Reynes bindings (4.5% of Oldham's total, 11.5% of Hobson's) and there are likely many more. All were printed on the continent in Latin between 1521 and 1540 (see Table 2). This measure would not hold up to scientific scrutiny. Nevertheless, it does suggest that there was a large market for Erasmus' writings in the capital, especially in octavo format (8 of 15 items).

Table 2: Sample of Erasmus editions from the bindery of John Reynes (c.1510-1544)						
Location	Shelfmark	Author	Title	Place pub	Date pub	Format
Unknown	Sotheby's, 2-4 December 2015, Lot 965.	Erasmus	<i>Paraphrasis in evangelium Matthaei</i>	Basel	1521	8vo
Westminster Abbey	CD.61	Arnobius	<i>Commentarii in omnes psalmos</i>	Cologne	1522	4to
Folger	PA8517.P3 J4 1524a Cage	Erasmus	<i>Paraphrasis in evangelium secundum Joannem</i>	Basel	1523	8vo
Parker Library, Corpus Christi, Cams	B.4.14	Hilary	<i>Lucubrationes</i>	Basel	1523	Folio
Exeter Cathedral	Strongroom C52	Hilary	<i>Lucubrationes</i>	Basel	1523	Folio
Corpus Christi College, Oxford	LL.L.1412.Hi/516	Jerome	<i>Opera</i>	Basel	1526	Folio
University of Essex	Harsnett, K.b.13	Erasmus	<i>Annotationes in Novum testamentum</i>	Basel	1527	Folio
Trinity Hall, Cams	Old Library G*.1.1-5	Chrysostom	<i>Opera</i>	Basel	1530	Folio
British Library	C.66.d.18	Various, inc. Erasmus	<i>Various, inc. Psalm com. And Paraclesis</i>	Various	1530-2	8vo

⁷⁵ J.B. Oldham, *Shrewsbury School Library Bindings: Catalogue Raisonné* (Oxford, 1943).

Folger	220-606q	Ambrose	<i>Commentarij in omnes Dini Pauli Epistolas</i>	Cologne	1532	8vo
Bodleian	8° A 82 Th.	Arnobius	<i>Psalm commentary</i>	Cologne	1532	8vo
Ushaw College ⁿ	XVIII.A.8.12	Erasmus	<i>Paraphrase</i>	Basel	1534	8vo
Parker Library, Corpus Christi, Cambs	SP. 205	Erasmus	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>	Antwerp	1535	8vo
British Library	Davis 12	Erasmus	<i>Enchiridion</i>	Antwerp	1537	8vo
All Souls, Oxford	4:SR.73.g.13	Cyprian	<i>Opera</i>	Basel	1540	4to
ⁿ Binding lacks Reynes' initials						

Not all readers acquired Erasmus' works in a bookshop. Not only was there a thriving second-hand market, but books were regularly acquired from relatives or close contemporaries. Tutors sometimes sold or lent books to their charges. One of Godfrey's customers in Cambridge bought a volume of *Colloquies 'pro pupilla'* and an *Enchiridion* for an acquaintance named 'Key', possibly John Caius.⁷⁶ A copy of Lorenzo Valla's notes on the New Testament, edited by Erasmus and now in the British Library suggests something similar.⁷⁷ Its original owner was probably John Wyman, a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, between 1531 and 1549.⁷⁸ On the title page, Wyman recorded that he purchased the volume from a mysterious '*dromto*', perhaps an Oxford contemporary.⁷⁹ The item then passed into the hands of 'Master Sutton' who gave the book to 'Helie Dugdell', his pupil.⁸⁰ While studying at Cambridge in the 1530s and 40s, Edmund Geste received Erasmus' *Epistola apologetica* from an older contemporary at King's College and perhaps bought his Erasmian New Testament from two other students there.⁸¹ He received other Erasmian texts from his uncle.⁸² William Bowerman, a canon of Wells Cathedral, circulated the Dutch

⁷⁶ *Godfrey*, pp. 31-2. This buyer also purchased a paper-book in pasteboards and five further quires of paper, perhaps in anticipation of teaching.

⁷⁷ BL, C67.d.17, Valla, *Annotationes* (Basel, 1526).

⁷⁸ c.f. with Wyman's signature on: Bod. Vet. M1 e.2.(1), *Tractatio de sacramento Eucharistiae* (London, 1549), tp.

⁷⁹ BL, C67.d.17, tp: '*Sum Wymanni liber, emptus a dromto.*'

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, endleaves: '*liber helie digdell ex dono magistri Suttoni...*'. Sutton himself signed the tp.

⁸¹ David Selwyn, *Edmund Geste and His Books: Reconstructing the Library of a Cambridge Don and Elizabethan Bishop* (London, 2017), p. 446.

⁸² *Ibid*.

scholar's works among his clerical friends, parishioners and family.⁸³ Literate communities such as the religious orders and common lawyers also furnish evidence of similar habits of circulation. While a law student in the 1540s, William Cecil received a large copy of the *Adagia* from his brother-in-law, Lawrence Eresby.⁸⁴ A copy of the *Institutio principis Christiani* (now at Chetham's Library) is signed by several figures who likely passed through the Inns of Court.⁸⁵ The sharing of books among intimates was often enshrined on their title-pages with an '*et amicorum*' signature, a motif adopted by the likes of Thomas Paynell and John Christopherson for their Erasmusian books.⁸⁶

While Erasmus' work often passed between readers with familial, institutional or cultural connections, circles could also be more fluid. A remarkable example of this flexibility is the accounts of book buying and lending left behind by Alexander Nowell during his time as a student at Oxford and as headmaster of Westminster school (from 1542).⁸⁷ Understandably, Nowell bought several copies of Erasmus for his students. Yet he also borrowed and lent the scholar's writings to his circle of associates, including several contemporaries at Oxford; the staff of Westminster; his brothers; and the Augustinian canon, John Batho, whom Nowell regularly met at a mutual friend's house in Hornchurch, Essex.⁸⁸ Robert Joseph discussed Erasmus' ideas with an equally eclectic bunch of fellow monks, students and friends.⁸⁹ It would be unwise to generalise too extensively about the patterns by which Erasmus' works circulated, since for every book with a clear chain of sixteenth-century provenance, there are countless others for which no logic can be applied to their movements. Christopherson's copy of the *Adagia* seems to have circulated both at Cambridge and among members of the Steward family in Norwich, though how and in what order defies easy explanation.⁹⁰

The means and motives for acquiring Erasmus' books were complex and based in part on the educational, religious and institutional contexts in which a reader operated. Some acquisitions were less about the texts themselves, than a broader cultural identification between Erasmus and

⁸³ See Chap. 4.

⁸⁴ Stanford, California, PN6418.E73 1533 F, Erasmus, *Adagiorum opus* (Basel, 1533).

⁸⁵ Chetham's, BYROM 2.I.4.34.(1) Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani* (Basel, 1519); (2) Lily, *De octo partium orationis constructione* (Basel, 1517): 'John Amcottes'; 'Thomas Chapman'; 'Christophorus Brow[n]'; 'Wm. Assheton'. John Baker, *The Men of Court, 1440-1550: A Prosopography of the Inns of Court and Chancery and the Courts of Law* (2 vols, London, 2012), i, pp. 212, 232-4, 378.

⁸⁶ BL, C.66.d.18.(2), Erasmus, *Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo* (Antwerp, 1530). WA, O.2.29, Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1518).

⁸⁷ The accounts are Brasenose College, Oxford, MS 31. I am extremely grateful to Dr Micha Lazarus for making his unpublished index of Nowell's accounts available to me. Quotations from the manuscript are dutifully drawn from Dr Lazarus' index. For a discussion of Nowell and the accounts, see Lazarus, 'The Dramatic Prologues of Alexander Nowell: Accommodating the Classics at 1540s Westminster', *Review of English Studies*, 69:288 (2018), pp. 32-55.

⁸⁸ e.g. Brasenose MS 31, fo. 43r: '*erasmi vt[ra]q[ue] copia*. lent to M. batho whe[n] he went to M. pen[n]y[n]gton.' *Ibid*, 43v: '*erasm[us] de co[n]scribe[n]d[is] ep[isto]lis*. bokes off M. adams to sell to ye scholars.'

⁸⁹ Epp. 15, 53, 73, 97, 112, 114, 133, 174, *The Letter Book of Robert Joseph. Monk-scholar of Evesham and Gloucester College, Oxford 1530-3*, ed. Hugh Aveling and W. Pantin (Oxford, 1969).

⁹⁰ WA, O.2.29, Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel 1518).

his readers. Thomas Lupset, a friend and correspondent of the Dutch scholar, purchased a letter collection defending Erasmus in which he himself appeared.⁹¹ He may also have used Erasmus' writings as gifts, embodying friendship through the exchange of humanist books.⁹² Even when relations between Erasmus and individuals had been frosty, his books could still act as tangible signs of friendship. Christopher Longolius had mixed feelings about Erasmus, but among the books he bequeathed to Reginald Pole was a lightly annotated copy of the *Annotations*.⁹³ Individual owners could also heighten the connection between their books and the Erasmian brand. One owner of a set of Erasmian pamphlets from 1524, for instance, inscribed the opening pages with Nicholas Bourbon's epigram in praise of the Dutchman.⁹⁴ Such actions suggest that readers were just as interested in the scholar's reputation for eloquence as they were in the religious writings between the covers. Several university readers used Erasmus' books to gather classical extracts or adages in a similar way.⁹⁵ The large number of Erasmian titles found in contemporary booklists, therefore, is not simply a product of the spectacular production and impact of his writings, but also testifies to the ways in which the scholar made himself synonymous with humanism more generally.

With the onset of the reformation readers were often tempted to collect Erasmian works along confessional lines.⁹⁶ There is a conservative strain to the collection of books left behind by John Clement on his flight from England under Edward VI, including Erasmus' *Hyperaspistes* and works by Thomas More and John Fisher.⁹⁷ The patristic collections of evangelical bishops such as Edmund Geste or Thomas Cranmer were evidently assembled to assist in their episcopate.⁹⁸ Simon Heynes had his copy of Cyprian (edited by Erasmus) emblazoned with his evangelical motto ('*Salus mea dominus*').⁹⁹ That said, we should not presuppose that book collections were the products of coherent ideological agendas, confessional or otherwise. Indeed, booklists often suggest multiple, sometimes competing motives were at play and our knowledge of individual libraries is often partial or unsatisfactory.¹⁰⁰ As later chapters will show, the effects of the reformation on the collecting of Erasmus' books were often unpredictable.

⁹¹ Dorne, 1179: '*epistole ad edwardum lei 2 quaterni mester lupset habet...*'.

⁹² Bodleian, Broxb. 15.3, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Basel, 1519), tp: '*Burbanco [?] dedit Thos. Lupsetus*'.

⁹³ Middle Temple, London, L(C): a30443, Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel, 1516) [*Annotationes* only]. Alessandro Pastore, 'Due Biblioteche Umanistiche del Cinquecento', *Rinascimento*, 19 (1979), pp. 269-90.

⁹⁴ SJC, Cambridge, N.11.14.(1), Erasmus, *De immensa Dei misericordia... Concio. virginis et martyris comparatio* (Antwerp, 1524), verso of front board.

⁹⁵ See Chap. 8.

⁹⁶ Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 156-9.

⁹⁷ A.W. Reed, 'John Clement and His Books', *The Library*, 6:4 (1926), pp. 338-9.

⁹⁸ Selwyn, *Library of Cranmer*. Idem, *Edmund Geste*, pp. 17-34.

⁹⁹ Queen's College, Cambridge, M.9.19, Cyprian, *Opera* (Basel, 1525).

¹⁰⁰ David Pearson, *Book Ownership in Stuart England* (Oxford, 2021), p. 7.

(iii) Survival

All books are subject to loss, decay and damage. Some, however, suffer from a greater rate of attrition than others. Several factors have shaped the varying survival rates of Erasmian books from the sixteenth century down to the present day.

First and foremost, the size and physical properties of the book have played an important role. Manuscripts were particularly susceptible to damage or loss, since they were often unbound or considered ephemeral. Erasmus himself lost several manuscripts in this fashion. The extract from *De conscribendis epistolis* (discussed above) survived only as part of a later binding. William Bowerman's collection of Erasmian poems, originally added to a fifteenth-century psalter, were later removed from the volume and stored separately.¹⁰¹ How a book was bound might also affect its condition. Parchment bindings, for instance, were popular in the period. However, they have survived in far fewer numbers than their leather counterparts and may have adversely affected the smaller format, cheaper imprints they often covered.¹⁰² Works printed on cheaper paper or intended to serve short-term markets also had a high attrition rate. In the first three decades of the sixteenth century, Wynkyn de Worde printed several editions of the *Disticha moralia*, a collection of Latin sayings by Cato with explanatory notes by Erasmus.¹⁰³ Two of these editions are known only from fragments, both of which were used as binding material.¹⁰⁴ Both fragments were printed on cheap, thin paper and annotated by readers.¹⁰⁵ The high use and poor survival of the *Disticha* contrasts markedly with the *First tome or volume of the Paraphrase*, printed by Edward Whitchurch in 1548.¹⁰⁶ This latter work had eight different editions or settings in folio format and also benefitted from the sponsorship of the Edwardian government, who ordered that it be purchased by every parish.¹⁰⁷ As a result, the *First tome* survives in much greater numbers, though to what extent it was actually read is harder to ascertain. Higher rates of survival, then, do not necessarily imply a larger readership.

The book trade itself also contributed to the uneven survival of Erasmian works. The book trade reused old or unsaleable volumes as binding material. Cheaper works, especially those

¹⁰¹ WA, CD.38, Erasmus, *Manuscript prayers*, c.1553. Originally a part of WA, MS 9, *Psalter*. xv cent.

¹⁰² For contemporary parchment bindings, see: ASL, Harsnett H.c.4-7; SJC, Cambridge, Gg.17.28, *De ciuilitate morum puerilium* (Antwerp, 1530); WA, N.2.110, Erasmus, *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas* (Antwerp, 1532).

¹⁰³ ESTC: 4839.4, 4839.7, 4840, 4841, 4841.3, 4841.5.

¹⁰⁴ ESTC: 4841.3 = Bodleian, Vet. A1 b.12.(12), *Cattho cum commento* (London, c.1515). ESTC 4841.5 = Bodleian, Lawn e.60, *Cattho cum commento* (London, c.1515-25).

¹⁰⁵ The products of Siberch's Cambridge press suffered similarly: WA, CE.4, William Lily, *Libellus de octo partium orationis constructione* (Cambridge, 1520-2).

¹⁰⁶ ESTC: 2854-2854.5.

¹⁰⁷ Devereux, *Checklist*, pp. 23-5. John Craig, 'Forming a Protestant Consciousness? Erasmus' Paraphrases in English Parishes, 1547, 1666', in Hilmar Pabel and Mark Vessey (eds), *Holy Scripture speaks: the production and reception of Erasmus' Paraphrases on the New Testament* (Toronto, 2002), pp. 313-60.

superseded by later editions or intended for short-term markets (like apologies), were particularly liable to find their way into bindings. A seemingly well-used edition of the *Moria* (Antwerp, 1512) became the binding leaves for a copy of John Major's psalm paraphrase, likely bound in Oxford in the 1570s.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, a tract by Albert Pighius, most likely bound in the 1540s or 50s, used a page from Erasmus' *Apologiae omnes* (Basel, 1522).¹⁰⁹ Oversupply of a work also left it liable to be recycled as pastedowns. One of Edmund Geste's books uses the 1547 black-letter edition of the *Paraphrases* as a pastedown, perhaps because so many had been produced at the government's behest.¹¹⁰ Erasmus' more ephemeral or oversupplied works may have survived more unevenly than works in other genres.

Attitudes towards collecting at both institutional and private levels have also shaped our understanding of Erasmus' reception. The surviving catalogues of Cambridge colleges detail 35 editions of Erasmus up to 1560. The bulk are large folio editions: seven copies of the *Annotations*, seven of Jerome's works edited by Erasmus, four editions of the *Paraphrases* and three of the *Adagia* (the latter are all described as 'magno', i.e. folios).¹¹¹ Donors likely preferred to give larger, more impressive items while colleges were usually keen to acquire important biblical, patristic and reference works. The libraries of individual members of the university, on the other hand, were usually more varied. John Chekyn, a fellow of Pembroke whose possessions were inventoried in March 1536, possessed copies of the *Adagia*, *New Testament*, *Annotations* and *Paraphrases*. Yet he also had Erasmus' *Methodus*, the *Preparatio ad mortem* and a smaller format copy of the *Adagia*.¹¹² John Cheswryght (inventoried June 1537) had a folio copy of the *Adagia* and some *Paraphrases* but these were dwarfed by his other Erasmian tracts.¹¹³ Cheswryght had closely followed Erasmus' debates with various critics in the 1520s (Edward Lee, Luther and Hutten) and also owned a range of educational, literary and devotional pieces (the *Enchiridion*, *Moria*, *De copia*, *Parabola*, *De civilitate morum puerilium* and *De contemptu mundi*).¹¹⁴

While institutions sometimes pursued a corporate logic in the acquisition of books, libraries were also shaped by the efforts of individuals. This thesis lacks the room to adequately discuss the impact of seventeenth-century collectors such as Thomas Symes, William Branthwaite,

¹⁰⁸ Bodleian, 8^o M.122 Th., John Major, *In psalmos dauidis paraphrasis* (Wittenberg, 1574), flyleaves.

¹⁰⁹ Queens' College, Old Library, M.3.3, Albert Pighius, *Controversiarum praecipuarum in comitiis Ratisponensibus tractatarum* (Cologne, 1542). Oldham roll: FL.a(8), using Desiderius Erasmus, *Apologiae Erasmi Roterdami omnes* (Basel, 1522), leaf Ff1, as a pastedown. *USTC*: 653202.

¹¹⁰ Selwyn, *Geste*, App. ix: PDN 196.1-2. Salisbury Cathedral, D.3.4, Johann Spangenberg, *Postilla, Euangelia, et Epistolae...* (Frankfurt, 1547).

¹¹¹ *CMBLC: University and College Libraries of Cambridge*: UC 16, 17, 22, 25, 30, 45, 55, 56, 110, 118, 147.

¹¹² *BCI*, i, pp. 1-3.

¹¹³ *BCI*, i, pp. 3-6.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Samuel Harsnett or Robert Ashley.¹¹⁵ However, they played a significant role in determining which of Erasmus' works were preserved and how they were arranged. In more recent times a preference for 'clean' copies without marginal annotation or for a strict division of printed and manuscript material has evidently shaped the Erasmian archive in important ways.¹¹⁶

Gender also affected the distribution of surviving volumes. The handful of books which can be traced to female owners centre on the royal court and to enclaves of female learning. Erasmian volumes from the collections of Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Mary Tudor and others have survived in the royal library.¹¹⁷ Mildred Cooke Cecil's copies of *De duplici copia* and *De conscribendis epistolis* are now at Hatfield House, while a pair of *Paraphrases* owned by her sister, Anne Cooke Bacon, are now at Gonville and Caius.¹¹⁸ Literacy rates, especially those in Latin and Greek, significantly reduced the number of female readers. Just as important, however, were the lack of institutional settings through which women's books could survive. The largest institutional framework for female reading – the religious orders – was dissolved in the 1530s and 40s. Men, by contrast, were likelier to have passed through several institutional settings – and frequently gave their books to a university, cathedral or college library. Given that women played a significant part in the translation and patronage of Erasmian works, one suspects that our knowledge of female readers of humanist writings is a considerable underestimate.¹¹⁹

Several more sudden purges of books in England have also limited the scope of our knowledge of Erasmus' readership. Life at the Tudor court proved fatal to many of the Dutch scholar's friends. The books of Thomas More, Richard Pace, John Fisher and Cuthbert Tunstall were destroyed or dispersed as a result of their interactions with authority. Henry VIII and his successors often enforced religious orthodoxy at the expense of monastic or university libraries. Several cathedrals were ransacked during the Civil War. Fire damage has also been unkind. The loss of books at the Inns of Court during the Fire of London and Blitz has inevitably limited our understanding of reading there, though heroic efforts have been made to gather evidence from

¹¹⁵ Francesca Galligan, 'The Library of Archbishop Samuel Harsnett: A Report': [https://www1.essex.ac.uk/history/documents/research/RT3_Galligan_2012.pdf]. Renae Satterley, "'To Be Unto Them as the Foundation of a Library": The Books of Robert Ashley at the Middle Temple', in John Hinks and Victoria Gardner (eds), *The Book Trade in Early Modern England: Practices, Perceptions, Connections* (New Castle, DE, 2013), pp. 61-85.

¹¹⁶ David McKitterick, *The Invention of Rare Books*, passim.

¹¹⁷ James Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives* (London, 2004).

¹¹⁸ Caroline Bowden, 'The Library of Mildred Cooke Cecil, Lady Burghley', *The Library*, 6:1 (2005), p. 27. G&C, F.10.24 (1) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium Matthaei* (Basel, 1523); (2) Erasmus, *In evangelium Marci paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524). See, Gemma Allen, *The Cooke Sisters: Education, Piety and Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2013).

¹¹⁹ Erasmus dedicated a work to the Franciscan nuns at Denney, Cambridgeshire, and their abbess, Elizabeth Throckmorton, acquired an English translation of the *Enchiridion*: Erasmus, *Epistola consolatoria in adversis*, CWE 69, pp. 185-201; Mordechai Feingold, 'Elizabeth Throckmorton', *Contemporaries*, iii, p. 321.

other sources.¹²⁰ The net effect of such disasters is evidently hard to quantify and we shall see in Part II that the such processes have fallen unevenly across the readers surveyed.

¹²⁰ John Baker, *The Men of Court*. Idem, 'Common Lawyers and the Inns of Court', in *CHLGBI*, i, pp. 448-60.

Chapter 2

Erasmus and his English circle:

The rise and fall of a network



Erasmus was not content to let his books fend for themselves in England. Print undoubtedly provided new opportunities for connecting with an audience but it also required the development of new strategies for managing one's interpretation and reputation. Erasmus was a master craftsman in this regard. He deployed an array of media to promulgate a sense of community among his friends and to enlarge his European standing by associating himself with the continent's leading artists, scholars and statesmen. Most of all, he used his vast web of correspondence to cultivate friendships and protect his image. Over three thousand epistles survive, providing an unprecedented window into the intellectual interests and habits of the period. Tudor historians are particularly indebted. Erasmus' commentary on affairs at the English court was heavily imbedded within Brewer, Gairdner and Brodie's *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic in the reign of Henry VIII* (20 vols in 23, London, 1862-1932) and, without his letters, historians would have little or no information about important figures such as William Grocyn.

Yet while Erasmus' letters are invaluable, they are also the product of a deliberate revision of the historical record. The scholar went to great lengths to edit and print his epistles during his lifetime.¹ In the process, he conjured into being an imagined community of friends, variously dedicated to a programme of Christian learning and reform. The vast editorial labours of Percy Allen and others have made this 'Republic of Letters' ever more visible.² A great deal has been written about its theory of friendship, its complex literary tropes and devout aspirations.³ This chapter, however, is more concerned with the mechanics of this network. It follows the approach

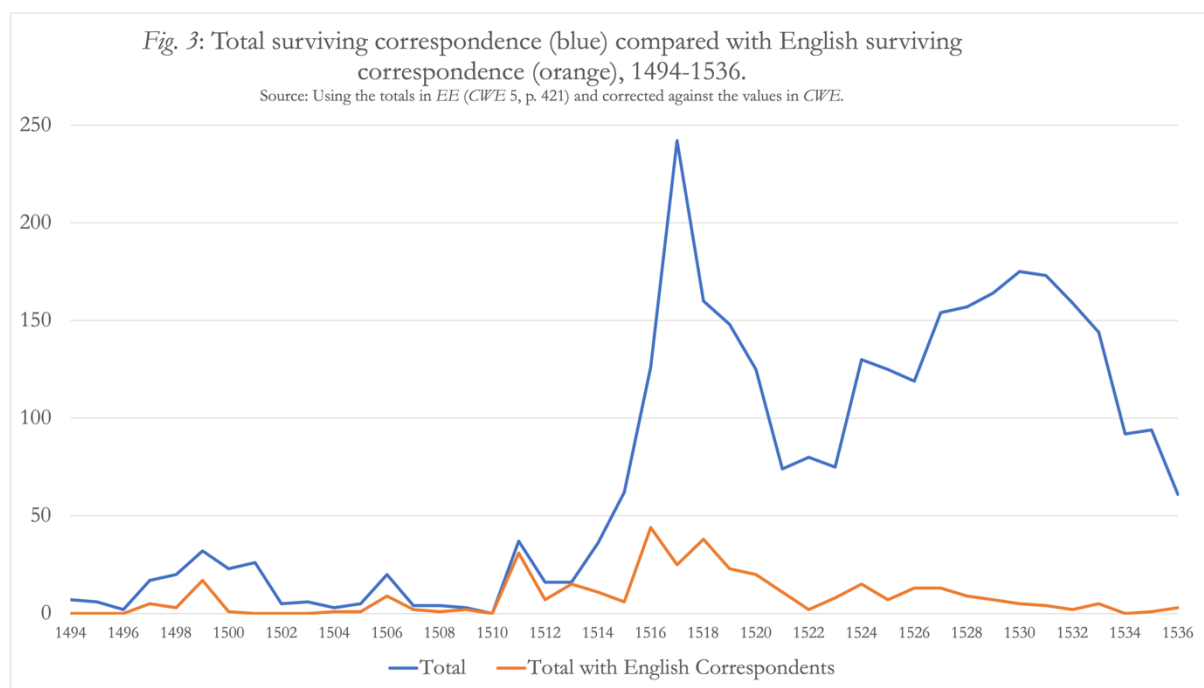
¹ See the discussion of the Deventer Letter Book and Erasmus' *famulae*. P. S. Allen, 'App. VIII: Deventer Letter Book', in *EE*, i, pp. 603-9; Ann Blair, 'Erasmus and His Amanuenses', *Erasmus Studies*, 39:1 (2019), pp. 22-49.

² Anglophone historians are indebted to the University of Toronto's ongoing project to edit Erasmus' correspondence.

³ Constance Furey, *Erasmus, Contarini, and the Religious Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, 2006). James McConica, 'The Englishing of P. S. Allen', in Stephen Ryle (ed.), *Erasmus and the Renaissance Republic of Letters: Proceedings of a Conference to Mark the Centenary of the Publication of the First Volume of Erasmi Epistolae by P.S. Allen, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 5-7 September 2006* (Turnhout, 2014), pp. 51-60. Hanan Yoran, 'The Erasmian Republic of Letters and Its Discontents', in Stephen Ryle (ed.), *Erasmus and the Renaissance Republic of Letters*, pp. 257-78. There are many important discussions of the correspondence in the introductions to *CWE* 1-17. P.S. Allen, 'App. VII: Principal Editions of Erasmus' *Epistolae*', in *EE*, i, pp. 593-602. For Holbein's printed work, Pascal Griener and Oskar Bätschmann, *Hans Holbein* (London, 2014).

of Lisa Jardine, who stressed that scholars ought to do more to dissect Erasmus' self-fashioning and the dynamics of reputation management in the period.⁴ We should be especially attentive to the ways in which Erasmus managed which missives ended up in print and which were kept in manuscript. What follows, then, discusses the various roles that English figures played in establishing a network with Erasmus and their joint labours in enhancing and protecting his reputation. These processes, I want to stress, cannot be separated from the reading of Erasmus' works in England, since it was often through the mediation of the scholar's friends that his writings were received.

Before surveying these relations in detail, it is worth briefly examining the overall shape of Erasmus' correspondence with England. The significance of Erasmus' English correspondence shifted in the course of his life. The point can be dramatically demonstrated if we compare the total quantity of Erasmus' surviving correspondence with that exclusively to his acquaintance in England (*Fig. 3*).



Behind this chart lie a number of assumptions. Many of the dates assigned to Erasmus' letters are tentative. Erasmus' English correspondents were frequently away from the country, travelling, studying and serving on embassy, while other foreign-born scholars such as Andrea Ammonio and Juan Luis Vives assisted Erasmus at the English court.⁵ Category problems aside, there is also the

⁴ Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, 1993).

⁵ I have included Ammonio in the total of English correspondence since he was permanently resident in England while in contact with Erasmus, while discounting Vives for the opposite reason.

question of survival. Much of Erasmus' mailbag has come down to us because he chose to print it. The general outline of his total correspondence, it will be noted, mirrors that of his overall printing output (see *Fig. 1* in Chapter 1). The graph does not therefore represent an impartial sample, but those epistles Erasmus considered significant.

These limitations aside, we can posit that Erasmus' relations with England fell into two broad phases. Erasmus visited England at least six times between 1499 and 1517 and saw his English acquaintance regularly up to 1521, thanks to his residence in the Low Countries and a series of diplomatic meetings in the region.⁶ Unsurprisingly, a large proportion of Erasmus' letters in these years were directed to and from England. English figures also played a prominent part in the early printed collections. Thierry Martens published the *Epistolae ad Erasmus* in October 1516, featuring 20 letters, seven of them from English correspondents (Ammonio included).⁷ Froben's *Auctarium selectarum* of 1518 contained 63 letters, 17 with an English connection.⁸ Up to 1520, in fact, English correspondents had become increasingly involved in the propagation and defence of Erasmus' works, despite the great expansion of his mail bag after 1516.⁹

In the 1520s, however, this system gradually began to break down. Significantly fewer letters have survived from this decade, in part because Erasmus failed to print many between 1521 and 1529.¹⁰ Several challenges, however, had limited his contact with England. Geography was an obvious problem. Erasmus largely resided in Europe from 1514 onwards. In 1521 he permanently relocated to the Upper Rhine, living first in Basel and then in Freiburg. Correspondence with his English friends and patrons took longer and required more organisation. Erasmus was now an international figure and communication with him required careful consideration of whether letters could be printed or should remain private. Most corrosive of all, however, was the impact of the reformation and its political ramifications in England. Several of Erasmus' closest companions in England joined the fight against Luther and heresy in the 1520s. While they were keen to involve their Dutch counterpart in these efforts, differences in attitude and approach became ever clearer. Erasmus also found it difficult to stay aloof from the warring factions at Henry's court, especially as Henry negotiated for a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Geography, politics and the reformation all ensured that fewer letters passed between Erasmus and England in the final years of his life.

This chapter begins by considering the state of humanism in England around the year 1500 and the opportunities and challenges it presented to a scholar such as Erasmus. It then considers

⁶ J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (London, 1969), pp. 97-134.

⁷ *Epistolae aliquot illustrium virorum ad Erasmus Roterodamum* (Louvain, 1516).

⁸ *Auctarium selectarum aliquot epistolarum Erasmi ad eruditos* (Basel, 1518)

⁹ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, pp. 149-61.

¹⁰ Allen, 'Principal editions of Erasmus' *Epistolae*', pp. 593-602.

the increasing involvement of English figures in the management of Erasmus' reputation. Despite his best efforts, Erasmus never exercised total control of his English friends. The Republic of Letters thus became a forum for both competition and collaboration. A final section considers the impact of the reformation and its politics on the effectiveness of this Erasmian network. By the end of his life, Erasmus' relations with England were severely strained. The divorce and the deaths of More and Fisher in 1535 had both deprived the scholar of friends and made him an object of concern for the English government.

(i) Erasmus and English humanism: the early years

When Erasmus arrived in England for the first time in 1499, he found a lively scholarly community, much of it engaged in the revival of classical learning. 'It is marvellous to see', he commented in one letter, 'what an extensive and rich crop of ancient learning is springing up here'.¹¹ Erasmus was always at pains to stress his affection for England and its scholars. Our knowledge of his relations in the country, however, is highly coloured by his editorial hand. Many of the missives from this period were only published in printed collections after 1516 and were selected to commemorate Erasmus' time there. It is important, therefore, to look beyond their cultivated sense of community and to examine instead the factors shaping humanism and Erasmus' relations in the period.

Humanism was undergoing a series of subtle transformations in England around the turn of the century.¹² Henry VII recognised the value of poets, writers and scholars to his regime and over the course of his reign welcomed several to his court.¹³ Many were drawn from Italy or elsewhere in Europe. Pietro Carmeliano and Giovanni Gigli were employed as royal secretaries, while Polydore Vergil, Andrea Ammonio and Bernard André were variously employed in and around the royal household.¹⁴ Other visitors such as Filippo Alberici, Cornelio Vitelli and Giovanni Opizio also presented the king with their productions, though with less success.¹⁵ Traffic also passed from England to Europe. A series of English students made their way to Italy in the late

¹¹ Ep. 118, *CWE* 1, pp. 235-6.

¹² Richard Schoeck, 'Humanism in England', in Albert Rabil, Jr. (ed.), *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms, and Legacy* (3 vols, Philadelphia, 1988), ii, pp. 5-38.

¹³ Gordon Kipling, 'Henry VII and the Origins of Tudor Patronage', in Guy Lytle and Stephen Orgel (eds), *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1981), pp. 117-64.

¹⁴ David Carlson, *English Humanist Books: Writers and Patrons, Manuscript and Print, 1475-1525* (Toronto, 1993).

¹⁵ Sergio Rossi, 'Noti sugli Italiani in Inghilterra nell'età del Rinascimento', in Rossi (ed.), *Saggi sul Rinascimento* (Milan, 1988), pp. 55-115. Roberto Weiss, 'Cornelio Vitelli in France and England', *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 2:3 (1939), pp. 219-26. Francis Wormald, 'An Italian Poet at the Court of Henry VII', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 14 (1951), pp. 118-19. Denys Hay, 'Pietro Griffi, an Italian in England, 1506-1512', *Italian Studies*, 2 (1939), pp. 118-28.

fifteenth and early sixteenth century, such as William Latimer, William Grocyn, Richard Pace, Thomas Linacre and Cuthbert Tunstall. Particularly notable in Henry's reign was the proliferation of Latin poetry at court, much of it lauding the king and his military exploits.¹⁶ Erasmus made great efforts to conform to this pattern of humanist activity on his early visits to England. He circulated his poetry at court and elsewhere, much of it flattering to the royal family and their humanist servants.¹⁷ He ingratiated himself with several Italians living in the country such as Andrea Ammonio and was employed as a tutor to the sons of Giovanni Battista Boerio when they travelled to Italy.¹⁸

Humanism, then, remained a cosmopolitan venture in England. There were nonetheless signs of native traditions taking root.¹⁹ The study of Greek is a case in point. By the 1480s, there were several significant figures teaching and learning the language in England.²⁰ William Sellyng, William Grocyn and Thomas Linacre were assisted by the likes of Vitelli and by the presence of Greek scribes in the country such as Joannes Serbopoulos.²¹ Erasmus made his own contribution to these traditions by lecturing on Greek in Cambridge from 1511.²² His joint translations of Lucian with Thomas More created a vogue for the Greek satirist. In 1507, Boerio presented the future Henry VIII with a manuscript of Lucian produced in Italy, while Richard Pace and Henry Bullock (the latter a pupil of Erasmus) had their versions printed.²³

In the earlier fifteenth century, humanists in England had primarily shown an 'interest in antiquity, in ancient literature, Latin or Greek, and in ancient culture more generally'.²⁴ By the end of the century, however, these studies had begun to cross-pollinate other areas of scholarship such as natural philosophy, medicine and, most significantly for the present discussion, theology. An intensified interest in the Greek texts of the bible can be sensed from the second half of the fifteenth century. Emmanuel of Constantinople produced several biblical manuscripts for his English clients, including two psalters and the famous *Codex Leicestrensis*. There was also a strong interest in the Church Fathers, especially Chrysostom.²⁵ Around the year 1488, Sellyng translated

¹⁶ Carlson, *English Humanist Books*, p. 21. Thomas Penn, 'Literary Service at the Court of Henry VII' (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2001). For an example see, BL, Harley MS 336. These poets also wrote for those in the royal household, such as Lady Margaret Beaufort: Susan Powell, 'Lady Margaret Beaufort and Her Books', *The Library*, 20:3 (1998), p. 209.

¹⁷ Carlson, *English Humanist Books*, pp. 82-101. Idem, 'Erasmus, Revision, and the British Library Manuscript Egerton 1651', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 15 (1991), pp. 199-232.

¹⁸ Ep. 193, *CWE* 2, pp. 114-17. Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, p. 109.

¹⁹ Carroll, 'Humanism and English literature', p. 248.

²⁰ Micha Lazarus, 'Greek Literacy in Sixteenth-Century England', *Renaissance Studies*, 29:3 (2015), pp. 437-9.

²¹ M. R. James, 'Greek Manuscripts in England Before the Renaissance', *The Library*, 7:4 (1927), pp. 337-53.

²² Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, p. 112.

²³ BL, Add. MS 19553. Richard Pace, *Plutarchi Cheronaei opuscula... Ex Luciano* (Rome, 1513). Henry Bullock, *Lepidissimum Luciani opusculum* (Cambridge, 1520).

²⁴ Carlson, *English Humanist Books*, p. 5.

²⁵ McConica, *English Humanists*, p. 71.

a sermon of Chrysostom into Latin and shared it with his fellow Benedictines and the archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham.²⁶ Grocyn also owned Chrysostom's homilies on Matthew in Greek, copied for him by Serbopoulos.²⁷ Sellyng and Grocyn, in fact, had access to a range of classical and patristic authors, suggesting that there was greater scope for establishing humanist collections in the period.²⁸

One result of these developments was an emergent interest in applying humanist methods to various aspects of the Christian corpus. John Colet's surviving notes and commentaries on the Pauline epistles, for example, draw from the Church Fathers, classical historians and poets alongside the more recent works of Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.²⁹ The works of Augustine also became a focus for historical and linguistic approaches pioneered by humanists. Thomas More and Bernard André commented upon Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in the early 1500s.³⁰ Christopher Urswick likewise annotated his vellum copy of *De civitate*, taking some interest in the saint's handling of Roman history.³¹ It was these interests and the availability of manuscripts that allowed Erasmus to pursue his own programme of biblical and patristic studies while in England. He may have consulted, for instance, the *Codex Leicestrensis* while working in Cambridge and he clearly had access to volumes in the possession of John Colet.³²

That is not to say that shared interests equated to agreement. Colet and Erasmus, for example, had rather different views concerning the humanity of Christ. The two men had met in Oxford in 1499 and, soon afterwards, entered into a discussion concerning Christ's 'distress, alarm and sorrow' prior to his death.³³ In the gospels, Christ withdraws from the apostles on the eve of his betrayal, falls to the ground in prayer and asks 'O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt'.³⁴ The passage raised fundamental questions about Christ's humanity and his role within the Trinity: was Christ genuinely afraid to accept death? And

²⁶ The two surviving copies of the text are: BL, Add. MS 15673 and Add MS 47675. See, J. B. Trapp, 'Notes on manuscripts written by Peter Meghen', *The Book Collector*, 24 (1975), pp. 80-96. Weiss, *Humanism*, p. 152.

²⁷ CCC, Oxford, MS 23. Alan Coates, *English Medieval Books: The Reading Abbey Collections from Foundation to Dispersal* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 110-2.

²⁸ John Leland described Sellyng's library after a devastating fire in Canterbury in 1535 as containing 'many Greek manuscripts' and 'Latin codices in ancient script' collected in Italy: John Leland, *On Famous Men*, ed. James Carley (Toronto, 2010), pp. 808-11. For Grocyn's library, see: 'The Accounts of Thomas Linacre as Executor of William Grocyn', *Collectanea* (Oxford, 1890), pp. 325-31.

²⁹ *John Colet's Commentary on First Corinthians*, ed. Bernard O'Kelley and Catherine Jarrott (Binghampton, 1985), p. 17.

³⁰ Daniel Hobbins, 'Arsenal MS 360 as a Witness to the Career and Writings of Bernard André', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 50 (2001), pp. 161-98.

³¹ J. B. Trapp, 'Christopher Urswick and His Books: The Reading of Henry VII's Almoner', *Renaissance Studies*, 1:1 (1987), pp. 61-3. CCC, Cambridge, MS 346, Augustine, *De civitate dei* (Venice, 1475), printed on vellum.

³² See Chap. 5.

³³ Erasmus, *Disputatiuncula de taedio, pavore, tristitia Iesu*, CWE 70, p. 14.

³⁴ KJV: Matt 26:39, Mark 14:36, Luke 22:42.

did the different persons of the Trinity have different or even competing wills?³⁵ Colet, siding with St Jerome, explained the passage by reference to its historical context.³⁶ Christ was not afraid for himself, but was concerned that, in passing him the cup of death, the Jews would be condemned forever. Erasmus retorted that such a reading was not supported by the plain words of the text and went against the consensus of the Fathers and the later commentators.³⁷ Christ had taken on human form (a theory termed *kenosis*) and was subject to a natural fear of death which he overcame to provide an example of human fortitude to his followers and to fulfil his salvific purpose.³⁸ The debate was typical of the ways in which Erasmus harnessed disagreements with his peers to his own end. After all, our primary knowledge of the discussion comes from the *Disputatiuncula de taedio, pavore, tristitia Iesu*, which Erasmus carefully edited from letters exchanged between himself and Colet on the matter.³⁹ Even in edited form, however, the debate still exposed various fault lines in the humanist approach to the gospel, ones which would prove significant for his later reputation.

Some of the vibrancy of humanism in England around the year 1500 gets overlooked either because it did not result in printed publication or because it was enshrined in other intellectual habits such as collecting. No scholar has yet undertaken a comprehensive survey of André's work on Augustine, for example, and one can only guess at the broader outlook of Grocyn from a list of his surviving books. This points to another factor shaping English humanism in the early sixteenth century: printing. As David Rundle has suggested, 'however unrevolutionary print may have been... it undeniably had an impact on the identity of humanism'.⁴⁰ Grocyn, Colet and their contemporaries were reticent about circulating their work in print. But that was not the case for More, Linacre and the generations after the 1520s, who saw participation in print culture as an essential expression of the humanist ethos. As we shall see, print was an increasingly important element for those in the orbit of Erasmus, especially as his international renown grew.

If England provided several opportunities for Erasmus, it also had its challenges. One basic problem was Erasmus' inability to secure a steady stream of patronage. He had arrived with William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, but the latter was evidently unable to support Erasmus more permanently. In 1506, Erasmus dedicated several translations of Lucian and Euripides to potential

³⁵ James Tracy, 'Humanists among the Scholastics: Erasmus, More, and Lefèvre d'Étaples on the Humanity of Christ', *Erasmus Studies*, 5:1 (1985), pp. 30-51.

³⁶ Erasmus, *Disputatiuncula*, pp. 16-7.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-20.

³⁸ Tracy, 'Humanists among the Scholastics', pp. 30-51.

³⁹ For a discussion of Gouda MS 1324, which contains the texts of some of the original letters exchanged in 1499 (now Epp. 109, 111, *CWE* 1), see Michael Heath, 'Introduction', in *CWE* 70, p. 2.

⁴⁰ Rundle, 'Introduction', in Weiss, *Humanism in England* (fourth edition), (Oxford, 2010), p. xliii.

benefactors, all without much success.⁴¹ Warham was probably not alone in wondering whether these scattered dedications were a sign that Erasmus had presented the same works to several patrons.⁴² Efforts to attract the attention of Henry VIII and Cardinal Thomas Wolsey with translations of Plutarch were similarly unsuccessful (see Chap. 3). Erasmus taught in Cambridge between 1511 and 1514, but by 1515, he was back on the continent and complaining to his English acquaintance at their failure to support him more readily.⁴³

With only limited avenues for patronage, it is not surprising to find that rivalry, as much as harmony, came to define Erasmus' relations with his English acquaintance. Erasmus was forced to keep away from Mountjoy's household at times by the presence of 'Cerberus', most likely Bernard André to whom Erasmus owed money.⁴⁴ Another member of Mountjoy's household in these years, Gervasius Amoenus, went on to plagiarise several of Erasmus' writings (see Chap 3). Erasmus wrote a seething letter to Pace in 1515, protesting at the moves which Linacre and Grocyn had made against him, perhaps in relation to a potential patron.⁴⁵ When the scholar proposed dedicating the *Colloquies* to Roger Wentford, the headmaster of St Anthony's School in London, the latter apparently urged him to suppress one of its dialogues.⁴⁶ Erasmus thought better of the dedication as a result. Erasmus' friendship with Polydore Vergil was equally turbulent. The two men were each adamant that their collection of adages had preceded the other's and the issue bubbled away well into the 1520s.⁴⁷ Vergil, in fact, acted as something of a hub for Erasmian discontent, remaining on friendly terms with two of the Dutchman's bitterest critics, Robert Ridley and Edward Lee.⁴⁸ In 1526, Vergil was still writing supportively to Lee in his dispute with Erasmus.⁴⁹ Erasmian England, therefore, could be a fractious as well as friendly place.

(ii) Competition and collaboration: the management of Erasmus' reputation in England

It was within a nexus of competition and collaboration that Erasmus came to rely on his English circle to help compose, distribute and defend his publications. Erasmus' writings in these years were frequently produced in close conversation with his English circle. *De conscribendis epistolis*

⁴¹ Epp. 187-8, 191-2, *CWE* 2, pp. 101-3, 107-10, 112-14.

⁴² Ep. 188, *CWE* 2, p. 107.

⁴³ See the apologetic tone of More: Ep. 388, *CWE* 3, pp. 229-37.

⁴⁴ Stanford Lehmborg, 'William Blount', in *Contemporaries*, i, p. 155.

⁴⁵ Ep. 350, *CWE* 3, pp. 169-70.

⁴⁶ Ep. 833, *CWE* 5, p. 410.

⁴⁷ Ep. 1175 *CWE* 8, pp. 135-40, Ep. 1210, *CWE* 8, pp. 224-5.

⁴⁸ Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford, 1952), p. 18.

⁴⁹ *LC&P* 4, 2570. BL, Harley MS 6989, fo. 13.

began life as a textbook for his English charges in Paris.⁵⁰ More and Erasmus translated sections of Lucian together in 1506 and continued to play with the possibilities of Lucianic satire in their later works.⁵¹ Several of Erasmus' works circulated in draft among his English intimates, though he often had trouble getting them returned to him.⁵² While the scholar frequently complained at the drudgery of his labours, he received a great deal of assistance from his English peers. John Smith, whom Erasmus had first met as a young man in Cambridge, served as the latter's amanuensis and servant between 1511 and 1518.⁵³ During his embassy to the Low Countries, Cuthbert Tunstall collated some of the Greek texts of the New Testament with Erasmus.⁵⁴ Robert Aldridge, a former pupil of the Dutch scholar, was instructed to gather readings from Senecan manuscripts in Cambridge in 1525. Erasmus, working on a revised edition of the Roman author, asked Aldridge to write textual variants in the margins of a printed edition and have the book conveyed to Basel.⁵⁵

Once a work had been completed, Erasmus often left it to his friends to ensure its successful distribution. Grocyn and later Colet, for instance, were asked to sell copies of the *Adagia* in England between 1501 and 1504.⁵⁶ Thomas More took on an increasing prominence in this process, overseeing several elements of the reception of Erasmus' New Testament and edition of Jerome. He surveyed the reactions of clerics and courtiers to the works for Erasmus and arranged for English scholars to assist in their revision.⁵⁷ He also composed verses to accompany the presentations of these works to Thomas Wolsey and William Warham. These verses must either have been handed over with the books themselves or composed afterwards with an eye to their eventual publication. For Warham (the dedicatee of the Jerome edition), More stressed that the work 'surpasses all that have preceded it' and that the Dutchman wished to share the credit with his patron.⁵⁸ Praise was more usually directed at a patron than Erasmus. The poem accompanying a copy of the New Testament for Wolsey, for example, commended the Lord Chancellor's handling of legal matters and rather tendentiously linked these to Erasmus' book as 'the law of Christ'.⁵⁹ Nor were these activities always restricted to England. When Thomas Lupset passed through Innsbruck on his way to Italy in 1523, he observed with horror that Erasmus' *Paraphrase*

⁵⁰ Charles Fantazzi, 'Introduction', *CWE* 3, pp. 2-3.

⁵¹ Dominic Baker-Smith, *More's Utopia* (Toronto, 2000), pp. 38-55.

⁵² Ep. 502, *CWE* 4, pp. 169-72.

⁵³ Franz Bierlaire, 'Robert and John Smith', *Contemporaries*, iii, p. 261.

⁵⁴ Ep. 597, *CWE* 5, p. 6. Ep. 864 *CWE* 6, pp. 106-7.

⁵⁵ Ep. 1656, *CWE* 11, pp. 397-9. Ep. 1766, *CWE* 12, pp. 400-5.

⁵⁶ Ep. 181, *CWE* 2, pp. 88.

⁵⁷ Ep. 388, *CWE* 3, pp. 229-37. Ep. 481, *CWE* 4, pp. 114-7.

⁵⁸ *CWM* 3:2, pp. 270-1, no. 257. The dedication edition survives: NC, BT1.74.9-13, Jerome (ed. Erasmus), *Omnia opera* (Basel, 1516).

⁵⁹ *CWM* 3:2, pp. 268-9, no. 256.

on John had been presented to Archduke Ferdinand unbound and 'with no letter or recommendation of any kind'.⁶⁰ Lupset urged Erasmus' friends to rectify the error.⁶¹

Erasmus' English circle, therefore, acted in both a promotional and critical capacity for the scholar. His friends contributed to each stage of the process, from its scholarly formation to its physical presentation to a patron. They guarded Erasmus' reputation at court and penned defences of his agenda in the face of several critics.⁶² More was most active in the latter regard, writing against Dorp, Lee, Batmanson and the Trojans at Oxford.⁶³ While More's actions were provoked by sudden controversies, other media, particularly Latin poetry, were used by English figures to celebrate Erasmus' fame and reputation in the longer term. John Leland praised Erasmus both before and after his death, while John Heliar contributed an epitaph to a volume celebrating the scholar's life printed at Antwerp in 1537.⁶⁴

The most significant development in defending Erasmus' scholarly identity was the printing of selections of his correspondence from 1515 onwards. These had the useful effect of both rebutting certain criticisms while presenting evidence of the extent of the scholar's support across Europe. Erasmus solicited several letters from English correspondents for these volumes. In 1518 he asked More to pass on any letters 'of mine or yours which you think suitable for publication after any necessary changes; for publish I must willy-nilly'.⁶⁵ The exchange of information was often carefully managed between the worlds of print and manuscript. In 1516, More and Erasmus had discussed the *Julius Exclusus* in their letters.⁶⁶ Yet after the pamphlet's printing in 1517, Erasmus was forced to deny authorship. The following year he wrote a missive to More (later published in the *Farrago*) complaining of the attribution of that 'scandalous pamphlet, fit only to be burnt repeatedly' to his pen and forwarded a letter he had written rebutting the claim to Paolo Bombace.⁶⁷

It was a quarrel between Erasmus and an English student, Edward Lee, that produced the most extended period of co-operation between Erasmus and his English network. The controversy originated in the conflicts at the university in Louvain.⁶⁸ In 1517, Erasmus invited Lee

⁶⁰ Ep. 1360, *CWE* 10, pp. 10-11.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶² e.g. Ep. 787, *CWE* 5, p. 331; Ep. 1385, *CWE* 10, p. 85.

⁶³ See, *CWM* 15.

⁶⁴ John Leland, *Encomia* (London, 1589), pp. 54, 70. *Epitaphiorum libellus cum clariss. virorum aliquot epistolis* (Antwerp, 1537), sigs O2r-O3r.

⁶⁵ Ep. 785, *CWE* 5, p. 325-6.

⁶⁶ Epp. 502, 543, *CWE* 4, pp. 169-72, 270-3.

⁶⁷ Ep. 908, *CWE* 6, p. 215.

⁶⁸ Erika Rummel, 'Introduction', *ASD* IX:4, pp. 1-20. Eadem, 'New Perspectives on the Controversy between Erasmus and Lee', *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkegeschiedenis*, 74:1 (1994), pp. 226-32. Eadem, 'Erasmus and the Valladolid Articles: Intrigue, Innuendo, and Strategic Defense', in Sperna Weiland and W. Frihoff (eds) *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar* (Leiden, 1988), pp. 69-78. Cecilia Asso, *La Teologia e La Grammatica: La Controversia tra Erasmo ed Edward Lee* (Florence, 1993).

to offer some comments for the revision of the New Testament.⁶⁹ The exchanges, however, soon became heated and Lee eventually printed a series of critical notes on Erasmus' work in 1520.⁷⁰ Erasmus claimed throughout to have suppressed attacks on Lee, but the truth was far otherwise.⁷¹ He called on several English friends to placate Lee, while pre-emptively assembling three letter collections for the press.⁷² These letters, attacking Lee, were to be forwarded to William Nesen, though Erasmus would supervise their editing, 'taking care', he added 'to praise English scholars and the great men in England who support them'.⁷³ Erasmus circulated information to help with the composition.⁷⁴ He sent More a bundle of letters to use in his contribution.⁷⁵ The scholar also insinuated that the affair would generate a sense of national disgrace in England. He disingenuously told Pace that the affair 'does not concern me personally' but that 'it does concern your native Britain'.⁷⁶ Pace's published letters marvel at the 'moderation' which Erasmus had shown and feared that Lee would be abused throughout Germany.⁷⁷ At Erasmus' request, Pace spoke with Lee in 1519 in Antwerp, an encounter which he then included in his letter of support.⁷⁸ Thomas Lupset wrote to Nesen in the hopes that 'the learned may curse a single Briton for the deed of a single man, not [the whole of] Britain'.⁷⁹ Once Lee published his *Annotationes* in 1520 the European floodgates opened. Anonymous lampoons, satirical epigrams and letters were all printed in 1520, abusing Lee's book and his pretensions to scholarship.⁸⁰

The censuring of Lee's work was perhaps the most blatant attempt by English figures to defend the Dutchman's reputation. Not every effort to support Erasmus, however, was met with approval. In 1516, Richard Pace fell foul of Erasmus' desire to control the commentary upon his life and works. While away on embassy, Pace had missed the publication of the New Testament and a letter collection in support of Erasmus, the *Epistolae ad Erasmus*, in 1516. The following year he made up for his absence with three literary productions: an epistle in support of the New Testament, a fresh attack on Martin Dorp (an early opponent of Erasmus) and several supportive comments in an independent work, *De fructu qui ex doctrina percipitur* (1517). The letter consciously

⁶⁹ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, i, pp. 95-120.

⁷⁰ Edward Lee, *Annotationum libri duo* (Paris, 1520).

⁷¹ Ep. 998, *CWE* 7, pp. 11-14.

⁷² See Rummel, 'Introduction', pp. 10-12. Michel Hillen printed two editions of the *Epistolae aliquot eruditorum* (Antwerp, 1520), the second was enlarged to feature more letters. Froben printed a quarto edition of Erasmus' defences in the same year, along with *Epistolae aliquot eruditorum virorum, ex quibus perspicuum quanta sit Edwardi Lei virulentia* (Basel, 1520).

⁷³ Ep. 1088, *CWE* 7, p. 255.

⁷⁴ See Ep. 1118, *CWE* 7, pp. 322-3.

⁷⁵ More later returned the letters to Cranevelt: LCB80, *LadC: More*, pp. 150-2. Ep. 1090, *CWE* 7, p. 257.

⁷⁶ Ep. 1118, *CWE* 7, pp. 323.

⁷⁷ Ep. 1089, *CWE* 7, pp. 255-6.

⁷⁸ See, Pace's letter in the *Epistolae aliquot eruditorum virorum* (Basel, 1520), pp. 85-88.

⁷⁹ *Epistolae aliquot eruditorum* (Antwerp, 1520), sig. Aii.v.

⁸⁰ Rummel, 'Introduction', pp. 10-12.

referred to the *Epistolae ad Erasmus*, praising the New Testament and decrying its opponents in Louvain.⁸¹ On its own, it might have proved useful to Erasmus. The attack on Dorp, however, risked reigniting a controversy that had already ended. Worse still, *De fructu* insinuated that the Dutchman was a penniless scholar and openly cited the complaints of several Erasmian critics, albeit in an effort to dismiss them.⁸² This was not the image Erasmus wished to share with the world and he reacted with fury, lambasting *De fructu*, and suppressing the attack on Dorp.⁸³

Others deployed print and poetry against Erasmus. Erasmus, for example, was particularly incensed at Lee's use of an index listing his errors and heresies.⁸⁴ Lee was also not without English support. John Skelton composed *Speke Parrot* at the height of the quarrel and left little doubt about his allegiances. Skelton was particularly scathing of the vogue for Greek. Lifting a line from Juvenal, he parodied those who 'lie in bed in the Greek manner' and complained, perhaps with an eye on the *Adagia*, that 'Attic sayings are a veneer of lead or even false offshoots'.⁸⁵ Last but not least, the poet criticised Erasmus' New Testament, mocking the false piety of those who sought to correct scripture – or in Skelton's inimitable words, those who 'sette... a D' to 'Amen', and thus made their creed 'Amend'.⁸⁶ He also made great play with Erasmus' use of the word *sermo* in the translation of John 1:1.⁸⁷ Despite vigorous efforts to police the English reputation of Erasmus, attacks continued to circulate. In the spring of 1525, for instance, a pamphlet condemning Erasmus made its way from the Low Countries to England.⁸⁸ The tract, authored under the pseudonym 'Taxander' and dedicated to Edward Lee, alleged that Erasmus supported Luther and criticised his contact with reformers such as Joannes Oecolampadius and Ulrich von Hutten.⁸⁹ Erasmus had perhaps caught a whiff of the attack in February when he sent 'a little bundle of letters' to Frans van Cranevelt in Bruges 'which should make plain how much I agree with the Pope and Princes'.⁹⁰ Cranevelt was a key intermediary for Erasmus and his English counterparts and soon thereafter wrote to More about Taxander. More reported back that the 'foolish pamphlet sent forth against our Erasmus... was already amongst us sometime ago' and complained that it

⁸¹ Ep. 619, *CWE* 5, pp. 55-60. For a longer discussion, see Chap. 5.

⁸² Richard Pace, *De fructu qui ex doctrina percipitur*, ed. Frank Manley and Richard Sylvester (New York, 1967), pp. 22-3, 117-21.

⁸³ Epp. 732, 736, 776, 787, *CWE* 5, pp. 229, 235, 301-2, 331-3.

⁸⁴ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, i, p. 109.

⁸⁵ John Skelton, *Speke Parrot*, ll. 268-276, in John Scattergood (ed.) *The Complete Poems of John Skelton. Revised Edition* (Liverpool, 2015), pp. 207-8: 'Concumbunt Grece.../ Ergo/ Attica dictamina/ Sunt plumbi lamina/ Vel spuria vitulamina'.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 'Non est hic sermo pudicus'.

⁸⁸ Erika Rummel, 'Manifesta mendacia: Erasmus' Reply to "Taxander"', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 43:4 (1990), pp. 731-43.

Two tracts were printed in a single volume: *Apologia in eum librum quem ab anno Erasmus Roterodamus de confessione edidit* and *Liber de carniū esu ante biennium per Erasmus Roterodamus enixus*.

⁸⁹ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, ii, pp. 1-28.

⁹⁰ Ep. 139, *LadC*, p. 376: 'epistolarum fasciculum'.

had been ‘sent under a false title of the author’.⁹¹ More entreated Cranevelt to investigate ‘who the true author was’ and ‘who might have conveyed it to the printer’, presumably in the hopes that he could discredit the pamphlet in England.⁹² Cranevelt, however, found little and More lamented the following year that the ‘scoundrels who conspired in the nonsense of Taxander, like serpents who have vomited out poison, have hidden themselves in darkness, but the infamy of these scurrilous men is plain to see’.⁹³ For all its sophistication, the Erasmian network remained an imperfect mechanism for controlling the author’s reception.

(iii) Reformation politics and the decline of the Erasmian network

Erasmus was in contact with Martin Luther from 1519 until communications ceased in 1526.⁹⁴ Relations were cordial, if cautious, in the beginning, before matters deteriorated with the publication of *De libero arbitrio* (1524). Erasmus’ relationship to evangelical reform was complex and revolved around many figures besides Luther.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, it was with the German reformer that Erasmus’ English correspondents were most concerned, for Erasmus was less discreet in his contact with Luther than they had hoped. Froben printed two of their letters in a folio volume, the *Farrago* (1519), a fact Erasmus’ detractors in Louvain soon seized upon.⁹⁶ Erasmus had also written incautiously to Luther’s patron, the Elector Frederick of Saxony. While claiming to have read little of Luther, Erasmus aligned the reformer with his own assaults on scholastic and conservative theology and defended Luther from the ‘libellous’ accusation of heresy.⁹⁷ The letter was quickly circulated by George Spalatin, the elector’s secretary, and printed in Leipzig.⁹⁸ Luther was excommunicated by papal bull in June 1520 and responded with three searing pamphlets of his own that year. As tensions rose, Frederick solicited Erasmus’ advice on whether to continue supporting Luther’s cause. Erasmus’ reply of November 1520, the *Axiomata Erasmi pro causa Martini Lutheri*, were a set of brief notes urging the elector to disregard the bull, pointing to the

⁹¹ Ep. 151, *LadC*, p. 419: ‘Libellus ille ineptus de quo scripsisti, adversus Erasmus nostrum editus, iam pridem apud nos erat; qui et mihi et multi aliis visus est sub ementiti authoris titulo emissus; quamobrem cuperem per te inquiri quis verus author fuerit; quis ad typographos attulerit: potest enim forsam ab eis disci.’

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Ep. 177, *LadC*, p. 481: ‘Nebulones qui conspirarunt in Taxandri nugas, velut serpentes euomito veneno, sese abdiderunt in tenebras sed infamia scurrarum versatur in luce.’

⁹⁴ Ep. 933, *CWE* 6, p. 281. Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, pp. 271-2.

⁹⁵ For his various friendships with reformers see: Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, pp. 263-78. For useful discussions of the theological correlation or otherwise see: A. Marlow and B. Drewery, ‘Introduction’, in *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation* (London, 1969), pp. 1-32; John Olin, *Luther, Erasmus and the Reformation: A Catholic-Protestant Reappraisal* (New York, 1969); Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 121-51.

⁹⁶ *Farrago nova epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami ad alios, et aliorum a hunc admixtis quibusdam, quas scripsit etiam adolescens* (Basel, 1519). See, Martin Lowry, ‘Introduction’, *CWE* 71, p. 98.

⁹⁷ Ep. 939, *CWE* 6, p.p. 295-9.

⁹⁸ *Ibid. Contenta in hoc libello, Erasmi Roterodami epistola...* (Leipzig, 1519).

questionable motives of those pursuing the excommunication and Luther's offer to submit himself to public disputation.⁹⁹ Frederick took Erasmus' advice seriously and the notes were once again published in Leipzig, despite the scholar's request that they remain private.¹⁰⁰ Having implicated himself in both encounters, Erasmus finally sought to distance himself from the German reform movement. In 1520, he even threatened to break off his relationship with Johann Froben if the printer continued to publish Luther's tracts.¹⁰¹ By this time, however, rumours were already circulating at the English court that Erasmus was 'not only a supporter of Luther's faction but his collaborator and almost his moving spirit', an especially damaging allegation given Henry's personal disapproval of the German's works.¹⁰²

Concerns at Erasmus' response to the reformation were to define his later relations with England. In July 1521, for instance, Erasmus wrote two letters to Richard Pace and William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, distancing himself from Luther. The two letters were directed at different audiences, for whilst that to Mountjoy was quickly printed in Froben's 1521 *Epistolae ad diversos*, the epistle to Pace survives only in manuscript.¹⁰³ In the printed missive to Mountjoy, Erasmus emphatically distanced himself from the reformer: 'in all of the books of Luther there is not one syllable that is mine or written with my connivance... I have made no secret agreement with Luther or any member of his party'.¹⁰⁴ Although he acknowledged that the Church had sunk 'far below the purity of the gospel', he argued that his books had been misconstrued and that he alone had counselled Luther to stop writing.¹⁰⁵ He also tentatively promised to write something against Luther.¹⁰⁶ The letter to Pace had a smaller community of intimates in mind. It accused Girolamo Aleandro, the papal nuncio at the Diet of Worms (described as a 'friend' in the Mountjoy letter), of conniving in attacks against him.¹⁰⁷ Erasmus' stance on Luther was also more nuanced. 'Let us not be so carried away with our hatred of falsehood in Luther's writings', he proposed, 'that we lose the benefit of the good things he has written'.¹⁰⁸ More tellingly, perhaps, he feared that once 'Luther is in ashes', those who persecuted him will turn on others.¹⁰⁹

Once again, Erasmus used manuscript and print channels to orchestrate a defence of his reputation. However, he soon found his English circle less responsive. A month after the missives

⁹⁹ See Erasmus, *Axiomata Erasmi pro causa Martini Lutheri*, trans. Martin Lowry, *CWE* 71, pp. 106-7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, p. 271.

¹⁰² Ep. 1219, *CWE* 8, p. 259. BL, Harley MS, 6989, fo. 5. Richard Rex, 'The English Campaign against Luther in the 1520s', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 39 (1989), pp. 85-106.

¹⁰³ See headnotes to Epp. 1218-9, *CWE* 8, pp. 257, 259.

¹⁰⁴ Ep. 1219, *CWE* 8, p. 260.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

¹⁰⁷ Ep. 1218, *CWE* 8, p. 258.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

to Pace and Mountjoy, an English delegation arrived in Bruges to negotiate with the emperor, who soon made the scholar aware of the changing stance on heresy in England. Erasmus met with More, Tunstall and Cardinal Wolsey and saw Henry's *Assertio septem sacramentorum*, though he had apparently not had the opportunity to read it.¹¹⁰ With his position under threat, Erasmus penned more letters aiming to clarify his position for both English and European audiences. One, seemingly drafted at Bruges, was addressed to Warham and subsequently printed in the *Epistolae ad diversos* (1521).¹¹¹ Erasmus now took a firmer stance against Luther and praised the king's book. He also promised to read 'all the works of Luther and his opponents.... My object will be to be seen to be doing all I can to support the Roman pontiff and the peace of Christendom'.¹¹² Erasmus then sent the letter and an edited version to printers in Basel and Leipzig, to broadcast his new stance.¹¹³ Once away from the critical atmosphere of Bruges, however, Erasmus had second thoughts. In March 1522, he wrote to Wolsey claiming that he had always opposed Luther and stringently denied having any agreement with the German 'any more than your Eminence had'.¹¹⁴ He pointed to the many letters now in circulation (including the one to Warham) which defended his reputation and reneged on his promise to write something against Luther, since 'there are other fields in which I can be of more use to Christendom'.¹¹⁵

The exchanges between Erasmus and his English friends between 1521 and 1522 were to set the tone for much of their later correspondence, as those involved in combatting heresy in England increasingly struggled to understand his relationship to reform. By the middle of the decade, Wolsey, Warham, Longland and Tunstall had all urged him to correct his writings, especially the *Colloquies*, the tone of which failed to register the changed religious atmosphere.¹¹⁶ Tunstall cut to the heart of Erasmus' self-image when he argued that it was not Jerome's editorial labours but his combatting of heresy which had made him famous.¹¹⁷ Erasmus, for his part, was defiant. While 'some things in my books might have been said with more circumspection', he complained, 'in no case do they exhibit impiety'.¹¹⁸ He objected to the inclusion of Henry Standish on heresy commissions (since Standish had repeatedly opposed Erasmus' New Testament translation).¹¹⁹ By the 1530s, Erasmus was openly disagreeing with the likes of Tunstall in print.

¹¹⁰ Epp. 1223, 1228 *CWE* 8, pp. 268-9, 284.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 283-6.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ See, Ep. 1228, *EE*, iv, p. 567-9. *Erasmi Roterodami duo epistolae de causa Lutherana* (Leipzig, 1521).

¹¹⁴ BL, Cotton MS Vitellius B V, 19, fo. 44r. The letter was damaged in the Cotton fire. See, *EE*, v, p. 27. Ep. 1263, *CWE* 8, pp. 38-40.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ Epp. 1697, 1704, *CWE* 12, pp. 164-74, 188-90. Epp. 1804, 1828, 1831, 1861, *CWE* 13, pp. 9-27, 146-50, 153-4, 275-6.

¹¹⁷ Ep. 1367, *CWE* 10, pp. 25-6.

¹¹⁸ Ep. 1828, *CWE* 13, p. 148.

¹¹⁹ Ep. 1697, *CWE* 12, p. 167.

When Tunstall reiterated his plea that Erasmus cleanse his writings of heretical suggestions, Erasmus responded by printing a strikingly honest rebuttal which cuttingly suggested that his English counterpart had been too busy to keep up with recent publications.¹²⁰ The religious stance of his friends also created uncertainty over what was private and what public. More, for instance, wrote of his hatred of heretics in 1532 and the following year forwarded his epitaph to the Dutchman with its equally defiant tone.¹²¹ Erasmus raised concerns about the tone of these exchanges, but More reassured him that there was no reason to avoid printing them.¹²² When Erasmus asked More to facilitate the visit of the Greek scholar and evangelical, Simon Grynaeus, the latter reluctantly agreed, while making it clear that it risked his reputation.¹²³ Collaboration with Erasmus, then, was becoming increasingly fraught in a divided world.

Erasmus' decision to relocate to Basel in 1521 also heightened tensions. He wanted to work in closer proximity to his printer, Johann Froben, and to avoid the endless quarrels of the university of Louvain. Yet he arrived in the Swiss city at the beginning of a decade of religious disturbances, culminating in the limitation of the Mass and iconoclasm of 1528-9.¹²⁴ Several of Erasmus' correspondents urged him to leave in the 1520s. Mountjoy pressed Erasmus to fight heresy, 'a task you cannot perform in the places where you now reside without great personal danger and distraction'.¹²⁵ Henry VIII had heard that Erasmus was not safe in Basel, while the latter wrote to England to dispel rumours that he lived in the city for fear of persecution elsewhere.¹²⁶ The city's evangelical leanings cast suspicion on Erasmus whilst simultaneously making communication with England more complex. More continued to pursue avenues for collaboration in the fight against heresy, even suggesting that the manuscript of *Hyperaspistes* could be secretly conveyed to England and printed there, if conditions were unfavourable in Basel.¹²⁷ But English figures increasingly conveyed sensitive information through messengers, rather than committing them to paper. In 1527 More informed Frans van Cranevelt that he was sending letters to Basel through a servant of Erasmus, 'in whom is greatly commended both the name of faith

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 72-4. Ep. 2263, *CWE* 16, pp. 165-9. Erasmus reiterated the criticism of Tunstall in another letter to Jacopo Sadoletto, printed in the same collection. Ep. 2443, *CWE* 17, p. 254.

¹²¹ Ep. 2659, *CWE* 19, pp. 55-9.

¹²² Ep. 2831, *EE*, x, p. 259: '*Quod in epistola priore scribis, dubitasse te epistolam meam aedere, quum tamen essent causae quur aeditam cuperes, non est, mi Erasme, quod dubites.*' More was referring to Ep. 2659, *EE*, x, pp. 32-4.

¹²³ Ep. 2263, *CWE* 19, p. 58.

¹²⁴ Hans Guggisberg, *Basel in the Sixteenth Century: Aspects of the City Republic before, during, and after the Reformation* (St Louis, 1982). Amy Nelson Burnett, *Teaching the Reformation: Ministers and Their Message in Basel, 1529-1629* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 19-46. Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, pp. 337-8.

¹²⁵ Ep. 1816, *CWE* 13, p. 109.

¹²⁶ Ep. 1878, *CWE* 13, p. 339. Ep. 1702, *CWE* 12, pp. 183-4.

¹²⁷ Ep. 1770, *CWE* 12, p. 417.

and the maintaining of silence'.¹²⁸ Collaboration was thus significantly harder than it had been when Erasmus lived in England or Louvain.

A brief window of opportunity presented itself in 1529 when Erasmus was driven from Basel by iconoclastic riots and relocated to Freiburg-im-Breisgau, a city under the protection of the Catholic Archduke Ferdinand. Writing of his distress at 'the ruin of the famous city of Basel', Tunstall claimed that Erasmus' departure from Switzerland was the only happy news he had received.¹²⁹ The move to Freiburg also coincided with a sustained effort to print Erasmus' correspondence, beginning with the *Opus epistolarum* (Basel, 1529).¹³⁰ The *Epistolae Floridae*, printed in Basel by Herwagen in the summer of 1531, contained a number of new letters to English friends (including his rebarbative reply to Tunstall), many of them memorialising his friendships and explaining his departure from Basel. There were letters to Margaret Roper and Charles Blount, the younger generation of Erasmus' closest friends.¹³¹ The epistle to More had a notably public feel to it, containing extended (and entirely undeserved) praise of Henry VIII for facilitating the peace of Cambrai and acknowledging Holbein's sketch of the More household.¹³²

If these publications were intended to reset Erasmus' relations with several English friends, the changing political situation in the country soon intervened. In the late 1520s, Henry VIII's urgent desire to secure a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, initiated a fundamental shift in the country's politics. Even prior to the official proceedings against Catherine, Erasmus had difficulty in keeping abreast of events from Basel. Catherine's chamberlain, Mountjoy, had reached out to Erasmus in 1525 about penning a work on marriage for the queen.¹³³ The resulting work, *Institutio Christiani matrimonii*, was presented to the queen in 1526. Both Catherine and Mountjoy were slow in responding to this piece and Erasmus began to suspect that his discussion of divorce in the tract had offended the queen.¹³⁴ A few years later, Erasmus further complicated the situation by producing three works for Thomas Boleyn, the newly ennobled father of Anne.¹³⁵ The Dutch scholar was fully aware that both sides were now attempting to draw him into the divorce controversy. Writing to Jacopo Sadoleto in 1530, Erasmus noted that he had written the *Institutio* for Catherine and only later learnt 'that divorce was already being discussed, though in

¹²⁸ Ep. 262, *LadC*, pp. 619-20: 'Hic gerulus minister est Erasmi, recta nunc illum repetens, a quo et fidei nomine, et taciturnitatis valde commendatur. Huic si quid Erasmo significatum velis quod litteris nolis committere, tutissime potes credere. Cetera si qua sunt quae te cupio scire, ex hoc tabellario cognosces.'

¹²⁹ Ep. 2226, *CWE* 16, p. 71.

¹³⁰ Allen, 'Principal Editions of Erasmus' *Epistolae*', pp. 593-602.

¹³¹ *Epistolae Floridae* (Basel, 1531), pp. 84-5, 124.

¹³² Ep. 2211, *CWE* 16, pp. 35-6. *Epistolae Floridae*, p. 90.

¹³³ Stanford Lehmborg, 'William Blount, Lord Mountjoy', *Contemporaries*, i, p. 156.

¹³⁴ Ep. 1804, *CWE* 13, p. 27.

¹³⁵ C. Knighton, 'Thomas Boleyn', *Contemporaries*, i, pp. 161-2.

secret'.¹³⁶ Erasmus thought it likely that Boleyn's supporters had 'taken a leaf out of their opponents' book' and requested writings from him in order to bolster their position.¹³⁷ He thus hoped to keep 'both parties equally well disposed to me' by staying neutral.¹³⁸ The contradictions of this position were exposed by 1534. In that year, Erasmus dedicated a third and final work to Boleyn, *De praeparatione ad mortem*, but had it printed with letters from the nobleman's erstwhile rivals, More and the imperial ambassador, Eustace Chapuys.¹³⁹

Erasmus' efforts to balance religious and political parties against each other was never likely to hold. The executions of More and Fisher, however, pushed Erasmus into a more aggressive stance towards events in England. Erasmus heard of the two men's deaths from the Louvain scholar, Conrad Goclenius.¹⁴⁰ Goclenius had been visited in August 1535 by Thomas Theobald, an English evangelical and agent of the Boleyns, who passed on the news of the executions.¹⁴¹ Goclenius, while rightly suspecting that Theobald was gathering information for his benefactor, quickly passed the news on to Erasmus. Whether the latter subsequently penned the account of More and Fisher's death known as *Expositio fidelis* (1535/6) remains a source of scholarly debate.¹⁴² What is clear is that Erasmus became a hub for the dissemination of information about More and Fisher. Erasmus had Goclenius' letter copied and circulated and received further information from Flanders and Italy.¹⁴³

Erasmus' actions risked a complete rupture in relations with England. Even prior to the deaths of More and Fisher, the Henrician government had monitored his reaction. One of the scholar's letters to Fisher only reached its recipient after Cromwell had inspected it.¹⁴⁴ The publication of the *Expositio* triggered a broader panic in government about the potential for Erasmus to denounce Henry. Simon Heynes informed Cromwell from France that he had heard news from some 'almaynes of myn acquaintance... that Erasmus hath now writen a work, wherin he do sore inveie against the kynges highnes for the dethe of Master More, the bookes be no yit cum owte, but thei belookide for to be solde at this ffrankfortmarket'.¹⁴⁵ Theobald, writing to

¹³⁶ Ep. 2312A, *CWE* 16, p. 299.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 300.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 300.

¹³⁹ Ep. 2659, *EE*, x, pp. 32-4.

¹⁴⁰ Ep. 3037, *EE*, xi, pp. 193-7. The following events are best surveyed in Henry De Vocht, *Acta Thomae Mori: History of the Reports of his Trial and Death with an Unedited Contemporary Narrative* (Louvain, 1947).

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, *L&P* 10, 458, p. 184.

¹⁴² E. Hitchcock, 'Appendix II: The Paris News Letter', in *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas Moore, Knight, Sometimes Lord High Chancellor of England*, ed. Hitchcock, (London, 1932), pp. 253-66. c.f. the contrasting opinions of: P. S. Allen, 'App XXVII: The *Expositio Fidelis*', in *EE*, xi, p. 368; De Vocht, *Acta*, pp. 61-6.

¹⁴³ Epp. 3049, 3061, 3079, *EE*, xi, pp. 217-222, 235-6, 262-3. Cochlaeus was one recipient: Cochlaeus, *Antiqua et insignis epistola Nicolai Papa I* (Leipzig, 1536), sigs CC1r-DD1r.

¹⁴⁴ *L&P* 8, 858.

¹⁴⁵ TNA, SP 1/97, fo. 84r.

Thomas Boleyn, was surprised that ‘no answer is made to Erasmus’ epistle for More and Fisher’.¹⁴⁶ A serious blow to English credibility might be dealt if Erasmus were to pivot more firmly to the Roman camp and denounce Henry. Eyes were trained on the Curia. John Wallop passed on the worrying news in August 1535 that ‘there was latelie voyde a certen office in Germanye of a good yerely provente and the same the bissop of Rome gaue to Erasmus’.¹⁴⁷ In October, Richard Moryson likewise informed Thomas Starkey of the pope’s gift of ‘a thousand gold pieces to Erasmus, to be paid annually’.¹⁴⁸ On several occasions English agents tried to use Erasmus’ English pension as leverage. Theobald ominously mentioned the pension while informing Goclenius of More and Fisher’s deaths.¹⁴⁹ Thomas Bedyll and Chapuys passed on further promises of payment.¹⁵⁰ Erasmus himself recorded that Cromwell, Thomas Cranmer and John Longland had sent money, ‘though none of them wrote’.¹⁵¹ Nor, it appeared, had they seen the preface to Erasmus’ latest literary production, *Ecclesiastes*, which included extended praise for three opponents of the Henrician supremacy: Fisher, More and William Warham.¹⁵²

Where once Erasmus had relied on his network of correspondents to manage his relations at court and combat his enemies, by the end of his life it had effectively ceased to operate. Bugged down in the 1520s by geographical distance and religious tensions, it was finally severed in the 1530s by the deaths of Erasmus’ closest friends and the political manoeuvres of the Henrician court. Even as Erasmus complained of ill health and crippling arthritis, Eustace Chapuys was composing a long encomium of Catherine of Aragon, evidently hoping that the scholar would circulate or even print the letter in defiance of the English monarch.¹⁵³ ‘Old friends have withdrawn’, Erasmus concluded, ‘and new ones are not obtained... In England either death has stolen them or fear restrained them’.¹⁵⁴

Erasmus’ own death in July 1536 released him from the obligation to manage his reputation in the age of print and religious turmoil. The baton was passed to his readers who continued to dissect his reaction to events in England and elsewhere, often with reference to the remains of his correspondence. John Foxe and John Bale trumpeted Erasmus’ connections to continental evangelicals.¹⁵⁵ Foxe noted that Erasmus had advised Frederick the Wise to protect

¹⁴⁶ *LEP* 10, 458.

¹⁴⁷ TNA, SP 1/97, fo. 89v.

¹⁴⁸ BL, Cotton Nero B VI fo. 149r. ‘*Erasmum paulus ep[iscopu]s romanus, mille aureis, quotannis prouenturis donauit.*’

¹⁴⁹ Ep. 3037, *EE*, xi, pp. 193-7.

¹⁵⁰ BL, Cotton MS Vitellius B XIV, f. 259v.

¹⁵¹ Ep. 3104, *EE*, xi, p. 296.

¹⁵² Erasmus, *Ecclesiastes*, *CWE* 67, pp. 243-5.

¹⁵³ Ep. 3059, *EE*, xi, pp. 276-7.

¹⁵⁴ Ep. 3104, *EE*, xi, p. 296: ‘*Veteres amici decedunt, parandi noni sunt, qui succedant... In Anglia omnes aut mors sustulit, aut metus contraxit.*’

¹⁵⁵ John Bale, *The true historie of the Christen departynge of the reuerende man D. Martyne Luther* (Wesel, 1546), sig. B8v.

Luther.¹⁵⁶ Thomas More's biographers increasingly distanced the Catholic martyr from his Dutch friend. By the end of the sixteenth century, one account conspicuously omitted Erasmus' name from a list of More's 'Externall Friends', alleging instead that the Englishman had been on good terms with 'Edward Lea, archbishop of Yorke, who wrote learnedlie againste Erasmus'.¹⁵⁷ Erasmus' reputation even remained a factor in diplomatic exchanges between England and the Holy Roman Empire. Chapuys had corresponded with the scholar, but his replacement as imperial ambassador in London, Frans van der Delft, had lived in Erasmus' household in the 1520s.¹⁵⁸ Thus, when Van der Delft complained at the treatment of conservative bishops such as Stephen Gardiner in England at the start of Edward VI's reign, the authorities quickly reminded him that Gardiner was an opponent of his former master Erasmus.¹⁵⁹ The dissolution of the Erasmian network in England thus ushered in a new phase in his reception, one driven primarily by his readers. It is to these readers and their efforts to understand Erasmus' legacy in England that we must now turn.

¹⁵⁶ *ACM* (1563), iii, p. 456.

¹⁵⁷ Ro. Ba., *The Lyfe of Syr Thomas More*, ed. E. Hitchcock and P. Hallett (London, 1950), p. 100. The external figures include Budé, Gillis, Dorp, Beroaldus, Cochlaeus, Godlenius and Vives.

¹⁵⁸ Franz Bierlaire, 'Frans van der Dilt', *Contemporaries*, i, pp. 393-4.

¹⁵⁹ *CSP*, ix, pp. 177-191.

Part II

The Readers of Erasmus

Chapter 3

Erasmus and the Tudor court



In the early sixteenth century the court became a focal point for the reading and circulation of humanist texts. The acceptance of humanists in court circles owed a great deal to Henry VII. Henry was ‘the great innovator of Tudor patronage, the creator of a royal literary and artistic establishment that he passed on to his heirs’.¹ By 1500, his court was home to a cosmopolitan group of poets, secretaries and tutors. He provided his son, the future Henry VIII, with an education in keeping with the humanists’ love of classical languages and literature.² Visiting England for the first time in 1499, Erasmus himself encouraged the young prince to continue ‘to model your life on ancient rather than modern ideals’.³ Yet humanists recognised that success in courtly circles involved more than stern exhortations to study. Erasmus, for instance, took to praising the English nation and royal family in poems for the Tudors.⁴

Humanism was also helped by broader institutional developments at court. Henry VII had provided his descendants with a library at Richmond and his successors would greatly expand its holdings.⁵ Henry VIII, in particular, would come to rely on the royal collection to carry out a series of royal projects, from the anti-Lutheran campaign of the 1520s, through the divorce negotiations and into the efforts to craft and enforce the reformation in England. In the time of his father, however, the library was not dominated by humanist writings in italic scripts but by chronicles and romances printed by Antoine Vérard or copied in a *lettre bâtarde*.⁶ Henry VII had little Latin and no Greek. His encounters with humanism were usually filtered through the genres and languages which flourished at Europe’s courts. When the French humanist and diplomat, Claude de Seyssel, wished to present Henry with a suitable gift in 1508, he chose a French translation of the *Anabasis*

¹ Gordon Kipling, ‘Henry VII and the Origins of Tudor Patronage’, in Guy Lytle and Stephen Orgel (eds), *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1981), p. 118.

² Nicholas Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: The Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy 1066-1530* (London, 1984). David R Carlson, ‘Royal Tutors in the Reign of Henry VII’, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22:2 (1991), pp. 253-79. Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely Education in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 42-62.

³ *CWE* 85, p. 29, no. 4.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 26-40.

⁵ Kipling, ‘Henry VII’ pp. 121-30. Janet Backhouse, ‘The Royal Library from Edward IV to Henry VII’, in *CHBB*, iii, pp. 267-73.

⁶ Valerie Schutte, ‘The Politics of Dedicating Printed Books and Manuscripts to King Henry VII’, *Journal of the Early Book Society*, 19 (2016), pp. 149-73. Carley, *Libraries*, pp. xxvi-vii.

of Xenophon, a text whose military exploits were sure to find an audience at court.⁷ Erasmus' works likewise reached royal hands through intermediaries and in languages other than Latin. Little changed in the years immediately following the accession of Henry VIII, despite the presence of a number of influential Erasmian supporters around the king. By 1515, Erasmus was back on the continent and complaining at the failures of his English friends to secure some compensation for his efforts at court.⁸

Erasmus' years of triumph at court did not, in fact, coincide with his residence in England. It was only in later years that Henry gave serious attention to reading Erasmus' works. Historians have long debated the role of Erasmus in shaping the mentality of the English monarch. The complicated course of religious reform under Henry has encouraged many to present the Dutchman as the guiding hand of the king's reformation. James McConica, Lucy Wooding, Norman Jones and George Bernard have all argued, albeit with different emphases, that Henry threw his weight behind Erasmus' ideas – particularly his biblicism and disdain for outward ceremonial observance – and that the scholar's writings acted as a *via media* between the demands of reformers and conservatives during his reign.⁹ Aysha Pollnitz has gone further, suggesting that Henry's willingness to take on the royal supremacy owed a great deal to Erasmus' view of Christian kingship.¹⁰ Others have drawn back from attributing too much ideological coherence to a process as contested and contingent as Henry's reformation. For J. J. Scarisbrick, Henry 'was not one of the enlightened': 'He had taken hold of little of what Tudor humanism stood for and was a stranger to the fire that consumed an Erasmus'.¹¹ Scarisbrick found little common ground between a warlike prince set on plundering the monasteries and a pacifist, former monk who lived by his pen. Richard Rex – another sceptic of Henry's Erasmian credentials – has rightly wondered why historians do not distinguish more readily between the different phases of Henry's life, positing a significant shift in the king's views during the 1530s.¹²

Current scholarship has given a diverse picture of Henry and his heirs' attitude towards Erasmus, ranging from a political mantra (Pollnitz) or propaganda tool (Rex), to a blueprint for religious reform (Bernard) or irenic spirit of compromise (Jones and Wooding). Sources as varied

⁷ BL, Royal MS 19 C VI, Xenophon, *Anabasis*, c.1508. Kipling, 'Henry VII', p. 122. Rebecca Boone, 'Claude de Seyssel's Translations of Ancient Historians', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 61:4 (2000), pp. 561-75. Schutte, 'Politics of Dedicating', p. 157.

⁸ Ep. 388, *CWE* 3, pp. 229-37.

⁹ McConica, *English Humanists*. Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2000). Wooding, *Henry VIII* (London, 2015). Norman Jones, *The English Reformation: Religion and Cultural Adaptation* (Oxford, 2002). George Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven, 2005).

¹⁰ Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, pp. 51-2, 116.

¹¹ J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (New Haven, 1997), p. 522.

¹² Richard Rex, 'The Religion of Henry VIII', *HJ*, 57:1 (2014), pp. 1-32. See also, Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Henry VIII: Pious King', in *All Things Made New: Writings on the Reformation* (London, 2016), pp. 94-117.

as official statements on religion, correspondence, accounts of the king's expenses, English tracts and committee papers have been marshalled in favour of these views.

This chapter begins by recentring the debate on the evidence of royal reading. The Tudors initially encountered Erasmus' work in manuscripts made to fit the languages and conventions of the court. Under Henry VIII, Erasmian reading entered a new and intensely personal phase, as the monarch reflected on the nature of faith and kingship in the margins of his books.¹³ Henry bequeathed a deluxe humanist education to his children, much of it modelled on Erasmian principles. Yet his heirs also inherited an increasingly fractious confessional struggle over the scholar's legacy. From the 1520s onwards, Henry's court had been riven by competing visions of Erasmus' thought and its relationship to the reformation. For conservatives involved in the anti-Lutheran campaign, Erasmus was a divisive force, leading some to doubt his intentions and others to revise aspects of his scholarship in favour of orthodoxy. The political eclipse of many conservatives in the 1530s, however, left room for more evangelical interpretations to thrive at court. In the circles of Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cromwell, Erasmus emerged as an advocate for biblical translation, political obedience and the Royal Supremacy. These debates not only encouraged those at court to think of Erasmus in more confessional terms, they also increasingly sought to link the scholar's writings to the official dogma and practice of the English church. This could only be achieved, however, by revising Erasmus' motives as a writer to anticipate the course of religious change in England. It was these competing religious, scholarly and literary factors which set the scene for the confused and at times chaotic discussions of Erasmus' legacy in Edward VI's reign. As such, this chapter takes a broad view of the English court, demonstrating how debates about Erasmus became increasingly public as they spilled out from the king's bedchamber into the political networks of courtiers and machinery of government more broadly.

(i) Early encounters

Erasmus owed his earliest readers at court to the patronage of William Blount, Lord Mountjoy. In 1498 Mountjoy had travelled to Paris in the company of his tutor Richard Whitford.¹⁴ Whilst there, the pair met Erasmus and encouraged him to visit England.¹⁵ The Dutchman promptly acknowledged Mountjoy's patronage by dedicating the first edition of the *Adagia* – the *Adagia collectanea* – to Blount in 1500. In the preface to that edition, Erasmus defended the use of

¹³ Carley, *Libraries*. Idem, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, pp. 100-5. Idem, 'The Libraries of King Henry VIII: An Update of the Westminster Inventory of 1542', *The Library*, 16:3 (2015). pp. 282-303. Idem, 'Marks in Books and the Libraries of Henry VIII', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 91:4 (1997), pp. 583-606.

¹⁴ James Carley, 'Blount, William, Fourth Baron Mountjoy (c.1478-1534)', ODNB.

¹⁵ Epp. 79-80, *CWE* 1, pp. 154-62.

adages and celebrated the achievement of a series of Italian humanist forebears such as Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Ermolao Barbaro and Angelo Poliziano.¹⁶ Erasmus and Whitford were not the only aspiring scholars in Mountjoy's household. Andrea Ammonio served as Mountjoy's secretary until promoted to royal service.¹⁷ Erasmus mentioned an unknown Frenchman, Milo, who died shortly after reaching England in 1505.¹⁸ The French scholar and poet Bernard André was also in attendance on Mountjoy in early years of the reign of Henry VIII.¹⁹ Between 1500 and 1515, therefore, Erasmus' writings were often aimed at an audience familiar with French and Italian models.

In January 1509, Gervasius Amoenus presented Henry VII with a manuscript containing French translations of devotional works by Pico della Mirandola and Erasmus.²⁰ Amoenus had acted as a *famulus* to Erasmus, but moved into Mountjoy's service when he fell out with his Dutch master.²¹ Amoenus described Mountjoy as his '*vray Mécenas*' in 1509, though we know he returned to Paris in 1512 to produce an edition of Valerius Flaccus.²² Around the same time, Amoenus plagiarised a translation of Lucian from Erasmus, having it printed without acknowledgement in his *Lucubrationculae* (a title also borrowed from Erasmus) and the Dutch scholar subsequently expunged the Frenchman from most of his correspondence.²³

Amoenus could not claim sole authorship for the translations of 1509 either. It reflected instead a wider readership for Erasmus around the households of the king and Mountjoy. As Amoenus explained in his preface, the extracts from Pico and Erasmus had originated with another figure at court (and perhaps also in the Mountjoy household), '*vostre bon orateur defunct maistre Henry Hault*'.²⁴ Hault (more commonly, Haute) was a royal chaplain with connections to the Woodville family.²⁵ Prior to his death in 1508, Haute had begun, in Amoenus' words, 'to translate from Latin into French some small contemplative works... the which being left imperfect, it seemed to me

¹⁶ Ep. 126, *CWE* 1, pp. 260-1.

¹⁷ J. B. Trapp, 'Ammonius, Andreas (c.1476-1517)', *ODNB*.

¹⁸ Ep. 194, *CWE* 2, p. 118.

¹⁹ Carley, 'Blount', *ODNB*.

²⁰ BL, Royal MS 16E XIV, *Translations of Erasmus and Pico*, 1509. See, P. Fleming, 'The Hautes and their "Circle": Culture and the English Gentry', in Daniel Williams (ed.), *England in the Fifteenth Century. Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 85-102.

²¹ Franz Bierlaire, 'Gervasius Amoenus of Dreux', *Contemporaries*, I, p. 51.

²² BL, Royal MS 16E XIV, fo. 2r. Carley, 'Blount', *ODNB*. Amoenus stated in the Flaccus edition that he had been in England for around seven years: *C. Valerii Flacci Setini Balbi Argonauticon. Gervasij Ameni Drucensis de eureo Iohannis parvi lilio Tetrastichon* (Paris, 1512), sig. A1v: '*Non possum non vehementi gaudio perfundi humanissime Caesar quum post septennium quod in foelici Britannia transegi...*'

²³ Bodleian, Vet. E1 e.80, Gervasius Amoenus, *Lucubrationculae quaedam non inuenuste* (Paris, 1513). Fleming, 'The Hautes', p. 93. Bierlaire, 'Amoenus'.

²⁴ BL, Royal MS 16E XIV, fo. 2r.

²⁵ Peter Fleming, 'Haute family', *ODNB. BRUO*, i, p. 886.

to be a seemly thing to collect and edit [them]... to present to your royal majesty'.²⁶ Haute and Amoenus placed the eighth section of Erasmus' *Enchiridion militis Christiani* and two of his prayers alongside Pico's *Twelve Rules for a Man in Spiritual Battle*, *Twelve Weapons of Spiritual Battle* and the *Twelve Properties of a Lover*. The match is natural since Pico's emphasis on constant vigilance and spiritual warfare chimes with Erasmus' vision of the Christian knight. Pico's writings were already known at court. A selection had been presented to Henry VII by another French translator and early in the next reign Thomas More published his *Life of Pico* with translations of the Italian scholar's poems and epistles.²⁷ Haute and Amoenus' work thus demonstrates how Erasmus' early reception in England was deeply influenced by existing structures of patronage and ideas about humanism, chiefly Italian humanism, in noble households and at court.

That is not to say, however, that Haute and Amoenus made no alterations to the fabric of Erasmus' text. In fact, they rearranged Erasmus' 'General rules of True Christianity' from the *Enchiridion* to suggest a greater continuity of purpose with Pico. Erasmus' argument that '*Vertu*' has a '*certain art et discipline*' was moved to the start of the translation. The piece then warned against three human failings (blindness, the flesh and weakness) and provided remedies for these (knowledge of good and bad, hatred of evil and perseverance). Finally the translators moved Erasmus' opening to the end of the chapter, so that the king would finish with a grand rhetorical flourish, extricating himself from '*l'[]inextricable Labyrinthus*' and attaining '*la pure lumiere de la vie spirituelle*'.²⁸ The art of virtue became '*la voye de vertus*' in Pico's *Twelve Rules* and the reader was admonished to keep continual warfare against the things of this world and to trust only in '*la vertu de Jhesucrist*'.²⁹ This emphasis on virtue and its cultivation was both entirely familiar to a courtly audience and in keeping with the Italian humanist and devotional literature already circulating in England. It reminds us of the ways in which Erasmus (and humanists more generally) found an audience at court by providing a modish twist to familiar themes and by employing language that distilled political, devotional and scholarly themes into palatable packages.³⁰

On the accession of Henry VIII, Erasmus' friends, chief among them Mountjoy, promised a new age of patronage under the young king.³¹ Erasmus took up a position at Queens' College, Cambridge, on John Fisher's recommendation, but more substantial rewards were not

²⁶ Fleming, 'The Hautes', pp. 91-2. BL, Royal MS 16E XIV, fo. 2r: '... propose translater de latin en françois aucunes petites oeuvres contemplatives et icelles presenter a vostre tresnoble grace[] lesquelles a laissez imparfaites, il ma semble ester chose convenable les colliger et rediger... [et] presenter a vostre royale maieste'.

²⁷ BL, Royal MSS 16 E XXIV and XXV, *Lexposicion du xv e pseaulme* and *Douze reigles en partie excitantes et en partie adressantes l'homme en la bataille espirituelle*, 1485-1509. Schutte, 'Politics of Dedicating', p. 159. Thomas More, *Life of Pico*, CWM 1.

²⁸ BL, Royal MS 16E XIV, fos 4r-v.

²⁹ *Ibid*, fos 4v, 5v.

³⁰ Carlson, *Humanist Books*, p. 26.

³¹ Ep. 215, CWE 2, pp. 147-51.

forthcoming. Two manuscripts which speak to the challenges Erasmus faced during his final extended stay in England now reside in Cambridge and Basel respectively. They are both Latin translations of Plutarch's moral essays. The first, a version of *De discrimine adulatorio et amici*, was presented to Henry in July 1513, though the king was then so occupied with the war in France that Erasmus subsequently sent another copy in 1517.³² The second manuscript, probably produced in 1514, was intended for Thomas Wolsey, though once again Erasmus struggled to get the work to its intended recipient.³³ The topics of these essays were clearly designed to appeal to Erasmus' patrons, dealing as they did with the themes of flattery and how to counteract your enemies in the political sphere. The manuscripts themselves were also presented in a fashionable italic hand, reminiscent of the work of Italian scribes in the period. Erasmus had the scribe 'Lazarus' produce a fair copy of the piece for the king in a flowing italic hand.³⁴ Wolsey's manuscript was also produced in imitation of this style, though Erasmus undertook to copy the work himself.³⁵ Erasmus provided red marginalia for both manuscripts which highlighted the major themes of the essays, whilst also noting exempla, classical figures, poems and similes.³⁶

The Basel manuscript left England with Erasmus in 1514 and probably never reached Wolsey. The king was similarly uninterested in *De discrimine*. In fact, the only figure at court who appears to have taken an interest in either piece was another expatriate Italian scholar and scribe, Peter Vannes. Vannes repeatedly signed his name and added an extract from Horace at the end of the manuscript.³⁷ He may be responsible for the handful of proverbs collected at the end of the preface in imitation of the manuscript's script.³⁸ Like his relative, Andrea Ammonio, Vannes found employment in England as a secretary and writer of italic script. He would have had extensive access to the royal collection from 1528 when he became Henry's Latin secretary, though one of his signatures in the Plutarch manuscript ends with '*decanus*', suggesting that he was using the manuscript after 1540 when he became dean of Salisbury Cathedral.³⁹ Vannes knew Erasmus and

³² CUL, MS Add. 6858, Plutarch, *De discrimine adulatorio et amici*, 1513. Ep. 272, *CWE* 2, pp. 250-2. Cecil H. Clough, 'A Presentation Volume for Henry VIII: The Charlecote Park Copy of Erasmus's *Institutio Principis Christiani*?', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 44 (1981), pp. 199-202.

³³ Universitätsbibliothek Basel, AN VI 1, *Quo pacto quis efficiat ut inimicis capiat utilitatem*, c.1514.

³⁴ Ep. 271, *CWE* 2, pp. 249-50. Erasmus wrote to More in 1513 to discuss this manuscript and its copyist whom he called 'Lazarus'. Lazarus' identity is unknown, but he may have been More's brother, John, who was known to be a scribe. I thank David Rundle for drawing my attention to Lazarus' work on Hatfield House MS 277/1, a copy of Bernard André's poem commemorating the French campaign of 1513.

³⁵ Universitätsbibliothek Basel, AN VI 1.

³⁶ e.g. CUL, MS Add. 6858, fos 5v, 6r, 7v: '*Nosce teipsum*', '*Adulatio sublimium ingeniorum pestis*', '*Simonides*', '*Simile*', '*Difficile discrimen adulatoris et amici*'.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 60v.

³⁸ CUL, MS Add. 6858, fo. 4v.

³⁹ L.E. Hunt 'Vannes, Peter (c.1488-1563)', *ODNB*. There is no mention of Erasmus' manuscript among the various inventories of the royal collection under Henry VIII, see Carley, *Libraries*.

owned other books by him.⁴⁰ On the other hand, it may be Lazarus' beautiful italic hand that made the book appealing to Vannes, rather than its content.

The creation and use of early Erasmian works by Vannes, Haute and Amoenus points to the ways in which humanism's reception in England was thoroughly enmeshed within the international community of scholars, poets and writers hovering at the margins of the court. Cultural as well as intellectual factors were critical to the forms in which Erasmus' writings were received at this early stage. His works were paired with those of the Italian humanists already in vogue, translated into French by intermediaries or presented in fashionable italic hands. The difficulties of presenting works to patrons and the meagre rewards also points to the difficulties of standing out in a crowded field. That picture, however, was soon to change. Erasmus' works gained a new prominence in the second half of the 1510s and England's king, Henry VIII, began a new, intense phase of Erasmian reading.

(ii) Henry VIII and Erasmus:

The cultivation of piety

In the wake of James Carley's extensive work on the royal libraries of Henry VIII, historians have become increasingly aware of the array of reading the king undertook throughout his life. Henry owned an extensive collection of Erasmus' works, some of which survive in various locations across the UK. Alongside the Plutarch volume now in Cambridge, works by Erasmus formerly in the king's possession can be found at Hatfield House, Charlecote House, Trinity College, Oxford, and the University of Sussex.⁴¹ By far the largest group has been preserved in the British Library. Many of these, as Carley painstakingly detailed, were catalogued as part of the Upper Library at Westminster Palace in 1542. It is among the books of the Upper Library, in fact, that we find the clearest evidence of the king's own reading. Henry was 'a compulsive annotator', especially of Erasmus' works.⁴² In his two-volume edition of the *Paraphrases*, for example, the king made a variety of marks in the gospels and epistles.⁴³ To guide his eye to important passages, he drew manicules, birds, *nota* marks, marginal brackets and what have come to be called 'tadpoles' (a

⁴⁰ Hereford Cathedral, G.6.1, Cyprian, *Opera* (Basel, 1530).

⁴¹ Carley, *Libraries*, pp. li, lxxiv-vi. Alan Coates, 'The Old Library of Trinity College Oxford', *Bodleian Library Record*, 13:6 (1991), pp. 466-78.

⁴² Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, p. 100.

⁴³ BL, 3913.k.4, Erasmus, *Paraphrases* (2 vols, Basel, 1522-4). Though bound together, each of the Gospel paraphrases is paginated separately. I have thus indicated both the volume and the gospel or epistle in the following references.

shape with three dots and a tail).⁴⁴ Henry's interest in Erasmus was probably greatest during the 1520s and 30s. The Erasmian printed books in his collection were produced between 1517 and 1537 and as he grew older he appears to have written less in the margins of his books.

Our knowledge of Henry's reading is undoubtedly incomplete. There is no copy of Erasmus' *De libero arbitrio* (1524), for instance, despite the king receiving a copy from the author himself. Nonetheless, those that have survived provide a good sense of Henry's tastes. Books from the Upper Library generally reflect the king's deep appreciation for Erasmus as a biblical exegete and moralist: three copies of the *Enchiridion*, two editions of Erasmus' New Testament, a two-volume folio edition of the *Paraphrases* and a second copy of the *Paraphrases* containing only the Apostolic Epistles.⁴⁵ A selection of these books was also inscribed with the king's 'HR' monogram, perhaps because they travelled with the king or made up an earlier, more choice collection of books.⁴⁶ One further Erasmian book can be added to those catalogued by Carley and others. It is a copy of Erasmus' *Enarratio pia iuxta ac docta in Psalmum XXXIII*, printed in Basel in 1531 and now in the British Library.⁴⁷ This volume contains neither the royal monogram nor a shelfmark from the Upper Library. In fact, the title page bears the signatures of Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, and John, Lord Lumley (who inherited many of Cranmer's books through his father-in-law).⁴⁸ Within the book itself, however, are a set of marginalia – pointing hands, birds, tadpoles and other highlighting techniques – which are unmistakably the work of Cranmer's king, Henry VIII (see Figs 4 and 5).⁴⁹

⁴⁴ For examples of tadpoles see Figs 4 and 5 below. Carley, *Henry's Prayer Book*, ii, p. 74. Henry's *Paraphrases* are now divided into two volumes, the first containing the gospels and the second containing the epistles.

⁴⁵ Carley, *Libraries*, H2.181-3, 194, 350, 407, 454, 538, pp. 58-60, 83, 90, 96, 108.

⁴⁶ Carley, 'Marks in Books', pp. 599-601.

⁴⁷ BL, 1012.c.4.(2), Erasmus, *Enarratio pia iuxta ac docta in Psalmum XXXIII* (Basel, 1531). Selwyn, *Library of Cranmer*, p. 34, n.113. The work is now bound with another Psalm commentary by Erasmus, though these items were undoubtedly brought together at a later date since the fore-edges of 1012.c.4.(2) are stained red, while 1012.c.4.(1) are uncoloured. Likewise, Cranmer and Lumley only signed the title page to 1012.c.4.(2), rather than 1012.c.4.(1), suggesting that this was a stand alone volume.

⁴⁸ Selwyn, *Library of Cranmer*, p. 34, n.113.

⁴⁹ The similarities in the annotations go beyond the shapes alone, but also to the habits of annotating. Henry used both margins of the book and often used repeated symbols to mark a single passage. For further images and discussion of Henry's marginalia, see: Andrea Clarke, 'Henry VIII and Marko Marulić's *Evangelistarium*', *Colloquia Maruliana*, 20 (2011), pp. 167-174. Ian Christie-Miller, 'Henry VIII and British Library, Royal MS. 2 A. XVI: Marginalia in King Henry's Psalter', *Electronic Journal of British Library* (2015). James Carley, 'Rex Noster Est Inconstans: Henry VIII's Reading Practices' in James Carley (ed.), *King Henry's Prayer Book: BL Royal MS 2 A XVI* (London, 2009).

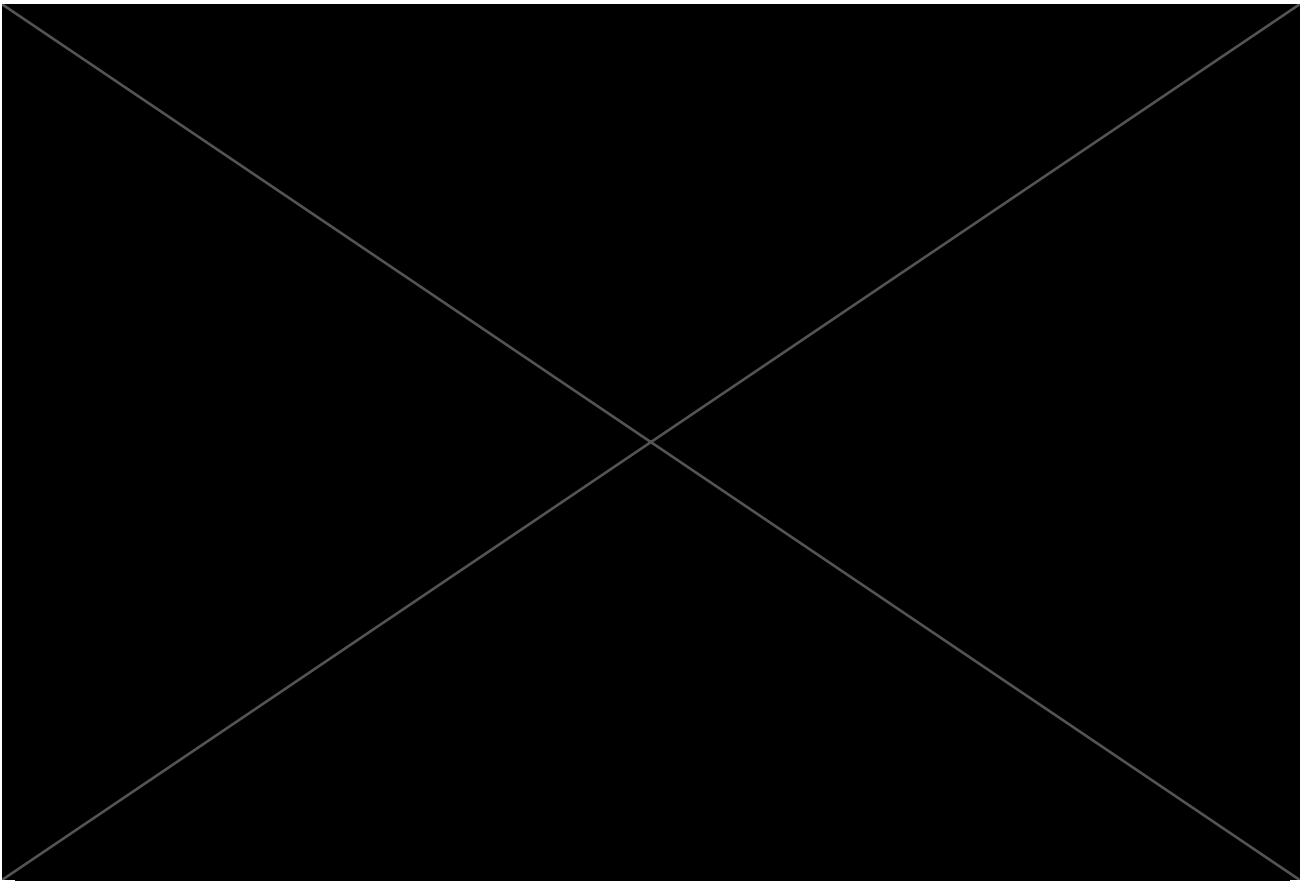


Fig 4. Marginal annotations by Henry VIII in the Paraphrases (BL, 3913.k.4, i, p. 148; ii, p. 26)

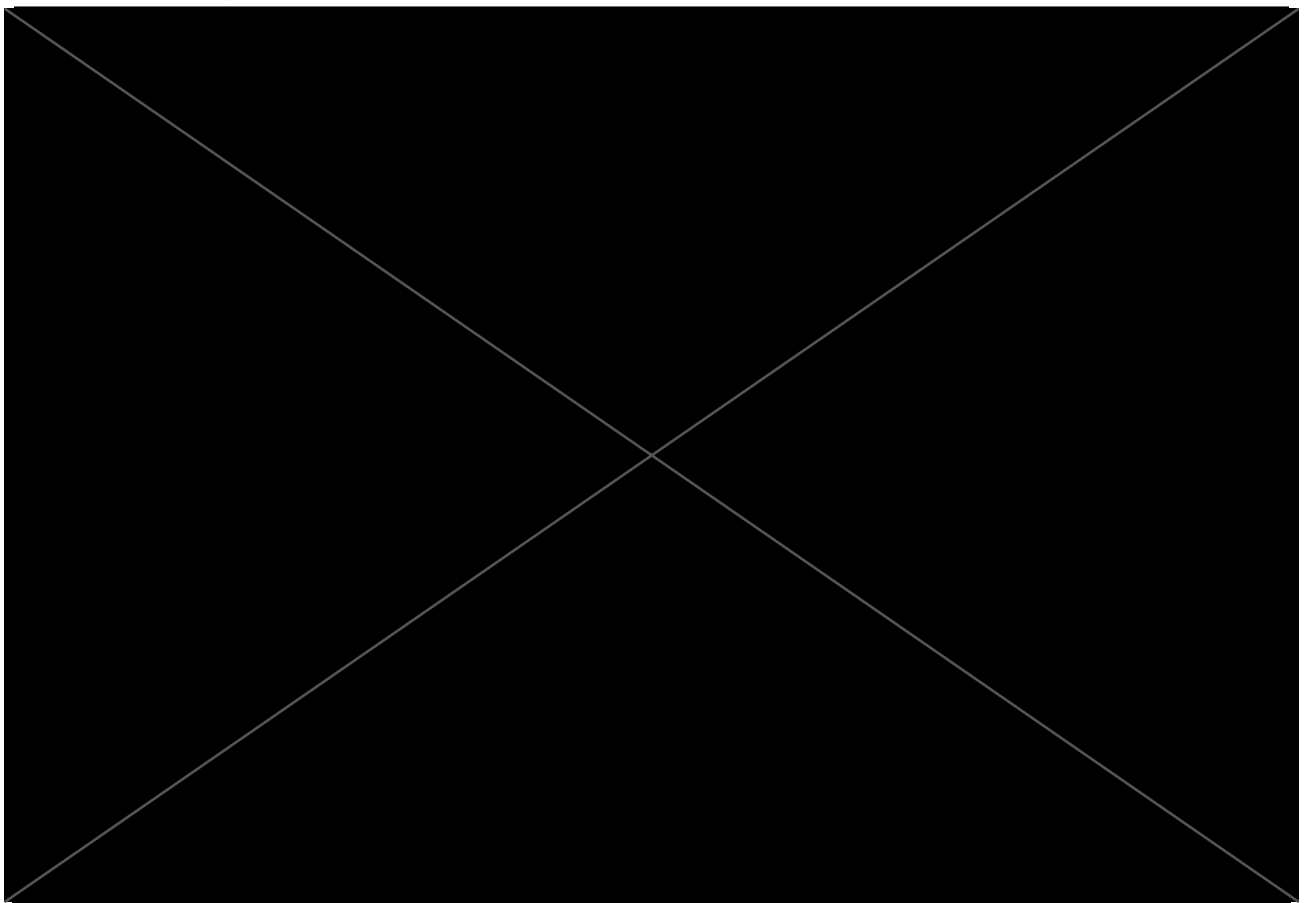


Fig 5. Marginal annotations in Enarratio... in Psalmum XXXIII (BL, 1012.c.4.(2), pp. 31, 120)

How or when the work passed from king to archbishop is a mystery. We do know that

other books passed between the two men and that Henry owned other commentaries on the Psalms by Erasmus.⁵⁰ The Psalms were of special interest to Henry, especially following the Break with Rome.⁵¹ The king increasingly identified with David and was even portrayed as the biblical king in a manuscript psalter of c.1540-1.⁵² If we compare Henry's notes in the *Enarratio* with those in his better-known *Paraphrases*, however, we find a wider set of motives for reading Erasmus than mere political validation. Erasmus strove in these works to provide an elegant and moving discussion of the theology, syntax and moral themes of the bible. Henry's ownership and annotations of multiple copies of the *Paraphrases* and Psalm commentaries suggests that he held them in great esteem.

Henry was certainly interested in Erasmus' comments upon the office of kingship. In the paraphrase of 2 Peter 2 – the chapter which warned of the rise of false prophets and their faulty interpretations of the gospel – the king highlighted almost an entire page.⁵³ The passage detailed the actions of pseudoprophets who 'treat with contempt those who have been entrusted with public authority... [and] assail with abuse men who are pre-eminent in rank'.⁵⁴ In Mark 3, he picked out the sentiment that kingdoms come to the point of collapse when divided by internal factions.⁵⁵ 'For just as concord is the best safeguard of a kingdom, discord ruins any realm, however strong and fortified'.⁵⁶ The king pulled similar sentiments from the *Enarratio*. Early in the work, Henry alighted on Erasmus' discussion of David's flight from King Saul.⁵⁷ 'No one', Erasmus contended, 'could safely give assistance to David or take him in, so terrible is the thunderbolt wielded by the anger of a king, especially when the king is foolish and insane like Saul'.⁵⁸ Elsewhere Henry noted how the Jews falsely interpreted the meaning of the law.⁵⁹ 'It is a king's privilege to give laws, and they boast of this too, claiming that it was God who gave them this privilege. But they do not understand the end - that is, that Christ is the perfection of the Law for salvation to every believer'.⁶⁰ One passage that clearly caught the king's eye was Erasmus' description of how saintly behaviour is suited to a person's status:

⁵⁰ For a book that passed between Cranmer and Henry: BL, 477.e.4, Antonius Sirectus, *Opus de mente Doctoris Subtilis* (Venice, 1517). Henry also owned: BL, 689.a.3, Erasmus, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (Basel, 1525).

⁵¹ John King, 'Henry VIII as David: The King's Image and Reformation Politics', in Mark Rankin, Christopher Highley and John King (eds), *Henry VIII and His Afterlives: Literature, Politics, and Art* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 34-52. Pamela Tudor-Craig, 'Henry VIII and King David', in Daniel Williams (ed.), *Early Tudor England: Proceedings of the 1987 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 183-205.

⁵² Carley, *King Henry's Prayer Book*.

⁵³ BL, 3913.k.4, ii, 2 *Peter*, p. 359.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* Erasmus, *Paraphrase on Epistles of Peter*, CWE 44, p. 117.

⁵⁵ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Mark*, p. 45.

⁵⁶ *CWE* 49, p. 52.

⁵⁷ BL, 1012.c.4.(2), p. 7.

⁵⁸ Erasmus, *Enarratio in psalmum 33*, *CWE* 64, p. 276.

⁵⁹ BL, 1012.c.4.(2), p. 20.

⁶⁰ *CWE* 64, p. 290.

There are saints who live in purity as priests. There are saintly rulers who govern honestly. There are saintly bishops who never cease to care for the Lord's flock... There are saints who earn a living for themselves and their families from a decent job honestly performed and have something left over to give those in need. A person's status in life is not so important as how much he fears the Lord. No one should say, 'I am not a monk, I am a married man and in business: how can I reach heaven?'⁶¹

No doubt this vision of a godly and ordered society resonated with the king's own expectations for his subjects.

Henry's annotations, however, were generally not related to his elevated political position but involved more personal devotional themes. In the *Enarratio*, he made a series of notes on Erasmus' discussion of true wealth, on prayer, on the need for hope and on the proper reading of the scriptures. These passages were primarily concerned with inspiring an ardent search for God. The Lord 'lies hidden in the Holy Scriptures; examine them, dig deep there, and you will find him', reads one.⁶² 'Those three words - "ask", "seek", "knock" - what do they commend to us but care, readiness and vigilance'.⁶³ 'What befell the Jews', Erasmus warned in another passage of interest to the king, 'will happen also to Judaising Christians, who are inwardly devoid of faith and love and boast of their diet, their fasts, the observances, and like formalities...'.⁶⁴ As Erasmus explained earlier in the work, when David eluded Saul's anger, he did not simply thank God for this singular benefit, but 'committ[ed] himself to praising God without ceasing'.⁶⁵

Henry's exemplars of such ardent faith were not restricted to David. In Luke 22, Henry singled out Christ's words to Peter on the eve of his betrayal:

For a storm of affliction flattens no one faster than those who trust in their own powers. But precisely those who put no trust in their own, that is, in human resources and rely entirely on heavenly defence are firm against all the tumults of this world. And so [Christ] turned the conversation to Peter, to instruct and chasten everyone through him... 'by your example you may strengthen your brothers who fall victim to the same weakness. Thus, everyone will understand that no one in his own strength is a match for the wickedness of Satan unless he is shored up by my defence'.⁶⁶

Henry extracted similar sentiments through a series of notes on Romans. 'Holy scripture is also concerned with preparing a model for us', Erasmus wrote of Abraham, 'for no other path to

⁶¹ BL, 1012.c.4.(2), pp. 94-5. *CWE* 64, p. 340.

⁶² *Ibid*, p. 76. *CWE* 64, p. 327.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 76. *CWE* 64, p. 327.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 99. *CWE* 64, p. 342-3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 51. *CWE* 64, p. 309.

⁶⁶ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Luke*, p. 219. Erasmus, *Paraphrase on Luke*, *CWE* 48, pp. 193-4.

righteousness lies open except that we too believe in the same God who has fulfilled for us in Jesus Christ our Lord what he promised Abraham through the prototype of Isaac'.⁶⁷ For a king who worried a great deal about his succession, Abraham's example was particularly pertinent, for despite the threats to the patriarch's only son, 'he did not hesitate, but relied on the promises of God with his whole heart, as strong in faith as he was weak in body'.⁶⁸

Henry's reading also led him to meditate on more controversial theological questions, such as the role of faith in salvation and Christ's redemptive power. The king, for example, placed a tadpole beside Erasmus' explanation of the contrast between the law and faith in Romans 4:

these no longer labour as though by rule, but purely and simply trust in Christ who bestows as a free gift perfect righteousness even on the impious, all of whose sins he has taken away by his death. To these, I say, after the example of Abraham, faith offers this, that they are considered righteous, commended not for having observed the law, but for faith alone [*sed solius fidei*], to which no one is compelled but all are invited.⁶⁹

Such a passage flirted dangerously close to the views of evangelical reformers. No less a figure than archbishop Cranmer would later contemplate this same passage while hoping to establish the authority of justification by faith alone (see Chapter 4). Since Henry left no substantive comment by this section, his attention should not straightforwardly be equated with agreement. The subtleties of Erasmus' position, however, may well have resonated with the English monarch. Erasmus, after all, while emphasising the role of faith in salvation, was also keen to avoid limiting salvation to a narrow elect of believers since 'no one is compelled but all are invited'.⁷⁰ Henry often made a similar point when interacting with his evangelical clerics. In a set of notes compiled in 1537, for instance, Hugh Latimer had argued for the falsity of purgatory, since 'God ys moor Inclynynyd to mercy then to Iustyce. He executyth Iustyce uppon them that be dampnyd, mercy uppon them that be savyd'.⁷¹ Henry angrily responded to Latimer's hint of election by stressing that 'god is as mercyfull and indyfferent in thys world to hym that may be dammyd as to hym that may be savyd'.⁷² The king likewise remained open to foreign evangelicals who were willing to compromise on the question of justification, such as Philip Melanchthon.⁷³

Though it would be tempting to align Henry and Erasmus on this and other theological matters, we ought not to lose sight of the broader patterns of the king's reading. Whatever the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, ii, *Romans*, pp. 25-26. *CWE* 42, pp. 31-32.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, ii, *Romans*, p. 25. *CWE* 42, p. 31.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, ii, *Romans*, p. 22. *CWE* 42, p. 27.

⁷⁰ Cranmer conveniently omitted this proviso, see Chap. 4.

⁷¹ BL, Cotton MS Cleopatra E V, fo. 142r

⁷² BL, Cotton MS Cleopatra E V, fo. 142r

⁷³ Philip Scholfield, *Philip Melanchthon and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 2006).

king's scholarly pretensions, the passages he extracted from his Erasmian books were usually more concerned with the cultivation of faith rather than the precise theology of salvation. When Erasmus argued in a discussion of John 3 that 'through his only-begotten son, God has offered salvation to everyone, and that by faith, that we might acknowledge and worship him as the source of salvation and entrust our entire happiness to him', the king once again highlighted the sentiment.⁷⁴ The point of the passage was less theological than moral: the believer had to strive for '*perfectam pietatem*'.⁷⁵ It would be better, therefore, to understand these marginal markings as ruminations on the nature of faith, rather than as strict canons of belief. Henry's impulses, it should be noted, were far less open to evangelical ideas elsewhere in the *Paraphrases*. The king underscored, for example, Erasmus' traditional discussion of the Mass: 'unless you eat the flesh of the son of man as bread and drink his blood as wine, you will not have life in you... whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life from that eating and drinking'.⁷⁶

Henry's marginalia in the *Paraphrases* and *Enarratio* suggest that his primary vision of Erasmus was centred on the development of a rich devotional life based upon the scriptures. During the divorce campaign Henry collected and annotated several works in the hopes of finding theological weapons to fight his case.⁷⁷ Yet the notes in these Erasmus volumes are neither fulsome nor argumentative. This more intimate mode of reading may be reflected in the type of books the king liked to collect. There is, for instance, no copy of the larger folio edition of Erasmus' New Testament with *Annotations* among the royal inventories. Instead, the only surviving Erasmian bibles from Henry's collection are two sextodecimo editions, both published in Antwerp, and containing only Erasmus' Latin text.⁷⁸ It may be that these books, shorn of parallel columns of Greek and linguistic notes, better served the king's devotional needs. Henry's collection of biblical commentaries were an eclectic mix. The accounts of books supplied to the king between 1541 and 1543 by the royal printer, Thomas Berthelet, list figures as diverse as Thomas Aquinas, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and Miles Coverdale.⁷⁹ The king's idiosyncratic tastes, however, were not necessarily shared by those around him. From the 1520s onwards, in fact, there were several figures at court who had begun to grapple more forthrightly with Erasmus' place in the emerging reformation landscape of Europe.

⁷⁴ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *John*, p. 44: '*perfectam pietatem*'.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *John*, p. 77.

⁷⁷ Clarke, 'Henry VIII and Marko Marulić's *Evangelistarium*', pp. 167-174.

⁷⁸ BL, 1006.a.13, *Novi Testamenti postrema aeditio per Erasmus Roterodamum* (Antwerp, 1527). BL, C.25.b.27, *Novum Testamentum per Desiderium Erasmus* (Antwerp, 1537).

⁷⁹ Carley, *Libraries*, H3, pp. 227-30.

(iii) Confessional cross-currents:

The anti-Lutheran campaign, Anne Boleyn and the circle of Thomas Cromwell

While Henry developed his own deeply personal approach to Erasmus' writings, the scholar's reputation was of concern to several other actors at court. Royal policy from the 1520s closely tied humanist scholarship to the crown. The anti-Lutheran campaign, divorce crisis and reform of the English church encouraged humanist scholars to find a range of biblical, patristic and historical material in support of the royal agenda. The king was eager to use the press in pursuit of his goals and his courtiers and councillors were soon establishing networks of printers and writers to serve these ends. The implications for Erasmus' reputation at court were twofold. Firstly, it drew the scholar's works into a series of confessional debates concerning papal authority, biblical translation and other matters. Secondly, his reputation became caught up with the wider political manoeuvring at court. As a result, scholarly matters became increasingly entwined with questions about Erasmus' broader motivations and support for royal policy.

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In the early 1520s Erasmus was conscious that despite his many supporters at court, there were still those who opposed his efforts. Thomas More, for instance, light-heartedly warned Erasmus in 1516 that there was 'a conspiracy in our midst to read what you write in a very different frame of mind'.⁸⁰ The king's decision to tackle Lutheranism at home and abroad only aggravated Erasmus' fears. By 1526, he was complaining to Thomas Wolsey about the involvement of Henry Standish and other Erasmian opponents in the English campaign against heresy. 'If the outcome is to depend on the judgement of such men', he thundered, 'no book of mine will escape the flames, nor would a book written by Augustine if it had Erasmus' name on the title page'.⁸¹ Worse still, Erasmus had heard through his servant Karl Harst of rumours circulating at the English court: the *Colloquies* were said to have been banned on account of their irreligious and seditious content; and Erasmus was alleged to have remained in Basel for fear of prosecution as a heretic elsewhere.⁸² Erasmus could only plead that Wolsey and others at court heed the counsel of his English supporters.⁸³

⁸⁰ Ep. 481, *CWE* 4, p. 115.

⁸¹ Ep. 1697, *CWE* 12, p. 167.

⁸² Epp. 1697, 1702, 1704, *CWE* 12, pp. 164-74, 183-4, 188-90.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

A range of reactions to Erasmus and his work emerged from the anti-Lutheran campaign. Henry and those around him remained keen to enlist the Dutch scholar as an opponent of Luther and others. When a committee of theologians was convened in May 1521 to advise on the anti-Lutheran campaign (and probably also to help draft the king's treatise, the *Assertio septem sacramentorum*), three of the Dutchman's former pupils at Cambridge were among its members.⁸⁴ As time passed, however, Erasmus' lack of action became a concern. 'For a long time now', Edward Powell, canon of Salisbury, noted in 1523, 'many expected great things from Erasmus in this business, partly because at one time not a little intimacy existed between him and Luther, partly because they trusted in the erudition of no one more than Erasmus'.⁸⁵ Powell hoped that Erasmus would soon join the fray, if only to stop men saying that 'Erasmus knew to vigilantly defend his business in apologies, but wherever he watches over the faith of Christ, there he sleeps and snores'.⁸⁶

The publication of Erasmus' *De libero arbitrio* in 1524 and a series of polemical tracts in later years helped his English colleagues to defend the Dutch scholar's orthodoxy in print. John Fisher alleged that Erasmus 'invincibly teaches that one ought to continually follow the part of the Catholic Church'.⁸⁷ In his defence of the Real Presence against Johann Oecolampadius, the English bishop twice singled out Erasmus' attacks on Luther for praise and stated that the reader could learn 'how much ought to be attributed to the free will... in those triumphs which he published concerning Luther'.⁸⁸ Erasmus' most extensive champion, however, was Thomas More. More not only defended his 'darling Erasmus' in his own pamphlets; he also sponsored a series of works from the press of his relative, William Rastell, which complained at attempts by evangelicals to co-opt Erasmus' writings for their own ends.⁸⁹ In 1531, for instance, More convinced William Barlow to write an exposé of the European evangelical movement. The resulting *A dialoge describyng the orygyneall ground of these Lutheran faccyons* distanced Erasmus from attacks on papal power by European evangelicals. Barlow notably lambasted the *Epistolae aliquot de re evangelica et haereticorum poenis* (1529) of Gerard Geldenhouwer (known as Noviomagus) which included favourable extracts from

⁸⁴ Rex, 'English Campaign', pp. 87-9.

⁸⁵ Edward Powell, *Propugnaculum summi sacerdotii evangelici* (London, 1523), fo. 117v: 'Tametsi complures in hoc negocio, ab Erasmo, iam diu magna expectabant: Partim quo ei quondam cum Luthero, non parva consuetudo intercesserat. Partim quo nullius eruditioni, magis quam Erasmi fidebat.'

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 118r: 'Novit Erasmus in apologiis, negotium suum vigilanter agere: At ubi christi fidem tueretur, ibi dormire et stertere.'

⁸⁷ John Fisher, *De veritate corporis et sanguinis Christi in Eucharistia* (Cologne, 1527), sig. D1v: 'et Erasmus imprimis, qui partes ecclesiae catholicae cuique sectandum invictissime docet.'

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 125v: 'Quantum vero tribuendum sit arbitrio libero, satis copiose docet Erasmus in triumphis illis quae egit de Luthero.' See also, sig. A1v.

⁸⁹ Thomas More, *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, CWM 8:1, p. 177. James Carley and Ann Hutchinson, 'William Peto, O.F.M.Obs., and the 1556 Edition of *The folowinge of Chryste*: Background and Context', *Journal of the Early Book Society*, 17 (2014), pp. 94-118. Blayney, *The Stationers' Company*, pp. 262-4. Brigden, *London*, pp. 353-4.

Erasmus' *Annotations* concerning the protection of heretics against papal and imperial repression.⁹⁰

'Dyd not Noviomagus', Barlow protested,

gather ther certayne sentencys out of Erasmus workes, whych falsly depraved he coupled unto Martyn Luthers assercyons, and caused them to be imprynted: blasing abrode that Erasmus and Luther were of one opynyon, to the slaunderous hynderaunce of his profytable studye?⁹¹

All Geldenhouwer could do, so Barlow alleged, was to use Erasmus' name to entice 'men agaynst theyr wyttes to be fautours of theyr heresies'.⁹² Germain Gardiner's *A letter of a yonge gentylman* (also printed by Rastell) likewise complained that 'All the rable of Luthers sect' had supported themselves 'wyth wordes mysse taken among some wrytynges of Erasmus'.⁹³ The author instead placed the scholar in exalted company alongside the apostle James, Origen, Cyprian, Jerome and Augustine, all of whose works had been mistreated by later heretics.⁹⁴ Of course, behind these attacks lay personal motives. Geldenhouwer had helped put More's *Utopia* through the press, even contributing a commendatory verse, and had borrowed money on false pretences from More's friend, Frans van Cranevelt.⁹⁵ It was thus important to distance Erasmus' wider circle from association with such figures.

Despite their public defence of Erasmus, those fighting heresy were also becoming more aware of the ways in which the Dutchman's works were at odds with orthodoxy. Tensions were already evident in the awkward discussion of the sacramental status of marriage in the *Assertio septem sacramentorum* (1521). In his *Annotations*, Erasmus questioned the scriptural basis for asserting that marriage was a sacrament. Discussing the central proof-text for that claim, Ephesians 5:32, Erasmus argued that the Vulgate's description of marriage as 'a great sacrament [*sacramentum*]' was inaccurate and that the epistle, in its original Greek, instead spoke of matrimony as 'a great mystery [*mysterium*]'.⁹⁶ While Erasmus never doubted that marriage was in fact a sacrament, his argument was adopted by those who did, among them Martin Luther, and caused consternation for conservatives such as Edward Lee.⁹⁷ As a result, the king and his literary team jettisoned Erasmus in the *Assertio*. 'The apostle', Henry admitted in a clear nod to the Dutch scholar, 'while writing in

⁹⁰ Gilbert Tournoy, 'Gerard Geldenhouwer', *Contemporaries*, ii, pp. 82-4.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, sigs k3r-v.

⁹² William Barlow, *A dialoge describyng the orygyneall ground of these Lutheran faccyons* (London, 1531), sig. k3r.

⁹³ Germain Gardiner, *A letter of a yonge gentylman... wherein men may se the demeanour [and] heresy of Iohan Fryth late burned* (London, 1534), fo. 26r.

⁹⁴ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, pp. 29-30.

⁹⁵ Tournoy, 'Gerard Geldenhouwer', pp. 82-4.

⁹⁶ Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1527), pp. 549-50.

⁹⁷ Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ*, pp. 209-11.

Greek, called it a “mystery” not a “sacrament”.⁹⁸ Nonetheless, it did not follow that ‘the Latins had therefore erred, when they set forth the matter in Latin, because Paul, in the Greek language, does not use a Latin word’.⁹⁹ Even if the Vulgate had used ‘mystery’ instead of ‘sacrament’, the passage would still argue for the sacramental nature of marriage, the king alleged, ‘since the context [*circumstantia*] of the whole matter teaches it to be thus’.¹⁰⁰ The nature of that context, however, was left unexplained. More fundamentally, the *Assertio* called into question the relevance of the Greek text when debating theological problems. While the approach stood at odds with Erasmus’ own intellectual leanings, it satisfied the king’s idiosyncratic views on the sacraments, for Henry refused to accept that there was no scriptural basis for the sacrament of marriage, despite the misgivings of Erasmus and others.¹⁰¹

Erasmus’ closest confidants similarly struggled to incorporate elements of his biblical scholarship while assaulting heresy. In the *Responsio ad Lutherum* (1523), Thomas More defended the king’s discussion of Ephesians 5 and adapted elements of Erasmian exegesis to conservative ends.¹⁰² In the hopes of defending the papal primacy, for instance, More alighted on Erasmus’ explanation of John 21:15-17. Here, More explained, Erasmus had noted that, when entrusting the Church to Peter, Christ had used the ‘repeated word *poimanein* meaning “to rule”’.¹⁰³ Yet More’s use of Erasmian scholarship made for a marked change of tone from Erasmus’ original discussion in the *Annotations*. There, Erasmus had said nothing of papal primacy, but rebuked priests ‘who boast from this place that the flock of the Lord has been entrusted to them’. Moreover, he had used the note to argue that the apostles had felt that ‘one is not qualified to be a priest, unless having disregarded everything, one should love nothing except Christ, that is truth, innocence, piety’.¹⁰⁴ In More’s hands, then, Erasmus’ anticlerical tirade had been transformed into a defence of papal power. John Fisher likewise suppressed the more radical elements of Erasmian biblical exegesis in his *Assertionis Lutheranae confutatio* (1523). Fisher regularly called upon Erasmus’ knowledge of the Greek New Testament to challenge Luther’s interpretation of passages.¹⁰⁵ The

⁹⁸ Henry VIII, *Assertio septem sacramentorum adversus Martinum Lutherum* (Antwerp, 1522), sig n4r: ‘... apostolus, dum graece scriberet, appellet mysterium non sacramentum, quasi ideo latini errarent, qui rem efferent latine, quia Paulus, in lingua graeca, non utantur latino vocabulo’.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*: ‘Quod si, non sacramentum sed mysterium vertisset interpret... non abstulisset tamen argumentum, quo, ex eo loco Apostoli concluditur, matrimonium esse sacramentum, quum id ita esse rei totius doceat circumstantia’.

¹⁰¹ MacCulloch, ‘Henry VIII: Pious King’, p. 114

¹⁰² Thomas More, *Responsio ad Lutherum*, CWM 5:1, pp. 663-9. Richard Marius, *Thomas More: A Biography* (New York, 1984), p. 287.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

¹⁰⁴ Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum* (Basel, 1516), pp. 372-3: ‘Illud obiter esse admonendum, qui ex hoc loco gloriantur sibi commissum gregem domini, eos primum oportere meminisse a Petro ter exactum amorem erga Christum, neque quemlibet amorem, sed ardentiorum caeteris. Deinde ter item commissam illi gregis curam. Illud nimirum significatum est non esse idoneum sacerdotio, nisi qui neglectis omnibus nihil amet nisi Christum, hoc est veritatem, innocentiam, pietatem.’

¹⁰⁵ John Fisher, *Assertionis Lutheranae confutatio* (Antwerp, 1523), fos lxviii, cxliiii, ccli, ccccxviii.

text of 2 Peter 1:10, for example, was a key battleground in the debate over good works and justification since the verse called upon the brethren to ‘make certain your calling and election through good works’. Luther had tried to limit the verse’s relevance to the discussion of justification by alleging that Peter was speaking only of a knowledge of one’s vocation as a Christian. Fisher, on the other hand, reiterated its relevance to the question of salvation. The apostle, he contended, ‘said nothing of knowledge in that place, but of strength and stability: *bebaios* [that is] stronger and more certain’.¹⁰⁶ Peter therefore had ‘taught that we may make firm and sure our calling and election, through good works, and Erasmus translates it thus’.¹⁰⁷ Fisher, however, was telling only half the truth for he neglected to mention that Erasmus had been less convinced by Peter’s defence of good works. Erasmus, in fact, found no evidence of those crucial words – ‘through good works’ – in the Greek manuscripts he consulted and had dropped the phrase entirely from his Latin translation.¹⁰⁸ Erasmus himself was only too aware of the implications of his work and, when disputing the passage with Luther, resorted to quoting the Vulgate rather than his own more controversial rendering.¹⁰⁹

By the 1530s, therefore, conservatives had been forced to adopt a Janus-faced approach to Erasmus’ writings. On the one hand, they continued to publicly align Erasmus with their assault on heresy. On the other, they privately urged him to edit certain writings in line with orthodoxy or pressed him to further defend the faith. Since the scholar was usually unwilling to do so, conservatives were left to construct their own narrower visions of the Dutchman’s corpus, while simultaneously defending the author’s motivations. More, for instance, was unmoved by the repeated efforts of evangelicals to cast Erasmus’ words back in his face. When Tyndale justified controversial translations in his English bible, he regularly cited Erasmus’ Latin translation as an inspiration.¹¹⁰ More, however, would not condemn Erasmus. He noted that Erasmus’ biblical work was restricted to Greek and Latin usage and could not therefore be used as a blueprint for translation into English.¹¹¹ Even if Erasmus had used the Latin word *congregatio* to translate the Greek *ekklesia*, that did not mean that Tyndale was correct in using the English word ‘congregation’, ‘for the laten tonge had no laten word before used for the chyrche, but the greke word *ecclesia*... [b]ut we had in englysshe a proper englysshe worde therfore’ (i.e. ‘church’).¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ Fisher, *Confutatio*, fo. lxxviii: ‘Nec est quod hic interpretetur Lutherus, quemadmodum in Psalmum v facit, nimirum ut cognitam faciamus vocationem nostram, quum nihil illic de cognitione Petrus dixerit, sed de firmitudine siue stabilitate, *bebaios*, enim *firmus* et *stabilis* dicitur.’

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*: ‘Monuit ergo Petrus, ut per bona opera, vocationem, et electionem nostram firmam, et ratam efficeremus, atque ita traducit Erasmus.’

¹⁰⁸ Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1527), p. 698.

¹⁰⁹ Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio*, CWE 76, p. 45.

¹¹⁰ Tyndale’s *New Testament*, ed. David Daniell (New Haven, 1989), p. 9.

¹¹¹ More, *The Confutation of Tyndale’s Answer*, CWM 8:1, p. 177.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Likewise, Erasmus' motivations were patently different to those of an English heretic. Erasmus 'detesteth and abhorreth the errours and heresy that Tyndale playnely techeth' and showed none of the 'malycyouse' or 'shrewde' intent that Tyndale did.¹¹³ Questions of intellectual principle, therefore, were becoming entwined with notions of character and intent. As we shall see, these were issues that were not restricted to Erasmus' conservative friends.

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The anti-Lutheran campaign ground to a halt at the end of the 1520s as Henry's marital difficulties took centre stage. The shift in royal priorities first side-lined and then overwhelmed the group of conservatives who had spearheaded the assault on heresy, many of them intimates of Erasmus.¹¹⁴ In their wake, a series of more evangelical figures gained prominence at court, not least Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cromwell. The religious loyalties of both figures remain a source of debate.¹¹⁵ They and their respective circles, however, engineered a new vision of Erasmus at the English court, one more in keeping with the newly antipapal and reforming drift of royal policy in the mid-1530s.

Henry's queens had always exercised an impact on the royal library and the reading of Erasmus.¹¹⁶ The Spanish translation of Erasmus' *Enchiridion* that found its way into the royal library at Westminster, for example, was almost certainly acquired for Catherine of Aragon.¹¹⁷ Catherine and her chamberlain, William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, had commissioned a tract on marriage from Erasmus and the Imperial ambassador, Eustace Chapuys, had made efforts to embroil him in the divorce crisis.¹¹⁸ It was Anne Boleyn, however, who made a more significant contribution to the reading of Erasmus at court.¹¹⁹ Her father had pursued a strategy of public engagement with Erasmus, commissioning works from the Dutchman. The new queen, by contrast, pursued her intellectual interests through the purchase of books, especially French evangelical texts which entered the royal library in large numbers during her ascendancy.¹²⁰ As her chaplain William

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, pp. 305-54.

¹¹⁵ On Boleyn: Maria Dowling, 'Anne Boleyn and Reform', *JEH*, 35 (1984), pp. 30-46; Eric Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn: 'The Most Happy'* (Oxford, 2004); G. W. Bernard, 'Anne Boleyn's Religion', *HJ*, 36:1 (1993), pp. 1-20.

On Cromwell: Susan Brigden, 'Thomas Cromwell and the "Brethren"', in Claire Cross, David Loades and J. Scarisbrick (eds), *Law and Government under the Tudors. Essays presented to Sir Geoffrey Elton* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 31-50; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cromwell: A Life* (London, 2018).

¹¹⁶ Carley, *Libraries*, pp. lv-lxiii. Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*.

¹¹⁷ BL, 851.a.1, Erasmus, *Enchiridion o manual del Cavallero Cristiano... Traduzido de alli en Castellano* (Alcala de Henares, 1527).

¹¹⁸ See p. 59.

¹¹⁹ Carley, *Libraries*, pp. lvii-viii.

¹²⁰ James Carley, 'French Evangelical Books at the Court of Henry VIII', in Jean-François Gilmont and William Kemp, *Le Livre Évangélique en Français avant Calvin* (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 131-45.

Latymer recalled, 'her highnes was very experte in the Frenche tounge, exercising her selfe contynually in reading the French bible and other French bookes of like effecte' such that she 'charged her chapellayns to be furnisshed of all kynde of Frenche bookes that reverently treated of the wholye scriptures'.¹²¹ These items ranged from small octavo editions to deluxe manuscripts. Anne engaged the services of both her family and the wider evangelical community to secure material.¹²² George Boleyn presented the queen with two lavish manuscripts containing French biblical commentaries.¹²³ William Lock, a merchant based in London and Antwerp, dispatched various French books to the queen from the Low Countries in the 1530s.¹²⁴ On the queen's fall, Latymer was apprehended at Sandwich, having just arrived from Flanders with the latest consignment of books.¹²⁵

In the 1530s, then, an increasing amount of French literature, much of it associated with the court of Marguerite of Navarre, was brought to the queen and subsequently entered the royal library. These works sought to convey the necessity of bible reading in the vernacular and often co-opted Erasmian texts to convey this message.¹²⁶ This was especially true of Erasmus' preface to the New Testament, the *Paraclesis*, which stridently argued for the merits of bible reading in native tongues and became a favourite among evangelicals. Latymer owned a Latin edition appended to an edition of Athanasius' works.¹²⁷ William Roy completed the first English version, *An exhortation to the diligent studye of scripture*, in Antwerp in 1529, and his text was reprinted twice in England in 1534 at the height of Boleyn's influence.¹²⁸ Two French translations of the *Paraclesis*, both printed in Antwerp (c.1527-29) by Martin Lempereur, probably entered the royal library through the Boleyns.¹²⁹ In both cases, Erasmus' work was bound with more controversial writings. In one, the *Paraclesis* was placed with three translations of works by Martin Luther, including the reformer's own rallying cry for biblical reading, *La maniere de lire levangile* (1529?).¹³⁰ In the second copy, Erasmus' text was gathered with works by Luther, Guillaume Du Molin and François

¹²¹ William Latymer, 'Chronickille of Anne Bulleyne', ed. Maria Dowling, *Camden Miscellany* 30, (C.S. 4th ser. 39, 1990), p. 63.

¹²² Carley, *Libraries*, p. lviii.

¹²³ BL, Harley MS 6561. Alnwick Castle, MS Percy 465. See, Carley, 'Anne Boleyn's Manuscripts and Their Sources', in Michelle Brown and Scot McKendrick (eds), *Illuminating the Book: Makers and Interpreters: Essays in Honour of Janet Backhouse* (London, 1998), pp. 261-80.

¹²⁴ Maria Dowling and Joy Shakespeare (eds), 'Religion and Politics in Mid Tudor England through the Eyes of an English Protestant Woman: The Recollections of Rose Hickman', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 55 (1982), p. 97.

¹²⁵ *Le&P* 10, 827.

¹²⁶ Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, pp. 106-38.

¹²⁷ Ampleforth, C023a, Athanasius, *Opera* (Paris, 1519).

¹²⁸ Devereux, *Checklist*, pp. 21-2. *ESTC*: 10493, 10493.5, 10494.

¹²⁹ Carley, *Libraries*, H2.406, p. 89.

¹³⁰ BL, 848.a.2.(1), Erasmus, *Exhortation au peuple* (Antwerp, 1527-9); (2) Luther, *La maniere de lire levangile* (Antwerp, 1529?); (3) Luther, *Sermon au jour de l'ascension* (Antwerp, 1527-29); (4) Luther, *Des bonnes ouures sus les commandemens de Dieu* (Antwerp, 1527-9).

Lambert.¹³¹ The king left no annotations in either book. However, he did place his monogram in the first copy, presumably reading it with other books marked in this way, such as his copies of the *Paraphrases* and the *Enarrationes in psalmos*.¹³²

Boleyn may not have been alone in presenting the king with evangelical interpretations of Erasmus' ideas. Besides the *Paraclesis*, Erasmus had also promoted the reading and translation of scriptures in his preface to the *Paraphrase on Matthew*. Once again, evangelicals were quick to exploit such sentiments for an English audience, with a first translation produced in 1534.¹³³ At court, the king had personally consulted the preface, leaving a series of marginalia in his Latin edition. Henry noted, for example, Erasmus' desire that the scriptures be 'translated into every language. Christ wants his philosophy to be propagated as widely as possible. He died for all, he wants to be known by all'.¹³⁴ He also highlighted sections on how pray before reading the bible, and how to consult the texts soberly and not to twist them to one's own desires.¹³⁵

Two sections of Erasmus' preface drew the king into a flurry of annotation. The first was Erasmus' long proposal for greater instruction in the Christian faith. The Dutchman proposed a public ceremony to reconfirm one's baptismal vows; a suggestion which proved highly controversial in certain quarters for the aid it lent to anabaptists.¹³⁶ Henry, however, was more engrossed in the practicalities than any subversive potential. He left manicules, brackets and *nota* marks by Erasmus' call for adolescents to be taught and examined on the basics of the faith and for a public profession to confirm it, so that 'children... will drink in the teaching of Christ just as eagerly in private as in public'.¹³⁷ He also bracketed the passage where Erasmus called for the publication of 'little books on the philosophy of Christ which portray the pure Christ, not one under the shadow of Jewish rituals or human fictions and decrees'.¹³⁸ As ever, Henry's attention was also drawn to passages reflecting on kingship. He highlighted Erasmus' stinging criticisms of division in Christendom. He likewise wrote '*nota bene*' by the suggestion that God sometimes allows 'an actor and an image to rule in place of a real shepherd' and the people 'adopt teachers who teach things to please rather than are salutary'.¹³⁹ When Erasmus warned that a second

¹³¹ BL, C.37.a.22.(1) Du Molin, *Notable et utile traicte du zele et grant desir que doibt avoir ung vray chrestien* (Strasbourg, 1527); (2) Luther, *Sermon de la maniere de prier Dieu et comment on doibt faire processions et rogations* (Antwerp, 1527-9); (3) Erasmus, *Exhortation au peuple* (Antwerp, 1527-9); (4) Luther, *Prophetie de Iesie de lenfant nouveau ne Jesuchrist* (Strasbourg, 1527); (5) Wolfgang Schuch and François Lambert, *Epistre chrestienne envoyee a tresnoble prince monseigneur le duc de Lorayne* (Strasbourg, 1526); (6) *Sentence de frere Jehan Guibert beremute de Liury* (Paris, 1527).

¹³² BL, 3913.k.4. BL, 689.a.3.

¹³³ Devereux, *Checklist*, p. 22.

¹³⁴ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sig. a6r. Erasmus, 'To the Pious Reader', *Paraphrase on Matthew*, CWE 45, p. 17.

¹³⁵ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sigs a4v, a5v.

¹³⁶ Darren Williamson, 'The "Doctor of Anabaptism" and the Prince of Humanists: Balthasar Hubmaier's Contact with Erasmus', *ERSY*, 27:1 (2007), pp. 37-58.

¹³⁷ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sig. a7r. CWE 45, p. 21.

¹³⁸ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sig. a7r. CWE 45, p. 22.

¹³⁹ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sig. a7v. CWE 45, p. 23.

Nebuchadnezzar would be sent if Christians do not refrain from internal strife, Henry wrote ‘beware’.¹⁴⁰ In the midst of wars, ambition and decay, Erasmus proposed that Christians call on Christ and to ‘take counsel together for the tranquillity of the Christian name’.¹⁴¹ ‘Let the leaders’, Erasmus added, ‘especially of the church, so direct the affairs of their councils that they strive with a pure conscience for nothing but that... Christ might rule, flourish and reign as widely as possible’; a passage Henry highlighted in the margin.¹⁴² There was certainly no blueprint for the English reformation here; but there was a great deal of encouragement, both personal and political, for a king looking to define the doctrines of his church and mired in the ever-shifting politics of European princes.

As Carley and Pollnitz have observed, Henry’s copy of this preface also contains the notes of a second unidentified contemporary reader, who has marked up the text – after Henry, but quite often engaging with the same passages as the king – with a series of pointedly evangelical suggestions.¹⁴³ When Erasmus explained that throughout Christian history the scriptures had been translated into the vernacular to spread their message, this second reader wrote in the margins that ‘Paul wished everyone to know how to interpret sacred letters’ and ‘for what reason the gospel was written in the mother tongue’.¹⁴⁴ Likewise, where Henry had contemplated the books and ceremonies needed to educate his people, this second reader took a more direct line, pointing out that Erasmus was writing ‘against those priests who are either ignorant or unwilling to preach the word of God’.¹⁴⁵ The relationship of these notes with those of the king is uncertain. Pollnitz goes so far as to claim that they were produced ‘to draw the king’s attention to key aspects of Erasmus’ argument for the dissemination of scripture’.¹⁴⁶ It is certainly true that figures around Anne Boleyn were interested in both Erasmus and vernacular scripture.¹⁴⁷ The annotating hand, however, remains unidentified among any of the obvious candidates in Henry’s reign (chaplains, councillors or close associates). The notes in Henry’s *Paraphrases* could just as easily have been produced by or for another figure with access to the royal collection. What they undoubtedly do show, however, is that evangelicals at the Tudor court were eager to explore the connections between Erasmus and reform of the church.

¹⁴⁰ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sig. a8v: ‘cave’.

¹⁴¹ *CWE* 45, p. 27.

¹⁴² BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sig. a8v. *CWE* 45, p. 27.

¹⁴³ Carley, *Libraries*, p. 90, H2.407. Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, p. 132. This reader consulted the book after Henry, since their notes occasionally overlay the king’s additions.

¹⁴⁴ BL, 3913.k.4, i, *Matthew*, sig. a6r: ‘Paulus cupit ut omnes sciant Interpretari sacras litteras. 1a corit.’; ‘quo Evangelium fit in lingua materna’.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, a7r: ‘contra Sacerdotes qui aut Nescint aut Nolunt predicare verbum dei’.

¹⁴⁶ Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, p. 132.

¹⁴⁷ See Latymer’s notes concerning the preface in WA, N.2.110, Erasmus, *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas* (Antwerp, 1532), pp. 14-15. Latymer’s hand, while by no means identical, shares several features with the unknown annotator of BL, 3913.k.4.

While Boleyn and her circle were presenting Erasmus as a champion of biblical translation, a more public repositioning of the Dutch scholar was being undertaken by the king's chief minister, Thomas Cromwell. Cromwell could not hope to exercise the same influence on the royal library as Henry's queens. Like More, however, he readily understood the potential of the English presses for the advancement of his political and religious goals.¹⁴⁸ His years of greatest political influence, in fact, coincided with an unprecedented expansion in the production of English translations of Erasmus, many of which were 'wholly complementary to the official settlement'.¹⁴⁹ Between 1531 and 1540, 52 separate editions of the Dutch scholar's works were put to press, with perhaps as many as 15 produced in a single year (1534).¹⁵⁰ While the Master Secretary clearly did not control every aspect of English printing in this period, his correspondence does reveal that he played a significant part in commissioning Erasmian works as propaganda for the Henrician regime. These Cromwellian productions show a particular concern for crafting an official Erasmus, one who supported the king and political obedience while furthering attacks on the papacy.¹⁵¹

Cromwell clearly held Erasmus in some regard. He was said to have perused a copy of Erasmus' New Testament translation while travelling to Rome in 1519.¹⁵² Henry Dowes, entrusted with the education of Cromwell's son, read sections of the *Colloquies* to his young charge and even made a manuscript translation of one, *Pietas Puerilis*.¹⁵³ Sending an Erasmian translation to Cromwell became a reliable way of attracting his patronage. Richard Taverner, a student of both Oxford and Cambridge, dedicated his version of the *Encomium matrimonii* to the Master Secretary in 1532 and thereafter served as both a clerk and frequent translator for Cromwell.¹⁵⁴ Martin Tyndale (or Tyndall) similarly offered the king's secretary a translation of the life of John Colet, from 'a greate booke of the saide Erasmus callide in Latyn *Farrago epistolarii Erasmi*'.¹⁵⁵ One of Cromwell's anonymous supplicants likewise excused himself for his previous links to papists and stated that he was now learning Greek and consulting Erasmus' edition of the New Testament.¹⁵⁶ Those who approached Cromwell usually had close links with his circle and religious reformers. Tyndale asked that Cromwell refer his translation to the judgement of 'maister Taverner (now one of your clientes, laste yere a reder of greke, in Cambridge)' and thanked Cromwell for aiding his

¹⁴⁸ G. R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 171-216. MacCulloch, *Cromwell*, pp. 148-9, 188-92, 236-7.

¹⁴⁹ McConica, *English Humanists*, p. 167.

¹⁵⁰ *USTC*. Figures for a specific year are only ever approximate, since dating these productions is often difficult.

¹⁵¹ On the reforming circles around Cromwell see, G. R. Elton, *Reform and Renewal: Thomas Cromwell and the Common Weal* (Cambridge, 1973).

¹⁵² *AcM* (1576), viii, p. 1173.

¹⁵³ *LeP* 7, 1135. S. Bindoff, *The House of Commons, 1509-1558* (3 vols, London, 1982), i, p. 54.

¹⁵⁴ Richard Taverner, *A ryght frutefull epystle deuysed by the moste excellent clarke Erasmus in laude and prayse of matrimony* (London, 1536).

¹⁵⁵ TNA, SP 1/77, fo. 132v.

¹⁵⁶ *LeP* 13:2, 1223.

brother John Tyndale, a member of London's evangelical underground.¹⁵⁷ Notable, too, is the preponderance of schoolmasters in Cromwell's circle, several of whom would later take an interest in the reform of English education and the use of Erasmus.¹⁵⁸ Tyndale was described in 1537 as Cromwell's 'true scholar and beadman' while serving as a schoolmaster at Eton.¹⁵⁹ Copies of Erasmus' works circulated among these men. Tyndale's copy of Erasmus' prescriptions for the bringing up of children, *De civilitate morum puerilium*, survives at St John's College, Cambridge.¹⁶⁰ It later passed into the hands of a near contemporary of Eton and King's College, Robert Aufield (or Alfield) who also served as a schoolmaster in later life.¹⁶¹

One of Cromwell's most talented writers was another humanist educator, Leonard Cox, with reformist leanings. Cox had spent much of his early career teaching in Poland and Hungary but had known Melancthon while a student in Tübingen.¹⁶² He had corresponded with Erasmus and had lectured from the Dutchman's *De duplici copia* while teaching in Cracow.¹⁶³ Following his return to England, he took up the position of headmaster at Reading School, relying on the patronage of the city's abbot, Hugh Faringdon. Soon thereafter, he began courting Cromwell with literary productions, proposing several translations of Erasmus' works through the aegis of the bookseller 'Goodman Toy'.¹⁶⁴

From this exchange emerged Cox's translation of Erasmus' *Paraphrase on Titus* (c.1534). The work is typical of Cromwell's circle in its approbation of recent parliamentary proceedings and its effort to reinterpret Erasmus' writings in the light of religious change in England. In the preface, Cox lent his support to Henry's recently created supremacy. 'Let here no man murmur as some do yet', Cox asserted, 'that his grace is electe to be hedde of the chyrche in his realme'.¹⁶⁵ God, he reminded his readers, had shown 'hye indygnacyon... agaynste the chyrche of Rome' and, by

¹⁵⁷ TNA, SP 1/77, fo. 132v. Brigden, 'Thomas Cromwell and the "Brethren"', pp. 31-50. Brigden, *London*, pp. 110-11, 183-4.

¹⁵⁸ Joan Simon, *Education and Society in Tudor England* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 147-8, 172-3. Agnes Juhasz-Ormsby, 'Leonard Cox and the Erasmian Circles of Early Sixteenth-Century England', *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Upsaliensis. Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies*, ed. Astrid Steiner-Weber (2 vols, Uppsala 2009), i, pp. 512-4.

¹⁵⁹ *LeP* 12:2, 848.

¹⁶⁰ SJC, Cambridge, Gg.17.28.(1), Erasmus, *De civilitate morum puerilium* (Antwerp, 1530). Tyndale and Aufield only signed the tp of (1). The work is now bound in vellum, possibly a contemporary binding, though impossible to date securely. It is unclear whether Tyndale and Aufield owned the entire volume in its present condition.

¹⁶¹ Thomas Harwood, *Alumni Etoniensis* (Birmingham, 1797), pp. 144, 149.

¹⁶² Andrew Breeze, 'Leonard Cox, A Welsh Humanist in Poland and Hungary', *The National Library of Wales Journal*, 25 (1988), pp. 399-410. Juhasz-Ormsby, 'Leonard Cox and the Erasmian Circles of Early Sixteenth-Century England', pp. 505-514. S. F. Ryle, 'Cox, Leonard (?1495-?1549)', *ODNB*.

¹⁶³ Ep. 1803, *CWE* 13, pp. 3-9. Andrew Breeze and Jacqueline Glomski, 'An Early British Treatise upon Education: Leonard Cox's *De erudienda iuventute* (1526)', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 40 (1991), pp. 112-167.

¹⁶⁴ *LeP* 7, 659.

¹⁶⁵ Leonard Cox, *Paraphrase on Titus* (London, c.1534), sig. A6r. James Warner, *Henry VIII's Divorce Literature and Politics of the Printing Press* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 141-2

contrast, 'greate goodnes... towarde our Englysshe nacyon'.¹⁶⁶ He then detailed how papal power was unsupported by scripture and listed various biblical and historical examples to the same effect.¹⁶⁷ Cox condemned clerics who 'haue possessyons & domynyons more lyke to kynges & emperours then spyritual fathers' and railed against their refusal to allow the scriptures to be read in English.¹⁶⁸ 'To rede the new testament with them is heresy, which is no thyng elles save Chrystes wordes & his dyscyples'.¹⁶⁹ Cox practised what he preached: his edition of Erasmus' *Paraphrase* included an English translation of the epistle itself.

Cox's choice of *Paraphrase* was highly significant in the context of a government in search of biblical and historical justifications for the supremacy. Though Cox suggested that the Epistle to Titus contained a useful pattern for Christian life, his broader point related to the management of political and religious affairs. Paul, he proposed, 'techeth howe moche and howe straitly we be bounde to obey next God our kyng & souerayne lorde'.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, the Epistle to Titus gave a blueprint of church governance on the island of Crete in apostolic times. In the *Paraphrase*, Paul informs Titus that

syth I dyd knowe ryght well the nature of this Ilonde, and againe I dyd not doubt but that they had nede of a faythfull and dilygent creanser or ouerseer, I haue for that cause lefte the[e] in Crete as representyng myn own person, bycause that the busynes of the gospell calleth me to other places, that suche thynges as have there begon to be corrected by me, thou as my deputye maye make make an ende of them...¹⁷¹

If Paul had possessed the authority to install Titus as his representative in Crete, then the authority of the church had not been solely invested in Peter and the popes. First-century Crete began to look like a promising parallel for an English church newly liberated from the Roman fold.

Cox's translation used Erasmus to support the royal supremacy and to justify printing a portion of scripture in English. Several Cromwellian servants were simultaneously mining Erasmus' works to similar ends. Richard Taverner was at the heart of this effort.¹⁷² He framed his translation of *A ryght frutefull epystle* as an attack on the monastic life and 'the blynd superstition of men and women, which cease nat day by day to professe & vowe perpetuall chastyte before they

¹⁶⁶ Cox, *Paraphrase*, sigs A2r, A5v.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, sig. A7r.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, sig. A3r.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, sig. A3v.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, sig. B1r. c.f Stephen Gardiner, *Obedience in Church and State: Three Political Tracts*, ed. Pierre Janelle (Cambridge, 1930), p. 89. *Obedientia* is also one of the allegorical figures represented on Byddell's title-page border to Cox's *paraphrase*.

¹⁷¹ Cox, *Paraphrase*, sig. C1r.

¹⁷² John Yost, 'Taverner's Use of Erasmus and the Protestantization of English Humanism', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 23:3 (1970), pp. 266-76.

sufficiently knowe themselves'.¹⁷³ He also adapted Erasmus to promote the reading of the scriptures and to celebrate the reform of feast days under Henry VIII.¹⁷⁴ John Byddell's editions of *A dialoge called Funus* (printed twice in 1534) and the *Julius exclusus* (twice in 1533-4, 1535) likewise contained plenty of anticlerical material helpful to government looking to assert its authority over the English church.

Not all of Henry's propagandists, however, could wield Erasmus' name with the same approbation. In 1534, Richard Sampson, dean of Lichfield, composed his *Oratio* in support of the royal supremacy, but found that Erasmus had not always reached the antipapal conclusions he would have liked. The Dutch scholar had noted, for instance, that in Jerome's epistles the saint speaks of those 'outside of this house' as 'profane' and explained that the house was the Roman See.¹⁷⁵ Sampson, at pains to defend Henry's new title, resorted to arguing that 'Erasmus seems to speak not as honestly as in many other places' and proposed instead that Jerome had been speaking of the faith more generally, rather than papal authority.¹⁷⁶ Sampson thus joined the ranks of Englishmen who sought to explain discrepancies between their own views and Erasmus' by alleging that the Dutch scholar had written dishonestly or under certain constraints. His views, however, were soon picked up by Henry VIII's conservative opponents. The king's cousin and arch-traitor, Reginald Pole, used Sampson's derisive comments as a springboard for a wider defence of Erasmus and assault on the supremacy. Pole had initially helped with efforts to secure a divorce for the English king but eventually turned his back on his relative, publishing *De unitate* (1538) to rebuke the king.¹⁷⁷ In *De unitate*, Pole poured scorn on Sampson's attempt to argue with Erasmus, 'the most expert man in letters'.¹⁷⁸ The Dutchman had 'put into writing more works than I believe you have ever read; he certainly published more learned works and less vulgar ones, than those that could be understood by you'.¹⁷⁹ 'No one', Pole continued, 'had more familiarity with Jerome'.¹⁸⁰ In exile in Italy, Pole recognised that Sampson's suggestion of insincerity in Erasmus had the potential to undercut all of the Dutch scholar's orthodox statements. He thus called on

¹⁷³ *A ryght frutefull epystle*, sig. A2r.

¹⁷⁴ Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 66. Yost, 'Taverner's Use of Erasmus', p. 271.

¹⁷⁵ Jerome, Ep. 15, 1:355-58: 'Extra hanc domum qui agnum comederit, prophanus est'. Andrew Chibi, 'Richard Sampson, his "Oratio," and Henry VIII's Royal Supremacy', *Journal of Church and State*, 39:3 (1997), pp. 556-7.

¹⁷⁶ Richard Sampson, *Oratio* (London, 1535), sigs C2r-v: 'Quod autem ait, D. Hiero. Extra hanc [C2v] domum qui agnum comederit, prophanus est, in epistola quae incipit: Quoniam vetusto, to. 3. pag. 59. extra hanc fidem, haud dubie sentit, quantumvis in illo potissimum loco, non tam sincere loqui videtur Erasmus, quam in aliis plerisque locis, qui illam domum nimis inadvertenter Rbo. ecclesiae primatum interpretatur. Non enim in illa aetate agnoscebatur huiusmodi primatus.'

¹⁷⁷ Thomas Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince and Prophet* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 13-61. John Edwards, *Archbishop Pole* (Farnham, 2014), pp. 11-37. Joseph Dwyer (ed.), *Pole's Defence of the Unity of the Church* (Westminster, ML, 1965), pp. 156-161.

¹⁷⁸ Reginald Pole, *Pro ecclesiasticae unitatis defensione* (Rome, 1538), fo. 64v: 'virum in literis exercitatissimum'.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*: 'qui plura opera conscripsit, quam te putem unquam legisse; doctiora quidem & minus certe vulgaria edidit, quam quae a te potuerint intelligi'.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: 'neminem magis quam Hieronymum familiarem habuisse'.

his English rival to render some justification for his view, especially to his fellow countrymen, ‘among whom, as you know, the name of Erasmus is quite celebrated and famous, while your name is most obscure on account of your learning’.¹⁸¹ Once again, issues of motive and status had come to infect the analysis of Erasmus’ legacy.

Two events in the mid-1530s helped to shift the picture of Erasmus crafted by Cromwell and his circle in support of the supremacy. Erasmus was shocked by the executions of More and Fisher and helped to circulate news of their deaths. This included publicly praising the two attainted traitors in the preface to *Ecclesiastes* (1535).¹⁸² In response, Cromwell and others in government kept a watchful eye on the scholar and sent assurances to Basel that his pension would be paid.¹⁸³ While Erasmus’ death in the summer of 1536 removed the threat of one prominent European adversary, Cromwell had little time to relax. By autumn, the north of England was gripped by the Pilgrimage of Grace, threatening both Cromwell’s position and the wider course of religious reform in the country.¹⁸⁴ Once again, he and the government’s pens-for-hire turned to Erasmus, though now with a greater emphasis on deference to secular authority.¹⁸⁵ Richard Morison – another of those orbiting Cromwell – hastily composed *A remedy for sedition* (1536), including a long letter from Erasmus in praise of the king in order to demonstrate ‘howe moche Englande is bound to love his grace, and howe moch we ought to hate all them, that wolde his grace any evyll’.¹⁸⁶ Its high praise of Henry’s character and learning also acted as a counterpoint to Erasmus’ tacit criticisms of the king for the deaths of More and Fisher and was reproduced again in Morison’s *Apomaxis* (c.1537).¹⁸⁷ From 1539, Taverner likewise produced heavily edited translations of selected Erasmian *Apophthegmata*, to which the author added his own musings on Henry’s benevolence and a subject’s duty to obey their prince.¹⁸⁸

Such pamphlets also began to strike a more cautious note on reform, especially as the king’s enthusiasm for evangelism faded towards the end of the 1530s.¹⁸⁹ Taverner complained in his *Proverbs and adagies* (adapted from Erasmus’ *Adagia*) of monks, anabaptists, ‘papistes’ and ‘gospellers’:

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*: ‘Sed si nullam tanti viri rationem habebas, quo pacto eum dimitteres, saltem Anglorum tuorum ad quos scribebas, aliquam habuisses: iis saltem rationem reprehensionis tuae aliquam reddidisses, apud quos scires Erasmi nomen satis esse celebre, & acceptum, cum tuum doctrinae quidem causa, si cum Erasmi conferatur, sit obscurissimum’.

¹⁸² Erasmus, *Ecclesiastes*, CWE 67 pp. 243-5.

¹⁸³ See Chapter 2.

¹⁸⁴ Michael Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace: A Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536* (Manchester, 1996).

¹⁸⁵ On the theme of obedience: Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (Basingstoke, 2006), pp. 25-6. Agnes Juhász-Ormsby, ‘Robert Radcliffe’s Translation of Joannes Ravisius Textor’s “Dialogi” (1530) and the Henrician Reformation’, *Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies*, 40:3 (2017), pp. 19-45.

¹⁸⁶ Richard Morison, *A remedy for sedition* (London, 1536), sigs f3r-4v. Tracey Sowerby, *Renaissance and Reform in Tudor England: The Careers of Sir Richard Morison* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 41-117.

¹⁸⁷ Sowerby, *Morison*, pp. 58-9.

¹⁸⁸ McConica, *English Humanists*, p. 184. e.g. Richard Taverner, *The garden of wysdom* (London, 1539), sigs A2r-v, A4v.

¹⁸⁹ Yost, ‘Taverner’s Use of Erasmus’, pp. 269-70.

Some can not do but they over do, ether in the redresse of the abuses in the church they wyll runne to farre and quyte and clean take away al honest ceremonies, tradicions, and lawes, or els in the mayntenynge of that is honest, they woll wythout choyse styffely defende yea and kepe styll in theyr churches al customes, ceremonies and traditions be they never so detestably abused and gone from the fyrst institution.¹⁹⁰

Taverner continued to express his loyalty to the Henrician church after Cromwell's fall through Erasmian translation, producing a now lost version (1545) of *De sarcienda ecclesiae concordia*.¹⁹¹ Taverner no doubt used the tract to echo the king's words on the need for religious unity and moderation.¹⁹² The fit of Erasmus' tract with Taverner's present political needs, however, was not altogether natural. After all, Erasmus had used *De sarcienda ecclesiae concordia* to argue that those who left the 'Tabernacle' of the Catholic church were worse than those who lived impure lives within it – hardly a ringing endorsement of the schismatic English church.¹⁹³ There were clear limits, then, to the process of reworking Erasmus' ideas in Henrician England. While the likes of More, Boleyn and Cromwell increasingly mobilised their networks to frame a version of the Dutch scholar in keeping with royal policy, there was also a growing awareness of the limitations of such an approach and the need to contextualise Erasmus' thought and motivations. Indeed, this interest was only to grow in the 1540s and 50s.

It would be wrong, nonetheless, to dismiss these figures as mere puppets of the Henrician regime or to reduce their interest in Erasmus to purely religious matters. Taverner, Cox and others were evidently also interested in the reception of classical culture and the reform of English education.¹⁹⁴ They shared a sense that Erasmus and humanism more generally provided the tools necessary to engage in state affairs. The reading habits of one final Cromwellian client, Sir John Prise, display these various facets to good effect.

Prise was born in Wales and, after study at Oxford and Cambridge, moved into Cromwell's employ as an agent of the dissolution of monasteries and a trusted secretary during the interrogations of Anne Boleyn, John Fisher and Thomas More.¹⁹⁵ After the chief minister's fall in 1540, Prise moved into the Benedictine priory of St Guthlac near Hereford and began to collect books and manuscripts from the dissolved houses of the west of England, many of them

¹⁹⁰ Richard Taverner, *Proverbes or adagies gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus* (London, 1545), sig. C5r.

¹⁹¹ Devereux, *Checklist*, p. 10.

¹⁹² Stanford Lehmberg, *The Later Parliaments of Henry VIII, 1536-47* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 200-37.

¹⁹³ Emily Kearns, 'Introduction', *CWE* 65, pp. 126-31.

¹⁹⁴ Ágnes Juhász-Ormsby, 'Erasmus' *Apophthegmata* in Henrician England', *Erasmus Studies*, 37:1 (2017), pp. 45-67.

¹⁹⁵ Huw Pryce, 'Prise, Sir John [Syr Siôn ap Rhys]', *ODNB*.

connected to Britain's early history.¹⁹⁶ He accommodated himself to the Edwardian and Marian regimes that followed, though he never returned to the prominence he had held under Cromwell. On his death in 1555 he bequeathed a large collection of books to Hereford Cathedral.¹⁹⁷ These included several Erasmian religious texts, including editions of the Church Fathers and an octavo edition of Erasmus' *Explanatio symboli*.¹⁹⁸ The clearest evidence of Prise's engagement with Erasmus comes from his commonplace book, probably compiled throughout the late 1530s and 40s.¹⁹⁹ Following Erasmus' advice, Prise created an alphabetical list of topic headings and added quotations from the classics to the relevant sections. His enthusiasm for this task soon faded and Prise instead filled the empty leaves with Welsh poetry and other miscellaneous material. In the latter category were several meditations on the role of faith, including a brief essay on faith and the word of God and a copy of the evangelical testament of William Tracy.²⁰⁰ Several of the entries in the commonplace book take us to the intellectual milieu of the Henrician court, for Prise transcribed notes from a book lent to him by Thomas Soulemont, the king's French secretary, and other material from Peter Vannes.²⁰¹

Before his interest turned elsewhere, Prise made several extracts from Erasmus' *De recta pronuntiatione* and *De ratione studii*. In a list of sayings 'very worthy to be remembered', Prise listed Erasmus' glum conclusion that the majority never favours what is best, alongside a handful of Erasmian adages such as '*festina lente*'.²⁰² More strikingly, he copied out several Erasmian admonitions regarding the cultivation of good handwriting. This was a topic close to Prise's heart, for he had acted as a notary and secretary during his time in royal service. The commonplace book itself was an experiment in handwriting styles and decoration, featuring Prise's secretary and italic hands and his elegant strapwork initials. In the section on how 'the pen ought to be practised', he extracted from *De ratione studii* the sentiment that 'the best master of speaking is the pen' and that 'one ought to diligently practise [one's handwriting] in poetry, prose and all manner of subjects'.²⁰³ Likewise, Prise agreed with Erasmus' advice that when writing, style will generate speed, but speed

¹⁹⁶ Neil Ker, 'Sir John Prise', in Andrew Watson (ed.), *Books, Collectors and Libraries: Studies in the Medieval Heritage* (London, 1985), pp. 471-496.

¹⁹⁷ F. Morgan, 'The Will of Sir John Prise of Hereford, 1555', *National Library of Wales Journal*, 9 (1955-6), pp. 255-61. Ker, 'Prise', pp. 483-8.

¹⁹⁸ Hereford Cathedral, H.V.1, Basil, *Opera* (Basel, 1540); H.I.1-3, Ambrose, *Opera* (3 vols, Basel, 1527); H.VI.1-5, Chrysostom, *Opera* (5 vols, Basel, 1530); I.I.1-5, Jerome, *Opera* (9 vols in 5, Basel, 1524). The edition of *Explanatio symboli* is now lost.

¹⁹⁹ Balliol College, MS 353, *Miscellany of Welsh Verse and Other Materials*, c.1535-50.

²⁰⁰ Ker, 'Prise', p. 482. Balliol College, MS 353, fos 162v, 141r-v. Prise was also open to more conservative influences, however, giving a copies of Fisher's *Confutatio* and Albert Pighius' *De ecclesiastica hierarchia* to Hereford Cathedral.

²⁰¹ Ker, 'Prise', p. 481. Balliol College, MS 353, fos 60r-v, 164.

²⁰² Balliol College, MS 353, fo. 134r.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, fo. 138v: '*Verum illud interim memineris, optimum dicendi magistrum esse stilum. Erit hic igitur in carmine, in oratione libera, in omni argumenti genere diligenter exercendus.*'

will never generate style and used this as a springboard for his own meditations on the role of spontaneity in penmanship.²⁰⁴ Prise's idiosyncratic extracts point to a broader cultural association between Erasmus' readers and those at the Tudor court. Men like Prise relied on their speaking and writing skills for advancement and no doubt saw Erasmus' prescriptions on such matters as vital validation.

(iv) An official Erasmus?

By the end of the 1530s, Erasmus' reputation at the English court was caught in a political and confessional quagmire. Indeed, assessments of Erasmus and his thought seem to have reached all quarters of the government. Among the State Papers, for instance, is an anonymous commentary on the opening verses of John's gospel which silently borrowed Erasmus' explanation of the Greek word *logos* which 'in Latin is called either "*verbum*" or "*sermo*"'.²⁰⁵ The author, however, was no great devotee of the Dutch scholar, admitting that they 'prefer to say "*verbum*" since this word is commonly used and accepted by all'.²⁰⁶ Elsewhere, a copy of Erasmus' letter repudiating Conrad Pellican and the denial of the Real Presence was perhaps in circulation in the 1520s or 30s, as was a manuscript of the *Duodecim articuli* (c.1527) defending Erasmus from the attacks of Noel Beda in Paris.²⁰⁷ While these documents defy attributions of authorship or accurate dating, they do give a sense of the extent of controversy provoked by Erasmus' writings and the broader effort to relate the scholar's writings to the workings of government.

One major reason for the continuing interest in Erasmus at the English court was the education of the royal children. The births of Mary (1516), Henry Fitzroy (1519), Elizabeth (1533) and Edward (1537) coincided with the height of Erasmus' fame and his works were soon to be found in the schoolrooms of Henry's children. Fitzroy's education was entrusted to a series of humanists. In 1529, John Palsgrave wrote to Thomas More and Henry VIII in the hopes of teaching Fitzroy both Latin and Greek and stressed that he had been reading works by Quintilian, Maffeo Vegio, Baptista Guarino 'and especially herasmus' to prepare himself.²⁰⁸ Around the time Palsgrave was writing, another of Fitzroy's entourage, William Tait, was embarking on his own project of Erasmian reading (see Chap. 7). The king invested less time in planning princess Mary's

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*: 'Recte scribendo fit ut celeriter scribamur, non multum scribendo ut bene.'

²⁰⁵ TNA, SP 6/6, fo. 124r: '... *logos dicitur latinis vero vel verbum vel sermo. Ego verbum dicere malo quoniam hoc apud omnes usitatus receptusque est.*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ TNA, SP 1/235, fos 79r-80v. Ep. 1637, *CWE* 11, pp. 344-50. The letter was published three times in 1526 and again in 1529. TNA, SP 6/9, fos 96-100. *L&P* 5, 8. See, Mark Crane, 'Defence of the Gospel or Personal Grudge? The Authorship of the *Duodecim Articuli*', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 75:3 (2013), pp. 417-28.

²⁰⁸ *L&P* 4:3, 5806.

education, though Juan Luis Vives made several proposals in a Latin treatise.²⁰⁹ Erasmus' writings were heavily used by John Cheke and Richard Cox to instruct Edward in good Latin and letter-writing. The prince's epistles were peppered with sentiments culled from Erasmus' writings and he was asked to declaim on topics such as the Erasmian adage, *Dulce bellum inexpertis*.²¹⁰ His copies of the *Institutio Christiani hominis* and *De conscribendis epistolis* are now in the British Library.²¹¹

Pollnitz has quite justly described this period as the 'apogee of Erasmus' influence in princely education'.²¹² Much of the education provided for the royal children was designed to instil a sense of moral and political purpose within the royal family. Edward, for instance, was asked to write summaries of sayings such as 'it behoves the king to rule with gentleness and mercy', drawn from Isocrates.²¹³ Edward's copy of the *Institutio principis Christiani*, printed alongside a declamation by Isocrates, was neatly ruled for use in the classroom and later given to Elizabeth as a pious memento of her half-brother. This copy drew attention to an inscription from Cicero in the back, allegedly by the young prince, which extolled the need to preserve the republic both before and after one's lifetime.²¹⁴ Elizabeth herself published a set of *sententiae* which deployed Erasmus to similar effect. The queen, for example, extracted from the *Institutio* the sentiment that a 'king who trusts nobody is useless; no less so is one who trusts everybody', along with the idea that no one is 'worthy of the name of king, who measures public affairs by his own interests'.²¹⁵

The reading of the Tudor children was aphoristic in style, contrasting somewhat with the exploratory approach of their father. Like Henry, however, the children were soon exposed to more confessional approaches to Erasmus' works. Henry Parker, Lord Morley, for example, presented princess Mary with a translation that drew affinities between Erasmus' devotional writings and conservative theology. Throughout the 1530s and 40s, Morley walked a political tightrope. Religiously conservative, he nonetheless supported the supremacy.²¹⁶ Though he eventually served on the panel that condemned George Boleyn, Viscount Rochford, he was related to the Boleyns and had been on familiar terms with Anne as queen. He maintained friendly relations with Cromwell, passing on copies of Machiavelli's *Florentine Histories* and *The Prince* to the

²⁰⁹ Juan Luis Vives, *De institutione feminae Christianae* (Antwerp, 1524). The dedication copy is: Bodleian, Arch. B e.30. See Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, pp. 221-3. Charles Fantazzi, 'Introduction', in *The Education of a Christian Woman*, ed. Fantazzi (Chicago, 2000), pp. 1-42.

²¹⁰ Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, pp. 140-50. LR, i, pp. 112-17.

²¹¹ BL, C.21.b.4, Erasmus, *Institutio Christiani hominis* (1523). BL, 1083.e.6, Erasmus, *De conscribendis epistolis* (Antwerp, 1545).

²¹² Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, p. 140.

²¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 154-5.

²¹⁴ SJC, Cambridge, Aa.6.51, Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani* (Cologne, 1529), end leaves. John Foxe presented this volume to Elizabeth in 1589. The inscription may well be a pious fake, since it little resembles Edward's hand.

²¹⁵ Elizabeth I, *Translations, 1544-1589*, ed. Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel (Chicago, 2009), p. 353.

²¹⁶ Richard Rex, 'Morley and the Papacy: Rome, Regime and Religion', in Marie Axton and James Carley (ed.), *Triumphs of English: Henry Parker, Lord Morley, Translator to the Tudor Court: New Essays in Interpretation* (London, 2000), pp. 87-105, esp. 96-7.

chief minister with notes on general councils and Florentine relations with the papacy.²¹⁷ Morley knew Mary in her childhood and remained loyal to her even after the king had removed her from the line of succession.²¹⁸ Sometime between 1537 and 1547, Morley dedicated a translation of Erasmus' *Paeon virgini matri* to Mary.²¹⁹ Erasmus wrote the piece in 1499 for an early patron, Anna von Borssele, though he later alleged that it had been written 'against the grain'.²²⁰ Morley, in contrast, praised the work's elegance, for 'emonges dyvers other thynges' that the Dutchman had written, 'he never wrote with his penne so elegaunte a style as thys'.²²¹ Erasmus repeatedly referred to the Virgin as a queen or lady and Morley in turn praised the princess as 'the secunde Mary of this wourlde in vertue, grace and goodnes'.²²² In a period when Mary's descent from royalty was being challenged, Morley stressed her connection to a higher, more heavenly family. Yet he also had to avoid making any such gesture too blatant, removing references to popes giving honour to the Virgin and other mentions of Mary's place in the heavenly court.²²³ The *Paeon* thus represented a subtle gesture of political support.²²⁴

Morley's preface co-opted Erasmus' work as a defence of traditional religion. He berated the evangelical assault on devotion to the saints, most especially the Virgin. '[W]e have clerkes in our tyme', Morley lamented, 'that dar affyrme that to honour hyr is a dymnysshynge of the honour of Godd'.²²⁵ Evangelicals now fell 'frome oone hereticall opynyone to another' and even denied 'the honoure due to God hymself in the most holy and dyvyne sacrament of the aulter'.²²⁶ Morley also developed a sophisticated account of the church's history and Erasmus' place within it. There was, in Morley's mind, no famous clerk who had not said something in 'laude of the mayde'.²²⁷ From Christ's crucifixion to the present day, Christians had 'ever had in honour the gloriouse martyrs and servaunts of God, and above all other, the blessyde Virgyne Mary'.²²⁸ Morley's translation of Erasmus underscored these points, stressing Mary's intercessory powers and how everywhere 'chrysten men have and do dedycate to the[e], temples and churches'.²²⁹ The 'fals

²¹⁷ Herbert Wright, 'The Life of Morley', in *Forty-Six Lives. Translated from Boccaccio's De Claris Mulieribus. By Henry Parker, Lord Morley*, ed. Herbert Wright (London, 1943), pp. xxix-xxxii. K. R. Bartlett, 'Morley, Machiavelli, and the Pilgrimage of Grace', *Triumphs*, pp. 77-86.

²¹⁸ Wright, 'Life of Morley', pp. xxxvi-vii.

²¹⁹ BL, MS Royal 17 A XLVI. James Carley, 'The Writings of Henry Parker, Lord Morley: A Bibliographical Survey', in Axton and Carley (ed.), *Triumphs of English*, pp. 29, 35. Morley's preface to the *Paeon* is printed in an appendix to *Forty-six lives*, pp. 171-2.

²²⁰ Stephen Ryle, 'Introductory Note', *CWE* 69, p. 18.

²²¹ *Forty-Six lives*, p. 172.

²²² *Forty-Six lives*, p. 172.

²²³ BL, Royal MS 17 A XLVI, fos 5v, 6r. c.f. Erasmus, *Paeon*, *CWE* 69, pp. 21-2.

²²⁴ Wright, 'Life of Morley', p. xxxviii.

²²⁵ *Forty-Six lives*, p. 171.

²²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 171.

²²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 171.

²²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 172.

²²⁹ BL, Royal MS 17 A XLVI, fo. 21v.

prophetesses' that beset the church could only herald the end of days where Christ would return to save his true followers.²³⁰ Erasmus, then, was no critic of contemporary religious devotion, but a pillar of it.

At the same time, a rather different image of Erasmus was emerging from a group of translators gathered around Henry's final queen, Katherine Parr.²³¹ As Micheline White has shown, Parr translated some of Erasmus' prayers in 1544 to support the English war effort of the 1540s and soon became the driving force of a larger project to translate Erasmus' *Paraphrases* into English.²³² As part of this latter scheme, Parr likely translated the *Paraphrase of Matthew*, while Nicholas Udall sent his version of the *Paraphrase of Luke* to the queen in 1545 and then turned to Acts.²³³ Parr's chaplain, Thomas Caius, handled Mark, and princess Mary was tasked with John. Mary was evidently an outlier in this project. She appears to have used a later edition of the *Paraphrases*, edited by Erasmus to reduce its emphasis on faith in the process of salvation, and eventually left the translation to be completed by her chaplain, Francis Malet, perhaps as the evangelical leanings of the other translators became apparent.²³⁴ What had started as a project centred on Parr's household was given official backing on the accession of Edward VI. Parishes were ordered to acquire the freshly printed English *Paraphrases* and to allow their parishioners to 'most commodiously resort unto the same, and read the same'.²³⁵ With the Gospels and Acts complete, a second team of translators was employed to translate the various paraphrases on the epistles. This group were evangelicals of a hotter sort.²³⁶ Miles Coverdale had returned from exile at the start of Edward's reign to become Parr's chaplain.²³⁷ John Olde had been forced to recant his sacramentarian views at the end of Henry's reign.²³⁸ Both would be joined in exile during Mary's reign by two of the other translators who worked on the second volume, Thomas Norton and Edmund Allen.²³⁹ The two volumes, therefore, were produced by a varied cast of personalities who had worked in rather different atmospheres at the end of Henry's reign and the beginning of Edward's.

²³⁰ *Forty-Six lives*, p. 172.

²³¹ McConica, *English Humanists*, pp. 200-34.

²³² Micheline White, 'Katherine Parr, Translation, and the Dissemination of Erasmus's Views on War and Peace', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 43:2 (2020), pp. 67-91. Susan James, 'Katherine Parr (1512-1548)', *ODNB*. Patricia Pender, 'Dispensing Quails, Mincemeat, Leaven: Katherine Parr's Patronage of the Paraphrases of Erasmus', in Pender and Rosalind Smith (eds), *Material Cultures of Early Modern Women's Writing* (London, 2014), pp. 36-54.

²³³ White, 'Katherine Parr', p. 70.

²³⁴ Pollnitz, *Princely Education*, p. 236.

²³⁵ *Documents of the English Reformation*, ed. Gerald Bray (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 220, 222.

²³⁶ Craig, 'Forming a Protestant Consciousness', pp. 318-9.

²³⁷ David Daniell, 'Coverdale, Miles (1488-1569)', *ODNB*.

²³⁸ C. Bradshaw, 'Old, John (d.1557)', *ODNB*.

²³⁹ Craig, 'Forming a Protestant Consciousness', p. 70.

Historians have given wildly different assessments of the motivations lying behind the translation and propagation of the *Paraphrases* in England after 1547. For some, the Edwardian injunctions were the culmination of a decades long programme of Erasmian reform and a symbol of the ‘enduring... Reformation consensus’ in England.²⁴⁰ Others have found it hard to square Erasmus’ theology with the more radical outlook of Edward’s church, akin to ‘promoting *De servo arbitrio* and *De libero arbitrio* at one and the same time’.²⁴¹ At their heart, the *Paraphrases* were an effort to demonstrate the affinity between Erasmus’ writings and evangelical doctrine. Udall’s preface to the *First tome* (1548) lauded the Dutch scholar’s careful sifting of the scriptures for ‘the trashe and bagguage stuffe that through papistical tradicions had founde a waye to crepe in’.²⁴² As with the translations of the 1530s, Udall similarly stressed Erasmus’ commitment to ‘teachyng obedyence of the people towards their rulers and Governours’.²⁴³ More dramatically, he asserted that the *Paraphrases* provided a perfect encapsulation of all the ‘poinctes or articles of our religion’, namely ‘iustificacion of feith... repentaunce & puritie of a Christen mans life... detesting of imagery and corrupte honouring of Saintes... [the] usurpacion of the See of Rome’, monastic observance and all other ‘vaine ceremonies’.²⁴⁴ Caius claimed he was too unworthy to praise the *Paraphrases*, though his preface echoed Udall’s points on scripture, justification and popular devotion.²⁴⁵ Udall and Caius were certainly not alone in advancing such ideas. Around the same time, Thomas Cranmer and his household were also exploring ways of collating Erasmian writings into a more coherent theological picture (see Chapter 4).

Such an aim, however, soon ran into difficulties. Udall alleged that Erasmus’ enemies had ‘never yet f[ou]nde how... to confound his doctrine’.²⁴⁶ Yet as he himself admitted, creating harmony between Erasmus and evangelism often involved interpreting passages ‘under a preaty couloure’.²⁴⁷ When Erasmus compared the decadent dress and behaviour of Jewish priests to the lowly demeanour of ‘Christes riding into Hierusalem’ (Mark 11), for instance, Udall read the passage as a clear attack on ‘the pompous rydyng of the pope & his cardinales’.²⁴⁸ Perhaps fearing that such concordances might be lost on the average reader, the revised edition of 1551 added a number of printed marginalia and an index, guiding the reader through the doctrinal uncertainties

²⁴⁰ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 272.

²⁴¹ Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation*, p. 235.

²⁴² *First tome* (London, 1548), fo. 10r.

²⁴³ *Ibid*, fo. 10v. The index included entries such as ‘Obedience to Magistrates, though they bee evyll’: *Second tome* (London, 1551), fo. 34.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, fo. 10v.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, Mark, fo. 1r-2r.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid*, fo. 10v.

²⁴⁷ *First tome* (London, 1551), sig. C4r.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*, fo. 180r.

of the volume.²⁴⁹ Entries were provided on how ‘Iustice’ could be ‘obtainyd, not by ceremonies, but by faythe egally of al’ and that there was ‘No salvation, but by fayth’.²⁵⁰ The *Seconde Tome* introduced a further note of caution.²⁵¹ Miles Coverdale argued that the *Paraphrases* could only be considered rich jewels ‘if they be distinctelye red, and practised with... discrecion’.²⁵² John Olde, the translator of the canonical epistles, emphasised that they should be read with ‘advised iudgement’, for while Erasmus was often ‘a strong interpretour’, ‘in hys life tyme, [he] was a manne subiecte to infirmitie and imperfeccion... and might bothe be deceaved and deceave’.²⁵³ Olde relegated Erasmus to the rank of moral instructor, whose works were helpful ‘to banysh pride, dronkenes, treason, tumultes, sedicion’ and other ‘horrible vices [which] are now a dayes so licentiously used’.²⁵⁴ He thus drastically scaled back the degree of theological unity between Erasmus and evangelical faith. Udall, by contrast, continued to emphasise the soundness of Erasmus’ doctrine, though he admitted in a new preface of 1551 that the Dutchman had written ‘in suche a daungerous season, as he was of force constrained either to kepe silence, or else to speake within such limites & compace as the world might than beare’.²⁵⁵ In both Udall and Olde’s minds, then, Erasmus was a victim of his times, unable either to comprehend or to fully express the truth.

Behind such comments lay a broader concern about the compatibility of Erasmus’ ideas in the increasingly radical landscape of the Edwardian reformation. The prince’s own education had often stood in plain contradiction to central aspects of Erasmus’ theology. By 1552, Edward was writing declamations which argued against the existence of free will and advocated for the widespread propagation of salvation by faith alone in the nation’s churches.²⁵⁶ The regime’s critics were also quick to draw attention to the contradictions in this latest incarnation of Erasmus. Writing from the Fleet in October 1547, Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, subjected Erasmus and the *Paraphrases* to a battery of political, theological and literary critiques. When Gardiner compared the views of the Edwardian Book of Homilies with those of Erasmus’ *Paraphrases*, he found that they ‘stryve one against another dyrectly’.²⁵⁷ The ‘booke of homelies’, Gardiner contended, ‘teacheth faith to exclude charitie in the office of justification; Erasmus

²⁴⁹ Craig, ‘Erasmus’ *Paraphrases*, p. 321.

²⁵⁰ *Seconde tome* (London, 1552), fos 7, 47.

²⁵¹ McConica, *English Humanists*, pp. 231-2, 240-6.

²⁵² *Seconde tome* (London, 1549), sig. +2v.

²⁵³ *Ibid*, sig. °1v.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, sig. °1v.

²⁵⁵ *First tome* (London, 1551), sig. CC7v.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 155-6.

²⁵⁷ Ep. 130, *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner*, ed. James Miller (Cambridge, 1933), p. 381.

Paraphrasis teacheth faith to have charitie joyned with him in justification'.²⁵⁸ Indeed, Gardiner noted that Erasmus had argued that 'the doctrine of "onely faith justifieth" is a verye poyson'.²⁵⁹

Yet Gardiner, too, offered several historical and stylistic qualifications to this rosy picture of Erasmian conservatism. One issue was the Dutch scholar's 'wanton pen'.²⁶⁰ Much as the translators of the *Paraphrases* had referred their readers to the complicated context in which Erasmus wrote, so Gardiner was keen to stress the discrepancy between the scholar's earlier and later writings. The Dutchman spoke 'wantonlye' of the sacrament of the altar in the *Paraphrases*, yet 'in his latter dayes, [he] hath for the Sacrament of the Aultar spoken as reverendlye and said as much for confirmation of it as maye be'.²⁶¹ 'But this is in the end', Gardiner added, 'when age had tempered him'.²⁶² Reading the work in the fraught religious atmosphere of the 1540s, Gardiner seems to have been struck by the ambiguity of Erasmus' terminology – 'the wordes and termes were able to subverte... the electe' – and at the genre of paraphrase where Erasmus 'taketh upon him to gesse the causes of Christes doings'.²⁶³ Erasmus' supposed wantonness also led the bishop to question the connection between the scholar's writings and political obedience. The *Paraphrases*, in fact, might 'minister occasion to evell men to subverte, with religion, the policie and order of the realme'.²⁶⁴ He was particularly troubled by Erasmus' interpretation of Christ's famous plea to 'Give to the emperoure that is th'emperowres'.²⁶⁵ 'Erasmus writeth it with an "if", after this sorte, "if ther be anything dewe to them"; which condition Christ put not to it, but spake planely, "Give to Cesar the thinges which arre Caesars..."'.²⁶⁶ In a series of follow up letters Gardiner expanded his criticisms: the book was a Trojan horse, filled with sedition; it was slyly translated; the cause of 'mervelous confusion'; and in 'one woord, [an] abhominacion'.²⁶⁷ He thus inverted the claims of Udall and others by suggesting that the work neither aligned with the doctrine of the Edwardian church nor inculcated political conformity, while offering the familiar refrain that Erasmus had to be read with discretion.

While the *Paraphrases* valiantly sought to project an image of Erasmus in keeping with the Edwardian reformation, it was clear that scholar's legacy was now a Pandora's box of competing scholarly, religious and political impulses. These tensions came to a head when Edward's

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 385.

²⁶³ Epp. 130, 133, *Letters of Gardiner*, pp. 385, 412.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

²⁶⁷ Epp. 131, 133, *Letters of Gardiner*, pp. 402-3, 412.

government began to discuss one of the more complicated strands of Erasmus' theological legacy: his views on the Eucharist.

Erasmus, as ever, had said conflicting things on the issue.²⁶⁸ In 1525, he tentatively praised Oecolampadius' denial of the real presence, though committing himself to the church's established view. There were certainly times when the *Annotations*, the *Enchiridion* and other works appeared to advocate a more symbolic interpretation and aired doubts about key aspects of the Mass such as the words of consecration. Encouraged by such comments, Conrad Pellican and Leo Jud soon claimed that Erasmus had been won over to the symbolic interpretation of the Mass. The latter reacted furiously and in the coming years reworked and defended the orthodoxy of his eucharistic views. Christ's presence in the Mass could not be denied, Erasmus now argued, since his words were plain: 'this is my body'. The scholar also produced an edition of Alger of Liege's defence of the real presence, *De sacramentis corporis et sanguinis domini libri tres*.²⁶⁹ Erasmus, however, was never an enthusiast for the doctrine of transubstantiation and his explanation of the transformation of bread and wine remained vague. Writing to Cuthbert Tunstall in 1527, Erasmus refused to back down on this point: 'Perhaps even now the church has not clearly defined how the body is present in the Eucharist beneath the accidents or beneath the actual bread'.²⁷⁰ He also refused to re-edit passages from Origen that had provided ammunition for attacks on the real presence.²⁷¹ Erasmus, therefore, had not kept aloof from theological debate but piled up arguments on either side for future generations to untangle.

Erasmus' name repeatedly cropped up in English discussions of the real presence.²⁷² Bishop Gardiner, who had found fault at every turn in the *Paraphrases* (including its eucharistic views), was happy to relate that Erasmus, though 'taken for no papist... declareth in divers of his works most manifestly his faith of the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament', especially with regard to the 'inviolable foundation of Christ's own words: "This is my body"'.²⁷³ Richard Smith more daringly lifted passages from Erasmus' New Testament to assert that the Mass was a sacrifice. In Acts 13, 'we fynd these words after Erasmus translation, *Quum autem sacrificarent domino...* That is, Whan the apostles dyd make sacrifice to our lorde'.²⁷⁴ Erasmus had here translated the Greek *leitourgia* as 'to sacrifice' and Smith eagerly noted that the same Greek word could be found

²⁶⁸ The following account of Erasmus' views on the Eucharist are drawn from: John Payne, *Erasmus: His Theology of Sacraments* (Richmond, VA, 1970), pp. 126-154. Payne, 'Introduction', *CWE* 78, pp. 148-162. Erika Rummel, *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: From Philologist to Theologian* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 156-60. S. Folley, 'Erasmus and the Sacramentarians', *CWM* 11, pp. xxxvii-xlvii.

²⁶⁹ Folley, 'Erasmus and the Sacramentarians', p. xlvii.

²⁷⁰ Ep. 2263, *CWE* 17, p. 167.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 167-8.

²⁷² e.g. John Fisher, *De veritate corporis et sanguinis christi* (Cologne, 1527), fos 125v, 166r.

²⁷³ Stephen Gardiner, *An explication and assertion of the true Catholique fayth* (Rouen, 1551), fos 6v, 81v.

²⁷⁴ Richard Smith, *A defence of the blessed masse, and the sacrifice thereof* (London, 1546), fos 59r-v.

elsewhere and should be translated as ‘Mass’.²⁷⁵ Erasmus’ defences of the real presence were also translated and published in England in these years.²⁷⁶

In the face of such views, evangelicals turned to a different strand of Erasmus’ writing on the issue. Cranmer reminded Gardiner that, even if the Dutchman had defended the real presence, he did not ‘thoroughly agree with your doctrine, either in transubstantiation, or in carnal eating and drinking of Christ’s flesh and blood, or in the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass’.²⁷⁷ A conservative eucharistic theology which relied on Erasmus, therefore, was built on sand. In the *Apologia pro Caena Dominica* (1547), Roger Ascham demolished Erasmus’ translation of *leitourgia* by presenting evidence of the large variety of ways in which Greek and biblical writers had used the term, though he refused to name the Dutch scholar in these remarks.²⁷⁸ Others simply excavated more favourable information from their Erasmian books. Nicholas Udall owned a copy of the *Annotations* (1522) and highlighted the author’s contention that the church had ‘only lately defined transubstantiation in a council’ and that previously ‘it was often sufficient to believe that the body of Christ was truly present under the consecrated bread or in whatever manner’.²⁷⁹

In 1548, the Edwardian government spurred on these debates by assembling bishops, scholars and councillors in parliament and at the universities in order to discuss the Eucharist more fully.²⁸⁰ The bishops gathered in the House of Lords in December 1548 for a four-day debate. Protector Somerset, presiding over the session, asked that speakers limit themselves to the text of scripture and the Church Fathers. Yet it soon became clear that such discussions also required the participants to offer a range of views on Erasmus. An abbreviated set of minutes from this parliamentary debate has survived, while the government later printed an account of the discussions at Oxford, both of which allow us to roughly reconstruct the ways in which Erasmus’ name was utilised in discussions of the real presence.²⁸¹

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*, fos 59v-60r.

²⁷⁶ E. J. Devereux, ‘Tudor Uses of Erasmus on the Eucharist’, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 62 (1971), pp. 38-52.

²⁷⁷ Thomas Cranmer, *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer Relatives to the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper* (Cambridge, 1844), p. 21.

²⁷⁸ Roger Ascham, *A Defence of the Lord’s Supper: Latin text and English translation*, ed. Lucy Nicholas (Leiden, 2017), pp. 135-9.

²⁷⁹ New Zealand, Auckland Public Library, ERAS 1522, Erasmus, *In Novum Testamentum annotationes* (Basel, 1522). TP: ‘*Sum Nicolai Vdalli. 1537*’ with ‘*Joannis Brikyndensis*’ added above Udall’s name; possibly John Brickenden, the theologian and former fellow of St John’s College, Cambridge. *Ibid*, p. 373: ‘*In synaxi transsubstantionem sero definiuit ecclesia: diu satis era credere siue sub pane consecrato siue quocunque modo adesse verum corpus Christi.*’ Udall wrote ‘*in sacramento altaris*’ by this passage. For Udall’s italic hand, see the small excerpt in BL, Cotton MS Titus B VIII, fo. 387v.

²⁸⁰ MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, pp. 87-9

²⁸¹ BL, Royal MS 17B XXXIX. A transcript is given in App. V of Gasquet and Bishop (eds), *Edward VI and the Book of Common Prayer: An Examination into its Origin and Early History with an Appendix of Unpublished Documents* (London, 1890/1). Hereafter: Gasquet and Bishop. *Disputatio de Eucharistiae sacramento habita Universitate Oxoniensi* (London, 1549).

In parliament, the conservative bishop of Chichester, George Day, gave an extended opinion of the Eucharist that was close to Erasmus' position.²⁸² The church had accepted that the bread and wine were changed after consecration and had denied a symbolic interpretation of the sacrament. 'Yet', Day admitted, 'both sides, the one and the other, ground their reasons upon Scripture and doctors'. His preference, nonetheless, was that Christ's words be taken literally, for there was nothing in the passages to suggest 'that these words were spoken by figure'.²⁸³ Turning to the question of transubstantiation, Day noted that the 'doctors had maintained not the substance in the sacrament' and 'alleged Erasmus for the judgement of the fathers'.²⁸⁴ Protector Somerset swiftly reminded the bishop that they had not gathered to discuss Erasmus, 'who is but a new writer', while Day replied that he 'intendeth not to make Erasmus his author, but to shew his mind how he understood a place in Scripture'.²⁸⁵ In Oxford, William Tresham likewise reminded his opponents that Erasmus had urged caution when reading such old writers as Epiphanius of Salamis on the Eucharist.²⁸⁶ In both cases, therefore, conservatives set themselves alongside Erasmus as judicious readers of scripture and the Fathers.

Later in the debates, however, evangelicals advanced their own Erasmian agenda, by calling on the witness of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* (first published in translation by Erasmus in 1527) to contest the idea that the Eucharist sanctified the recipient.²⁸⁷ Thomas Smith cited Origen to demonstrate that the eucharistic could not sanctify (a key conservative doctrine) since 'then it doth make holy the wicked man that doth receive the sacrament'.²⁸⁸ In response, Cuthbert Tunstall (who had discussed this very work with Erasmus twenty years before) simply denied that the commentary was by Origen, despite the protests from other bishops that he was trampling on Erasmus' reputation.²⁸⁹ Conservatives, in fact, adopted this highly critical attitude to Erasmus' editorial labours on Origen throughout the various eucharistic debates of Edward's reign. '[T]hey that defended transubstantiation', Nicholas Ridley later reported, 'said that this part of Origen was but set forth of late by Erasmus and therefore is to be suspected'.²⁹⁰ Indeed, Tresham made exactly this point in Oxford, noting that Erasmus had only had fragments to edit the text in question.²⁹¹ The evangelical Ridley launched his own attack on transubstantiation by recalling Erasmus'

²⁸² Gasquet and Bishop, pp. 421-3.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 421.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 423.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 423.

²⁸⁶ *Disputatio*, fo. 16r.

²⁸⁷ Scheck, *Life of Origen*, pp. 102-3.

²⁸⁸ Gasquet and Bishop, p. 438.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 439.

²⁹⁰ Nicholas Ridley, 'Brief Declaration of the Lord's Supper', in *The Works of Nicholas Ridley*, ed. Henry Christmas (Cambridge, 1841), p. 29.

²⁹¹ *Disputatio*, fo. 11v: 'Origenis fides in hac re suspecta est, habetur locus in fragmentis, quae ab Erasmo nuper adiecta sunt...'.

discussion of another Greek Father: Chrysostom. Speaking of the cup, Chrysostom had alleged that it ‘contained not the true body of Christ, but the mystery of the body’.²⁹² Though the defenders of transubstantiation alleged once again that the work was corrupt, Ridley noted that ‘Erasmus... although he would not be seen to speak against this error of transubstantiation... yet in his time declareth plainly that this saying of [Chrysostom] is none otherwise to be understood [sic]’.²⁹³ In Oxford, the disputants could be found arguing about the meaning of individual marginal notes in other Erasmian editions of the Fathers. When Peter Martyr Vermigli denied that Cyprian had spoken of transubstantiation in his sermon on the Lord’s Supper, William Tresham snapped back by noting that Erasmus had ‘annotated the margin that he received the passage as such’.²⁹⁴ Vermigli was unconvinced, arguing instead that Erasmus had used the marginal notes to indicate that ‘many people had gathered [transubstantiation] from this place’.²⁹⁵ Erasmus himself, Vermigli pointed out, had been less than convinced by transubstantiation.²⁹⁶ Vermigli and Tresham then accused each other of cherry-picking opinions from Erasmus’ works, an accusation which could fairly be levelled at almost all the participants as they tried to construct a coherent picture of the scholar, his patristic scholarship and views upon the Eucharist.²⁹⁷

(v) Conclusion

In his earliest days at the English court, Erasmus had struggled to find an audience. His works found a handful of readers, often appearing in hybrid or heavily excerpted forms. What followed was a story of remarkable success, as Erasmus’ works passed into the royal libraries, commonplace books and countless translations. Those around the English monarch set about carving up the scholar’s writings, presenting them to the king, his children and the public more generally in the hopes of guiding royal policy. By the 1550s, Erasmus’ name and his *Paraphrases* had become an official tool of the Edwardian reformation. That, however, only raised more questions about Erasmus’ historical context, his style of writing and his overall compatibility with the reformed cause. Such questions gave rise to Erasmus’ unique, if not paradoxical, place at the Tudor court. He was clearly a figure of considerable learning and an authority to be reckoned with; yet he was also wanton, at times misguided, perhaps even a liar.

²⁹² Ridley, ‘Brief Declaration’, p. 33.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.33. See, ‘Note B’, *Ibid.*, pp. 509-10, for the removal of the passage from Catholic editions of Chrysostom’s work.

²⁹⁴ *Disputatio*, fo. 55v: ‘Erasmus annotavit in margine sic accipi hunc locum’.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘Erasmus idcirco annotavit in margine, quod sciebat multos hoc inde colligere: quam vero fuerit persuasa transubstantiatio Erasmo, ex eius scriptis poteritis disquirere’.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 56r.

Erasmus' reputation was rarely stable. While historians have often hailed his writings as a middle ground or point of compromise, the reality at court was one of continual reinvention. For the king, his children and his councillors, Erasmus at times provided a powerful political ethos. He offered Henry VIII several biblical exemplars of faith and offered suggestions for the reform of the church. In the hands of others, he became a supporter of obedience to monarchs or a fusion of Christian and classical wisdom suitable for princely education. He might even encourage contemporaries to practise their handwriting!

That is not to say, however, that Erasmus was a mere cipher – an empty shell onto which readers could project their prejudices. If Erasmus' image and his body of writings more generally was fragmenting, it was nonetheless breaking along predictable lines. One powerful force was the emergence of competing confessional outlooks. From the 1520s onwards, the likes of More and Fisher had deployed Erasmus as a powerful ally in the struggle against heresy, even as they judiciously sifted his works for controversial material. Reimagining Erasmus as a supporter of various dogma – the Royal Supremacy, justification by faith alone or transubstantiation, for instance – required both creativity and serious scholarly labour. Readers were forced to sift through Erasmus' many tomes in search of supportive material, even down to the printed marginal notes. They were also made to grapple with Erasmus the man in all his complexity.

Chapter 4

Erasmus and the Reformation in England



‘Defining Erasmus’ theological legacy has been almost as much of a challenge for historians as acknowledging its existence has been for theologians’.¹ As Greta Grace Kroeker has rightly recognised, scholars face two obstacles when explaining Erasmus’ impact on the religious thought of early modern Europe: the scale, diversity and style of his religious writings; and the overall failure of his vision for the church. For over thirty years, Erasmus published an array of poems, prayers, treatises, apologies, annotations and paraphrases on a variety of theological, devotional and biblical themes. His writings on theology were not systematic and he frequently revised, updated and commented upon older pieces.² By 1550, a reader could encounter Erasmus at several stages of his intellectual trajectory in the pages of a single work. His publishing career also coincided with the largest schism in the history of the Latin Church. Despite his calls for peace, Europe descended into a century or more of bitter conflict. Erasmus’ works were critiqued throughout his lifetime and he founded no church in which his memory could be cultivated more systematically.³ If contemporaries considered him ‘learned’ or likened him to the Church Fathers, then, that was both a mark of respect and a symptom of uncertainty about the scholar’s place in the emerging religious landscape.⁴

Historians have often contrasted Erasmus’ ambiguous theological legacy in Europe with his far stronger connections to events in England.⁵ The scholar’s links with the country, the confused course of religious reform and the official approbation of works such as the *Paraphrases* are held to mean that Erasmus retained an unusual degree of authority in the English church. This chapter, by contrast, stresses that England cannot be so easily separated from the experience of mainland Europe. By turning its attention to how Erasmus’ writings were read and used, it argues that the scholar’s reputation was significantly shaped by the broader confessional environment.

¹ Greta Grace Kroeker, ‘Theological and Humanistic Legacies of Erasmus in the Age of Reform’, in Martin Wallraff, Silvana Seidel Menchi, Kaspar von Greyerz, *Basel 1516: Erasmus’ Edition of the New Testament* (Tübingen, 2016), p. 255

² Important interpretations of Erasmus’ revisions are: Erika Rummel, *Erasmus’ Annotations*; John Payne, *Erasmus and His Theology of Sacraments*; Greta Grace Kroeker, *In the Footsteps of Paul*, pp. 41–88.

³ See the work on Luther’s no less controversial legacy: Cameron, *European Reformation*, pp. 370–6. Robert Kolb, *Nikolaus von Amsdorf (1483–1565): Popular Polemics in the Preservation of Luther’s Legacy* (Nieuwkoop, 1978).

⁴ E.g. Gentian Hervet, *De immense misericordia dei* (London, 1526), sig. A2v.

⁵ McConica, *English Humanists*. Craig Thompson, ‘Erasmus and Tudor England’, *Actes du Congrès Erasme, Rotterdam 1969* (Amsterdam, 1971), p. 68. Gregory Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus*. Lucy Wooding, ‘Erasmus and the Politics of Translation in Tudor England’, *Studies in Church History*, 53 (2017), pp. 132–45.

Figures from across the religious spectrum began to test, edit and reject aspects of Erasmus' legacy in response to the reformation. These processes did not give rise to neat evangelical or conservative interpretations of Erasmus; rather they produced a series of reading techniques by which Erasmus could be made to conform with or deviate from a given religious position at a given point in time. This chapter also calls for a shift in the focus of studies of Erasmus' reception in England. Scholars have lavished a great deal of attention on a small selection of Erasmian writings, especially those which were translated and printed in England in the period.⁶ As important as works like the *Enchiridion* undoubtedly were, Erasmus' patristics, apologies and biblical scholarship also exercised the minds of English contemporaries, often forcing them to confront the more controversial and theologically ambitious aspects of Erasmus' thinking. No account of Erasmus' place in sixteenth-century England can fail to ignore such material, even if it is dense and complex. As this chapter demonstrates, the engagement of English readers with the minutiae of biblical translation or the realities of editorial work often takes us closer to the fraught relationship between humanism and the reformation than those works which were deemed suitable for translation.

Given the scale of the scholar's output, this chapter cannot provide a comprehensive survey of the range of theological meanings, confessional conflicts and religious resonances readers found in Erasmus' works. Instead, it offers a mixture of thematic and biographical snapshots that illuminate different facets of the confessionalisation of Erasmus in England. I begin by considering the fate of the Erasmian New Testament. I suggest that readers did not view this as a static or authoritative achievement, but rather as a work in progress, one to which they were expected to contribute and improve. Contemporaries offered alternative translations, compared their own manuscripts to Erasmus' work or crafted their own composite volumes of his work. Attention to the workings of Erasmus' book, however, also made readers more aware of the interdependence of humanist scholarship and their own confessional viewpoints.

The next section details in turn the range of reading practices developed by figures on both sides of the religious divide in an effort to rework Erasmus' legacy in line with the dictates of orthodoxy. I consider first a loose coalition of conservatives – those who either contributed to the struggle against evangelical belief or who expressed an affection for traditional doctrine. While some conservatives were exasperated at Erasmus' tepid response to Luther, others re-edited his writings in accordance with orthodoxy or presented his devotional writings as laments for the changing religious landscape. The following section demonstrates how evangelicals, too, drew from the humanist toolbox, judiciously excerpting, commonplacing or comparing Erasmus to the

⁶ The tradition owes a great deal to McConica and Devereux, who relied heavily on translations in their work: McConica, *English Humanists*. Devereux, *Renaissance English Translations of Erasmus*.

ideas and works of continental evangelicals. Such techniques, I propose, betrayed a belief that Erasmus provided a model for scholarly rigour in the reformation, even as the specifics of his theological outlook became increasingly marginalised.

The final sections contemplate two areas in which Erasmus' reputation and the processes of confessionalisation combined to more unpredictable effect. The first asks how translations of Erasmus were read, especially those which aligned the Dutchman with evangelical doctrine or the project of church reform. The second turns to the responses of two readers – John Mason and John Bekinsaw – who reflected on the relationship of religion and politics in the margins of their books. These sections stress that the impact of the reformation on Erasmus was not linear. Instead the scholar's works generated a range of scholarly, commercial and political responses in his readers.

(i) The New Testament: A work in progress

Erasmus' scholarly reputation was built in no small part on his editions of the New Testament.⁷ The work comprised four elements: an edited Greek text drawn from the comparison of various manuscript exemplars and patristic witnesses; a fresh Latin translation; a series of annotations, printed in a separate volume, explaining Erasmus' editorial decisions and digressing on matters of language, patristics and theology; and a set of prefaces and apologies justifying the work and its methods.⁸ The work was first published as the *Novum Instrumentum* in 1516 and revised a further four times in Erasmus' lifetime as the *Novum Testamentum* (1519, 1522, 1527 and 1535). Significant additions were made to the 1519 and 1527 editions, not least the inclusion of a Vulgate text in the latter (though this was abandoned in 1535).⁹ Erasmus' Greek text (with minor edits) remained the *textus receptus* for biblical scholars up until the nineteenth century.¹⁰ The fate of his translation and annotations, however, was less serene.

Erasmus' English admirers greeted the publication of the *Novum Instrumentum* with gusto. John Colet expressed amazement at his friend's scholarship and reported that the book sold well in London.¹¹ Thomas More passed on favourable comments from two bishops, John Fisher and

⁷ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, ii, pp. 175-93. See the essays in: Martin Wallraff, Silvana Seidel Menchi and Kaspar von Greyerz (eds), *Basel 1516: Erasmus' Edition of the New Testament* (Tübingen, 2016).

⁸ Henk Jan de Jonge, 'Novum Testamentum a Nobis Versum: The Essence of Erasmus' Edition of the New Testament', *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 35:2 (1984), pp. 394-413.

⁹ See the collected essays in *CWE* 41. Henk Jan de Jonge, 'Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum* of 1519', *Novum Testamentum*, 61:1 (2019), pp. 1-25.

¹⁰ Bruce Metzger and Bart Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration* (New York, 2005), pp. 137-64.

¹¹ Ep. 423, *CWE* 3, pp. 311-3.

Richard Foxe.¹² The latter thought the work ‘as good as ten commentaries’.¹³ Various English scholars helped to revise the work for its second and third editions. In other quarters, however, the work met with a less favourable response. Colet and More wrote of figures at court opposed to any revision of the Vulgate.¹⁴ In the following years, a succession of English clerics – Henry Standish, John Batmanson and Edward Lee – would publicly oppose Erasmus’ aims and methods, often working in tandem with his European opponents.¹⁵ These critics did not confine themselves to the world of print, but issued attacks at court and the university, from the pulpit and in manuscript.¹⁶ There may even have been efforts in convocation to censure the Dutchman.¹⁷ Their criticisms of Erasmus’ work on the New Testament challenged every aspect of the book. They argued that the Greek manuscripts Erasmus had used were more corrupt than the Latin Vulgate tradition.¹⁸ They questioned the value of producing a text in keeping with the humanists’ views on pure Latin and the propriety of changing a text accepted by the church.¹⁹ They also worried that Erasmus’ efforts would undermine Christian unity in its efforts to combat Luther and they amplified rumours that the Dutchman was in league with his German counterpart.²⁰ Two changes, in particular, provoked major discussion. In 1519, Erasmus rendered John 1:1 as ‘*In principio erat sermo*’ to better reflect (in his mind) the Greek word *logos* (‘word’ or ‘speech’).²¹ When comparing Greek manuscripts, Erasmus had also found no evidence for the so-called Johannine comma (1 John 5:7-8), an important biblical passage defending the Trinity.²² Both edits triggered denunciation from certain quarters, for the first was said to challenge the authority of the church, while the second was alleged to undermine the doctrine of the Trinity.²³

Erasmus dismissed many of these early criticisms as the product of professional jealousy and a slavish adherence to a corrupt Latin text.²⁴ Much recent historical work, however, has recognised that behind this caricature lay a rather more complex set of reactions.²⁵ In particular,

¹² Epp. 481, 502, *CWE* 4, pp. 114-7, 169-172.

¹³ Ep. 502, *CWE* 4, p. 171.

¹⁴ Epp. 423-4, *CWE* 3, pp. 311-6.

¹⁵ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, i, pp. 95-120. Richard Schoeck, ‘Henry Standish’, in *Contemporaries*, iii, pp. 279-80. David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1979), iii, App. 1, pp. 469-70.

¹⁶ Maria Dowling, *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII* (London, 1986), p. 22.

¹⁷ See the cryptic comment of Hugh Latimer in his convocation sermon of 1536: Latimer, *The sermon* (London, 1537), sig. C5v.

¹⁸ More, *Letter to a Monk*, *CWM* 15, pp. 255-7.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 217, 237-45.

²⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 209, 263.

²¹ Denis Drysdall, ‘Introduction’, *CWE* 73, pp. xii-xix.

²² Grantley McDonald, *Biblical Criticism in Early Modern Europe: Erasmus, the Johannine Comma and Trinitarian Debate* (New York, 2016).

²³ Erasmus, *Apologia de ‘Sermo’ (1520a)*, *CWE* 73, pp. 3-4. Edward Lee, *Annotationes in Annotationes Novi Testamenti* (Basel, 1520), pp. 199-204.

²⁴ E.g. Ep. 481, *CWE* 4, pp. 115-16.

²⁵ Erika Rummel, ‘Scholasticism and Biblical Humanism in Early Modern Europe’, in Rummel (ed.), *A Companion to Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of Erasmus* (Leiden, 2008), pp. 1-14. Alistair Hamilton, ‘Humanists and

Erasmus' New Testament raised a number of questions concerning the status of the different texts of the bible, the authority of the Fathers, the propriety of translation and the role of philology in theology. Both Erasmus' friends and his critics responded to his biblical scholarship along these lines. His critics, for instance, were not diametrically opposed to all aspects of humanist insight. Edward Lee's censures began life as notes to assist Erasmus and drew on his knowledge of Greek and the Fathers.²⁶ Their discussion of Acts 1:4 was a case in point. Erasmus argued that the Vulgate passage had been corrupted by a scribe, who mistakenly wrote *convescens* (eating with) in place of *conversans* (living with).²⁷ The latter reading, Erasmus pointed out, agreed with the surviving Greek manuscripts. Lee, while committed to defending the authority of the Vulgate, did not simply dismiss the Dutch scholar's point out of hand. He tried to demonstrate instead that a proper understanding of the Greek text would support the Vulgate in place of Erasmus. Lee thus cited Girolamo Aleandro's Greek dictionary as proof that the verb *synalizo* (to gather) 'which word [Erasmus] admits is had in certain exemplars, not only means "to live together" but also "to eat with"'.²⁸ So while Lee accused Erasmus of lending aid to heresies and writing irreverently of the word of God, his notes were largely philological in nature.²⁹ He was prepared to venture into Greek, to entertain doubts about the authorship of the bible and lambasted Erasmus for claiming to have edited the Greek text of Revelation, when in reality he had merely translated it from the Latin.³⁰ Erasmus in turn made a number of changes to later editions of his New Testament based on Lee's work, usually without acknowledgement.³¹

This section looks at three responses to the New Testament in England. Erasmus' circle in England, I propose, contributed to the project, offering a range of comments on matters of higher and lower criticism and seeking to bring the text into dialogue with the Vulgate. An anonymous reader in Cambridge demonstrates how readers used Greek manuscripts and other sources to engage critically with his methods. Finally, I turn to the engagement of several evangelicals with Erasmus' text and their efforts both to wield the work as a polemical weapon and to borrow or improve upon its translation. In all three cases, readers approached the New

the Bible', in Jill Kraye (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 100-17. Richard Rex, *The Theology of John Fisher* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 50-64, 148-61.

²⁶ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, i, pp. 95-120. McDonald, *Biblical Criticism*, pp. 16-22.

²⁷ Erasmus, *Response to the Annotations of Edward Lee*, CWE 72, pp. 245-8.

²⁸ Lee, *Annotationes*, p. 79: '... quod verbum fateris in quibusdam exemplaribus haberi) non solum cohabitare, sed et conversi significat, si Aleandrino lexico credimus'.

²⁹ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, i, p. 116.

³⁰ Cecilia Asso, *La Teologia e la Grammatica: La controversia tra Erasmo ed Edward Lee* (Florence, 1993). Robert Coogan, *Erasmus, Lee and the Correction of the Vulgate: Shaking the Foundations* (Geneva, 1992). See the helpful review: Erika Rummel, 'New Perspectives on the Controversy between Erasmus and Lee', *Nederlandsch Archief Voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 74:2 (1994), pp. 226-32.

³¹ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, i, pp. 100-8.

Testament text in a critical frame of mind, viewing it as a work in progress rather than an immovable scholarly edifice.

~ Erasmus' circle ~

Erasmus was keen to have his English friends both defend and assist in the revision of the New Testament following its first publication in 1516. He especially hoped to enlist two Greek scholars who had studied in Italy and spent time with the Aldine press: William Latimer and Cuthbert Tunstall. Latimer, while protesting his ignorance, agreed to read the work and offer any comments. He also raised the broader question of whether his knowledge of ancient Greek writers was useful for assessing Erasmus' work since 'almost all those who have left any written comment on the Scriptures have used words and forms quite different from those of the classical Greeks... for neither the forms of speech, on which alone the sense sometimes depends, nor the peculiar meaning of the words are sufficiently familiar'.³² Erasmus had more luck with Tunstall, who helped him to collate manuscripts while the two were in Bruges.³³ In thanks, Erasmus had a copy of the second edition of the New Testament printed on vellum for Tunstall.³⁴ Others read the work in the same spirit. John Fisher found Erasmus a little too scrupulous in his preservation of the word Sabbath in the Latin text (e.g. Matt 24:26); he would have preferred a word with a better Latin pedigree.³⁵ Such a comment revealed an awareness that Erasmus' translation aspired not only to greater accuracy but also to greater elegance. Defending Erasmus from his adversaries, Thomas More noted that Augustine and Jerome had disagreed over the propriety of biblical translation and stressed that Christendom would benefit from different bible translations since they would better convey the multiple meanings of the text.³⁶ More was not afraid to air differences of opinion with Erasmus on this count. His preferred solution to the controversy surrounding the opening lines of John 1, for instance, was to use neither *verbum* (Vulgate) nor *sermo* (Erasmus) but to let the Greek word *logos* stand in a fashion similar to the words 'Amen' or 'Hallelujah', though he admitted this was an unsatisfactory way to produce a translation.³⁷

Richard Pace ventured into more technical ground in 1517.³⁸ While congratulating Erasmus on the publication of the *Novum Instrumentum* and decrying the work's critics in Louvain

³² Ep. 520, *CWE* 4, p. 199.

³³ Ep. 597, *CWE* 5, p. 6. See also, Ep. 864, *CWE* 6, pp. 106-7.

³⁴ Ep. 848, *CWE* 6, p. 41. Rosenbach Library and Museum, Philadelphia PA, C2.B582 519, Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1519).

³⁵ Ep. 481, *CWE* 4, pp. 115.

³⁶ More, *Letter to a Monk*, *CWM* 15, p. 215.

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 235-7.

³⁸ Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, i, pp. 43-4.

as a ‘College of Numbskulls’, he nevertheless provided detailed feedback on Erasmus’ translation of the Prologue of Luke (Luke 1:1-4).³⁹ Luke begins his gospel by explaining the circumstances of its composition. Many had previously composed narratives of Christ’s life, the evangelist explained, relying on eyewitnesses and other sources, and Luke had followed these in his own account. The Greek of this passage, however, was complex. Erasmus noted, for instance, that when the evangelist spoke of previous accounts having ‘been undertaken’ (Luke 1:1), he used the Greek word *epecheirēsan*. That word, Erasmus argued, implied a degree of dissatisfaction on Luke’s part for the previous accounts (of which there were many in Luke’s day) and, as a result, he altered the Vulgate’s use of *conati* to *aggressi*, to convey the sense of displeasure better.⁴⁰ Pace had no qualms with the change. He was unhappy, however, with his friend’s characterisation of the evangelist. Luke was not

finding fault with writers of an earlier generation as though they did not take enough trouble; for he admits that they wrote on the authority of men who were present at the events related and saw them happen, and it is from them and no one else that a historian can arrive at truth.⁴¹

Pace thus modified the implications of Erasmus’ translation in order to defend the veracity of Luke’s account. Indeed, his vision of Luke as a ‘historian’ also meant that he could not accept Erasmus’ contention that Luke had personally spoken with eyewitnesses to Christ.⁴² Last but not least, Pace raised the spectre of Lorenzo Valla who, he thought, had offered a better translation of Luke 1:2 than Erasmus.⁴³ Pace’s copy of the *Novum Instrumentum* has survived, though sadly it contains nothing that might allow us to probe his criticisms in more detail.⁴⁴

A better witness to the reaction within Erasmus’ English circle can be gleaned from a series of manuscripts produced by the scholar’s occasional scribe and messenger, Pieter Meghen.⁴⁵ With the exception of the 1527 edition, Erasmus’ New Testament did not include a Vulgate text. Readers, however, often wished to compare his version with its older rival. As a result, Meghen was twice commissioned to create impressive New Testament manuscripts containing both the

³⁹ Ep. 619, *CWE* 5, p. 60.

⁴⁰ Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum*, p. 314.

⁴¹ Ep. 619, *CWE* 5, p. 60.

⁴² Ep. 403, *CWE* 3, pp. 278-9.

⁴³ C.f. Pace’s version: Ep. 619, *EE*, iii, p. 41: ‘*Sicuti tradiderunt nobis hii qui Christum viderunt eique ministrarunt*’. Lorenzo Valla, *Adnotationes* (Paris, 1505), fo. 15. Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum*: ‘*...qui ab initio suis oculis viderant, ac pars aliqua fuerant eorum quae narrabant*.’ See, Mark Vessey, ‘The Actor in the Story: Horizons of Interpretation in Erasmus’s *Annotations on Luke*’, in Judith Rice Henderson (ed.), *The Unfolding of Words: Commentary in the Age of Erasmus* (Toronto, 2012), pp. 55-69.

⁴⁴ Winchester College, A19 Bk269, Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum* (Basel, 1516). Three Greek notes have been left by the text of 1 Corinthians, concerning charity and the resurrection of the dead. They may be by Pace, though the sample size is rather too small to write with absolute confidence.

⁴⁵ J. B. Trapp, ‘Notes on Manuscripts Written by Peter Meghen’, *Book Collector*, 24 (1975), pp. 80-96.

Vulgate and Erasmusian editions side-by-side. A two-volume set, probably completed in the early 1520s, now resides at Oxford.⁴⁶ It is around the size of a regular printed folio and presents the New Testament in alternating lines of Erasmusian and Vulgate editions. The volumes were a gift to Corpus Christi College in the sixteenth century by a mysterious ‘doctor Hille’.⁴⁷ David Rundle has ingeniously proposed that this may be Alban Hyll, a member of the Royal College of Physicians, who died in London in 1559 but who had come into the possession of a number of John Clement’s books in the 1550s.⁴⁸ Clement was close to both Erasmus and the circle of English patrons who supported Meghen in the 1520s.⁴⁹ He also inherited a number of More’s books and might easily have acquired a deluxe Erasmusian manuscript as a result.⁵⁰

The second Erasmusian New Testament by Meghen is considerably larger and dispersed between the British Library, Cambridge University Library and Hatfield House (for simplicity’s sake I will refer to these as the Colet set).⁵¹ The textual history of this second set is particularly complex. Meghen was commissioned by John Colet to write out a Latin New Testament and the colophons show that the Gospels and Epistles were finished between 1506 and 1509, while the volume with Acts and Revelation lacks a dated colophon.⁵² Meghen wrote the Vulgate in a large hand in one column and presented the Erasmusian text in a smaller column beside it. Historians initially took this as evidence that Erasmus had completed an edition of the New Testament in England well before 1516.⁵³ Andrew Brown, however, demolished this view on textual and palaeographical grounds, showing that the Erasmusian text was written in Meghen’s later hand and that the text itself better conformed to the later editions of Erasmus’ New Testament.⁵⁴ This single set thus appears to have had three phases of production.⁵⁵ Meghen initially wrote a Vulgate New

⁴⁶ CCC, Oxford, MSS 13 and 14, *New Testament*, c.1520.

⁴⁷ CCC, Oxford, MS 13, fo. 1r.

⁴⁸ David Rundle, ‘Corpus Before Erasmus, or the English Humanist Tradition and Greek before the Trojans’, in Mordechai Feingold and John Watts (eds), *History of Universities: Volume XXXII/1-2: Renaissance College: Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in Context, 1450-1600* (Oxford, 2019), pp. 105-6. A. W. Reed, ‘John Clement and His Books’, *The Library*, 6:4 (1926), pp. 329-39. Frederick Smith, ‘Life after Exile: Former Catholic Émigrés and the Legacy of Flight in Marian England’, *EHR*, 133:563 (2018), pp. 820-1.

⁴⁹ Clement sued Hyll for restitution of his property during the reign of Mary and included a long list of books: Reed, ‘Clement and His Books’, pp. 337-9. The list presents around 180 of the 300 books known to be in Clement’s house, including a ‘*Testamentum novum scriptum*’.

⁵⁰ Giovanni Mercati, ‘Supra Giovanni Clement e Suoi Manoscritti’, *La Bibliofilia*, 28:3 (1926), pp. 81-99. Grantley McDonald, ‘Thomas More, John Clement and the Palatine Anthology’, *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance*, 75:2 (2013), pp. 259-70. J. North, ‘A Glasgow Octateuch and a Leiden Psalter, Two Old Testament Manuscripts Formerly Belonging to Dr John Clement: History and Hypothesis’, in Timothy McLay (ed.), *The Temple in Text and Tradition: A Festschrift in Honour of Robert Hayward* (London, 2015), pp. 239-56.

⁵¹ BL, Royal MS 1.E V (A-B). CUL, MS Dd.7.3. Hatfield House, MS 324.

⁵² e.g. BL, Royal MS 1.E V (A), fos 310v-311r.

⁵³ Henri Gibaud (ed.), *Un Inédit d’Érasme: La Première Version du Nouveau Testament: Copiée par Pierre Meghen 1506-09* (Anger, 1982).

⁵⁴ Andrew Brown, ‘The Date of Erasmus’ Latin Translation of the New Testament’, *TCBS*, 8:4 (1984), pp. 351-80.

⁵⁵ The following account draws on: Brown, ‘The Date of Erasmus’ Translation’. David Rundle, *The Renaissance Reform of the Book and Britain: The English Quattrocento* (Cambridge, 2019), pp. 147-164. John Monfasani, ‘In Defence of Erasmus’ Critics’, *Erasmus Studies*, 39 (2019), pp. 147-183.

Testament for Colet, completing only the Gospels and Epistles. A large blank margin was left, perhaps with the intention that Colet or Meghen would add further material. After Colet's death in 1519, another figure commissioned Meghen to add Erasmus' text to the existing manuscripts. Finally, Meghen was asked to complete the New Testament by writing Acts and Revelation in a separate volume. This last volume survives in a binding for Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, suggesting that, by this stage, the tomes were intended for the royal library.⁵⁶ That said, Meghen can be connected to several of Erasmus' friends and patrons in this period who might plausibly have sponsored the project.⁵⁷

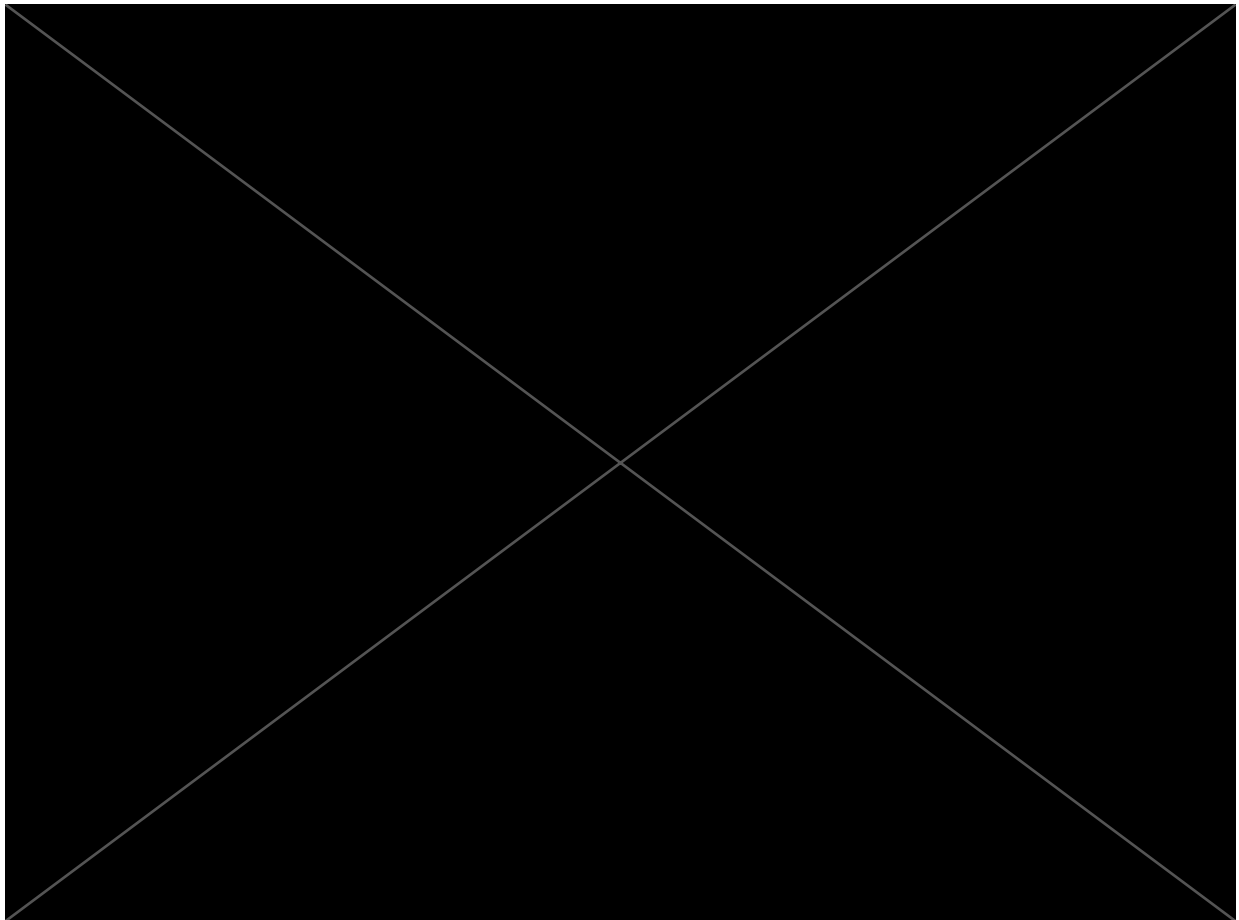


Fig. 6: Meghen's aligned texts. CCC, Oxford MS 13, fos 10v-11r.

Both sets, therefore, are likely connected to Erasmus' circle in England. The lavishness and complexity of the Colet set has understandably made it a focus of research. However, the volumes at Corpus are in many ways more revealing of the objectives of readers in this period,

⁵⁶ Matthew Parker bequeathed the volume to the CUL, while William Cecil presumably acquired the volume at Hatfield.

⁵⁷ In 1519 Richard Pace sought royal patronage for Meghen on Erasmus' behalf: Ep. 937, *CWE* 6, p. 292. Meghen produced three manuscripts for Wolsey prior to 1530: Christ Church, MS 101; Magdalen College, Oxford, MS 223; Bodleian, MS Rawl. C. 779.

since it was designed from the outset to carry both Vulgate and Erasmusian versions. Meghan took great pains to ensure that the alternating lines of Vulgate and Erasmusian texts were aligned with each other, leaving gaps, elongating letter forms and even encroaching on the margin to ensure that words and phrases were aligned (see *Fig. 6*). In Matt 24:41, for instance, Meghan's Vulgate text included an interpolation from Luke 17:34, whilst Erasmus' text omitted the section.⁵⁸ Meghan left the line above the interpolation blank and continued the Erasmusian text in line with the next verse. The eye was thus guided easily between similarities and differences in the two texts. The opposing columns of the Colet set reproduce this effect, though in a less extreme manner. The most striking feature of this second set, in fact, is their emphasis on Christ's own words within the gospels, which are underlined or given a separate colour, so that they immediately catch the eye.⁵⁹

Various collations of the Erasmusian text in both sets of manuscripts have been undertaken, though neither has proved wholly conclusive.⁶⁰ The Corpus Christi volumes generally reflect readings from Erasmus' first two editions of the New Testament (1516, 1519), while the Cambridge, British Library and Hatfield volumes tend to reflect later editions (1522 onwards), though neither is completely consistent in this regard. The Corpus set uses *resipiscite* instead of *penitentiam agite* in both Matt 3:2 and Matt 4:1, while the Colet one uses it in the latter case (in accordance with 1522 edition). Both maintain Erasmus' controversial opening to John 1 (*In principio erat sermo...*), while preserving the Johannine comma.

More importantly, the composition of these volumes suggests a broader awareness of complications within the Erasmusian New Testament. In a letter to Fisher in 1518, for example, Erasmus expressed dissatisfaction with his work on the genealogy of Christ in Luke 3:23-38, arguing that the passage was likely unresolvable.⁶¹ In recognition of the problem, Meghan omitted the full Erasmusian text in this section of the Corpus and Colet manuscripts.⁶² If this was intended only to save him some labour, it is striking that he elsewhere diligently copied out sections with identical Vulgate and Erasmusian texts.⁶³ A similar interest in aspects of biblical criticism can also be sensed in the choice of prologues. Both sets begin with Jerome's letter to Pope Damasus explaining his own biblical translation – a fairly typical feature of Vulgate bibles, but one which no doubt accentuated Erasmus' connections to Jerome and the papal sanction for both revisions.⁶⁴ From

⁵⁸ CCC, Oxford, MS 13, fo. 55. The interpolation is a feature of the *Vetus latina*, see H. Houghton, *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts* (Oxford, 2016), p. 159.

⁵⁹ e.g. BL, Royal MS 1 E V(A), fo. 97v.

⁶⁰ Gibaud, *Un Inédit d'Érasme*. Brown, 'The Date of Erasmus' Translation', p. 369. Monfasani, 'In Defence of Erasmus' Critics', app. 1.

⁶¹ Ep. 784, *CWE* 5, p. 325.

⁶² The Erasmusian text is omitted altogether in BL, Royal MS 1 E V (A). In the Corpus set, Meghan added Erasmus' seven changes as individual words squeezed in between the lines of Vulgate text: CCC, Oxford, MS 13, fos 115r-v.

⁶³ E.g. CCC, Oxford, MS 13, fos 103r, 167v.

⁶⁴ CUL, Dd.7.3, fo. 3r.

the Pauline Epistles onwards Meghen also included Erasmus' *argumenta*. These were not drawn from his editions of the New Testament, as one might expect, but from the *Paraphrases*. Erasmus' New Testament *argumenta* were often cursory but those in the *Paraphrases* were generally longer and provided more information on the circumstances of each letter's composition, its literary qualities and authorship. Erasmus' long introduction to Romans, for instance, discussed the relative date of the letter compared with others by Paul, its scribe and major themes.⁶⁵ It also explained how Paul's emphasis on Christ as the sole path to salvation had emerged from the competition between Jews and gentiles at Rome. Though shorter, Erasmus' *argumenta* to other letters also conveyed basic elements of his biblical criticism. The language of John's First Epistle, Erasmus argued in one, was clearly in keeping with John the Evangelist, though the Second and Third Epistles were clearly authored by someone else.⁶⁶ These paratexts were included for an audience keen to incorporate more humanist biblical criticism into the framework of their bible.

~ Erasmus, the Greek text and a Cambridge reader ~

Meghen's productions were Latin bibles. Other readers in England, however, began to turn their attention to the Greek text. Inspired by Erasmus, they began to compare his text with surviving Greek manuscripts. The most striking witness to this approach is a hitherto unnoticed set of marginalia in a copy of Erasmus' *Annotations* (1519) now in the Cambridge University Library. BSS.130.B19.1-2 is a two-volume set of the New Testament (vol. 1) and *Annotations* (vol. 2). The two volumes were most likely brought together after the sixteenth century, as one survives in a pigskin binding common to central Europe while the other is in a contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, active in Cambridge in the first half of the sixteenth century.⁶⁷ The second volume contains contemporary inscriptions and notes (some of them in English) in a distinctive set of hands, while the first volume lacks these. The provenance of this second volume is unknown between its binding in Cambridge and its ownership by a 'Guido Dobins', probably the clergyman who held several benefices in Hampshire between the 1590s and 1620.⁶⁸ The volume, nevertheless,

⁶⁵ *CWE* 42, pp. 6-14.

⁶⁶ *CWE* 44, p. 173.

⁶⁷ Oldham, *EBSB*, p.43: AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) [1503-30].

⁶⁸ *CCEd*: 'Guy Dobbins [84071]'.

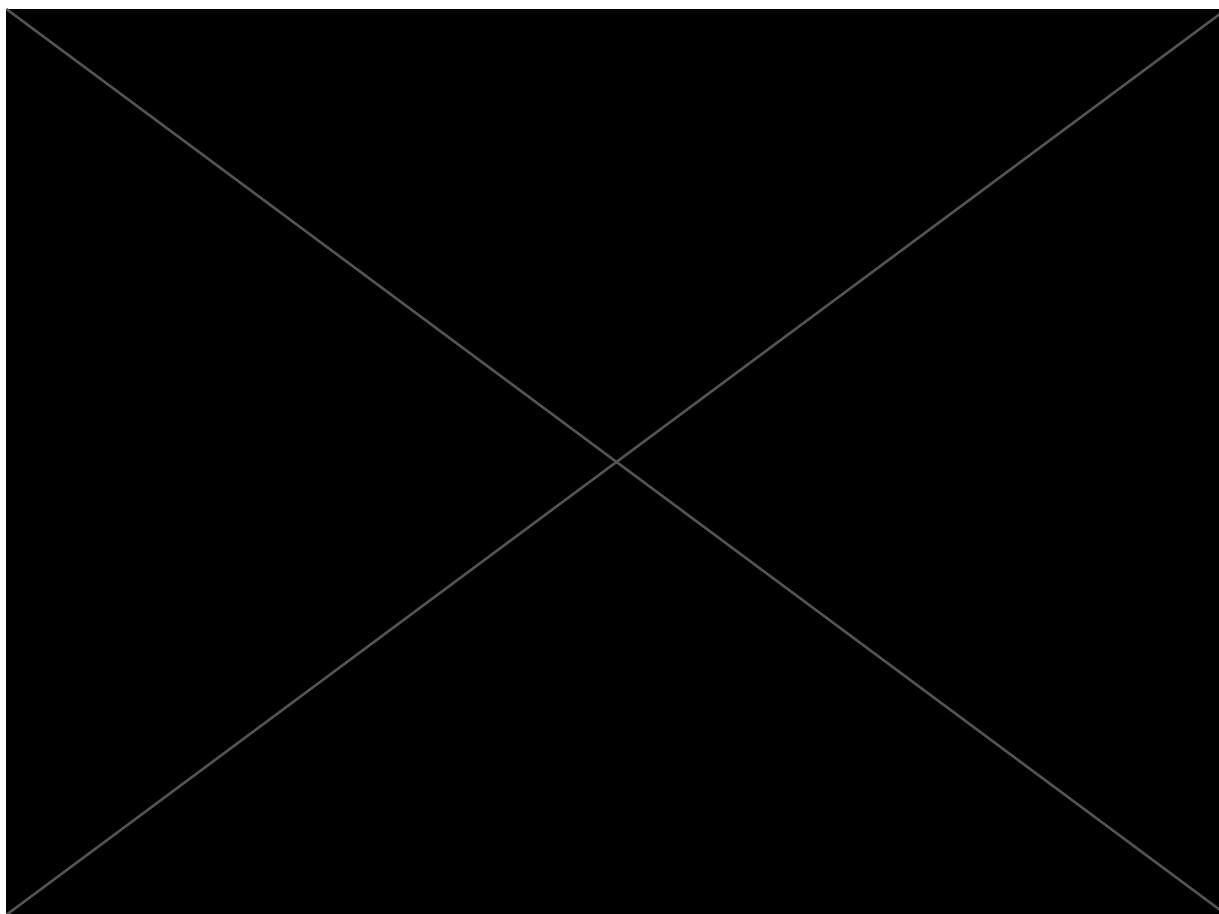


Fig. 7: The reader acknowledges Brinkley's manuscript. CUL, BSS.130.B19.2, Erasmus, *Annotationes* (Basel, 1519), p. 66.

clearly had an active owner prior to Dobins, for throughout the book are a series of anonymous red ink annotations in an italic hand.

At first glance, these notes reveal little about their origins or date. The reader cited several early sixteenth-century writers such as Calepinus, Reuchlin, Faber, Budé, and Edward Lee, alongside earlier authorities such as Chrysostom and Aquinas.⁶⁹ Their main priority was to better understand the Greek text and they added numerous Greek words to the work's index in recognition of this effort.⁷⁰ In the course of reviewing Erasmus' work, however, they also indicated that they had access to a Greek manuscript of the gospels. In his notes on Matt 21:3, Erasmus specified that some Greek manuscripts read *apostellei* ('he sends'; present tense), while others read *aposteiei* ('he will send'; future).⁷¹ The red-ink annotator agreed with Erasmus on the latter reading, since 'the codex of the Franciscan brothers of Oxford, which Brinkley showed us, has *aposteiei*'

⁶⁹ CUL, BSS.130.B19.2, Erasmus, *Annotationes* (Basel, 1519), pp. 1, 3, 24, 40, 293, 315.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 549-65.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

(Fig. 7).⁷² This referred to the Franciscan Richard Brinkley (d. ?1527), best known to historians as a collector of rare Greek and Hebrew manuscripts.⁷³ Brinkley had begun his studies at Cambridge in the late fifteenth century, going on to receive doctorates in theology from both Oxford and Cambridge and to serve as the minister provincial for his order.⁷⁴ He regularly travelled between Oxford, London and Cambridge and used these journeys to borrow (often without returning) various codices. The most famous volume to enter his possession was the so-called *Codex Leicestrensis* (miniscule 69), which preserves important variants of the New Testament.⁷⁵ Erasmus may have consulted this manuscript during his time in England, though this remains a source of contention.⁷⁶ The red-ink annotator, however, referred to another manuscript in Brinkley's possession. This was a Greek text of the gospels dating from the thirteenth century (now Gonville and Caius MS 403/412 (miniscule 59)), that Brinkley had removed from the Oxford house of his order.⁷⁷ Armed with a connection to Brinkley, then, we can propose a plausible date and place for this reader of the *Annotations*. Brinkley died around the year 1527. This copy of the *Annotations* was printed in 1519 and bound in Cambridge by Godfrey. The red-ink reader was thus most likely active in Cambridge at some point between 1519 and 1527.⁷⁸

On the whole, this reader used Brinkley's manuscript to confirm information supplied in the *Annotations*. When Erasmus discussed variant Greek readings, the annotator then compared these to the 'Oxford codex'.⁷⁹ At Mark 11:26, Froben had accidentally missed an entire line of the Greek text, even though Erasmus' annotation referred to it. The reader took matters into their own hands, correcting 'the sleepy printer' and supplying the line 'from the Oxford codex'.⁸⁰ Their attention to Erasmus' editorial practice meant that they often alighted upon errors or

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 66: 'atque apostelei habet codex fratrum franciscanorum oxoniensum quem ?communicavit nobis brynkleus'.

⁷³ J. H. Moorman, *The Grey Friars in Cambridge, 1225-1538* (Cambridge, 1952), pp. 155-6. James Carley, 'John Leland and the Contents of English Pre-Dissolution Libraries: The Cambridge Friars', *TCBS*, 9:1 (1986), pp. 90-100. Jeremy Catto, 'Franciscan Learning in England, 1450-1540', in James Clarke (ed.), *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England* (Woodbridge, 2002), p. 98. Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, 'Robert Wakefield and the Medieval Background of Hebrew Scholarship in Renaissance England', in Giulio Busi (ed.) *Hebrew to Latin, Latin to Hebrew: The Mirroring of Two Cultures in the Age of Humanism* (Berlin, 2006), pp. 63-4. J.R. Harris, *The Origin of the Leicester Codex of the New Testament* (London, 1887), pp. 17-23.

⁷⁴ *ACAD*: 'Brinkley, Richard'.

⁷⁵ Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ*, p. 126. Leicestershire Record Office, Leicester, Cod. 6 D 32/1, *Codex Leicestrensis*, s.xv.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*. Bentley himself collated several passages in Erasmus' *Annotations* which he believed were derived from ms. 69. See, *ibid*, p. 126, n. 50. Andrew Brown, however, has expressed his reservations about Erasmus' use of ms. 69. See his introductions to *ASD* 6:2-3 and *idem*, 'The Manuscript Source and Textual character of Erasmus' 1516 Greek New Testament', pp. 125-44.

⁷⁷ Harris, *The Origin of the Leicester Codex*, pp. 18-19. M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Gonville and Caius College* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1907-8), ii, pp. 469-70.

⁷⁸ Against this, it will be noted that the reader refers to the text as the Oxford codex throughout, though this simply may indicate that they understood where Brinkley had acquired the manuscript, since MS 403/412 remained in Cambridge after Brinkley's death, eventually passing to Gonville and Caius in 1567: Harris, *The Origin of the Leicester Codex*, p. 19.

⁷⁹ *CUL*, BSS.130.B19.2, pp. 80, 106, 183. Matt 26:42; Mark 11:26; John 8:59.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p.106: 'Tamen dormitatus chalcographus non ascripsit, nos ?ascripsimus ex oxoniensi codice'.

inconsistencies. Erasmus, for instance, had omitted a line from the Vulgate in 1 Cor 9:21 without providing any justification. ‘He omits here’, the reader complained, ‘what follows in the Vulgate exemplars... a truly strange thing that he does not note it’.⁸¹ Discrepancies in Erasmus’ approach to translation also caught the reader’s eye. In the notes beside Matthew 26:60, the reader recorded that Erasmus ‘translates here this word *hereo* [*heurisko*] as “I discover”, although previously he constantly corrects the verse from the Vulgate and says that it means instead “I learn”’.⁸² When Erasmus stated at the beginning of his notes to the Gospel of Matthew that the evangelist had written in Hebrew, the annotator was quick to note a further contradiction. ‘In the second response to the annotations of Lee’, they pointed out, Erasmus ‘says that he thinks that this gospel of Matthew was written in Greek rather than Hebrew’, adding further that ‘Valla does not doubt that Matthew wrote in Hebrew’.⁸³ Sometimes they introduced other sources besides Brinkley’s manuscript. By the annotation of Matthew 27:52 (‘and the bodies of the saints that had slept arose’), the reader judged that Erasmus’ discussion agreed with the Gospel of Nicodemus, an apocryphal Christian text, ‘which testifies that certain people rose up and lived among themselves and related many things which you will hardly believe’.⁸⁴ Elsewhere the reader was more forgiving. They argued that Erasmus ‘rightly pours down scorn on those stubborn and unlearned theologians’ who had criticised his comments on the Lord’s Prayer (Matt 6:12).⁸⁵

On one occasion this reader also resisted the theological implications of Erasmus’ changes to the New Testament text. The Dutchman had been criticised by conservatives for altering the words of consecration in his translation of 1 Cor 11:24, particularly his suggestion that Christ had offered his body to be broken (*frangere*) rather than delivered (*tradere*).⁸⁶ By questioning the act of consecration, Erasmus was seen by some to be casting doubt on the church’s understanding of the Mass. But Erasmus pointed out that Paul had elsewhere spoken of bread being broken during the ceremony, without rebuke.⁸⁷ Reaching this discussion, the reader was unimpressed with Erasmus’ defence, pointing out (as many conservatives did) that Paul was not speaking about the consecration of bread in 1 Cor 10 but about its ‘distribution’.⁸⁸ Certainly, this copy of the

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p.338: ‘omittit hic quod in vulgatis exemplaribus sequitur id: quasi sub lege essem, cum ipse non essem sub lege[.] mirum vero quod non annotat’.

⁸² *Ibid*, p.81: ‘hic vertit ?euro inuenio cum constanter ante corrigat sic versum ab interprete et dicat significare potius reperio’.

⁸³ *Ibid*, p.1: ‘In secunda ad annotationes lei responsione dicit se putare evangelium hoc matthei potius grece scriptum quam hebraice. Valla non dubitat matthaeum scripsisse hebraice’.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p.86: ‘?Constatis hec enarratio cum evangelio nichodemi quod testatur quosdam resurrexisse et vixisse inter suos et multa que ferre non credes narrasse’.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 29: ‘Optime iure destomochatur in theologos istos morosos et indoctos’.

⁸⁶ Rummel, *Erasmus’ Annotations*, p. 158.

⁸⁷ E.g. 1 Cor 10:16: ‘Is the bread which we break not a participation in the body of Christ?’

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p.340: ‘libenter arripit ansam qui talem arripit cum hic nihil de consecrationis vertis sed distributionis potius’.

Annotations later found its way into the hands of another conservative reader, who accused Erasmus of erring in his interpretations and of wrongly questioning John's authorship of Revelation.⁸⁹

The Cambridge reader's close attention to Erasmus' methods, manuscripts and theology points to the ways in which humanist scholarship and confessional allegiance were becoming ever tighter. Arguments about manuscript readings could act as a proxy for broader confessional point-scoring. Notoriously, it was a Greek manuscript from England that convinced Erasmus to reintroduce the Johannine Comma in 1522. As Grantley McDonald has shown, it was almost certainly Francis Frowyk, an Observant Franciscan from Greenwich, who had uncovered and conveyed the manuscript to the scholar in Basel, probably with the assistance of Erasmus' circle of friends.⁹⁰ English readers therefore were advancing the cause of orthodoxy through the tools of humanist scholarship. More and Fisher, we have already observed, were busy tweaking Erasmus' insights to better suit the polemical environment and the Dutch scholar himself was not above compromising his scholarly principles in favour of advancing his view of the reformation, forging the text of Cyprian's *De duplici martyrio* in 1530.⁹¹ Erasmus' scholarly legacy, therefore, was becoming bound up with his reformation stance.

~ Evangelicals ~

Erasmus had not only edited and annotated the Greek and Latin text of the scriptures. He had also argued passionately for the presence of the scriptures in the Christian's life. Judging by their own accounts, many evangelicals took Erasmus at his word, maintaining a highly personal relationship with his biblical writings. Thomas Cromwell is said to have been first stirred to doubt the established church while perusing a copy of the *Novum Instrumentum* on his way to Rome in 1519.⁹² The work was called upon in times of tribulation. Anthony Dalaber had been a member of an evangelical book network in Oxford in the 1520s. He later recalled to John Foxe that, on the eve of his arrest, he had gone 'into my studye shuttinge the doore unto me, and tooke the newe Testamente of Erasmus translation in my handes, kneled down on my knees, and with manye a depe sigh and salt tere, I did, with much deliberation read over the x. chapter of s. Mathew his

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 398, 543.

⁹⁰ McDonald, 'The Johannine Comma from Erasmus to Westminster', in Dirk van Miert, Henk Nellen, Piet Steenbakkers and Jetze Touber (eds), *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age: God's Word Questioned* (Oxford, 2017), pp. 61-72.

⁹¹ Silvana Seidel Menchi, 'Un'Opera Misconosciuta di Erasmo? Il Trattato Pseudo-Cipriano "De duplici martyrio"', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 90 (1978), pp. 709-43. Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, 2019), pp. 43-5.

⁹² *AC&M* (1576), viii, p. 1173.

Gospell'.⁹³ That chapter was particularly resonant for those at risk of persecution, for Jesus warns his disciples that they will be 'as sheep in the midst of wolves... ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake'.⁹⁴ Some evangelicals found the cadences of Erasmus' new Latin translation resonated with their own spiritual longings. Thomas Bilney informed Cuthbert Tunstall that he had 'at last heard of Jesus' when reading the Erasmian New Testament.⁹⁵ Bilney had been particularly stirred by the scholar's more purposeful rendering of 1 Tim. 1: 'It is a trew saieng, and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Iesus cam into the world to save sinners of which I am the chiefe and principall'.⁹⁶ As we have already seen, Anne Boleyn's circle were also interested in Erasmus' preface to the New Testament, the *Paraclesis*, and its potential to advance the cause of the vernacular scriptures.

Even if evangelicals found the Erasmian New Testament a moving and often helpful tool for their own spiritual yearnings, their relationship was still one of creative tension. William Tyndale supported several of his more controversial translations of scripture by referring to the Greek and Latin of Erasmus.⁹⁷ He preferred 'repentance' to 'penance' because St Jerome

hath most part *converti*, to turn or be converted, and sometime yet *agere penitenciam*. And the Greek in the New Testament hath perpetually *metanoeo* to turn in the heart and mind, and to come to the right knowledge, and to a man's wits again... And Erasmus useth much this word *resipisco*, I come to myself or to my right mind again...⁹⁸

By translating into English, however, Tyndale was stretching Erasmus' humanist apparatus to its breaking point.⁹⁹ Erasmus had compared Greek and Latin manuscripts and the readings of Greek and Latin Fathers in order to translate from Greek into Latin. Despite Erasmus' upending of certain passages, his work still embodied an idea of consensus in the church, albeit one based on humanist methods of textual reconstruction. Such a framework, however, could not easily be conveyed into English.¹⁰⁰ There was neither an authoritative tradition of English biblical translation, nor a set of accepted manuscripts, nor a company of English Fathers to anchor such work. As Thomas More complained, Tyndale could make 'the latyn texte and the greke... hys

⁹³ *Ac&M* (1563), iii, pp. 661-2.

⁹⁴ KJV: Matt. 10:16, 18.

⁹⁵ *L&P* 5, 373: 'Sed tandem de Iesu audiebam, nimirum tum cum nouum testamentum primum ab Erasmo ederetur'.

⁹⁶ *Ac&M* (1563), iii, p. 520.

⁹⁷ William Tyndale, *An answer unto Sir Thomas More's dialogue*, in *The Works of the English Reformers: William Tyndale and John Frith*, ed. Thomas Russell (3 vols, London, 1831), ii, pp. 14-24. Mark Rankin, 'Tyndale, Erasmus, and the Early English Reformation', *Erasmus Studies*, 38:2 (2018), pp. 135-70.

⁹⁸ *Tyndale's New Testament*, ed. David Daniell (New Haven, 1989), p. 9.

⁹⁹ Alan Stewart, 'The Trouble with English Humanism: Tyndale, More and Darling Erasmus', in Jonathan Woolfson (ed.), *Reassessing Tudor Humanism* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 78-98.

¹⁰⁰ Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 187-231.

excuse' all he liked; that would still not justify using a word 'very rare and selde' such as 'congregation' in the place of 'church'.¹⁰¹ 'There is of the chyrch', More argued, 'no sygnifycacyon neyther more great nor more comen, then that by whych yt is ment and taken for the catholyque chyrch and unyversall'.¹⁰² Tyndale was thus attempting to force a personal interpretation on a text, against the common sense.¹⁰³

The relationship of evangelicals to the Erasmian New Testament was also deformed by the polemical context of the early reformation in England. Many leading conservatives were close friends of Erasmus. Associating evangelism with Erasmus was thus a means of embarrassing the likes of More or Tunstall. John Frith provided a virtuoso display of such tactics in *A disputacion of purgatorye* (1531). More had called upon Peter's words in Acts 2:24 (*Quem Deus suscitavit, solutis doloribus inferni...*; 'Whom God awakened, having loosened the pains of hell') to prove that purgatory had been discussed and sanctioned by the apostles themselves. Frith, however, rebutted such statements with reference to Erasmus' Greek text and translation:

in steade of these wordes / *the paynes of deeth* / [More] setteth *the paynes of hell* (as it is most like) even of a purposed deceyte. For all be it [More] wold not take the payne to read the greke / yet if he had but once looked vppon the translacion of his olde frinde and companion Erasmus / it wolde have taught him to have sayed *solutis doloribus mortis* / that is / *dissolvinge the paynes of deeth* / accordinge to the greke...¹⁰⁴

Frith's use of Erasmus to condemn purgatory was typical of evangelicals in the period, who usually turned to Erasmus to bolster their arguments surrounding papal supremacy, auricular confession and other doctrines.¹⁰⁵

Evangelicals thus developed a range of responses to the Erasmian text. One was to place Erasmus in the company of more solidly evangelical writers. William Roye paired his translation of the *Paraclesis* with a Lutheran commentary on Paul.¹⁰⁶ Printers similarly took to pairing Erasmus' Latin text with English versions, thus allying the humanist comparative method to an evangelical desire for vernacular scripture. In 1538, Robert Redman produced a dual Latin-English bible, in which Tyndale's version sat across from Erasmus' Latin.¹⁰⁷ Others reworked Tyndale's text with

¹⁰¹ More, *A Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, CWM 8:1, p. 144.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁰³ Wooding, 'The Politics of Translation', p. 136.

¹⁰⁴ John Frith, *A disputacion of purgatorye* (Antwerp, 1531), sigs g2r-v. Italics added.

¹⁰⁵ Ridley, *Exposition*, sig. H7v. Taverner, *On Saynt Andrewes day the gospels with brief sermons upon them* (London, 1542), fo. 22r.

¹⁰⁶ Douglas Parker (ed.), *An exhortation to the diligent studye of scripture and an exposition into the seventh chaptre of the pistle to the Corinthians* (Toronto, 2000), p. 4.

¹⁰⁷ *The newe Testament in Englyshe and Latyn, accordyng to the translacyon of doctour Erasmus of Roterodam* (London, 1538). Christopher Anderson, *The Annals of English Bible* (London, 1845), pp. 34-5.

reference to the Greek and Erasmian versions. In 1539, Richard Taverner published a revision of the Matthews Bible (1537), ‘according to ye true exemplars’ by which he meant a Greek text and reference to Erasmus and others.¹⁰⁸ In Acts 17, Taverner deployed the phrase ‘straunge goddes’ because ‘the Greke word signyfyeth here godes not deuiles [as] noteth also Erasmus in his annotacions’.¹⁰⁹ He also borrowed from Erasmus to explicate passages to his audience. In Romans 12:10, Paul cryptically compels his followers ‘In geuyng honour, prevent one an other’. Taverner had Erasmus explain that ‘honour is taken here for relief, succour, or help. For so are we also bounde to honor oure parentes’.¹¹⁰ Taverner’s changes were no doubt a response to Henry VIII’s cooling attitude to biblical translation in the late 1530s. While he preserved the Lutheran organisation of the bible, he stripped his work of Tyndale’s strident *Prologue to Romans*. He also removed some of Tyndale’s more controversial translations, replacing the word ‘love’ with ‘charitie’.¹¹¹

The deference shown to Erasmus by Redman and Taverner was not always shared. The religious exile Wouter Deleen, for instance, cast a more critical eye on Erasmus’ Latin translation. Deleen was a native of the Low Countries with a talent for biblical languages who had studied at Louvain and become one of the first teachers of Hebrew in the northern Netherlands in the 1520s.¹¹² Early in the reformation he visited Wittenberg and by 1534 his activities as an evangelical teacher in Amsterdam had come under suspicion, as did his connections to an alleged group of anabaptists. In 1537 he fled to London, seemingly shaking off any taint of unorthodoxy and finding employment at court as the king’s ‘*biblioscopus*’, a role that perhaps involved reading and copying books for the royal household.¹¹³

In the late 1530s, Deleen embarked on his most ambitious project to date: a revised Latin translation of the New Testament that was eventually published in 1540 by John Mayler in London.¹¹⁴ Deleen claimed that his version had been corrected from ‘the oldest Greek exemplars’, but as Johannes Trapman has noted, it was by and large an adaptation of Erasmus’ translation.¹¹⁵ That did not prevent Deleen from critiquing Erasmus. In the preface to the reader, Deleen announced that

¹⁰⁸ *The most sacred Bible, whiche is the Holy Scripture* (London, 1539). Harold Hutson and Harold Willoughby, ‘The Ignored Taverner Bible of 1539’, *The Crozier Quarterly*, (1939), pp. 161-176.

¹⁰⁹ *The most sacred Bible*, fo. 49v.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, fo. 64v.

¹¹¹ McConica, *English Humanists*, pp. 164-6.

¹¹² Andrew Pettegree, ‘Delenus, Gualter (c.1500-1563)’, ODNB. Idem, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 22, 49-52, 64, 117.

¹¹³ Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, p. 17.

¹¹⁴ J. Trapman, ‘Delenus en de Bijbel’, *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, 56:1 (1975), pp. 95-113.

¹¹⁵ Trapman, ‘Delenus’, p. 103.

... in this New Testament I have altered more than six hundred places. For firstly, I corrected those passages which had been changed by the old interpretation [i.e. Vulgate] which seemed not to satisfy the Greek truth. Then I omitted the Erasmian '*periphrases*' (by which, I hear, I offended many) and followed the most ancient exemplars of the Greeks. Besides my interpretation is most simple; I turned those Greek and Hebrew phrases into Latin ones and I explained in whatever manner those places which are not obvious...¹¹⁶

Deleen thus set about trimming Erasmus' text of overly long or elaborate phrases. At Matt 9:36, he explained that 'Erasmus expressed the force of the verb *splagchnizomai* [to feel pity] with this *periphrasis*: "was influenced by the feeling of mercy"'.¹¹⁷ Deleen preferred instead a minor variation upon the Vulgate: 'he felt pity within'.¹¹⁸ Occasionally, Deleen's desire to stay faithful to the Greek meant that he willingly mistreated the Latin language. In Matt 14:9, he turned a singular (*propter ius iurandum*, 'on account of the oath he had sworn') into a plural (*propter iura iuranda*) to better reflect the Greek. He admitted, however, that 'Erasmus... preserves the singular. For, indeed, it is not plausible to me that this plural was ever heard by Latin ears'.¹¹⁹

Deleen also turned to the work of other authorities to justify changes, especially the writings of Guillaume Budé. Budé's work, for example, encouraged Deleen to use the legalistic phrase, *satis accipere* (to guarantee), in Acts 17:9, for 'As Budé writes: "they say by habit of the Latins *satis accipere*"'.¹²⁰ Throughout John, Deleen showed an awareness of the paraphrase of Nonnus of Panopolis, a late antique verse interpretation of the gospel.¹²¹ Deleen also included comments from acquaintances, including one from Edmund Bonner, bishop of London, on the true meaning of Luke 8:18.¹²² His fellow Dutchman and Hebraist Johannes Sartorius was also quoted on the implications of the Greek preposition *dia* ('through' or 'on account of') which had been discussed in Erasmus' *Annotations*. 'Sartorius observed', Deleen reported, that 'to live on account of someone is one thing, to live through someone, is another. For the first means the efficient cause, and the second the final cause'.¹²³ Sartorius' observation thus used the Aristotelian division of causes to better explain a linguistic problem spotted by Erasmus.

¹¹⁶ Wouter Deleen, *Novum testamentum Latinum, ad antiquissima Graecorum exemplaria* (London, 1540), sig. f3r: '*Ne mireris optime lector, me in hoc novo Testamento, supra sexcenta loca mutasse. Nam imprimis, quae a veteri interprete versa, veritati Graecae non satisfacere videbantur, correxi. Deinde Erasmicas periphrases, quibus complures offendi audio, omisi: secutusque sum vetustissima Graecorum exemplaria. Porro praeter interpretationem meam, eandemque simplicissimam, et ipsas phrases quum Graecas tum Hebraicas ad Latinas deflexi: proque mea virili loca non cuius obvia utcumque explanavi...*'

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 8v.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 8v: '*... intime misertus est*'. VUL: '*... misertus est*'.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, sig. Nnn2v: '*Erasmus secutus veterem interpretem servavit sigulare, nam mihi quidem non sit verisimile hoc plurale latinis auribus unquam auditum esse*'.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, fo. 117v. Trapman, 'Delenus', pp. 104-5.

¹²¹ Trapman, 'Delenus', p. 105. e.g. *Ibid.*, fos 78v, 80r.

¹²² *Ibid.*, fo. 58r.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, fo. 84v.

Evangelicals, in fact, were just as keen to supplement or compare Erasmus' New Testament as their conservative peers. Deleen's colleague at the Strangers' church in London, Jan Laski, for example, used the margins of his Erasmian New Testament to offer different translations of the Greek and to gather further testimonies from the Fathers about the texts in question, including Augustine and Chrysostom's different approaches to John 1.¹²⁴ Lancelot Ridley mainly used Erasmus' translation in his *Exposition in the epistell of Iude* (1538); however, he did admit that the 'laste sentence of Iude the olde translacyon hath moore playnly then Erasmus'.¹²⁵ There was likewise no agreement on how to approach Erasmus' more controversial editorial decisions. Deleen and Redman, for instance, preserved the Johannine comma, while Taverner noted that the passage seemed to have been interpolated later.¹²⁶ Redman deployed *poenitentiam agite* in Matt. 3 and 4, while Deleen used *resipiscite*.¹²⁷ Evangelical theology was overlaid onto the texts in different ways. Deleen, for his part, referred to Andreas Osiander's biblical concordance and wrote a long preface extolling the king, the tenets of evangelical faith, and explaining how to resolve seeming disparities in the bible.¹²⁸

Evangelicals, therefore, were just as committed to comparing, correcting and critiquing Erasmus' New Testament. Their judgements encompassed not just a desire to explicate a text in favour of their religious persuasion, but also a wider desire to assess his style, imitate his methodology and copy the layout of his books. Each suggested a different orientation for Erasmus and humanist biblical criticism within the reformation. This accelerated not only the processes by which humanism and the reformation became inseparable, but also the fragmentation of Erasmus' writings into multiple competing, sometimes contradictory units. The following sections will look in greater detail at the ways in which the reformation shaped the reading of Erasmus in England, considering in turn the techniques developed by conservatives and evangelicals to selectively align, edit and reject the scholar's religious works in line with their own ideas on theology and the reformation.

¹²⁴ Queens' College, Cambridge, C.2.9, Erasmus, *Novum testamentum omne* (Basel, 1527), pp. 191-3. Dirk Rogers, 'À Lasco [Laski], John (1499-1560)', ODNB.

¹²⁵ Lancelot Ridley, *An exposition in the epistell of Iude the apostel of Christ* (London, 1538), sig. I8v.

¹²⁶ *The newe Testament in Englyshe and Latyn*, fo. 255v. Deleen, *Novvum testamentum Latinum*, fo. 211v. *The most sacred Bible, whiche is the Holy Scripture*, fo. 89r.

¹²⁷ *The newe Testament in Englyshe and Latyn*, fos 3v, 4v. Deleen, *Novvum testamentum Latinum*, fos 2v, 3v.

¹²⁸ Deleen, *Novvum testamentum Latinum*, sigs. a3r-f2v, f3r.

(ii) Conservatives: reform or reject

By the late 1520s, different paths were opening up for the readers of Erasmus living through the English reformation. For conservatives, many of whom had been on close terms with the scholar, the tension between scholarship and religious loyalty was particularly fraught, since they had often lent their energies and thrown their weight behind Erasmus' work. They were acutely aware of Erasmus' connections to the leaders of the reformation movement in Europe whilst also encountering evangelicals in England who emphasised their debts to him.

Nowhere were these issues as starkly visible as in the circle of Cuthbert Tunstall in the late 1520s and 30s. Tunstall and Erasmus had met in the 1500s.¹²⁹ Their friendship, however, blossomed during Tunstall's long embassy to the Low Countries between 1515 and 1516.¹³⁰ While attending the court of the future emperor, Charles V, Tunstall spent much of his time with Erasmus.¹³¹ The Dutch scholar shared a copy of *De duplici copia* with his English friend and had Tunstall advise on the response to be made to Martin van Dorp's attack.¹³² Tunstall later assisted Erasmus by collating texts for the scholar's second edition of the New Testament.¹³³ Other figures in Tunstall's employ were close to Erasmus. Richard Sparcheford, Tunstall's chaplain, had corresponded with Erasmus since at least 1517.¹³⁴ In 1527, Erasmus sent Sparcheford a copy of his new edition of Chrysostom.¹³⁵ Sparcheford's multi-volume edition of Augustine's works (edited in part by Erasmus) survives now at Hereford Cathedral, where Sparcheford spent much of his time from the 1530s until his death in 1560.¹³⁶

During the 1520s, however, contention began to emerge between Tunstall and Erasmus regarding the reformation. Tunstall had been elevated to the bishopric of London in 1522 and was subsequently transferred to the see of Durham in 1529. During the 1520s, he played a key role in the fight against heresy in England. As early as 1523, Tunstall was urging his friend to 'to grapple after all this time with the hydra-headed monster' and expressed concern that Erasmus' writings might lend aid to heresy.¹³⁷ The Dutchman's response (which survives only in an edited form) suggested instead that aspects of Luther's writings ought to be discussed without condemnation

¹²⁹ Ep. 207, *CWE* 2, pp. 129-33.

¹³⁰ Ep. 332, *CWE* 3, p. 85.

¹³¹ Ep. 475, *CWE* 4, p. 94.

¹³² Epp. 477, 584, *CWE* 4, pp. 99, 368-74.

¹³³ Ep. 597, *CWE* 5, p. 6. See also, Ep. 864, *CWE* 6, pp. 106-7.

¹³⁴ Mordechai Feingold, 'Richard Sparcheford', in *Contemporaries*, iii, p. 269.

¹³⁵ Egbertus Van Gulik, *Erasmus and His Books* (Toronto, 2018), pp. 40, 266.

¹³⁶ Hereford Cathedral, H.1.7, H.1.9-12, H.2.1-5, Augustine, *Opera* (Basel, 1522-9). He may also have inherited an edition of Jerome's works: Andrew Taylor, 'John Leland's Communities of the Epigram', in L. Houghton and Gesine Manuwald (eds), *Neo-Latin Poetry in the British Isles* (London, 2012), p. 24.

¹³⁷ Ep. 1367, *CWE* 10, p. 27.

and that the church was imperilled by clerics who condemn ‘what they do not yet understand’.¹³⁸ In 1527, Erasmus complained that Tunstall offered little support in his fight against the Parisian theology faculty and failed to understand his fraught position in evangelical Basel.¹³⁹ By 1529 the English bishop’s view was starker. He found it hard to account for Erasmus’s refusal to assault the Lutheran heresy more forcefully and laid out a list of his friend’s writings which ought to be corrected in accordance with orthodoxy. Erasmus should remove the slighting references to ceremonies and popular devotion in the *Colloquies*; he should amend the dubious eucharistic views of Origen’s *Commentaries on Matthew* (translated by Erasmus); and he should eliminate the work of Oecolampadius from the edition of Chrysostom, including the Lutheran glosses.¹⁴⁰ The bishop’s trenchant stance was informed by his encounters with evangelicals in England, several of whom considered Erasmus to be an inspiration.¹⁴¹ Members of his household were also contemplating the connections between Erasmus and heresy. Tunstall’s chaplain Robert Ridley, for instance, complained that Tyndale had rendered ‘*penitentiam agite*’ as ‘repent’ in his New Testament, a translation Tyndale claimed was inspired by Erasmus.¹⁴²

It was in the context of the battle against heresy and the reassessment of Erasmus’ writings by Tunstall, in fact, that Ridley came to make a series of notes in his copies of the Dutch scholar’s writings. Ridley was a relative of Tunstall who had studied at Cambridge and Paris, receiving a doctorate in theology by 1518.¹⁴³ During this time he acquired a reputation as a teacher, preacher and theologian and Tunstall soon appointed him as his secretary.¹⁴⁴ He was involved with the anti-Lutheran campaign from its inception and later formed links with continental Catholic apologists such as Johann Dobneck (known as Cochlaeus).¹⁴⁵ Ridley was on good terms with Polydore Vergil, who cast him as a speaker in one of his dialogues.¹⁴⁶ In 1529 he travelled north with Tunstall to Durham. Ridley’s opposition to the royal divorce and supremacy, however, led to his arrest in 1534. He is thought to have died around 1536 while still a prisoner.

Margaret Harvey was the first to detail the remains of Ridley’s library.¹⁴⁷ In a seminal article, she explored his often fraught relationship with Erasmus as traced in the margins of his books.¹⁴⁸

¹³⁸ Ep. 1369, *CWE* 10, pp. 31.

¹³⁹ Ep. 1803, *CWE* 13, pp. 9-27.

¹⁴⁰ Ep. 2226, *CWE* 16, pp. 71-4. Erasmus’ response is: Ep. 2263, *CWE* 16, pp. 165-9.

¹⁴¹ See Thomas Bilney’s answer to Tunstall, *L&P* 5, 373.

¹⁴² BL, Cotton Cleopatra E.V fos 392r-v.

¹⁴³ Richard Rex, ‘Ridley, Robert (d.1536?)’, *ODNB*. Margaret Harvey, ‘Reaction to Revival: Robert Ridley’s Critique of Erasmus’, *Studies in Church History*, 44 (2008), pp. 77-86.

¹⁴⁴ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p. 31.

¹⁴⁵ Rex, ‘Campaign’, pp. 87-8.

¹⁴⁶ Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 40-2.

¹⁴⁷ I am extremely grateful to Dr Harvey for sharing her current list of Ridley’s library with me.

¹⁴⁸ Margaret Harvey, ‘Reaction to Revival: Robert Ridley’s Critique of Erasmus’, *Studies in Church History*, 44 (2008), pp. 77-86.

Ridley owned several of the scholar's editions, including volumes dedicated to the writings of Jerome, Ambrose and Augustine.¹⁴⁹ He also had access to a separate edition of Jerome's letters, either because the book was part of his personal collection (though unsigned) or because he had access to the monastic library at Durham.¹⁵⁰ Since Harvey wrote, a further Ridley book has been uncovered. It is a copy of the *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae* – Erasmus' response to the censure of the Parisian theologians – that now resides at the Huntington Library, California.¹⁵¹ This new volume, which sheds further light on his reaction to Erasmus, deserves to be studied in the context of developments in Ridley's own thinking and that of his patron, Tunstall.

Tunstall and Ridley were keenly interested in patristics and Erasmus' editorial methods. The former owned a copy of Cyprian's writings (1512) in which he made a handful of notes on the lives of Hilary and Origen.¹⁵² The bishop also lent a manuscript of Ambrose to Erasmus to assist the Dutch scholar in his editing of the saint, a fact Ridley recorded in his copy of the final edition.¹⁵³ Not content merely to celebrate Tunstall's association with the volume, Ridley also noted how a section of the book (Ambrose's commentaries on Paul's epistles) was yet to be printed, but that copies of these works could be found 'at the monastery of Canterbury... and in the monastery of the Carmelite brothers in London'.¹⁵⁴

Erasmus' editions of the Church Fathers, however, were by no means uncontroversial. One source of frustration for conservatives was the Dutchman's association with Johann Oecolampadius, a talented Greek scholar who had assisted Erasmus' editions on several occasions and who emerged in the 1520s as the leading light of the Basel reformation.¹⁵⁵ Tunstall had complained about the Swiss reformer's role as early as 1529 and was still publishing tracts against Oecolampadius in the 1550s.¹⁵⁶ Prior to his embrace of evangelism, Oecolampadius had compiled the index to Erasmus' nine-volume edition of St Jerome's writings. Nonetheless, Ridley considered his interventions to be highly suspect and pointedly began adding orthodox statements to his copy. Where the index listed Jerome's complaints about singing in church (one entry reads: 'The singing of some, like the cries of donkeys'), Ridley added that 'Jerome praises songs in the temple, as a manifest proof of true faith'.¹⁵⁷ Other entries were updated to speak more positively of pilgrimages

¹⁴⁹ DCL, D.VII.1-5, Jerome, *Omnia opera* (Basel, 1516); D.VII.23-4, Ambrose, *Opera* (4 vols in 2, Basel, 1527); D.VII.6-11, Augustine, *Opera* (Paris, 1531).

¹⁵⁰ DCL, D.VI.37, Jerome, *Opus epistolarum* (3 vols in 1, Basel, 1524-6).

¹⁵¹ Huntington Library, 342263, Erasmus, *Declarationes ad Censuras Lutetiae vulgatas sub nomine Facultatis Theologiae Parisiensis* (Basel, 1532). I owe my knowledge of this item to Susan Brigden.

¹⁵² DCL, P.V.40, Cyprian, *Opera* (Paris, 1512), below the index.

¹⁵³ Harvey, 'Reaction to Revival', p. 79.

¹⁵⁴ DCL, D.VII.24, sig. A1v: 'que nondum excusa est, extas tamen in monasterio Cantuariensi apud anglicos et in monasterio fratrum carmelitarum lond?.'

¹⁵⁵ Hans Guggisberg, 'Johann Oecolampadius', in *Contemporaries*, iii, pp. 24-7.

¹⁵⁶ Cuthbert Tunstall, *De veritate corporis et sanguinis domini nostri Iesu Christi in eucharistia* (Paris, 1554), fos 56r-113r.

¹⁵⁷ DCL, D.VII.5, p. 44: 'Cantica in templis laudat hieronymus. tanquam vere fidei insigne argumentum'.

or to state plainly that faith without works 'is like circumcision without the observation of the mandates of god'.¹⁵⁸ Ridley also collected information on the authority of the church, the papal supremacy and the authority of bishops, topics which suggest that some of this material may have been destined for Tunstall.¹⁵⁹ Yet Ridley was coming to question not only Erasmus' connections to leading reformers but also aspects of his editorial practice. He was appalled by the scholar's efforts to cast doubt on the canonicity of certain books of scripture, especially when Erasmus based such decisions on stylistic grounds.¹⁶⁰ He fumed at Erasmus' diminution of the papal supremacy, miracles and the monastic life.¹⁶¹ Often, the stages of Ridley's alienation can be read in successive comments in the margins. When Erasmus argued that Jerome had referred to Pope Damasus as the 'bishop of Rome' in his letters, Ridley initially offered only a curt summary. Returning to the passage later, however, Ridley was less passive, writing in the margin that 'on the contrary, the same Jerome in the preface to the four gospels, calls Damasus the high priest. I beseech you, whether the bishop was not also indeed the highest? O I hate the envy towards the pope and the blind apostate Erasmus'.¹⁶² Many of Ridley's later notes, in fact, are mere abuse.

Ridley had studied in Paris and appears to have kept abreast of several attacks on Erasmus emerging from the city's university. He revealed in his one surviving letter that he had been reading Peter Sutor's *De tralatione bibliae*, a work which condemned both vernacular translation and much of Erasmus' biblical scholarship.¹⁶³ With the survival of Ridley's copy of the *Declarationes*, we can also begin to disentangle the threads of his reaction to the apologetic works of Erasmus. One does not have to search far for Ridley's views. On the title page of the *Declarationes*, he left a caustic review of the scholar's 'apologies and defences of errors'.¹⁶⁴ The entire purpose of these works, Ridley contended, was to

persuade the world that the later and more recent doctors of the church contradict the ancients, and that the rites, customs, dogmas and constitutions of the church either do not conform to or are plainly against the scriptures, and to greatly diminish and reduce the power and authority of the same.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 214, 105: 'est ut circumcisio sine observatione mandatorum dei?.'

¹⁵⁹ See the index entries on church authority, the powers of bishops and Peter's status as the chief of the apostles: *Ibid*, pp. 89, 96, 216.

¹⁶⁰ Harvey, 'Reaction to Revival', pp. 80-1.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, pp. 83-6.

¹⁶² DCL, D.VII.1, i, fo. 106v: 'imo ipse hieronymus in praefationem 4. evangeliorum, damasum vocat summum sacerdotem, obsecro, an non etiam episcopus erat et quidem summus? O malignum in pontificem et odio cecum apostatam erasum?.'

¹⁶³ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E V, fos 392r-v. Rummel, *Catholic Critics*, ii, pp. 29-60.

¹⁶⁴ HL, 342263, Erasmus, *Declarationes ad Censuras Lutetiae vulgatas sub nomine Facultatis Theologiae Parisiensis* (Basel, 1532), tp: 'In hoc opere et in omnibus aliis et precipue in apologiis ac defensionibus errorum.'

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*: '... hoc solum illi studio videtur, ut mundo suadeat, posteros et recentiores ecclesiae doctores veteribus contradicere, ecclesiae ritus, mores, dogmata et constitutiones, scripturis, vel non conformari, vel plane adversari, eiusdemque auctoritatem ac potestatem, multum attenuare parvique facere.'

Erasmus' scholarship, then, needlessly exposed discrepancies between the bible, the Fathers and contemporary church practice and writing. All of which led Ridley to the devastating conclusion that 'if [Erasmus] cannot be called an atheist, he may at least most justly be called a sceptic'.¹⁶⁶ Onto this accusation, Ridley poured the details of Erasmus' life, particularly his departure from the monastic life. The Dutchman was a 'deserter', an 'apostate' and a 'persecutor of his own order... reviled by God'.¹⁶⁷

In the margins of the book, Ridley substantiated this character assassination. Like Tunstall, he was aggrieved at the disrespectful tone of the *Colloquies*. When Erasmus argued that the characters in the *Colloquies* were fictive persons, whose views could not be attributed to him, Ridley reacted with scorn.¹⁶⁸ 'With this art', he scribbled in the margin, 'you will permit yourself without impunity to deride under fictive persons the sacrosanct and revered sacraments, rites and ceremonies of the church'.¹⁶⁹ In such passages, Erasmus showed a 'Lucianic contempt' by 'scurrilously mocking divine and pious worshippers'.¹⁷⁰ Ridley even referred Erasmus to the acts of the obscure Council of Tribur (an edition of which had been published by Ridley's friend Cochlaeus), which included an article stipulating punishments for those who used irony to undermine the faith.¹⁷¹ Elsewhere he accused Erasmus of sharing Luther's views on justification. 'We expect', Ridley noted by a passage on human merit, 'that [Erasmus] might say, "without good works faith is not sufficient"; the sly old man does not say this, but he confesses that "without these things the profession of faith is not sufficient", and thus he believes that he has beautifully eluded everyone and escaped remarkably well'.¹⁷² 'If only, Erasmus, you would be hot or cold', Ridley lamented, 'a braver Catholic or openly Lutheran'.¹⁷³ At the very end of the pamphlet, when Erasmus claimed that he was willing to correct his works if they could be shown to be in error, Ridley remained unmoved. 'You always bear this in your mouth', he complained, 'never in your heart... You do not recognise the error but defend it'.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*: 'ut si non atheos saltem scepticus iustissime dici possit.'

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 367: 'transfuga'; 'meminisse debuerat erasmus, olim monachus nunc apostata, et persecutor sui ordinis, maledictum a deo esse...'

¹⁶⁸ Erasmus, *Declarations*, CWE 82, p. 298.

¹⁶⁹ HL, 342263, p. 367: 'Ergo hac arte tibi licebit impune, sacrosanta et reverenda sacramenta, ritusque et ceremonias ecclesiae sub fictis personis impie deridere.'

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*: 'Impia inrisio est, non risus, dios et pios eorum cultores, quos divorum omnium cum tuo luciano contempto, supersticiosos appellas, scurriliter subsannare.'

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* Joannes Cochlaeus, *Acta et decreti concilii Triburiensis* (Mainz, 1525), sig. F3v: 'De eo, si quis aliquem per inlusionem a recte fide subverterit, vel perdiderit, ut dupliciter puniatur.'

¹⁷² HL, 342263, p. 214: 'ubi expectamus quod diceret, sine bonis operibus fidem non sufficere; non hoc dicit callidus veterator, sed quod sine hijs fidei professionem non sufficere, fatetur, sicque putat se pulchre omnes elusisse, et egregie evasisse.'

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 270: 'Utinam calidus esses vel frigidus, erasme, fortis Catholicus aut palam lutheranus...'

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 397: 'hoc semper in ore, numquam in corde geris [or: coneris]... nec agnostis errorem sed defendis.'

On the one hand, therefore, Ridley showed a willingness to update, improve and correct Erasmus' works. Given that many of his books were destined for the community of monks at Durham Cathedral, it may be that he intended to leave an orthodox trail for the brothers to follow in their reading, though as we shall see, the monks were perfectly capable of following their own path. Elsewhere, however, Ridley was moving towards a more radical rejection of Erasmus. By recasting the Dutch scholar as a purveyor of 'shams' and 'disguises' in the *Declarationes*, he aligned himself with several other Erasmian critics, not least Luther, who had likewise dismissed Erasmus as a sceptic.¹⁷⁵ Whether Tunstall shared all these views is hard to say. In his displeasure at the tone of the *Colloquies* or his annoyance at elements of Erasmus' patristic programme, however, he certainly shared the concerns of his chaplain.

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Ridley represented an extreme rejection of Erasmus. Most conservatives, however, remained open to a more judicious reworking of the Dutch scholar's legacy. Tunstall recommended that Erasmus 'put his works back on the anvil' and purge them of indiscretions.¹⁷⁶ Likewise, Nicholas Harpsfield lamented that Erasmus had not followed the counsel of Thomas More 'to retract many things he had written'.¹⁷⁷ Since the scholar had not carried out this work himself, however, Harpsfield was aware that he and others must 'either utterly... abolish' some of Erasmus' writings 'or at least to redress and reform them'.¹⁷⁸ By the 1540s, in fact, some European printers had taken to editing Erasmus' writings to address points of concern. The Parisian printer Guillaume Roland, for instance, preserved Erasmus' *Vita Chrysostomi* in his edition of the saint's works. But when Erasmus complained about the morals of the religious orders, the printed marginalia simply stated that the Dutchman was a 'reviler of monks'.¹⁷⁹ The call to reform rather than reject Erasmus left readers with a variety of options for accommodating the Dutch scholar with a range of conservative viewpoints.

One of the more creative strategies involved returning to Erasmus' devotional writings in order to express loyalty to traditional doctrine and lament the current state of the church. This was the approach of the somewhat obscure cathedral cleric, William Bowerman. Bowerman had

¹⁷⁵ Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, *Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus' Civil Dispute with Luther* (Cambridge, MA, 1983).

¹⁷⁶ Ep. 2226, *CWE* 16, p. 72.]

¹⁷⁷ Nicholas Harpsfield, *The Life and Death of Thomas More*, ed. E. Hitchcock and R. W. Chambers (London, 1932), p. 109.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Chrysostom, *Opera, quatenus in hunc diem latio donata noscuntur* (5 vols, Paris, 1546), i, sig +6v: 'Erasmus monachomastix'.

studied at Oxford in the early sixteenth century, studying both civil and canon law up until the early 1520s.¹⁸⁰ Around this time he became a canon of Wells Cathedral and was acting as subdean by 1534, a role which he occupied until 1561, when he was relieved of his duties due to great age.¹⁸¹ Like many cathedral clergy, he was also appointed to other benefices in the period, including to the parish of Wiveliscombe, Somerset. From our knowledge of his library, he was evidently an admirer of Erasmus. He owned a slim copy of the *Moriae encomium* during his time as a canon of Wells Cathedral, in which he made a handful of now badly trimmed notes on the folly of marriage, philosophy and theology.¹⁸² In Erasmus' *Letter to Dorp*, appended to the volume, he also identified Henry Standish as the target of one of the scholar's diatribes.¹⁸³ He also received Erasmian volumes from his clerical and university contacts. In 1539, the priest John Litelskill gave Bowerman copies of Erasmus' *Paraphrases* and the Dutchman's edition of the works of Ambrose.¹⁸⁴ Bowerman himself later gave two Erasmian works to his 'cosin Mr Bysse of Batcombe' in his will of 1572.¹⁸⁵

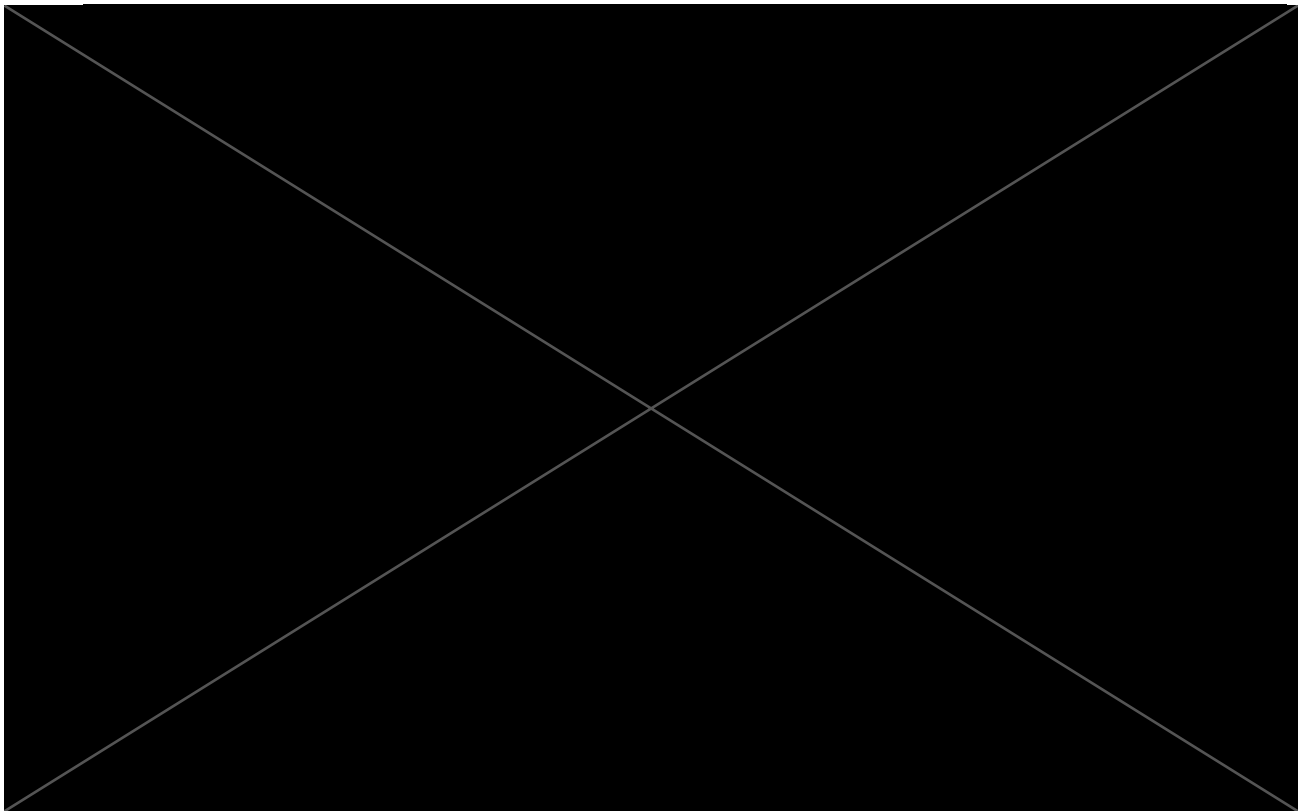


Fig. 8: Bowerman's Erasmian Prayers: (Left) WA, MS 9, final leaf. (Right) WA, CD.38 Loose leaves that were removed from MS 9. Note the identical damp and glue damage on top of leaves.

¹⁸⁰ BRUO:1501-40, pp. 63-4.

¹⁸¹ *L&P* 7, 1024. See *CCEd*: 'William Bowerman [45403]'.

¹⁸² SJC, Oxford, HB4/1.b.2.1.15, Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1522), end leaves: 'William Bowreman wellenis ecclesiae Canonici'. *Ibid*, pp. 128, 262, 265.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 399.

¹⁸⁴ *Somerset Medieval Wills, 1531-58*, ed. F. Weaver (3 vols, London, 1901-5), iii, p. 53.

¹⁸⁵ TNA, PROB 11/53/335.

The most remarkable item in his collection was a set of Latin prayers by Erasmus that Bowerman copied around the year 1553 and which survive now as loose leaves with their original blind-tooled binding.¹⁸⁶ Though it has gone unnoticed, these leaves were originally part of a fifteenth-century psalter (also at Westminster Abbey), the last page of which also contains a prayer by Erasmus in Bowerman's hand, with identical red ruling.¹⁸⁷ This also explains why the loose prayers contain a warning from Bowerman to his parishioners in Wivelscombe that 'The clean book of psalms without dirt shall stand open to all the singers in the choir, which [book] the vicar, William Bowerman, recently delivered and handed over to your church'.¹⁸⁸ Evidently, the loose prayers (which once stood at the front and back of the psalter) were deemed too fragile to be rebound and were stored separately at Westminster, after which their connection was forgotten.

Bowerman's decision to embellish the psalter with Erasmian prayers suggests that he considered the texts to be devotionally compatible. Indeed, just as the psalter contained the usual calendar of festivals, so Bowerman selected prayers which suited the devotional rounds of the day and year. There were prayers for those 'who have just been woken, to keep them from sleep', 'at dawn to Christ' and four to be read in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter.¹⁸⁹ Prayers for a time of pestilence, for relatives and for true piety were also included. First published in 1535, Erasmus' prayers became popular with both conservatives and evangelicals.¹⁹⁰ Katherine Parr had translated some for an English audience and Otto Brunfels had included them in a set of devotional pieces for Protestants.¹⁹¹ Nonetheless, there was a hint of religious conservatism in Bowerman's selections. He included Erasmus' appeals to the Virgin and for the protection of chastity, telling choices for a cleric in mid-Tudor England, alongside two prayers for those about to receive holy communion.¹⁹² By 1553, Bowerman had lived through the religious turmoil of Henry VIII's and Edward VI's reigns and would shortly witness Mary's efforts to reverse the tide. No wonder, then, that the final prayer included by Bowerman asked 'for a consensus of dogma' and likened the state of the contemporary church to the disorder of tongues following the Tower of Babel.¹⁹³ Like

¹⁸⁶ WA, CD.38, Erasmus, *Manuscript prayers* (c.1553). Bowerman signed his name on the last leaf with the date 1553.

¹⁸⁷ WA, MS 9. Not only is there another prayer in Bowerman's hand, but the psalter also contains water and glue damage which matches with the pages of CD.38 and the original binding. Both use vellum and have been ruled in red ink by the original scribe of the psalter.

¹⁸⁸ WA, CD.38, fo. 2v: 'Omnibus in choro cantantibus iste patebit/ psalmorum mundus et sine faece liber/ quem modo vicarius v[est]rae ecclesiae Gulielmus/ nomine bouremanus tradidit atque dedit'.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, fos 2r, 5r-7r: 'mane a somno experrecti', 'diluculo ad christum', 'Tempore veris' 'In Aestate', 'In Autumno', 'In hyeme'.

¹⁹⁰ Hilmar Pabel, *Conversing with God: Prayer in Erasmus' Pastoral Writings* (Toronto, 1997), pp. 155-82.

¹⁹¹ Micheline White, 'Katherine Parr, Translation, and the Dissemination of Erasmus's Views on War and Peace', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 43:2 (2020), pp. 67-91.

¹⁹² WA, CD.38, fos 2v, 3r 4r-v: 'pro custodia pudicitie', 'Sumpturi corpus dominicum', 'Ad virginem matrem'. WA, MS 9, end leaves: 'Accedentis ad sacram Synaxim'.

¹⁹³ WA, CD.38, fo. 7r: 'Pro consensus dogmatum': '... ut confundas linguas pseudapostolorum, qui coniurati substriunt impiam turrem Babel...'.

Henry Parker, Lord Morley, before him, Bowerman created a harmony of purpose between traditional devotion and Erasmus, such that prayers could come to express a concern for the direction of religious reform.

Bowerman's approach worked well for Erasmus' devotional writings. The scholar's controversial writings, however, often forced conservatives to take a more discriminating approach. The remains of William Chedsey's library provide a glimpse of how conservatives could read these controversies with profit while guarding themselves against error. Chedsey had been admitted to Corpus Christi College, Oxford in 1529. He became a fellow in 1533 and proceeded to study divinity for the following decade (BD 1542; DD 1546).¹⁹⁴ In the 1530s and 40s he gained a reputation as an opponent of religious innovation. He was made a chaplain to Edmund Bonner in 1536 and the pair would work closely together to oppose reform in Bonner's London diocese in later years.¹⁹⁵ In 1538, he aroused the suspicion of Cromwell and Cranmer, who had heard reports that Chedsey wished to 'keep the youth of [Corpus Christi] from the knowledge of God's Word'.¹⁹⁶ Likewise Chedsey took a swipe at his evangelical colleagues when preaching at Paul's Cross, lamenting the rise of a new brand of evangelical preacher who entered the pulpit with 'new & straunge thynges to speke'.¹⁹⁷ His career suffered under Edward VI, with Chedsey opposing Peter Martyr Vermigli at the Oxford debates and later finding himself imprisoned for seditious preaching.¹⁹⁸ Ecclesiastical preferment returned under Mary. Chedsey disputed with Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer at their trials in Oxford and was made president of Corpus Christi. His fortunes went into reverse again on Elizabeth's accession. He was imprisoned for recusancy in 1562 and committed to the Fleet where he spent the remaining fifteen or so years of his life.

A handful of books formerly in Chedsey's possession survive today, though they have been widely dispersed.¹⁹⁹ Seven imprints in six different repositories can be linked Chedsey.²⁰⁰ Three are Erasmian titles, all of which date to the 1530s. Chedsey's copy of the *Enchiridion* survives at York Minster and is bound with a copy of Erasmus' *De praeparatione ad mortem*.²⁰¹ Since the book survives in an Oxford centrepiece binding of the later sixteenth century, it is impossible to know whether

¹⁹⁴ Luke MacMahon, 'Chedsey, William (1510/11-1577?)', *ODNB*.

¹⁹⁵ Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* (New Haven, 2009), p. 121.

¹⁹⁶ *LeP* 13:2, 561.

¹⁹⁷ *Two notable sermones lately preached at Pauls Crosse Anno 1544* (London, 1545), sig C4r. Brigden, *London*, p. 357.

¹⁹⁸ MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, p. 119.

¹⁹⁹ It is unclear exactly when Chedsey's books were dispersed, though his books ended up in the possession of several important Elizabethan and Jacobean collectors: John Foxe, Edmund Geste and William Branthwaite.

²⁰⁰ The non-Erasmian items are: New College, BT3.143.13, John Major, *Quartus Sententiarum* (Paris 1509). Brasenose, Latham A.7.10, J. Arboreus, *Theosophiae* (Paris, 1540). Lambeth Palace, **D67. Bonaventura, *Autoritatem sanctorem libri quatuor* (Cologne, 1542). Salisbury Cathedral, ZC2.6.4, G. Postel, *Compositio omnium dissidoiorum circa aeternam veritatem...* (Paris, c.1540).

²⁰¹ York Minster Library, XV.M.11.(1) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Basel, 1535); (2) Erasmus, *De praeparatione ad mortem* (Basel, 1535).

the second item was original to the book in Chedsey's day or added by a later owner.²⁰² We can be more certain that Chedsey owned the contents of a volume now in the library of Gonville and Caius. This is a copy of Erasmus' *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae* bound together with a compilation of several other Erasmian apologies, all of which were printed in 1532.²⁰³ Contemporary notes are scattered throughout both imprints which compare favourably with both Chedsey's signature and marginalia in other volumes that passed through his hands.²⁰⁴

Chedsey's notes in the *Declarationes* and apologies are generally brief. They usually either reiterate the text or highlight passages of interest with marginal brackets, *nota* marks, flags and other symbols. As might be expected of a fellow of Corpus Christi, Chedsey showed an awareness of the literary properties of Erasmus' writing, regularly flagging, for example, Erasmus' use of adages.²⁰⁵ Several highlighted passages were clearly motivated by his knowledge of English figures and customs. He noted how Erasmus had discussed William Grocyn's views on the authenticity of Dionysius the Areopagite and the scholar's defence of his discussion of popular devotion, especially his criticisms of the cult of St Thomas Becket.²⁰⁶ Most importantly, Chedsey grappled with Erasmus' views on ceremonies, devotion and clerical learning. His notes often reflect an urge to understand the history of the church and its practice from apostolic times to the present day. The earliest Christians, Erasmus contended, did not need rules on fasting, prayer or tithes.²⁰⁷ Indeed, Christ had called the teachings of the Pharisees 'tasteless wine' (a phrase which Chedsey reiterated).²⁰⁸ Chedsey left a flurry of notes in the *Scholia to the letter to the bishop of Basel* on various church decrees which had subsequently fallen into disuse.²⁰⁹ In a sermon at Paul's Cross in 1544, Chedsey had bemoaned the declining standards of clerical leadership. In the margins of his books he did likewise, highlighting Erasmus' assault on those theologians 'who are more concerned with dignities than with Christ, who handle the word of God with little integrity because of greed for money, who distort to curry favour with popes or other princes...'.²¹⁰ A passage berating the priests who neglect the sacrament of the altar in favour of hunting, warfare and gambling, was similarly noted.²¹¹

²⁰² *Ibid.*(2), sig. B2v: there is a badly trimmed note somewhat like Chedsey's hand.

²⁰³ G&C, M.24.43.(1) Erasmus, *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae* (Basel, 1532); (2) Erasmus, *Dilutio eorum quae Iodocus Clichoveus... Epistola... de delectu ciborum... In elenchum Alberti Pii brevissi, a scholia* (Basel, 1532).

²⁰⁴ c.f. the use of *nota* and flag symbol in NC, BT3.143.13, fo. 94r.

²⁰⁵ G&C, M.24.43.(1), p. 205; (2), p. 37.

²⁰⁶ G&C, M.24.43.(1), pp. 266, 367 Chedsey referred to the many shoes of Becket: '*divae Thomae calcens*'.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 197: '*rapidum vinum*'.

²⁰⁹ G&C, M.24.43.(2), pp. 157-8.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 271. *CWE* 82, 247. The Toronto edition has 'the favour with bishops and other princes', but Chedsey's text reads: '*gratiam pontificum aut aliorum principum*'.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

If Chedsey marked such passages with seeming approval, he was nonetheless impressed by Erasmus' critics. The Paris theologians, for example, provided a ringing defence of liturgical singing and music in response to the Dutch scholar's claims that churches were filled with discordant noise rather than devotion. The Faculty, in fact, beat Erasmus at his own game, providing an extensive list of biblical precedents for singing. 'A hymn', Chedsey wrote in the margin, 'is nothing other than the praise of God with song', though he also noted the Paris theologians' complaints against excessive polyphony.²¹² Several portions of text marked by Chedsey also reveal an interest in other aspects of the church service such as collects, readings and psalm singing.²¹³ More striking still was his reaction to the exchanges between Erasmus and Paris on the question of how to punish heretics. Chedsey, for instance, bracketed off the Parisian opinion that 'if those who corrupt and falsify money, which supports the life of our bodies, are justly executed, there is even stronger reason to rightly deprive heretics of their lives, since they corrupt the faith which is the basis of our spiritual life'.²¹⁴ Erasmus had tried to counter that proposition by arguing that the gospels had called for Christians to avoid heretics, not burn them. The Parisian theologians, however, argued that 'the civil laws, in conformity with natural law (which is not revoked by the gospel), justly decree that they should be punished with death and be consumed by fire'.²¹⁵ Chedsey summarised their view in the margin as 'the civil law decrees that heretics ought to be burnt'.²¹⁶ Chedsey actively supported the policy of burnings under Mary, vigorously pursuing heretics in Middlesex and earning himself an infamous place in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*.²¹⁷ Despite his general interest in Erasmus' discussion of church practice, therefore, he was likely also filtering out Erasmus' more irenic proposals, in favour of a more aggressive stance on heresy.

(iii) Evangelical Experiments

Evangelicals had hoped that Erasmus would come out in favour of the reformation. Those hopes, however, were to be disappointed in the 1520s. Under increasing pressure from conservatives, Erasmus published *De libero arbitrio* in 1524, followed by a further assault on Luther, entitled *Hyperaspistes* (released in two parts between 1526 and 1527).²¹⁸ Luther was not the only

²¹² G&C, M.24.43.(1), pp. 210, 212: '*hymnus nihil aliud quam laud dei cum canticō*'.

²¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 209, 223-4.

²¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 239. *CWE* 82, 219.

²¹⁵ *CWE* 82, 223.

²¹⁶ G&C, M.24.43.(1), p. 243.

²¹⁷ Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, p. 49, 100, 130, 165-6

²¹⁸ Charles Trinkaus, 'Introduction', *CWE* 76, pp. xi-cv.

evangelical to feel the force of the Dutchman's pen. Erasmus issued pamphlets attacking Ulrich von Hutten, Leo Jud, Conrad Pellican and others in the same years.²¹⁹ The growing annoyance with Erasmus in English evangelical quarters can be sensed in William Roye and Jerome Barlow's *Rede me and be nott wrothe* (1528).²²⁰ Not only had Erasmus tried to prove the validity of free will, 'A thyng nott possible to be / After wyse clerkis estimacion', but he had also vacillated on topics such as the presence of Christ in the Mass, 'lest he shulde lose his pension'.²²¹ Tyndale, too, bemoaned how Erasmus 'maketh of litle gnattes great Elephants, and lifteth up above the Starres whosoeuer geveth him a litle exhibition'.²²² The implication was clear: Erasmus had betrayed the cause in favour of old friends, false theology and a pension.

Yet English protestants did not abandon Erasmus. Tyndale, as Mark Rankin has shown, 'agreed with Erasmus when it suited him to do so', especially on topics such as the importance of vernacular scripture, auricular confession or the fallibility of the virgin.²²³ By the 1540s, George Joye was adamant that Erasmus had affirmed 'onely faith to iustifye' in the *Paraphrases*.²²⁴ Nicholas Wyse thought they also supported the abolition of auricular confession.²²⁵ This vision of Erasmus usually created a canon of the scholar's works – the *Paraclesis*, the *Exomologesis* or the *Paraphrases*, for example – while ignoring much or all of his controversial writing. This was accompanied by a subtle reworking of Erasmus' biography and connections. John Foxe neglected to mention that Erasmus had attacked Luther in the 1520s, but did detail the Dutch scholar's controversial discussions with Frederick, duke of Saxony (c.1519).²²⁶ Despite the frosty relations between Erasmus and Johann Oecolampadius during their lifetimes, John Bale recalled that Erasmus had called the Swiss reformer 'a verye pure theologyane'.²²⁷ When John Carion's chronicle reached an English audience in 1550, it commended Erasmus as 'a special instrument of God' who 'hath done no small service with his writinges towards the setting furth of the Gospell'.²²⁸ In the hands of evangelicals, then, the Erasmian legacy was selectively trimmed and refashioned, even as the scholar continued to edit and publish new works.

This section asks what early evangelicals did with Erasmus' books in the light of their developing religious loyalties. Understanding their reading habits is no easy task. Some of the

²¹⁹ See the relevant essays in *CWE* 78 and *Contemporaries*.

²²⁰ Jerome Barlowe and William Roye, *Rede me and be nott wrothe*, ed. Douglas Parker (Toronto, 1992).

²²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-3.

²²² William Tyndale, *Preface to Genesis*, in *Doctrinal Treatises and Introductions to Different Portions of the Holy Scriptures*, ed. Henry Walter (Cambridge, 1848), p. 395.

²²³ Mark Rankin, 'Tyndale, Erasmus, and the Early English Reformation', *Erasmus Studies*, 38:2 (2018), p. 149.

²²⁴ George Joye, *The refutation of the byshop of Winchester's derke declaration of his false articles* (London, 1546), fo. 57r.

²²⁵ Nicholas Wyse, *A consolacyon for chrysten people to repayre agayn the lordes temple* (London, 1538), sig. C3r.

²²⁶ *A&M*, iii, p. 456.

²²⁷ John Bale, *A mysterye of iniquyte containyd within the heretycall genealogye of Ponce Pantolabus* (Antwerp, 1545), fo. 25v.

Hans Guggisberg, 'Johannes Oecolampadius', *Contemporaries*, iii, pp. 24-27.

²²⁸ John Carion, *The thre bookes of cronicles* (London, 1550), pp. 216-7.

earliest cells of evangelical reading were broken up by the authorities; their books and papers seized. When books have survived, they are often unrevealing. One can, for example, trace several Erasmian books to the community of early evangelicals at Cambridge and court. John Skip, Anne Boleyn's almoner, owned an edition of the *Enchiridion*, though he recorded no thoughts in its margins.²²⁹ Dr Simon Heynes may have bought his *Paraphrases* of several Pauline epistles from Garrett Godfrey in Cambridge.²³⁰ Yet while Heynes would later emerge as a key supporter of the royal divorce and the English reformation, his *Paraphrases* contains only one marginal note (seemingly by another reader) stressing that 'we cannot be reborn [*resurgere*] unless Christ should drive away the shadows'.²³¹ In 1561, Edward Crome, one of England's earliest sacramentarians, bequeathed his Erasmian New Testament and *Annotations* to Gonville and Caius.²³² Neither volume contains a single note. Even annotated volumes associated with later figures are difficult to place in time. Given the binding and imprint date of his edition of the writings of Jerome, James Pilkington may have made the handful of notes in its pages while a student in Cambridge, though they might just as easily date from his period as bishop of Durham.²³³ Such difficulties mean we must rely on a variety of sources to build a picture of early evangelical reading, such as official investigations, contemporary bindings and provenance as well as commonplace books and annotated volumes.

The investigations into England's earliest cells of evangelicals suggested that they were closely following the debates between Erasmus and his European opponents. In 1528, an investigation into Francis Denham revealed a network of evangelicals in Paris, Calais and the Low Countries. Denham had studied at Cambridge and the Inns of Court before travelling to France for further study.²³⁴ John Leland praised his talents and he was said to be 'addicted to Greek'.²³⁵ But he had also spent time with George Constantine, Simon Fish, William Gonnell and Thomas Bilney in Antwerp, translating François Lambert's *De causis excaecationis multorum seculorum* into English.²³⁶ While travelling through Calais, Denham fell into conversation with a priest, Philip

²²⁹ G&C, M.5.18, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Basel 1518).

²³⁰ Bridwell Library, Texas, AEN4977, Erasmus, *Paraphrases in aliquot Pauli apostoli epistolas* (Basel, 1523). Bound with Godfrey's panels: RO.18 and HE.31. See, *Godfrey*: 631-3.

²³¹ Bridwell Library, AEN4977, Erasmus, *Paraphrases*, no pagination (Eph. 5). C. Knighton, 'Haynes, Simon (d.1552)', *ODNB*.

²³² G&C, F.3.1, Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522). G&C, F.4.27, Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522). Susan Wabuda, 'Equivocation and Recantation during the English Reformation: The "Subtle Shadows" of Dr Edward Crome', *JEH*, 44:2 (1993), pp. 224-42.

²³³ Chetham's, Nn.20.4-7, Jerome, *Omnia opera quae extant* (9 vols in 4, Paris, 1534). David Marcombe, 'Pilkington, James (1520-76)', *ODNB*.

²³⁴ *L&P* 4:1, 1143. Baker, *Men of Court*, i, p. 619. Baker places Denham at Lincoln's Inn, however, he is also named at the Middle Temple, see Brigden, *Wyatt*, p. 597, n. 139.

²³⁵ Brigden, *Wyatt*, p. 126.

²³⁶ TNA, SP 1/48 fos 185r-v. TNA, SP 1/51 fos 146r-v.

Smith, with whom he discussed poetry and Luther.²³⁷ The pair exchanged the books of Luther and Erasmus, especially *De libero arbitrio*, *Hyperaspistes* and Luther's *De servo arbitrio*.

The same year, the authorities also revealed a network of evangelical book smuggling between Oxford and London.²³⁸ Embarrassingly, the activities centred on Thomas Wolsey's newly founded Cardinal College in Oxford. Thomas Garrett, the parson of All Hallows Honey Lane, London, had ingratiated himself with several of the students at the college, providing them with copies of works by Luther and others.²³⁹ More worryingly, a senior canon, John Clerk, had read the Pauline epistles with several younger canons, seemingly expounding them along evangelical lines.²⁴⁰ Most of the books had been stored with John Radley, a singer in the college, and Anthony Dalaber, a canon. They included several works by Erasmus' opponents, including *De servo arbitrio*, Hutten's *Expostulatio*, in which the reformer savaged Erasmus for his failure to support the evangelical movement, and a copy of Lambert's *In Oseam commentarii*, a work which dismissed Erasmus' defence of the free will as a 'pestiferous dogma'.²⁴¹

Since the authorities listed only those books deemed heretical, the impression is of a highly hostile attitude towards Erasmus. Those charged with investigating, however, were concerned that heresy might be most attractive to those studying humane letters. Garrett was said to have targeted those in Oxford who were skilled in the 'greke, ebrew and the polyte latyn tonge and pretendyd he wold lern ebrew and greke' in order to spread more controversial material.²⁴² Rather than rejecting the Dutch scholar outright, then, this circle may have been exploring the connections between Erasmus and his continental opponents.²⁴³ A copy of the Dutch scholar's *Paraphrases* on various Pauline epistles, for instance, can be connected to one of the accused men of Cardinal College.²⁴⁴ This volume contains three imprints of paraphrases on Romans, Corinthians and Galatians, printed in Basel and Louvain, and bound together by the Cambridge bookseller, John Siberch.²⁴⁵ The binding initially makes this an unlikely candidate for a book in Oxford. In the back flyleaves, however, is the inscription: 'Mr Beatis of Cardinall Colledge Oxon'.²⁴⁶ This can only refer to William Betts (often spelt 'Beatis'), one of the canons '*primi ordinis*' at the college who was

²³⁷ TNA, SP 1/48 fos 195r-196v.

²³⁸ Brigden, *London*, pp. 113-16.

²³⁹ TNA, SP 1/47 fo. 16v.

²⁴⁰ TNA, SP 1/47, fos 16r-17r.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.* fo. 11r. Lambert, *In... Oseam... commentarii* (Strasbourg, 1525), p. 104: '*Heu quam pestiferum Christi Ecclesiae fuit, hoc de libero arbitrio dogma, quod nihil vere libertatis habet.*'

²⁴² TNA, SP 1/47 fo. 16v.

²⁴³ See Anthony Dalaber's account of reading Erasmus alongside Luther, Lambert and Oecolampadius: *A&M* (1563), iii, pp. 660-1.

²⁴⁴ BL, C.66.c.20.(1) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in duas epistolas Pauli ad Corinthios* (Louvain, 1519); (2) Erasmus, *In epistolam Pauli ad Galatas Paraphrasis* (Louvain, 1519); (3) Erasmus, *In epistolam Pauli ad Romanos paraphrasis* (Basel, 1518)

²⁴⁵ Oldham, *EB&B*, p. 50: HE.b(4) with 'J.S.' initials, on imprints between 1508-1520.

²⁴⁶ BL, C.66.d.20, end leaves.

suspected of involvement in the heretical circle in 1527-8 and went on to act as a chaplain to Anne Boleyn and the king.²⁴⁷ A connection with Betts would explain how a book bound in Cambridge ended up in Oxford, for Betts had been a student at Gonville Hall, Cambridge, in the early 1520s, before he was transferred to Oxford in 1525 to staff Wolsey's new foundation.²⁴⁸ He subsequently returned to Cambridge in 1531 as a fellow of Corpus Christi College.²⁴⁹ Its Pauline material may have appealed to those eagerly reading the scriptures with Clerk. A later reader of Betts' *Paraphrases* made the connection between Erasmus and reform even more explicit, copying in information from Augustine and Bucer on free will and criticising 'pastors who love the world more than God', all while making comments on the Greek derivation of certain Pauline words.²⁵⁰ Others appear to have travelled a similar path from humanism to evangelism. William Woodruff left his Oxford lodgings suddenly in 1529, prompting the authorities to search his rooms. Among his books were Greek and Hebrew grammars, several Erasmian educational tracts and a New Testament, as well as Erasmus' attack on Hutten, the *Spongia* (1523). While Woodruff would soon return to Oxford, by 1536 he had left for Zurich to study the bible with Heinrich Bullinger and others.²⁵¹ English evangelism in these years was often an ambiguous combination of humanist learning, biblicism and continental connections. The ambiguities were not lost on the figures themselves. Betts was said to have escaped trouble at Cardinal College in 1528 because he was 'a wittie man' who had ensured that no illicit books were found in his possession.²⁵² By 1530 he was back lecturing to the college's canons as reader in humane letters.²⁵³

Evangelicals experimented with combinations of Erasmus and his Lutheran peers. This approach helps to explain one of the more intriguing evangelical survivals from this period. Harsnett I.a.12 is a *Sammelband* of both printed and manuscript material, much of it related to Wittenberg, and bound in pigskin, a technique commonly used by bookbinders in the Holy Roman Empire and Switzerland.²⁵⁴ Frustratingly, the binding has been rubbed such that the tools cannot be identified. The volume begins with Erasmus' introduction to the reading of the bible, the *Ratio verae theologiae* (Basel, 1519). This is followed by the scholar's translation of Paul's Epistle to the

²⁴⁷ BRUO: 1501-40, p. 47. TNA, SP 1/47, fo. 102r.

²⁴⁸ ACAD: 'Bettes, William, (1502-35)'. In February 1526/7 Cardinal College paid 11/12s for 'the expenses of Dr Thornton in conveying of sundry scholars from Cambridge to Oxford', L&P 4:2, 3536.

²⁴⁹ BRUO: 1501-40, p. 47. L&P 4, 1762.

²⁵⁰ BL, C.66.d.20.(3), p. 56. BL, C.66.d.20.(1), sigs g4r, h4r: 'pastores mundum magis quam deum amantes...?.'

²⁵¹ MacCulloch, *Cromwell*, pp. 366-9.

²⁵² A&M (1583), viii, p. 1056.

²⁵³ See Chap. 5 for the similarly ambiguous connections between another college canon, John Toker, and evangelism.

²⁵⁴ ASL, Colchester, Harsnett I.a.12.(1) Erasmus, *Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae* (Basel, 1519); (2) *Epistola Pauli ad Romanos D. Erasmo interprete: rerum theologicarum, et summa, et methodum continens* (Wittenberg, 1520); (3) *E Lvciano. Hercules Gallicus. Ex Thucydide. Oratio quaedam contra leges* (Wittenberg, 1520); (4) *Exercitamentum Graecae lectionis* (Wittenberg, 1520); (5) Philip Melanchthon (ed.), *Plena eruditionis epistola divi Pavli ad Galatas* (Wittenberg, 1520); (6) MS Latin translation of Galatians, with an argumentum and Latin poem 'Christiane sapientie oracula' (c.1520).

Romans, not in its more common Basel or Louvain imprint, but one produced in Wittenberg for the lectures of Philip Melanchthon. Three Greek texts come next, all published in Wittenberg in 1520, including Melanchthon's Greek text of Galatians. To this, the book's first owner and probable compiler has written out a Latin translation of Galatians with a preface commending Christian liberty and salvation through faith alone.²⁵⁵ The contents indicate that this volume was compiled by a student of Melanchthon's in Wittenberg, most likely in the early 1520s when the reformer lectured on the texts of Romans and Galatians.²⁵⁶ Not only does it gather several of the texts printed for Melanchthon's students in the period, but the manuscript translation of Galatians and its marginal notes exactly match those found in other surviving copies of these texts in the period.²⁵⁷ Remarkably, the provenance of the volume suggests that it soon passed from Wittenberg to England. The first title page in the volume was inscribed by 'Leonard Dulcensus, physician of the most illustrious queen of France and duchess of Suffolk'.²⁵⁸ Dulcensus or Dulse was a physician in the household of the duke and duchess of Suffolk, Charles Brandon and Mary Tudor, from at least 1524 (the surviving accounts refer to him as 'Master' or 'Doctor' Leonard).²⁵⁹ His inscription suggests that he acquired the book prior to Mary's death in 1533. The book then passed into the hands of several unidentifiable English owners – 'Thomson', 'Burkins(?)', 'Thomas Scughed' and 'Richardus' – before passing into the collection of Samuel Harsnett by the start of the next century.²⁶⁰

How and why had Dulse acquired such a volume? Dulse was not himself English and had studied in Europe. In 1530, he commuted ten years of study abroad into a Bachelor of Medicine at Oxford.²⁶¹ Where he studied is a mystery, though he could be the Leonard Delanus of Utrecht who matriculated in the faculty of medicine in Wittenberg in 1524.²⁶² The Suffolks' household was certainly not averse to a mixture of Erasmian and reformed piety. Thomas Linacre and John Palsgrave had travelled to France with Mary during her marriage to Louis XII and the Dowager

²⁵⁵ I.a.12.(6), fo. 1r.

²⁵⁶ Timothy Wengert, 'Philip Melanchthon on Bible Translation and Commentaries', *Lutheran Quarterly*, 33:1 (2019), pp. 26-45. Idem, 'Philip Melanchthon's 1522 "Annotations on Romans" and the Lutheran Origins of Rhetorical Criticism', in Richard Muller and John Thompson (eds), *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MC, 1994), pp. 118-140.

²⁵⁷ See the identical interlinear translation and notes produced by another reader in Badische Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe, Cod. Karlsruhe 387.(8), Philip Melanchthon, *Plena eruditionis Epistola Divi Pauli ad Galatas* (Wittenberg, 1520), fos 2r-3r. Such similarities of marginal commentary can surely only be the product of attending Melanchthon's lectures or of the circulation of notes among his students. The scribe of Harsnett I.a.12.(6) also heavily annotated Harsnett I.a.12.(2) and the notes are closely related to Melanchthon's 1522 *Annotations on Romans*.

²⁵⁸ I.a.12.(i), tp: '*Liber Magistri Leonardi dulcensis phisichi illustrissime regine francie necnon ducise suffocie bene merito*'.

²⁵⁹ Steven Gunn, *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, c.1484-1545* (Oxford, 1988), p. 64.

²⁶⁰ See the inscriptions: Harsnett I.a.12, front and back flyleaves. See, Francesca Galligan, *The Harsnett Library: A Report* (2012): https://www1.essex.ac.uk/history/documents/research/RT3_Galligan_2012.pdf.

²⁶¹ BRUO: 1501-50, p. 179.

²⁶² C. Foerstemann (ed.), *Album Academiae Vitebergensis ab a. Ch. MDII usque ad a MDLX* (Leipzig, 1841), p. 117.

Queen later became a hub for the dedication of works of Erasmian piety in England.²⁶³ Following Mary's death, Brandon's second wife, Catherine Willoughby, injected a more reformed atmosphere. Indeed, by the 1540s the Suffolks were employing another physician, Dr Marten Kyrnbeck, who most certainly had studied in Wittenberg.²⁶⁴ Dulse's only contribution to the volume itself is a set of rough notes in the blank end-pages commenting on the hardships of the life of a courtier and that 'whoever shall desire primacy on earth, shall find confusion in heaven' (attributed to Chrysostom, though likely taken from Gratian's *Decretals*).²⁶⁵ Nonetheless, the volume's contents suggestively harmonised the outlooks of Erasmus and Melancthon. Indeed, the *Ratio* not only provided practical advice for the reading of scripture; it also argued that 'salvation comes to us only through the righteousness that is from faith'.²⁶⁶

English evangelism was nurtured by a variety of European writers and contacts. Historians have frequently framed the evangelical reception of Erasmus in the light of his contest with Luther. However, there were other evangelical writers whose work overlapped with Erasmus' in useful ways. As Christine Christ-von Wedel has noted, while Erasmus repudiated many of the Swiss reformers, they felt no such compunction, happily plundering his works for supportive material.²⁶⁷ To English onlookers, a figure such as Oecolampadius, Erasmus' former assistant and co-editor, offered a means of developing Erasmian exegetical techniques along reformed lines. The martyr, John Bradford, for instance, studied Erasmus and Oecolampadius' writings. Bradford came to theology late in life.²⁶⁸ In the 1540s he had served as vice-treasurer to the English army in France with Sir John Harington. He returned to England in 1547 and dramatically converted to evangelical belief. He was soon studying divinity at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and became a popular preacher under Edward VI. A small selection of Bradford's books has survived, most of them revealing his intense interest in the Old Testament.²⁶⁹ His copy of Erasmus' Psalm commentaries was bound in the mid sixteenth century in Cambridge and probably dates from Bradford's time at Pembroke.²⁷⁰ He also owned two of Oecolampadius' commentaries which survive in a single

²⁶³ David Loades, 'Tudor, Mary (d.1533)', ODNB. Gunn, *Brandon*, pp. 103-4.

²⁶⁴ *Album Academiae Vitebergensis*, p. 138. 'Marten Kyrnbeck, Vienen.' enrolled in arts and medicine in 1530.

²⁶⁵ Harsnett I.a.12, endleaves: '*Quicumque desideraverit primatum in terra, inveniet in coelo confusionem*'. In *Corpus Juris Canonis Decret.* Part I, D.40 c.12.

²⁶⁶ Erasmus, *System of True Theology*, CWE 41, p. 589.

²⁶⁷ Christ-von Wedel, *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, pp. 183-202.

²⁶⁸ Andrew Penny, 'Bradford, John (c.1510-1555)', ODNB.

²⁶⁹ Those not discussed below: Manchester, Central Library, BR264.038P1, *Psalterium Hebraeum, Graecum & Latinum* (Basel, 1548); MUN.7.C.2.1, *Biblia Sacra* (Paris, 1552). The editors of the Parker Society were also aware of an English New Testament with meditations by Bradford: *The Writings of John Bradford*, ed. Aubrey Townsend (2 vols, Cambridge, 1848-53), i, p. 248.

²⁷⁰ The Morgan Library, New York, E3 103 E, Desiderius Erasmus, *Exactissimae enarrationes, in aliquot Psalmos quos ordine suo inuenies* (Antwerp, 1524-5).

contemporary binding.²⁷¹ Bradford made a handful of notes in his Erasmian commentaries. These concerned the titles or headings of the psalms and how they might be interpreted. As Erasmus explained

Most of the psalms are marked by some kind of heading; like new stars they light our path as we approach the threshold of the mystical meaning, they act as a key, as it were, and unlock the outer door leading to the hall, from which we then proceed to the inner rooms.²⁷²

Bradford underlined the title's role as a 'key' and wrote '*sensus mysticus*' in the margin.²⁷³ He noted how the headings could refer to the 'form of melody', the 'importance of the subject-matter', the 'season', 'history' or 'historical circumstances' (*res gesta*) of the psalms. He also highlighted the suggestion of St Hilary that psalms without titles be linked with preceding ones. Bradford annotated with similar intent in Oecolampadius' commentary on the Book of Malachi. He recorded how previous writers like Origen had considered Malachi an angel and the various meanings of 'the burden of the word' in Latin and Hebrew.²⁷⁴ This layer of reading, however, soon gave way to an interest in Oecolampadius' theology: how the 'ungrateful deny God' and how the failure to acknowledge him as the author of all good things, leads to 'the blindness of the flesh'.²⁷⁵ Bradford, one suspects, could easily see the value of both Erasmus and Oecolampadius' philological and historical expertise, while finding more resonance in the latter's confessional standpoint.

Sometimes evangelicals took a more active approach to Erasmus' theology, creating commonplace books into which they could organise his writings under theological headings. The commonplace book of Anthony Hornigold is one witness to such processes, albeit a complex one.²⁷⁶ All we know about Hornigold is that he was a scholar at Eton in the early 1530s who then headed to King's College, Cambridge, in 1532, taking his BA in 1535 and becoming a fellow in the same year.²⁷⁷ He repeatedly signed the back of a commonplace book now in the British Library.²⁷⁸ This document, however, was clearly used over the course of many years by several readers. Many of the initial headings and index entries were written in red and black ink and Hornigold also signed his name in red and black. A subsequent reader has washed out many of the extracts and overlaid

²⁷¹ Chetham's, MUN.7.C.4.120.(1) Oecolampadius, *In Daniele Prophetam* (Basel, 1530); (2) Oecolampadius, *In postremos tres prophetas... commentarius* (Basel, 1527). For a similar binding, see: Selwyn, *Geste*, p.245, fig.20.3.

²⁷² Erasmus, *Commentary on the Second Psalm*, CWE 63, p. 75.

²⁷³ Morgan Library, E3 103 E, sigs e6v-f1r.

²⁷⁴ Chetham's, MUN.7.C.4.120.(2), fos 66r-v: '*Malachiam fuisse angelum Aggaeum, et Ezram, putant scriptores*'; '*onus verbi*'.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*, fos 67r-v: '*Ingrati negant Deum*'; '*Caecitas carnis*'.

²⁷⁶ BL, Add MS 16173, *Theological Commonplace Book*, s. xvi.

²⁷⁷ ACAD: 'Anthony Hornigold'. He could be the Anthony Hosegood/Housegood who went on to hold the vicarage of Bampton: CCEd: 'Anthony Hosegood [97908]'.

²⁷⁸ BL, Add MS 16173, fo. 183v.

them with new ones. The notebook, in fact, is a palimpsest of at least three hands, one of which dates to the later Elizabethan period, since their extracts include Thomas Lupton's *A persuasion from papistry* (1581).²⁷⁹ The entries of the notebook which conform closest to Hornigold's handwriting, dating perhaps from the late 1530s or 40s, cull Erasmus' works for evangelical sentiments. In a section on 'works neither save nor justify', the reader has gathered a series of biblical quotations (Job 13, Isaiah 57, Gal. 1, Gal. 5, Ps. 142, Luke 17 and Deut. 9), alongside two quotations from Erasmus' *Precatio dominica* and the *Paraphrase on Matthew*. The latter, in particular, was used to emphasise that salvation does not lie within human power or 'the painstaking industry of philosophers, or the superstitious religion of gentiles, or the diligent observation of the Mosaic law'.²⁸⁰ Hornigold's commonplaces are undoubtedly difficult to date. They are indicative, nevertheless, of how reading habits were adapted in the reformation to create a vision of Erasmus in line with the 'new learning'.²⁸¹

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Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury from 1532, did not personally know Erasmus, though the Dutchman did enquire about his pension soon after Cranmer's appointment.²⁸² The archbishop's knowledge of the scholar was instead acquired through extensive reading. Cranmer owned at least 36 imprints either authored, edited or with contributions from Erasmus.²⁸³ These included 12 of Erasmus' patristic works, eight works of religious controversy and five biblical texts or commentaries. Cranmer's collecting habits were mirrored by those in his household. His long-time friend and chaplain, John Whitwell, also owned Erasmus' *Annotations* and editions of Irenaeus, Ambrose and Chrysostom.²⁸⁴

One volume to which Cranmer dedicated a great deal of attention was Erasmus' 1516 edition of Jerome's works. This now resides at Lambeth Palace and contains extensive notes from Cranmer in his earlier hand.²⁸⁵ Many of these are intently focused on Erasmus' editorial practice. In the preface to the first volume, Cranmer has underlined or reiterated in the margins the scholar's

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 166v.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, fo. 92v. The reader supplied a page reference (fo. 153) which is closest to the edition of the *Precatio* printed in 1540: Otto Brunfels, *Precationes biblicae* (Paris, 1540), fo. 155.

²⁸¹ See, Richard Rex, 'The New Learning', *JEH*, 44:1 (1993), pp. 26-44.

²⁸² Ep. 2815, *CWE* 20, p. 40.

²⁸³ Selwyn, *The Library of Cranmer*, pp. 30-5, 119-20.

²⁸⁴ These volumes passed to Matthew Parker: CCC, Cambridge, Parker Library, E.3.5, Erasmus, *Annotations* (Basel, 1527); B.4.4, Irenaeus, *Opera* (Basel, 1534); B.4.11.12, Ambrose, *Opera* (Basel, 1527); B.2.20-24, Chrysostom, *Opera* (Basel, 1539).

²⁸⁵ LPL, D65.(J3) [*], Jerome, *Omnium operum* (9 vols in 4, Basel, 1516-25). Cranmer may only have owned tomes 1-5. For Cranmer's early hand see: BL, C.81 f.2, John Fisher, *Assertionis Lutheranae Confutatio* (Antwerp, 1523).

method for comparing the oldest manuscripts and his plea that readers not accept texts without scrutiny.²⁸⁶ In the second volume, containing a series of spurious texts, Cranmer likewise summarised how ‘Erasmus collects here many things both sacred and profane which were falsely added by different authors’.²⁸⁷ Erasmus’ innovative biography of Jerome was extensively marked, with Cranmer highlighting aspects of Jerome’s education and travels.²⁸⁸ Likewise, when Cranmer read *De libero arbitrio* (most likely in the 1520s) he found little to disagree with, noting the dangers of those ‘addicted’ to their own opinions and how it would be counterproductive ‘to prostitute’ all opinions to all ears.²⁸⁹ He seemed content, too, with Erasmus’ suggestion that theologians should avoid speculation on certain theological subjects, creating a list of such topics by striking through the first letter of the relevant sentences:

whether god foreknows anything contingently; **w**hether our will accomplishes anything in things pertaining to eternal salvation; **w**hether it simply suffers the action of grace; **w**hether what we do, be it of good or ill, we do by necessity or rather suffer to be done to us...²⁹⁰

As time passed, however, hints of Cranmer’s growing evangelism can be sensed in his copies of Erasmus. In the *Institutio principis Christiani*, he alighted on a passage where the scholar complained of monks as idlers, usurers and brothel keepers (among other things). To this, Cranmer added an interlinear gloss to explain that Erasmus was criticising ‘the farmers of taxes’ and the ‘vendors of luxurious clothes’.²⁹¹ When a second edition of Jerome’s writings made its way into his library, Cranmer showed far less concern for the humanist editorial practices.²⁹² He, like so many of his peers, was instead concerned to reorientate the volume around the burning questions of the day, highlighting passages, for example, which argued against human merit, purgatory and idols.²⁹³

By the later 1530s, Cranmer’s household were busy organising his reading into a series of theological notes and papers in an effort to compare biblical passages, the Church Fathers and more recent writers on a variety of topics. One of the most impressive collections – the so-called ‘Great Commonplaces’ – was probably begun around the time of the Bishops’ Book (1537), though Cranmer’s secretaries continued to expand them up until the end of Henry’s reign.²⁹⁴

²⁸⁶ LPL, D65.(J3) [*], i, sig. α4r.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, ii, fo. 2v.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid*, i, sigs α5r-β7v.

²⁸⁹ BL, 697.b.3.(1), sigs A3r, A5r. For the dating of these notes, see MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp. 30-31.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*, sig. A4v. Cranmer struck through the first letter of each clause, here indicated with a bold letter.

²⁹¹ BL, C.81.b.25, Erasmus, *Institutio principis christiani* (Basel, 1519), p. 111: ‘*vectigalium emptores*’, ‘*venditores vestium delicatarum*’.

²⁹² BL, 476.G10-13, Jerome, *Omnia opera* (Paris, 1534).

²⁹³ BL, 476.G.11, v, fos 33v, 70r, 74v.

²⁹⁴ BL, Royal MS 7 B XI-XII, *Cranmer’s Commonplace books*, c.1535-50. Ashley Null, ‘Thomas Cranmer’s Doctrine of Repentance’ (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1994), pp. 6-20. MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp. 190-1.

Material was grouped into over fifty headings, including discussions of the authority of scripture, unwritten traditions, ceremonies, sacraments, justification, faith and freewill.²⁹⁵ Many of the extracts can be traced back to books within Cranmer's library where the corresponding passages have been underlined.²⁹⁶ Large sections of the Great Commonplaces were given over to comparisons of biblical verses or patristic writers. When more contemporary views were sought, they were usually those of reformed figures such as Luther, Bucer and Calvin or polemical extracts from medieval writers, rather than those of Erasmus. The notes on penance, for instance, began by emphasising in distinctly Erasmian fashion that the Greek word *metanoia* meant 'to change one's mind... or to return to one's senses'.²⁹⁷ Thereafter, however, material was gathered from a host of other authorities such as Anselm, the Master of the Sentences and Calvin.²⁹⁸ Erasmus, in fact, is only a small presence in these volumes. Cranmer and his team of secretaries included extracts from the scholar's work on only four topics: the sacraments of marriage, extreme unction and the Mass, along with notes pertaining to vows of chastity.

The sacraments were the object of prolonged episcopal debate in the late 1530s, beginning with the decision in the Ten Articles of 1536 to reduce the traditional seven sacraments to only three.²⁹⁹ By the following year, Cranmer was looking to reduce the number to two (the Eucharist and baptism).³⁰⁰ His views, however, were opposed by a group of conservative bishops, among them John Stokesley, one of Erasmus' former patrons, who argued for the reinstatement of all seven. No doubt the politics of the episcopal bench explain Cranmer's recourse to Erasmus in the Great Commonplaces. Indeed, several of the extracts come from a single source: Erasmus' attack on Edward Lee, archbishop of York and another opponent of Cranmer's views.³⁰¹ The longest excerpts arose from Erasmus' discussion of marriage. While Erasmus believed that marriage numbered among the sacraments, he was unconvinced that its sacramental status could be proved by any biblical text, especially Ephesians 5:32.³⁰² The view, as we have already seen, caused some consternation to conservatives in the early 1520s. While Cranmer's secretaries did record Erasmus' opinion that marriage was a sacrament, most of the extracts set out the scholar's more controversial reflections on the history of the church, the Fathers and philology. The first extract thus noted that 'no mention of matrimony was made by Dionysius who set out to discuss the sacraments of

²⁹⁵ BL, Royal MS 7 B XI, fos 4r-5r.

²⁹⁶ David Selwyn, 'Books with Manuscript: The Case of Thomas Cranmer's Library', *Electronic British Library Journal*, 23 (1997), pp. 47-59.

²⁹⁷ BL, Royal MS 7 B XI, fo. 303: '*significat mentem mutare... resipiscere...*'.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 327-50.

²⁹⁹ MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp. 161-6. Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, pp. 238-43.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 188-9.

³⁰¹ BL, Royal MS 7 B XI, fos 171-73.

³⁰² See Payne, *Theology of Sacraments*, pp. 104-125.

the church with careful interpretations of their individual rites and ceremonies'.³⁰³ Neither Jerome nor Augustine nor Jovinian ('the defender of matrimony') had referred to marriage as a sacrament.³⁰⁴ Strictly speaking, moreover, the Greek word used by Paul to describe marriage did not mean 'sacrament' but rather 'hidden or secret'.³⁰⁵ The apostle had thus used it in connection to a range of matters, not merely the sacraments. After this came several similar extracts from Erasmus' response to Lee.³⁰⁶ Of most value to Cranmer from this second source was the support Erasmus found in the medieval scholastics for his views. Peter Lombard, for example, had noted that marriage could not be defined as a sacrament 'until it is agreed that it effects a particular grace that is conferred by prescribed words and rites; otherwise it is merely one of the number of things that are signs of something holy'.³⁰⁷ Erasmus pointed to several other medieval commentators who like Lombard doubted whether grace was conferred by marriage. Such views, therefore, were fully in keeping with 'the decree of the catholic church or the custom and position of the Roman church'.³⁰⁸

For Cranmer, then, Erasmus' writings provided a compelling blueprint for revoking marriage's sacramental status by demonstrating its lack of textual and historical support. The archbishop and his secretaries scoured the scholar's writings for discussions of biblical passages in contention or for pithy summaries of the patristic and medieval commentators. In the process, however, they cast aside Erasmus' distinctive theological position – that marriage is a sacrament but does not confer grace – in favour of an iconoclastic reading of his works. The same approach to the Dutch scholar's ideas was employed in the sections on the Mass and extreme unction. The Great Commonplaces gathered material from the *Annotations* on Mark 6 and James 5 to explain how the apostolic practice of anointing the sick with oil was different from the practice of extreme unction in the modern church.³⁰⁹ Regarding the Mass, it was noted that Erasmus had believed that the early church had read from the scriptures and prayed prior to the taking of communion. Elsewhere, a space was left for an extract from Erasmus' *Apology against Alberto Pio* on vows of celibacy and chastity.³¹⁰ Though the compiler never finished this entry, there was a great deal in

³⁰³ BL, Royal MS 7 B XI, 171r: '*Nam quod obijcitur a nonnullis, a dionisio qui ex professo tractat de sacramentes ecclesiasticis, singulorum ritus, ac caerimonias, diligente explicans, nullam matrimonii factam mencionem...*'. Erasmus, *Annotationes*, CWE 58, pp. 209-11.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid*: '*nec apud Ioninianum, qui patronus erat matrimonij, vsque de sacramenti vocabulo sit mencio*'.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, fo. 171v: '*arcanum et secretum*'.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, fos 172r-173v. Erasmus, *Responsio ad annotationes Lei*, CWE 72, pp. 296-303.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid*, fo. 172v: '*Petrus Lombardus. li. 4. dist. 1a. non constabit matrimonium proprie dici sacramentum, nisi constiterit esse causam gratiae peculiaris, que prescriptes verbis et ritibus confertur, sed ?tam de numero eorum que sacre rei sunt signa...*'

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, fo. 173r: '*Atque ideo si quis idem sentiat, non facere adversus decretum ecclesiae catholicae, aut consuetudinem ac mentem Ecclesiae Romanae, cum horum opinionem non reprobatur*'.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, fo. fo. 226v

³¹⁰ BL, Royal MS 7 B XII, fo. 69v; CWE 84, pp. 319-33.

Erasmus' apology that would have appealed to the married Cranmer, namely the Dutchman's suggestion that 'it might be more beneficial even for priests to practise holy wedlock with an unstained bed in a holy and pure way'.³¹¹ Like Hornigold before him, then, Cranmer was trying to arrange Erasmus' disparate comments on doctrinal matters into a more coherent picture.

The sections on freewill, grace and justification in the Great Commonplaces contained no excerpts from Erasmus' writings. The archbishop, however, did toy with the possibility of construing the Dutchman's works in favour of reformed opinions in a set of notes on justification he compiled around the year 1543.³¹² In them, Cranmer arranged biblical quotations alongside excerpts from the Fathers and medieval commentators to demonstrate aspects of the doctrine of justification by faith alone. There are no quotations from evangelicals and Erasmus is the latest author cited. The passage from the *Paraphrase on Romans* is cited to demonstrate that works merit nothing in salvation: 'To these, who purely and simply trust in Christ, faith offers this, that they are held to be righteous, commended nothing for observing the law, but for faith alone'.³¹³ In order to create the impression of theological harmony, however, Cranmer abridged the line, which in reality ended by proposing a far more nuanced view of the relationship between faith, free will and grace: '... thus it becomes a matter of free will not of servitude, that we believe in Christ'.³¹⁴ In Cranmer's surviving copy of the *Paraphrases*, this truncated proposition about faith, along with several other relevant passages, has been underlined. As David Selwyn has pointed out, these red-ink markings are almost certainly the work of Cranmer and his team as they compiled various notebooks.³¹⁵ Moreover, the passages highlighted in the *Paraphrases on Romans* are alike in their effort to exaggerate Erasmus' solafideism. Righteousness, one underscored passage reads, could be achieved 'through faith and trust in Jesus Christ, through whom alone true righteousness is conferred...'.³¹⁶ The new law, another suggests, 'demands nothing except faith in the Son of God'.³¹⁷

Cranmer, like many of his peers, reworked Erasmus in line with contemporary evangelical opinion. In the Great Commonplaces and elsewhere, the Dutch scholar could be presented as a subverter of the sacraments or as a supporter of justification by faith alone. Yet there was also a

³¹¹ Erasmus, *Apology against Alberto Pio*, *CWE* 84, p.323.

³¹² LPL, MS 1108, fos 58-67. Reproduced in Thomas Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556*, ed. John Cox (Cambridge, 1846), pp. 203-11.

³¹³ *Ibid*, p. 207. Erasmus, *Paraphrase on Romans*, ed. J. B. Payne Albert Rabil, Jr and Warren Smith, Jr, *CWE*, 42 (Toronto, 1984), p. 27.

³¹⁴ BL, 3913.f.15, Erasmus, *Tomus primus[-secundus] paraphraseon D. Erasmi Roterodami in Nouum Testamentum* (2 vols, Basel, 1524), ii, p. 22.

³¹⁵ Selwyn, *Library of Cranmer*.

³¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 20. Erasmus, *Paraphrase on Romans*, *CWE* 42, p. 25.

³¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 20-21.

degree of uncertainty about Erasmus' place in the canon. In the notes on marriage, he was sandwiched between Calvin and the medieval lawyer Guillaume Durand.³¹⁸ Was Erasmus, then, the first reformed thinker? Or was he the last in a line of earlier authorities? Perhaps most importantly, Erasmus' writings were not merely easy reference works but models of theological scholarship. When Cranmer wished to consider the merits or otherwise of divorce, for instance, he turned to his copy of the *Annotations* (1535) and the scholar's long notes on 1 Cor 7:36.³¹⁹ There, he underlined or briefly annotated the views of the Fathers, especially Origen, and considered how scripture might be adapted to human customs or how the church's practice had varied over time.³²⁰ Erasmus' interpretation did not always win out. But theologians like Cranmer nevertheless felt compelled to follow in his scholarly footsteps.

(iv) Into English:

Tyndale's *Enchiridion* and the reading of Erasmian translations

The reception of Erasmus in early modern England was deeply affected by the greater availability of his writings in English. As Lucy Wooding has stressed, the translation of Erasmus was a conduit 'for the many shades of religious attitudes in these formative years of Reformation'.³²¹ Many of these works were closely connected to struggles at court. Cromwell's circle produced a series of translations which aligned Erasmus with the royal supremacy, obedience and anticlericalism. Thomas More harnessed the English press to defend Erasmus' reputation. These translations, like commonplace books or marginalia, extracted individual works and sentiments from Erasmus' oeuvre and repackaged them in light of contemporary concerns. Despite the potential for disagreement, it is striking how many evangelicals from William Roye and Leonard Cox, through to Miles Coverdale and John Olde, took on the task of translating Erasmus. Such efforts not only speak to the efforts to confessionalise Erasmus, but also from a deeper urge to communicate with the faithful.

Perhaps the most famous and debated of Erasmian translators was William Tyndale. In 1523, he translated the *Enchiridion* into English for his patrons, Sir John and Anne Walsh of Little Sodbury.³²² Tyndale was a tutor in the Walshes' household but had found time to debate the merits

³¹⁸ BL, Royal MS 7 B XI, fos 171r-173v.

³¹⁹ Anton Weiler, 'Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam on Marriage and Divorce', *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 84:1 (2004), pp. 149-197.

³²⁰ CUL, Young.25, Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum omne* (Basel, 1535), pp. 467-79. Cranmer made several notes on divorce in 1547 in relation to the William Parr case, see: MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p. 367.

³²¹ Wooding, 'Erasmus and the Politics of Translation', p. 144.

³²² David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 63-74.

‘of Luther and... Erasmus’ and ‘of divers other controversies and questions upon the Scripture’.³²³ The *Enchiridion*’s assault on ceremonialism and monasticism and its powerful scriptural message no doubt recommended the text to Tyndale. One major sticking point, however, remains: Has Tyndale’s *Enchiridion* survived? In 1533, John Byddell published an anonymous translation of the work, printed for him by Wynkyn de Worde. In the 1930s and 40s, John Gee and James Mozley argued that the edition must have been based on Tyndale’s translation, since Byddell was well connected to the evangelical community in London and the translator had handled biblical passages in remarkably similar ways to Tyndale in his New Testament translation.³²⁴ The attribution, however, has not garnered universal approval. In particular, scholars have disagreed about the extent to which literary and stylistic comparison can be used to prove authorship.³²⁵ Alternative candidates have been proposed using the same methods while other evangelicals, such as Thomas Arthur, are said to have translated the work in the same years as Tyndale.³²⁶ Speculation increased following the re-emergence of a manuscript of the English *Enchiridion* (now British Library Add MS 89149), the colophon of which states that it was ‘translatid oute of latten into englishe in the yere of our lorde god mvcxxiiij’, exactly the year in which Tyndale is said to have worked.³²⁷ The text of this translation lacks Erasmus’ preface to Paul Volz, but otherwise, is near-identical to the English *Enchiridion* printed in 1533, albeit with minor omissions, additions and copying errors. Moreover, the marginalia in the manuscript are frequently longer and include several which were never printed. All of these factors suggest that this manuscript was not the proof-text for the 1533 edition but that it circulated independently of the copy from which De Worde worked.

Since so much commentary has focused on the question of authorship, little attention has been given to the physical evidence of this manuscript and what it can tell us about the reception of Erasmus in sixteenth-century England. The first significant detail relates to its production. Frustratingly, there is only the beginning of a scribal signature (*‘Amen quod’*) to which no name is attached.³²⁸ The scribe’s habits, however, suggest that they were not regularly employed in

³²³ *Ac&M* (1570), viii, p. 1264.

³²⁴ J. Gee, ‘Tyndale and the 1533 English *Enchiridion* of Erasmus’, *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 49 (1934), pp. 460-71. J. F. Mozley, ‘The English *Enchiridion* of Erasmus, 1533’, *The Review of English Studies*, 20:78 (1944), pp. 97-107. McConica, *English Humanists*, pp. 145-6.

³²⁵ Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani: an English version*, ed. Anne O’Donnell (Oxford, 1981). Devereux, *Checklist*, p. 15. Douglas Parker, J. F. Mozley’s ‘The English *Enchiridion* of Erasmus, 1533’: Some Qualifications’, *Notes and Queries*, 18:6 (1971), pp. 210-21.

³²⁶ For the suggestion that the work might be by Nicholas Udall, see, Daniell, *Tyndale*, p. 71. John Bale, *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae* (Basel, 1557), pp. 709-10. c.f. Tyndale’s translation of ‘*opuscula Lutheri et Erasmi*’, *ibid.*, pp. 658-9 and John Lambert’s translation of ‘*Erasmi opuscula quaedam in patrium sermonem*’, pp. 711-12.

³²⁷ BL, Add MS 89149, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, c.1523, fo. 144v. Brian Cummings, ‘William Tyndale and Erasmus on How to Read the Bible: A Newly Discovered Manuscript of the English *Enchiridion*’, *Reformation*, 23:1 (2018), pp. 29-52. The watermarks suggest that the copy was made close to 1523.

³²⁸ BL, Add MS 89149, fo. 144v.

compiling long literary or devotional manuscripts. Though they endeavoured to write an elaborate gothic hand in both the body of the text and the marginalia, the application of the letter forms is uneven and increasingly so as the work progresses.³²⁹ On several occasions the scribe slips into a secretary hand more common to the period, especially in the marginal notes. Additionally, some of the marginal glosses are far from the passages of text they explain, and an entire page had been left blank.³³⁰ Other features intimate that this copyist may have been more familiar with legal documents. Strapwork initials of varying quality are used throughout the text, a form of decoration typically associated with scribes.³³¹ While the text sometimes indicates the end of a clause or sentence with a virgule, elsewhere the scribe simply enlarges the first word of a new sentence, a technique more commonly seen in wills, writs and other administrative documents. This, therefore, is not a deluxe manuscript but a competent copy on paper without colour or illumination. The scribal profile is not out of keeping with the evidence regarding the production of Tyndale's *Enchiridion*. Indeed, in 1528, Humphrey Monmouth, an evangelical draper in the city of London, confessed that he had had several manuscript copies of the *Enchiridion* made.³³² Monmouth would certainly have called upon the services of scribes and other legal writer in his day-to-day affairs.³³³

The marginalia appended to the translation suggest that the translator was writing for an audience unfamiliar with classical literature. In the first few pages, for instance, they offered detailed explanations of figures such as Hercules, Cephalus, Achilles, Hector, Scylla and Charybdis.³³⁴ The translator also endeavoured to turn aspects of Erasmus' erudite Latin into something more recognisable to an English reader. When Erasmus spoke of a Greek symposium, the translator proposed instead 'a pastyme to gither at the taverne or alehowse'.³³⁵ Likewise, a fool will always accuse a wise man of being 'as mad as a bedlem man'.³³⁶ Occasionally they even parsed Latinate English words for the reader in the margin. 'Incogitable is that which cannot be comprehendid with mans Reason', reads one.³³⁷

³²⁹ C.f. with the gothic hand of BL, Harley MS 6561, Jacques Lefèvre D'Étaples, *Epistres et Evangiles des cinquante et deux semaines de l'an* (before 1533), which is far more consistent.

³³⁰ See the placement of the note on the 'many causes why a christen man ought to be a good comforth and to haue confidence': BL, Add MS 89149, fos 7v. For the blank page: *Ibid*, fo. 103v.

³³¹ Hilary Jenkinson, *The Later Court Hands in England: From the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century* (New York, 1969), pp. 105-8.

³³² *LeP* 4:2, 4282.

³³³ See Brigden, *London*, pp. 106-9.

³³⁴ BL, Add MS 89149, fos 1v-2r, 5r, 8r.

³³⁵ *Ibid*, fo. 2v.

³³⁶ *Ibid*, fo. 20v. C.f. the use of 'bedlam' in Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, in *Works of English Reformers*, i, p. 218.

³³⁷ BL, Add MS 89149, fo. 86v.

The marginalia also consistently drive home the connection between the *Enchiridion* and the writings of the apostle Paul ('Paule is a verye good capiten of o[u]r religion', 're[a]d paule' and 'erasmus makith a coment upon paule').³³⁸ On one occasion, the translator used a reference to the apostle to launch into a lengthy note (omitted from the printed version), covering two pages and discussing the Pauline notion of charity:

God biddith us love eche one other as we love ourselff. Pawle, which understod the mynde of crist and the treu order of charitie, to make the[e] perceyve the treue menyng of crist, comparith crist and christen men to one body, so that crist be the hed of that body & we the members, & behold what unytie, what quyetnes, what care, what love, what affeccion, is amonge the membres of one body of eny one towarde a nother; when on[e] be Sik all be Sik; when one sorowith all soroweth; what one felith all doth fele, what so ever is don to all. Purvey indifferently, there is comen care no singularite; the stomak receyveth for all; the armes defend all; the fete bere all; if one be hurte all be hurte; all seke Remedy; there is no disdayne, no envy, no hate, but of siknes and infirmytie which every membre hatith aswell in eny other, as in hym self. This order of charitie willith crist to be amonge us. So lovid he us and, not as som saie love thy self best, so shulde we every one love other in crist, that is to saie, in sure feith, brenyng [i.e. burning] love, fervent hope of the thinges which crist promesed us.³³⁹

The prose here is layered with biblical references (e.g. 1 Cor 12:12 and Ps. 133:1) and a stylish verve for repetition. It also lays an emphasis on God's promises to mankind in a way which is highly resonant of Tyndale's later theology.³⁴⁰ On two further occasions, the marginal notes explain the Pauline concept of adoption, which Erasmus refers to in the *Enchiridion*. 'Adopcion', one proposed, 'when one is a made a nother mans heire not by birth but of grace & favor of hym which of his free will & of kyndnes chose hym to be his heire'.³⁴¹ Later 'Adopcion' is defined as 'when a man is chosen by fre will to be heire of that whereof he hath no title' and referred the reader to the previous note.³⁴² Tyndale, too, felt it necessary to gloss the word 'adopcion' in his 1534 New Testament and his later writings speak of man as an 'heir of God'.³⁴³

The marginal notes, therefore, indicate that the translator – quite possibly Tyndale – was keen both to explicate classical and biblical references and to stress the connections between the *Enchiridion* and Pauline theology. As we have seen, evangelicals from Betts to Cranmer were similarly interested in Erasmus' commentaries on Paul. Evangelicals would continue to promote

³³⁸ *Ibid*, fo. 78v, 144r

³³⁹ *Ibid*, 6v-7r. Punctuation added.

³⁴⁰ Carl Trueman, *Luther's Legacy: Salvation and English Reformers, 1525-56* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 88-9.

³⁴¹ BL, Add MS 89149, fo. 66v.

³⁴² *Ibid*, fo. 78r, 78v.

³⁴³ William Tyndale, *The new Testament*, William Tyndale (Antwerp, 1534), fo. 228v: 'Adopcion] that is the inheritaunce promised by grace'. The theme of being an 'heir of god' runs through Tyndale's later writings, e.g. Tyndale, *Wicked Mammon*, fo. 15r-v.

the text into the middle decades of the century, with both Miles Coverdale and John Gough producing abridged or shortened versions of the *Enchiridion* for the English market.³⁴⁴ Nevertheless, in its printed form the English *Enchiridion* remained a flexible confessional document. In 1538, all references to the pope were removed and, three years later, ten mentions of friars and monks were expunged too, only to be reinstated in the editions printed under Mary.³⁴⁵ Most strikingly, as Anne O'Donnell has noted, in the later Henrician editions five lines on the subject's duty to obey the prince were inserted.³⁴⁶ Given that the long expository note on charity was never printed, Byddell and De Worde may have massaged the text in order to avoid the wrath of the authorities and to appeal to a broad reading public. Indeed, despite the connections between the printing industry, religious reformers and figures at court, we should not forget that printers were usually toeing a fine line between profit, political necessity and religious conviction.³⁴⁷ Their picture of Erasmus, therefore, was often targeted at multiple audiences.

A case in point are the two editions of Erasmus' *De esu carniū* produced by Thomas Godfray in 1533 and 1534 against the backdrop of the Reformation Parliament.³⁴⁸ Erasmus had written *De esu carniū* in 1522 following the furore surrounding the consumption of meat in Lent by several evangelicals in Basel.³⁴⁹ The tract both defended the use of certain ceremonies such as fasting, tracing their origins to Christ himself, whilst also inveighing against the mass of accumulated religious ordinances. Though originally a private missive for the city's bishop, the work was quickly printed and initiated instant debate. Several conservative figures at the universities of Louvain and Paris argued that the pamphlet was a tacit endorsement of Lutheran doctrines. Erasmus's response was to write several apologies and to print a second edition of *De esu carniū* with justificatory notes. When Godfray published the English translation, however, there was no mention of either controversy or notes. Instead, *An epistell concernyng the forbedyng of eatyng of flesshe, and lyke constitutyons of men* balanced calls for reform, with warnings for the avoidance of evangelical excess. The tract explained how open contempt for ceremonies betrayed 'a leude mynde, lytel regardyng or setting by the autorite of the common offycer & ruler' and censured those who 'troubleth the order in a common welth'.³⁵⁰ It also attacked evangelicals for their appeals

³⁴⁴ Miles Coverdale, *A shorte recapitulacion or abrigement of Erasmus Enchiridion* (Antwerp, 1545). *A godly booke wherein is containyd certayne fruiitfull rules* (London, 1561).

³⁴⁵ See the collations in O'Donnell, *Enchiridion*.

³⁴⁶ O'Donnell, *Enchiridion*, pp. xxxvii-xxxix. Elizabeth McCutcheon, 'Erasmus, *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*: An English Version: 1', *Moreana*, 52:201/2 (2015), pp. 332-44.

³⁴⁷ Peter Blayney, *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London, 1501-1557* (2 vols, Cambridge, 2013), i, pp. 277-85.

³⁴⁸ Alex da Costa, 'Selling Forbidden Books: Profit and Ideology in Thomas Godfray's Printing', *Journal of the Early Book Society*, 19 (2016), pp. 125-48.

³⁴⁹ Denis Drysdall, 'Introduction', *CWE* 73, pp. xxii-xxix.

³⁵⁰ *An epystell unto the reverende father & excellent prince, Christofer bysshop of Basyle, concernyng the forbedyng of eatyng of flesshe, and lyke constitutyons of men* (London, c.1534), sigs A2r, B1v-2r.

to ‘the lybertie of the gospel’ and condemned Luther and his followers ‘in whom it semeth to me... the trewe spirite of the gospel [is] wantyng, which is sobre, mylde, & endewed with discrete symplycite’.³⁵¹ If religious reforms were required, it would be best that they be done ‘by lytel & lytel, that al wrangling and stryfe myght be excluded’.³⁵² After these appeals to authority, however, the tract changed tack. It was sad to see ‘the flocke of Cryst overmoch wrapped and entangled with iudaical ceremonyes, & to be oppressed outhur with the authorite, or els through the neglygence of some certayn prelates of the church’.³⁵³ *An epistell* thus struck a clever note between reforming zeal and deference to established authority. While both the *Enchiridion* and *An epistell* show a desire to link Erasmus to reform, therefore, their presentation of the scholar was often subtly different.

While the intentions of translators and printers can be parsed from a close analysis of the context of production, the paratexts included and the practice of translation, it is significantly harder to build a picture of the readership of translations of Erasmus’ works in England since so few copies have survived. There are two extant copies of Cox’s *Paraphrase on Titus*, for example, one of which survives in a mid-century binding.³⁵⁴ Neither, however, has any contemporary notes or provenance from which to gauge an audience or reaction. The English *Enchiridion* must have been widely read in England since it went through ten editions between 1533 and 1553.³⁵⁵ Inventories and surviving copies suggest only very loosely that the work was of interest to gentry families, clerics and other educated figures. An *Enchiridion* printed by John Byddell in 1544 survives in a contemporary binding and contains the signature of John Roynon, perhaps a gentleman of Somerset.³⁵⁶ Two members of the Walcot family from Lincolnshire owned an *Enchiridion* in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, bound with the *Preparation to Deathe*.³⁵⁷ The inventory of the library of Sir William More of Loseley likewise revealed an *Enchiridion* in the section on ‘scripture books in English’.³⁵⁸ John Perman, a surgeon in Cambridge, had one by 1545.³⁵⁹ Other

³⁵¹ *Ibid*, sig. C1v.

³⁵² *Ibid*, sig. B3v.

³⁵³ *Ibid*, sig. C3r.

³⁵⁴ BL, C.51.aa.9. Chetham’s, MUN.7.c.4.2, using CS.2 stamp commonly associated with Cambridge in the mid sixteenth century. See, Selwyn, *Geste*, p. 317 and David Pearson, ‘Bookbinding in Cambridge in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century’, in Pearson (ed.), *For the Love of the Binding: Studies in Bookbinding History Presented to Mirjam Foot* (London, 2000), pp. 169-96.

³⁵⁵ Devereux, *Checklist*, pp. 15-16.

³⁵⁶ BL, C.188.a.74, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (London, 1544), end flyleaves: ‘Jhon Roynon’. Foster names several Roynons from Somerset later in the century. A mid-century John Roynon, gentleman of Somerset, is also listed in several records at the TNA e.g. TNA, E 115/320/111.

³⁵⁷ BL, 696.a.43.(2), Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (London, 1544): (1) and (2) variously signed by ‘Thomas Walcot’ and ‘William Walcott, 1620’. See *ACAD* for various members of the Lincolnshire family. TNA, PROB 11/40/157, will of Thomas Walcott, gentleman of Walcot, Lincolnshire, 1558.

³⁵⁸ PLRE: Ad127.141.

³⁵⁹ Leedham-Green, *Inventories*, p. 51.

names found in contemporary copies are not locatable, such as the John Walker who signed a copy from 1569, or the Jerome Grene who left his name on the title page of an edition printed in the 1550s.³⁶⁰

Occasionally, contemporary notes in these volumes can tell us a little about how these works were read. The British Library holds a *Sammelband* of three Erasmian translations printed in the 1530s which remains in its contemporary binding.³⁶¹ The opening pages of the first work, *Ye dialoge called Funus* (1534), have been lost and have likely taken with them any sixteenth-century provenance. Nevertheless, the combination of this mildly anticlerical colloquy with the antipapal *Julius exclusus* (1534/5) and *An epistell... concernyng the forbedynge of eatynge of fleshe* (c.1533) indicates that the original compiler was open to seeing Erasmus as a proponent of religious change in England. One contemporary reader has marked the margins of the latter two imprints in a mixture of Latin and English. In the *Julius*, this reader wrote ‘*nota*’ or ‘*notum principale*’ by passages complaining of the pope’s love of pompous ceremonies and warfare.³⁶² The impact of *An epistell* was more uneven. The reader noted, for instance, Erasmus’ opinion that fasting and other ceremonies could be useful for Christians and had even been used by Christ and Paul.³⁶³ When Erasmus rather ironically listed the many saints held in special favour by the painters, surgeons and other crafts, the reader marked the passage for remembrance: ‘*notum* of divers sayntes for craftesmen’.³⁶⁴ However, when Erasmus proposed that ‘neither Christ, neyther the apostels have apoynted or sette any lawe in holy scrypture’ for priests to remain unmarried, the reader summarised the Dutchman’s view as ‘prestes to marye’.³⁶⁵ ‘He that eateth fleshe synneth not’, was the summary of another passage, ‘but he that backebyteth doth hurt’.³⁶⁶ They likewise reiterated Erasmus’ reminder that Paul ‘everiwhere fyght[s] agaynst the ceremonyes of the lawe of Moyses’.³⁶⁷ While evangelical arguments were identified, then, the reader’s ultimate intentions are hard to interpret, for they marked passages both for and against religious ceremonies.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁰ CCC, Cambridge, M.11.1, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (London, 1541). BL, 3925.b.30, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (London, 1550?), tp. Grene could be: merchant in Bristol, c.1520, TNA C 1/551/3; and the gentleman of Tolleshunt D’arcy, Essex, TNA PROB 11/54/373.

³⁶¹ BL, C.108.bb.29. (1) *Ye dialoge called Funus* (London, 1534); (2) *An epistell of the famous doctor Erasmus... concernyng the forbedynge of eatynge of fleshe, and hyke constitutyons of men* (London, c.1533); (3) *The dialoge between Julius the seconde, Genius, and saynt Peter* (London, 1534-5).

³⁶² BL, C.108.bb.29.(3), sigs g1r.

³⁶³ BL, C.108.bb.29.(2), sigs L8v, N1v.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid*, sig. C6v.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, sig. E2v.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid*, sig. sig k2v

³⁶⁷ *Ibid*, sig. P1v: ‘Againste the ceremones etc’.

³⁶⁸ c.f. Folger Library, STC 10488.7, *An epistell of the famous doctor Erasmus* (London, 1533). This edition also has anonymous notes in a roughly contemporary hand, commenting upon Paul’s counsel of obedience, Christ’s view on ceremonies and the Fathers on chastity.

A copy of *A lytle treatise of the maner and forme of confession* (c.1535), now in the British Library, presents an equally mixed response to efforts to tie church reform to Erasmus' writing.³⁶⁹ Once again, we lack a positive identification for this reader and can only say that a contemporary hand annotated the book's margins. These notes are all in Latin and show a high degree of learning, quoting (unprompted) from the Vulgate, Sallust and Erasmus' *Adagia*.³⁷⁰ Some of the material gathered suggests that the reader was extracting material on moral behaviour. They noted, for instance, Erasmus' contention that 'night pollutions' could not be considered sins and that the tongue was frequently a cause of immorality.³⁷¹ Several of the reflections related to criticisms of priests or scholasticism. The reader considered Erasmus' contrasting points on the vices of priests and their elevated status as representatives of Christ on earth.³⁷² When Erasmus mocked the scholastic jargon surrounding confession, the reader summarised the view that '*attritio* is a word brought forth from the brain of a Scotist'.³⁷³ Erasmus' tale of a ludicrous sermon given by a 'Gray frere' on the stoning of adulterers also provoked the reader to reflect on the 'danger of false friars'.³⁷⁴ The annotator's reaction to the more explicitly evangelical framing of Erasmus' ideas, however, was cryptic. At one stage in the text, Erasmus seemingly agreed with the Lutherans on the fraudulence of indulgences, a fact the printed marginalia sought to underscore: 'It is a surer way to hopefull remission of synnes, of charite and the mercye of god: than of any pardons gyven by man'.³⁷⁵ The reader, however, only recorded in a matter-of-fact way that this was 'the opinion of Luther'.³⁷⁶

Both these cases suggest that the reading of Erasmus in translation could be unpredictable. While contemporaries were drawn to the reformist framing of the material, they were also capable of resisting a straightforward equivalence of Erasmus and evangelism. Notable, too, is the fact that both owners annotated an English text partially or entirely in Latin. Though translation is often considered a means of popularising Erasmus' work, it may be that many readers of this material were already acquainted with the Dutchman's Latin writings. Tyndale's manuscript *Enchiridion* was said to have passed through the hands of educated figures such as the abbess of Denney, the friars of Greenwich, the confessor of Syon and even John Fisher, bishop of Rochester.³⁷⁷ Judging by his will of 1565, the vicar John Bretchgirdle may have bound the Latin and English texts of the

³⁶⁹ BL, C.110.b.31, *A lytle treatise of the maner and forme of confession* (London, c.1535)

³⁷⁰ *Ibid*, sigs A7r, E2v, K8r, P2r.

³⁷¹ *Ibid*, sigs D4r, F2v: '*polutiones nocturnae non sunt vitia*'; '*lingua loquax*'.

³⁷² *Ibid*, sigs A8r, B7v: '*vicia sacerdotium*'; '?*Regale sacerdotium*'.

³⁷³ *Ibid*, sig. E2v: '*attritio est vocabulum e cerebro scotistae profectum*'.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid*, sig. E8r: '*periculum in falsis fratribus*'.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid*, sig. N7r.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid*, sig. N7r: '*opinio luthaer*'.

³⁷⁷ *LeP* 4:2, 4282.

Enchiridion together.³⁷⁸ Printers, too, preserved the Latin and English titles of works, perhaps aware that many of their readers had a smattering or more of Latin. In all cases, from Tyndale through to our anonymous readers, multiple forces – confessional, scholarly, commercial – were being brought to bear on Erasmus’ reputation. Despite the efforts of readers and translators, therefore, confessionalisation remained an uneven process; a constant interplay between books, readers and their wider environment.

(v) Politics and Religion: John Bekinsaw and John Mason

From the outset, the English reformation had been a political process. The king’s search for a divorce and subsequent breakaway from the papal fold preceded any clear embrace of reformed theology. Between the Act in Restraint of Appeals (1533) and Henry’s death, the theological situation remained flexible. The king, however, refused to compromise on matters concerning his authority or the loyalty of his subjects.³⁷⁹ Throughout, Erasmus’ name had been tied to various facets of this agenda, including attacks on the papacy and the duty of obedience to a prince. Edward VI’s government were no less concerned to use the *Paraphrases* as a means of inculcating political loyalty. In the troubled year of 1549, Thomas Chaloner thought it wise to reiterate the connection between Erasmus’ writings and the obedience of the lower orders in his translation of the *Praise of Folly*. Those of ‘the meaner degree’ should not aspire ‘to thinges above theyr reache’, Chaloner contended, but should ‘[give] place to others, who had greater giftes of God, and were called by auctoritee of theyr prince or countrey to welde the same’.³⁸⁰ Not all the scholar’s writings, however, were as sympathetic to princes and their conduct. Erasmus’ pacific writings in particular jarred with the martial exploits of Henry and his European rivals.³⁸¹

The reception of Erasmus was therefore closely tied up with the fraught reimagining of politics in the reformation period. Two readers who can take us closer to these processes are John Mason and John Bekinsaw. Mason and Bekinsaw knew each other well and their careers followed a similar trajectory. Bekinsaw was slightly older, becoming a fellow at New College in 1520 and supplicating for his BTh in 1529.³⁸² He then travelled to the Low Countries and Paris for further study with Juan Luis Vives, taking an especial interest in Greek. Mason studied at All Souls in the

³⁷⁸ PLRE: Ad95.14:1

³⁷⁹ Richard Rex, ‘The Crisis of Obedience: God’s Word and Henry’s Reformation’, *HJ*, 39:4 (1996), pp. 863-894.

³⁸⁰ Thomas Chaloner, *The praise of folie* (London, 1549), sig. A3r.

³⁸¹ Robert Adams, *The Better Part of Valor: More, Erasmus, Colet, and Vives, on Humanism, War, and Peace, 1496-1535* (Seattle, 1962).

³⁸² BRUO: 1501-40, p. 37. Andrew Chibi, ‘Bekinsau, John (1499/1500-1559)’, *ODNB*.

1520s.³⁸³ He likewise became acquainted with Vives and was granted a royal exhibition to study in Paris in 1529. Both men's lives, however, were to be upended by their connections with two other English students in the French capital: Richard Pate and Reginald Pole.³⁸⁴ Mason and Bekinsaw studied with Pate in Bruges and Paris and likely knew Pole when he arrived to cajole the Sorbonne into supporting Henry's divorce. Mason later joined Pate's embassy to Spain in 1533, before taking on a variety of other diplomatic assignments for the remainder of the decade. Bekinsaw stayed on in Paris for much of the 1530s, acting as an agent for various prominent English families. In the meantime, Pate and Pole spectacularly defected to the papacy in defiance of the break with Rome.³⁸⁵ The ensuing investigation into the two traitors revealed that Bekinsaw had run letters between them in Paris and he was imprisoned on his return to England in the 1540s. Mason, too, had met with Pole while serving in France in the late 1530s.³⁸⁶ He was twice interrogated on suspicion of treason, narrowly escaping on both occasions. The experience pushed both men to accommodate themselves to various Tudor regimes. Bekinsaw was pardoned in 1544 and two years later published an apology for the royal supremacy, *De supremo et absolute regis imperio*, in a further act of loyalty to the crown. He subsequently retired to the countryside. Mason also retreated from overt statements of religious loyalty, pushing aside any scruples to serve as a councillor and diplomat under Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth.

Some of Bekinsaw and Mason's political trauma spilled over into the margins of their Erasmian books. A small collection of Bekinsaw's books, mainly editions of the Church Fathers, was bequeathed to New College after his death in 1559.³⁸⁷ Many of Bekinsaw's holograph letters have survived in the State Papers, allowing us to track his marginal annotations through these volumes. Bekinsaw's copy of the works of Ambrose (1527) edited by Erasmus is particularly well annotated, revealing a great deal about Bekinsaw's religious and political priorities when working with the Dutch scholar's books. It was bound in Paris and probably acquired by Bekinsaw during

³⁸³ BRUO: 1501-40, pp. 386-8. D. Hurd, *Sir John Mason, 1503-1566: Distinguished Son of Abingdon* (Oxford, 1975). P. Carter, 'John Mason, (c.1503-1566)', ODNB.

³⁸⁴ For the complex network of friendship and subsequent political machinations of this group of students in Paris, see: James Carley, 'John Leland in Paris: The Evidence of His Poetry', *Studies in Philology*, 83:1 (1986), pp. 1-50. Dominic Baker-Smith, 'Florens Wilson: A Distant Prospect', in Janet Hadley Williams (ed.), *Stewart Style, 1513-42: Essays on the Court of James V* (East Linton, 1996), pp. 1-14. Jason Powell, 'Scholars, Servants and Spies: William Weldon and William Swerder in England and Abroad', in Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox (eds), *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke, 2011), pp. 30-45.

³⁸⁵ Tracey Sowerby, 'Richard Pate, the Royal Supremacy, and Reformation Diplomacy', *HJ*, 54:2 (2011), pp. 265-85. Thomas Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince and Prophet* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 13-61.

³⁸⁶ Susan Brigden, *Thomas Wyatt: The Heart's Forest* (London, 2012), pp. 530-50.

³⁸⁷ They were donated in 1569, probably after the death of Bekinsaw's widow. New College, Oxford: BT3.261.11.(1) Aristotle, *Ex Physiologia, libri duodeviginti* (Paris, 1518); (2) Aristotle, *Opus metaphysicum* (Paris, 1518). BT3.33.3-4, Ambrose, *Opera* (Basel, 1527). BT3.13.7, Tertullian, *Opera* (Basel, 1528). BT3.27.7, Cyril, *Opera* (Basel, 1528). BT3.36.10, Platina, *De vita et moribus summorum pontificum historia* (Cologne, 1529). BT3.25.7, Basil, *Opera* (Basel, 1532).

his long period of residence in the city.³⁸⁸ Erasmus provided only a light editorial touch to his edition of Ambrose, adding little in the way of explanatory notes or commentary to the text. Bekinsaw was thus forced to play the role of editor, supplying historical information or cross-references. By Paulinus' *Life of Ambrose* Bekinsaw noted that other biographical details could be gleaned from a letter of Basil of Caesarea to Ambrose.³⁸⁹ When Ambrose discussed the empress Justina, Bekinsaw explained that she was 'daughter of Justus, mother of Valentian Junior, whom [the emperor] Valentian Senior took as a wife'.³⁹⁰ At one stage Ambrose invoked the early career of Gyges of Lydia, drawn from Plato, but Bekinsaw pointed out in the margins that Herodotus told the story otherwise.³⁹¹ Erasmus, nonetheless, did not leave his readers entirely at sea. An introduction to the first tome, for example, explained that these writings could be considered Ambrose's 'ethics', where the saint laid out his views on 'establish[ing] the habits of Christians'.³⁹² Bekinsaw showed a degree of willingness to follow this suggestion. In Ambrose's *Book of Duties*, he extracted sentiments on clerical reading and how priests ought to flee this world.³⁹³

Erasmus' framing of Ambrose, however, also posed a political problem to Bekinsaw. Erasmus had penned a long prefatory letter to this edition in which he hailed Ambrose as the type of cleric required to heal a divided Christendom.³⁹⁴ Christians, Erasmus proposed, had for some time hoped that 'someone like Ambrose would rise up, who... would restore to tranquillity this tragic turmoil of the world'.³⁹⁵ While Ambrose had rebuffed heretical opinions, it was his resistance to the emperor Theodosius that provoked the greatest praise from Erasmus, who contrasted Ambrose's conduct with that of clerics in his own age. 'Now if any prince whatever deigns to approach a church, they build him a tabernacle higher than the altar'.³⁹⁶ Only Ambrose's 'exceptional integrity' had allowed him 'to defy kingly majesty and not succumb to the unscrupulousness of wicked men'.³⁹⁷ By 1546, however, Bekinsaw was trying to demonstrate his loyalty to the crown and could not allow Ambrose's defiance of imperial authority to stand unquestioned. In *De imperio*, therefore, he subtly challenged Erasmus' presentation of the saint. If Ambrose had 'stubbornly stated before Valentinian that a controversial matter of faith ought to be considered, determined and defined by priests, not by emperors', nevertheless 'those matters

³⁸⁸ The bindings use rolls similar to Denise Gid, *Catalogue des Reliures Françaises Estampées à Froid, XVe-XVIIe siècle de la Bibliothèque Mazarine* (2 vols, Paris, 1984): CH.i(4) and FP.a(12).

³⁸⁹ NC, BT3.33.3, i, sig. AA5v.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid*, iii, p.159: '*hec erat iustina filia Iusti mater Iunioris valentiniani quam senior valentinianus dux[it] in uxorem...*'.

³⁹¹ *Ibid*, i, p.77.

³⁹² *Ibid*, i, sig. AA1v: '*Primus hic Tomus continet "ta ethika", hoc est, quae ad mores christianorum instituendos faciunt, quorum oportet primam esse curam.*'

³⁹³ *Ibid*, i, pp. 17, 190.

³⁹⁴ Ep. 1855, *CWE* 13, pp. 234-46.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 238.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 241.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 242.

related to customs, of which he did not deny that the supreme judgement lay in the power of the emperor'.³⁹⁸ Henry's authority was safe, therefore, since Ambrose was only following custom not a divine mandate. Bekinsaw extended this insight into the margins of his copy of Ambrose's writings, searching for passages which might support the independence of the English church from papal control. He noted, for instance, how archbishops had always had the power to appoint bishops and that while the saint 'wished in all things to observe the form of the Roman Church... he himself thought that he had discretion'.³⁹⁹ Bekinsaw also alighted on several of the saint's statements which questioned Peter's elevation above the other disciples: Peter was merely a 'priest of the Roman Church'; Christ had washed all of the disciples' feet; and all the apostles had been given the keys to the kingdom of heaven.⁴⁰⁰ That said, Bekinsaw could not keep all of his conservative tendencies in check, highlighting, for example, various passages where the saint spoke 'against those who say that under the sacrament of the altar is not the true body of Christ'.⁴⁰¹

In 1567, John Mason also donated several of his books to his alma mater, All Souls, including a folio edition of Erasmus' *Paraphrases* on the gospels, printed in Basel in 1535.⁴⁰² It is unclear when Mason acquired the volume, though we know he was collecting books on his travels in the 1530s.⁴⁰³ The majority of Mason's interventions in the volume were made in the paraphrase on John 18-19 and appear devotional in nature.⁴⁰⁴ Christ's deeds and actions were a particular focus. He highlighted how Christ came forward to meet Judas at Gethsemane and Christ's meekness on his way to the crucifixion.⁴⁰⁵ He read the work with the scriptures in mind, or perhaps to hand, for many of notes record the biblical verse on which Erasmus is writing, especially pieces of dialogue. Intriguingly, these are closer in form to the traditional Vulgate than Erasmus' own New Testament translation, even though the author normally reproduced his version in the *Paraphrases*. Thus, Mason has Christ tell Pilate '*Tu dicis quia rex sum ego*', even though Erasmus had

³⁹⁸ John Bekinsaw, *De supremo et absoluto regis imperio* (London, 1546), fo. 18r-v: '*Divus item Ambrosius, quamvis controversam fidei quaestionem a sacerdotibus, non imperatoribus agitari, determinari, ac definiri debere, apud Valentinianum obstinate egerit, quae tamen ad mores spectant, eorum supremum iudicium penes imperatorem esse non negat.*'

³⁹⁹ NC, BT3.33.4, iv, pp.404, 389: '*Ambrosius voluit in omnibus observare formam romanae ecclesiae. sed seipse putavit et sensum habere.*'

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid*, iv, pp. 389, 401.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid*, iv, pp. 392, 396, 397: '*contra eos qui dicunt sub sacramento altaris non esse verum corpus christi sed significanter solum.*'

⁴⁰² All Souls, Oxford, 4.SR.79.f.9, Erasmus, *Paraphraseon in Nouum Testamentum* (Basel, 1535). N. Ker, *Records of All Souls Library* (Oxford, 1971), p. 108.

⁴⁰³ Mason wrote from Valladolid to Thomas Starkey in 1534, commenting that 'cloth, lether [and] books... be unresonable dere': BL, Cotton MS Vespasian C XIII, fo. 327r. He also owned two works bound by the Venetian Apple Bindery, active from the 1530s, and probably purchased while Mason was in Italy in the period: All Souls College, g.infra 2.6, *Omnia Themistii opera* (Venice, 1534); All Souls, g.infra 1.12, Symplicius of Cilicia, *Hypomnemata in Aristotelis Categorias* (Venice, 1499).

⁴⁰⁴ All Souls, Oxford, 4.SR.79.f.9, pp. 172-185.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 172, 179.

judged *quia* to be ungrammatical.⁴⁰⁶ Perhaps Mason was simply recalling the text of his childhood. Occasionally, Erasmus' own sentiments caught his eye. He underlined, for instance, the scholar's contention that 'nothing can be done by our own virtue', that piety located in physical objects was hopeless if not joined by piety of the heart, and that Christ had demanded Peter put away the sword and fight with '*gladius sermonis evangelici*'.⁴⁰⁷ In more humanist fashion, he also noted the Greek names for the places mentioned in the text, such as Calvary.⁴⁰⁸

Running through the gospel text and Erasmus' paraphrase upon them, however, are the themes of truth, betrayal and courtly conduct. When, for instance, Peter denies Christ, Erasmus linked the story to those 'who attach themselves to the courts of princes', whose 'first assertion... is to deny Christ, that is, to deny truth'.⁴⁰⁹ Mason, sensitive to his own bargains with earthly powers, made sure to highlight the sentiment.⁴¹⁰ He also underlined the scholar's explanation that Jesus' actions during his arrest and trial demonstrated that 'on behalf of truth one must indeed speak forcefully, but without insulting language'.⁴¹¹ When Erasmus pointed out that Christ sometimes became angry when religion was used as a false pretence, Mason glossed the passage by suggesting that Christ 'did not bear the blow in silence, who endured the cross silently'.⁴¹² Mason, thoroughly acquainted with the arts of politic speech, no doubt found much to muse on in such passages.

Even as successive regimes tied Erasmus to the reformation, the scholar's work continued to throw up uncomfortable questions about the relationship of religion and politics in the period. For Bekinsaw it became convenient to ignore some of Erasmus' wider views on the Church Fathers in favour of loyalty to the crown. Mason's notes register a deeper disquiet about the compromises he and his peers made in the service of princes. Both indicate that against the systematic and at times ruthless reworking of Erasmus in the English reformation, there remained scope for more emotional responses to his work, shaped not by the scholarly or theological ideas of the times, but by the dictates of conformity.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 178. C.f. ASD 6:2, p. 187. See also: (1) Mason: '*Regnum meum non est de hoc mundo*', Erasmus: '*ex hoc mundo*';

(2) Mason: '*Tu es rex iudeorum?*', Erasmus: '*Tu es ille rex iudeorum?*'

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 176, 184, 173: '*nihil possumus nostrapte virtute*'.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 182.

⁴⁰⁹ Erasmus, *Paraphrase on John*, CWE 46, p. 201.

⁴¹⁰ All Souls, Oxford, 4.SR.79.f.9, p. 174.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 175. Erasmus, *Paraphrase on John*, CWE 46, p. 202-3.

⁴¹² *Ibid*, p. 175: '*Non tulit tacitus alapam qui crucem tacitus pertulit*'.

Chapter 5

Erasmus, Humanism and the Universities



The impact of humanism on the character of the early modern university was profound, though historians still disagree about the extent and pace of change.¹ In almost every discipline, the humanists' close attention to language, literary contexts and the processes of textual transmission was reflected in changing approaches to the study of Christian and classical writings. In England, the effects were felt in the foundation of new colleges such as St John's College, Cambridge, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford; in changing university syllabuses; and in the growing proportion of humanist books in personal libraries.² Sometimes changes were initiated in dramatic fashion. In 1535 Cromwell's visitors descended on Oxford and Cambridge to enforce the royal supremacy, while cajoling the colleges to offer better instruction in Latin and Greek and to banish scholastic authors from their libraries.³ More often than not, however, change was slow and sporadic. The growing independence of colleges meant that the transformation tended to take root institution by institution. Older fields of enquiry reinvented themselves, rather than fading from view.⁴

At the heart of this movement was Erasmus. Throughout his life Erasmus was engaged both in the practice and theory of teaching. He penned grammars, writing manuals, declamations for imitation and handbooks for reading the bible, all while editing a host of classical and Christian texts for study. Many of those instituting educational reform were friends of the Dutch scholar,

¹ Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986); Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995); Paul Grendler, 'The Universities of the Renaissance and Reformation', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 57:1 (2004), pp. 1-42; Agostino Sottili, *Renaissance Humanism and University Studies: Italian Universities and Their Influence on the Studia Humanitatis in Northern Europe* (Leiden, 2006).

² For St John's and Corpus, see Richard Rex, 'The Sixteenth Century', in Peter Linehan (ed.), *St John's College Cambridge: A History* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 5-93; and Mordechai Feingold and John Watts (eds), *History of Universities: Volume XXXII/1-2: Renaissance College: Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in Context, 1450-1600* (Oxford, 2019). For the changes in Oxford see the relevant essays in James McConica (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford* (8 vols, Oxford, 1984-94), iii; and the review article, Felicity Heal, 'Scholars, Clerics and Gentlemen: Oxford University in the 16th Century', *Oxford Review of Education*, 23:2 (1997), pp. 211-6. For Cambridge, see the relevant sections of D. R. Leader (ed.), *A History of Cambridge University: The University to 1546* (Cambridge, 1989); H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958); Ceri Law, *Contested Reformations in the University of Cambridge, 1535-84* (Woodbridge, 2018). For the private libraries of Oxford and Cambridge students: R. Fehrenback (ed.), *Private Libraries in Renaissance England: A Collection and Catalogue of Tudor and Early Stuart Book-Lists* (10 vols, Binghampton, 1992-), ii and iii. Elisabeth Leedham-Green (ed.), *Books in Cambridge Inventories: Book Lists from Vice-Chancellor's Court Probate Inventories in the Tudor and Stuart Periods* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1986).

³ Donald Logan, 'The First Royal Visitation of the English Universities, 1535', *EHR*, 106:421 (1991), pp. 861-88.

⁴ J. M. Fletcher, 'The Faculty of Arts', in James McConica (ed.), *The Collegiate University*, pp. 157-99.

such that their efforts ‘show unmistakably the hallmark of Erasmus’s reforming policy’.⁵ Among the student body, demand was high for Erasmian tracts teaching good Latin. In 1520, the Oxford bookseller John Dorne sold 41 copies of the *Colloquies* and 31 copies of *De constructione octo partium orationis*.⁶ Garrett Godfrey’s patchier records still include the sales of 32 editions of the *Colloquies* to figures in Cambridge.⁷ As other commentators have argued, it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of Erasmus to humanism in England and at the universities.⁸

Yet there are also dangers of too readily conflating humanism in England with the achievements of the Dutch scholar.⁹ One is that we privilege vaguer forms of evidence – changing educational statutes or the numbers of books in inventories, for example – at the expense of witnesses to practice on the ground. Large numbers of used books from scholars and students at English universities have survived from the period, many of them heavily annotated. Though their evidence can be cryptic, these volumes often take us closer to the realities of what was taught in the lecture hall than the wishes of pious founders. Secondly, we run the risk of caricaturing English humanism to such an extent that we fail to recognise separate strands of scholarly enquiry or to acknowledge points of divergence among humanists in the period. If Erasmus became increasingly preoccupied with the importance of Greek and the New Testament, there were several scholars in England who sought to challenge this orientation within humanism and to argue for the centrality of Hebrew and the Old Testament, or to pursue the study of natural philosophy or medicine in dialogue with other humanist writers.¹⁰ Even in the age of Erasmus, humanism in England was a multifarious phenomenon, one which required readers to adopt a differentiated approach to the scholar’s writings. Indeed, often the scholarly methods put forward by Erasmus provided readers with the tools to challenge his conclusions.

This chapter begins, therefore, by examining how humanist prescriptions for a revitalised course of study at university were put into practice by two figures at newly founded educational institutions. John Toker and George Day, I will argue, were deeply engaged in understanding Erasmus’ literary and religious agenda, albeit one filtered through a range of texts and

⁵ James McConica, ‘The English Reception of Erasmus’, in M. Mout, Heribert Smolinsky and J. Trapman (eds), *Erasmianism: Idea and Reality* (Amsterdam, 1997), p. 42. McConica, *English Humanists*, pp. 76-105.

⁶ *Dorne*, p. 156.

⁷ Elisabeth Leedham-Green, D. E. Rhodes and, F.H. Stubbings (eds), *Garrett Godfrey’s Accounts, c. 1527-1533* (Cambridge, 1992).

⁸ Richard Schoeck, ‘Humanism in England’, in Albert Rabil, Jr., *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacies* (3 vols, Philadelphia, 1988), ii, p. 12.

⁹ Alistair Fox, ‘Facts and Fallacies: Interpreting English Humanism’, in Alistair Fox and John Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician Age. Humanism, Politics and Reform 1500-1550* (Oxford, 1986) pp. 9-33. Richard Rex, ‘The Role of English Humanists in the Reformation up to 1559’, in Scott Amos, Andrew Pettegree and Henk van Nierop (eds), *The Education of a Christian Society. Humanism and the Reformation in Britain and the Netherlands: Papers Delivered to the Thirteenth Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference, 1997* (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 19-40.

¹⁰ Richard Durling, ‘Linacre and Medical Humanism’, in Francis Maddison, Margaret Pelling and Charles Webster (eds), *Essays on the Life and Work of Thomas Linacre, c.1460-1524* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 76-106.

commentaries. It then considers two areas of humanist scholarship in which the Erasmian legacy was more contested. Through the books of John Claymond and John Caius, I demonstrate how an immersion in a deeper tradition of philological scholarship helped to foster a more critical approach to Erasmus, especially towards a work such as the *Adagia*. Likewise, I suggest that three scholars who gained a knowledge of Hebrew – the brothers, Robert and Thomas Wakefield, and William Tait – also challenged Erasmus on a variety of fronts, not least his grasp of the third tongue and his editorial decisions. Not all of these readers were active at English universities for their entire lives. Tait and Caius had studied in Italy and, like Day and Wakefield, were to pursue careers at court or in the church. Nonetheless, they were profoundly shaped by the changes in educational life in the period and took a keen interest in many of the central planks of humanism such as the close attention to classical and patristic texts. They thus provide our best window into the complicated Erasmian legacy at the universities and within the broader humanist community in England.

(i) New Foundations:

Reading Erasmus at Cardinal College, Oxford, and St John's College, Cambridge

The early sixteenth century was a period of renewed interest in the reform of university education and witnessed a series of new collegiate foundations which variously tried to incorporate elements of the humanist programme into their teaching.¹¹ One of the most ambitious projects was pursued by Thomas Wolsey at Oxford. Wolsey had already provided for lectures in Greek to be given at the university by some of the leading humanist scholars of the 1520s: John Clement, Thomas Lupset and Juan Luis Vives.¹² By 1524, however, he had plans for a far larger intervention in Oxford's academic life by establishing his own college, erected with the proceeds of dissolved monastic houses, that would, he hoped, house approximately 150 professors, lecturers, canons, choir boys and a large staff besides.¹³ Along with its lavish scale, Wolsey planned to import books and manuscripts from Italy and poached promising scholars from Oxford and Cambridge colleges to fill the college's ranks.¹⁴ The statutes for study were largely borrowed from the foundations of

¹¹ James McConica, 'The Rise of the Undergraduate College', in McConica (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford* (8 vols, Oxford, 1984-94), iii, pp. 1-69.

¹² G. Duncan, 'Public Lectures and Professorial Chairs', in McConica (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford* (8 vols, Oxford, 1984-94), iii, pp. 337-41.

¹³ John Newman, 'Cardinal Wolsey's Collegiate Foundations', in Steven Gunn and Phillip Lindley (eds), *Cardinal Wolsey: Church, State and Art* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 103-15.

¹⁴ James Willoughby, 'Thomas Wolsey and the Books of Cardinal College Oxford', *Bodleian Library Record*, 28:2 (2015), pp. 114-134.

Magdalen and Corpus Christi, importing their aims to teach classical languages and literature and to provide for instruction in the higher subjects such as theology, law and medicine.¹⁵

One of those lured to Cardinal College in these years was John Toker (or Tucker). Toker was originally from Somerset and probably began studying at Exeter College in the late 1510s.¹⁶ In 1521 he received his BA and became a fellow of the college, proceeding to MA in 1523. He was plucked from Exeter in 1525 to become a canon *'primi ordinis'* at the newly formed Cardinal College, though he appears not to have been drawn into the circle of evangelicals active at the college in the same period. In 1530 he was the college's censor of arts. He then proceeded to study medicine, eventually receiving his doctorate in 1538. At this stage all record of Toker dries up. He may have died shortly thereafter or simply slipped from view.¹⁷ Prior to this date, however, we do know that Toker was acting as a physician for Thomas Cranmer and perhaps for the cathedral's monastic community as well.¹⁸

It is thanks to his association with the archbishop that we know a fair amount about Toker's activities while at Cardinal College. Cranmer, in fact, acquired around 20 of the physician's books, perhaps in the late 1530s.¹⁹ The provenance for these items, however, is not consistent. Several are signed and annotated by Toker. Others are linked with him because they were previously bound together with items he signed and because their content matches with books Toker is known to have owned (such as medical treatises). Almost all of Toker's signatures reveal him to have been studying at Cardinal College at the time of acquisition, though he also came into the possession of a medical manuscript once housed at Athelney Abbey, perhaps through his connections to Somerset.²⁰ Some of Toker's collection clearly made its way into other hands since two editions of the works of Galen, one housed at the Royal College of Physicians, the other among Matthew Parker's books at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, were never a part of Cranmer's library.²¹

Given Toker's position at Cardinal College and his interest in medical texts, it is not surprising to find a handful of Erasmian survivals from his library. Some of these can be traced

¹⁵ McConica, 'The Rise of the Undergraduate College', pp. 29-32. Judith Curthoys, *The Cardinal's College: Christ Church, Chapter and Verse* (London, 2012), pp. 5-9.

¹⁶ BRUO:1501-1540, p. 578.

¹⁷ It may be that Toker died shortly afterward. A John Tucker of Yatton, Somerset, left a will in 1568, though it makes no mention of medicine, books, or any other factor that might suggest the same man. Another Toker, rector of both Ashcombe and Poltimore in Devon died in 1556, see CCEd: 'John Toker [99656]'. Toker's name is not found among the members of the Royal College of Physicians. The latest date of an imprint in his library is 1534.

¹⁸ *L&P* 12:2, 1055. TNA, SP 1/126 fo. 90r: Cranmer describes 'my trustie servunte master Towker my Phesition being a man of good Larning and conversacion [who] hath exercysed the offyce of a phisition of longe contynuaunce with the Priour and Covent of Christes church in Caunterbury'.

¹⁹ Selwyn, 'Books with Manuscript', pp. 47-59.

²⁰ BL, Royal MS 12 B XVI, *Practica Alexandri*, s. xiii.

²¹ Royal College of Physicians, London, D1/39-f-1, Galen, *Methodus medendi* (Paris, 1519). Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, EP.M.2, Galen, *Primum[-tertium] Galeni volumen* (Pavia, 1515-16).

directly, while others must be inferred from Toker's activities in his books. By and large his Erasmian reading concerned topics closely connected with study at Cardinal College, especially the cultivation of a fine Latin style and the acquisition of Greek. This is evident from the pages of Toker's copy of Erasmus' letter-writing manual, *De conscribendis epistolis*.²² In the opening pages, Toker arranged Erasmus' book into three headings, with each section representing a type of rhetoric. Thus, sections were created for letters conforming to the deliberative, demonstrative and judicial genres.²³ Inscribed in the back of the book was a separate heading for 'unusual types of

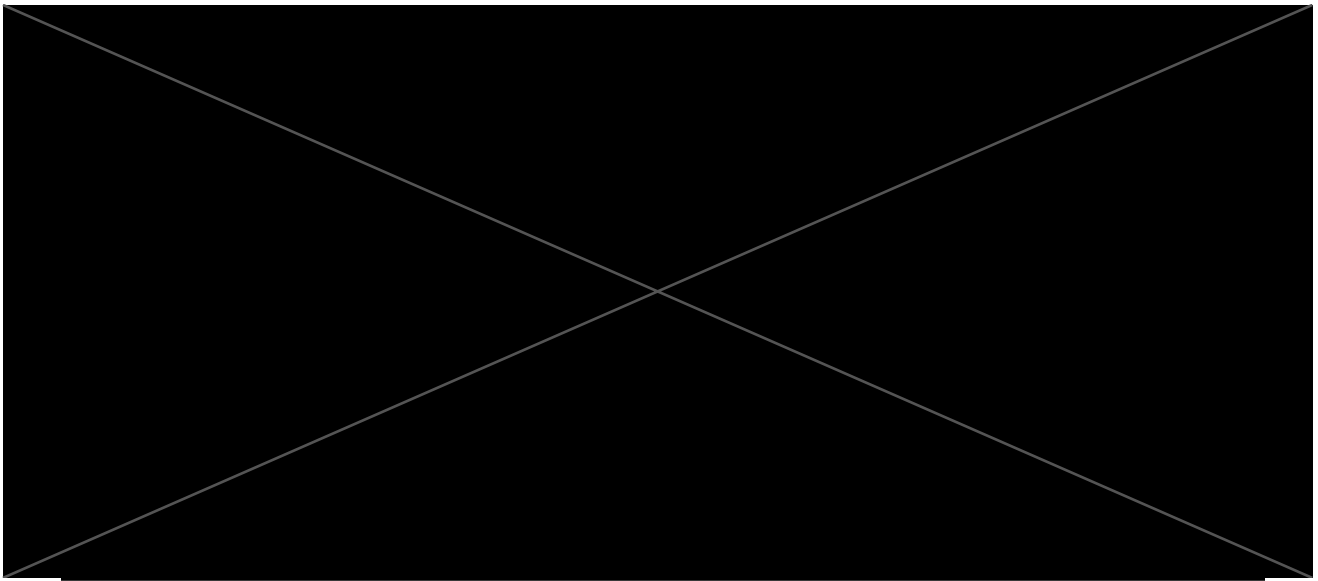


Fig. 9: Toker's tables dividing the work by rhetorical genre. BL, 1083.d.1, *De conscribendis epistolis* (Cologne, 1523), fos 2v, 194r.

letters'.²⁴ Here, Toker could find Erasmus' advice on letters which did not fit easily into the three rhetorical genres such as light-hearted epistles or messages of congratulation.

Toker repeatedly reiterated the central messages of *De conscribendis epistolis* in the margin. He underlined Erasmus' suggestion that all letters cannot conform to one type, noting that 'letters are not written with one character'.²⁵ One important theme of Toker's reading, to which we shall return, was an interest in more liberal approaches to Latin composition. The language of letters need not always be plain, for in Toker's words 'sometimes a letter ought to soar [*assurgere*]'.²⁶ Similar

²² BL, 1083.d.1, *De conscribendis epistolis* (Cologne, 1523).

²³ *Ibid.*, fos 2v.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 194r.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, fo. 3r: 'Epistola non uno caractere scribere'.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 5v: 'Epistola aliquando assurgere debet'.

passages were marked by Toker on avoiding taking one's vocabulary from a single approved author or on the peculiarities of style unique to Cicero, Terence and others.²⁷ Later on, Erasmus turned to mocking those who would prefer 'the *Catholicon*, Holcot, Bricot and Gorra' to 'Cyprian, Jerome and Augustine', asking rhetorically: 'Will the nightingale exchange its melodies with the cuckoo just because in the ass's judgement the cuckoo's song is clearer and more intelligible?' Alongside this passage, Toker registered his delight. 'Sometimes', he recorded in the margin, 'Erasmus digresses most charmingly'.²⁸ Occasionally, Toker also followed the moral implications of Erasmus' precepts. In the passage on letters of consolation, Erasmus recommended the behaviour of David, who on losing a child, remarked that grief was unnecessary now, since death had brought the child to God. Toker, echoing Erasmus, called this 'a most beautiful example and a wise response of David'.²⁹

Erasmus was not the only humanist presence in the margins of this book. On several occasions Toker referred to a 'Campanus', most likely the humanist letter writer, Giovanni Antonio Campani, who would have provided a complementary example of letter-writing.³⁰ Certainly, the English student owned other works by contemporary Italian humanists, such as Ludovicus Caelius Rhodignus' *Libri xvi lectionum antiquarum*, a collection of classical Latin and Greek excerpts on a variety of topics.³¹ Greek was evidently at the forefront of Toker's reading of Erasmus. He underscored, for example, the Greek names for the various genres of letter.³² No doubt, this focus was driven by Toker's interest in the Greek medical corpus, especially Galen. We should not imagine, however, that students abandoned their interest in matters of style once they moved on to higher subjects in the curriculum (theology, medicine and law). Style, in fact, played a significant role in the reception of medical humanism. Between 1517 and 1524, for instance, Thomas Linacre had published a series of Latin translations of Galen. By returning to Galen's Greek, Linacre claimed not only to be assisting the efforts of the humanists in purifying the study of medicine from the Greek fonts, but also that the resulting translations were more elegant. As Guillaume Budé noted in his preface to Linacre's *Methodus medendi* (1517), no one could improve on the Englishman's 'ancient severity of writing and translating'.³³ Erasmus, too, later remarked on

²⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 7r.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 7v: 'Suavissime digreditur aliquando Erasmus'.

²⁹ Erasmus, *De conscribendis epistolis*, CWE 25, p. 157.

³⁰ Peter Quentel printed an edition of Campani's letters at Cologne in 1516: *Epistole familiares Joannis Antonij Campani clarissimi oratoris* (Cologne, 1516): USTC 651754.

³¹ BL, 632.l.5, Ludovicus Caelius Rhodignus, *Lectionum antiquarum libri xvi* (Basel, 1523). One reader, most likely Toker, has highlighted sections of the contents on medical subjects.

³² *Ibid.*, fo. 52v.

³³ Durling, 'Linacre and Medical Humanism', p. 87: 'prisca scribendi vertendique severitas'.

Linacre's rejection of 'sophisticated ease' in favour of 'conciseness and precision'.³⁴ Debates about Galen, then, provoked explorations of literary style and translation.

Questions of accuracy, ease and concision, therefore, informed Toker's reading of Erasmus the translator. At Cardinal College, Toker acquired two Greek texts of plays by Euripides, *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia in aulis*, printed by Erasmus' friend, Thierry Martens, in Louvain.³⁵ In both these texts Toker recorded a series of glosses, translations and alternative phrasings in the margins.³⁶ Toker must have had access to Erasmus' Latin translation of this play, perhaps even the edition now bound with the book, for on several occasions he excerpted passages from the Erasmian version. These excerpts are not randomly chosen but generally highlight occasions where Erasmus' translation departs from Euripides' text in interesting ways. Erasmus had presented his translations of Euripides as youthful efforts at perfecting his Greek.³⁷ The challenge of Euripides, however, had caused him to adapt his own approach to translation.³⁸ Finding the dramatist's language in the *Hecuba* dense and obscure, Erasmus decided not to render the text liberally, but 'verse for verse and almost word for word'.³⁹ Toker, by contrast, was not interested in this austere vision of Erasmian translation, preferring instead to focus on passages where Erasmus had expanded upon his text in interesting ways.

Two examples will suffice. Early on in the play, Odysseus tells Hecuba that her daughter, Polyxena, is to be sacrificed on the grave of Achilles. A distraught Hecuba reminds Odysseus that she once aided him in his time of need. Yet Odysseus is unmoved, bluntly remarking that 'Doubtless I found plenty to say to save my life'.⁴⁰ As Erika Rummel observed, Erasmus' version turns this one line into three, significantly expanding on Euripides' use of the word *heurema* (excuses, inventions or remedies): 'To escape the danger of death, cunningly I devised all kinds of tricks together with all methods of persuasion'.⁴¹ Toker was sufficiently taken with the changes to record it in the margin.⁴² Slightly later in the play, Polyxena accepts her fate and tells Odysseus: 'Take heart, in my case you are safe from the suppliants' god, Zeus'.⁴³ Once again, Toker recorded Erasmus' much expanded version of this line.⁴⁴ For instance, Erasmus rendered the Greek *tharsei*

³⁴ Erasmus, *Ciceronianus*, CWE 6, p. 423.

³⁵ BL, 999.d.1.(1-2), Euripides, *Hecabē, Iphigeneia hē en Aulidi* (Louvain, 1520). BL, 999.d.1.(1) has two signatures by Toker. On the title page is 'Sum Tokeri nec muto dominum', a common inscription among humanists, including Erasmus. On the verso Toker signed in a format seen in many of his other books: 'Liber Joannis Toker Collegij Card. in Oxoniensis'.

³⁶ BL, 999.d.1.(1), pp. 10, 13, 14, 15, 17. Toker himself added page numbers to which I refer.

³⁷ Erika Rummel, *Erasmus as a Translator of the Classics* (Toronto, 1985), pp. 21-48.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴⁰ Euripides, *Hecuba*, trans. Gilbert Murray, in *Euripidis Fabulae* (3 vols, Oxford, 1981-84), i, l. 250. Hereafter: *Hecuba*.

⁴¹ Rummel, *Erasmus as Translator*, p. 35.

⁴² BL, 999.d.1.(1), p. 10.

⁴³ *Hecuba*, l. 345.

⁴⁴ BL, 999.d.1.(1), p. 14.

(Take heart), with the more common Latin idiom ‘*animo bono sis* (Be of good mind)’.⁴⁵ Whereas Euripides described Zeus as the ‘protector of suppliants’, Erasmus remarked parenthetically: ‘if he cares for and regards suppliants with favour and fairness’.⁴⁶ Toker also brought the Greek texts into line with Erasmus’ version in more subtle ways. For example, he manually added the printed speech marks from Erasmus’ edition into the Greek plays printed by Martens.⁴⁷ Toker, then, was not simply reading Euripides to improve his Greek but to engross himself within the humanist practice of translation, even as he read against the grain of Erasmus’ intentions.⁴⁸

Toker left a table of contents in this edition of Euripides which reveals how it was originally bound with several other items. After Euripides’ plays came ‘*Plutarchi de liberorum institutione grece*’, ‘*Erasmi declamationes duae pro matrimonio et medico*’, ‘*Tunstalli in laude matrimonii...*’ and ‘*Hutteni de morbo gallico*’.⁴⁹ Along with the practice of Greek, the rhetorical arts were well represented by the orations of Tunstall and Erasmus. Likewise, Toker’s interest in medicine was reflected in Erasmus’ declamation for the medical arts and Hutten’s tract on syphilis. It is no surprise either to find Erasmus’ speech on marriage in this collection, for it was subsequently included in *De conscribendis epistolis* as an example of the art of *suasoria*.⁵⁰ The Tunstall and Hutten editions have been lost. The Plutarch and Erasmus’ *Declamations*, however, are identifiable in the British Library. The Royal Library Catalogue (c.1761) confirms that the Euripides texts were once bound with editions of Plutarch and Erasmus.⁵¹ From here, their rebinding with other items under two different shelfmarks can be traced.⁵² The Plutarch work, edited by Melanchthon, contains a few Greek notes in the opening pages in a hand very similar to that of Toker.⁵³ Likewise, the Latin hand and marginalia of the *Declamations* is a close match. This reader uses the same shorthand ‘n’ for *nota*, similar manicules, and brackets the first few words of key sentences as Toker did in his books. The *Declamations* may have had another contemporary owner (besides Cranmer), since they contain a contemporary secretary hand different from any script Toker used.⁵⁴ Both editions were printed at Cologne (as Toker’s *De conscribendis epistolis* was) and both show evidence of red fore-edge staining

⁴⁵ Rummel, *Erasmus as Translator*, p. 34.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ BL, 999.d.1.(1), pp. 11, 12.

⁴⁸ Toker made similar excerpts from Erasmus’ Latin translation in his copy of *Iphigenia in aulis*. BL, 999.d.1.(2), sig. i1v.

⁴⁹ BL, 999.d.1.(1), on the verso of the tp.

⁵⁰ See, Charles Fantazzi, ‘Introduction’, *CWE* 71, p. 86.

⁵¹ See, Selwyn, *Library of Cranmer*, nos 464, 474-5, 511.

⁵² They are: BL, 551.b.1.(1), Erasmus, *Declamationes duae. Altera exhortatoria ad matrimonium. Altera artis medicae laudes complectens* (Cologne, 1518); BL, 8305.b.37, Plutarch, *Peri paidon agoges* (Cologne, 1519).

⁵³ BL, 8305.b.37, sigs A2r-v.

⁵⁴ BL, 551.b.1.(1), sig. D1r. This reader, however, did record his name as ‘John’. The vine-like marginalia may be this second reader’s work.

(like the Euripides editions they were once bound with).⁵⁵ Most importantly, perhaps, the annotations show a degree of stylistic unity, particularly in the *Declamations*, where the Toker-like reader has picked out various rhetorical figures and underlined sentiments concerning medicine.⁵⁶

Seen as a single volume, Toker's Euripides edition reveals the complementary strands of classical, rhetorical and stylistic matter which animated his reading of Erasmus. The patchy survival of his books has no doubt only provided a glimpse of his activities. Nonetheless, a glance through his notes powerfully demonstrates how the aspirations of a founder like Wolsey were translated into practice.

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St John's College, Cambridge, had been founded a few years before Cardinal College but equally envisioned itself as a bastion of humanist learning. Its first set of statutes, compiled in 1516, expressed the hope that lecturers in Greek and Hebrew would instruct the college's members, and in the coming years the college's guiding spirit and chief patron, John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, provided it with two talented scholars who had studied and taught abroad, Richard Croke and Robert Wakefield.⁵⁷ Not much is known about their teaching, but following the example of Erasmus, More and others, Croke used the works of Lucian to hone his pupils' Greek.⁵⁸ The college was also a hub for the reading of Greek and Erasmus' writings.⁵⁹ A *Sammelband* of three Erasmian works – *De duplici copia*, the *Colloquies* and *De octo orationis partium constructione* – came into the possession of Leonard Barton, who also owned Theodore of Gaza's Greek grammar and the works of Aristotle.⁶⁰ Barton's italic hand recorded a series of classical expressions in the front leaves of the book and then made copious annotations throughout the work, commenting on Erasmus' style and subject matter.⁶¹ The presence of other contemporary hands in this volume likewise suggests that it circulated among Cambridge students in the period. Nonetheless, Fisher's connections to the court, his opposition to the reformation and eventual execution meant that the

⁵⁵ This is obvious on the fore-edges of BL, 8305.b.37. However, BL, 551.b.1.(1) has been severely trimmed and only the faintest hint of the red pigment can be seen.

⁵⁶ BL, 551.b.1.(1), sig. B4r.

⁵⁷ Rex, 'The Sixteenth Century', pp. 17-24.

⁵⁸ *L&P* 4:1, 1143. On Croke, see Jessica Crown, 'Renaissance Humanism in England, c.1490-c.1530', (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2019), pp. 114-48.

⁵⁹ Rex, 'The Sixteenth Century', p. 22.

⁶⁰ Bodleian, Vet. M1 f.11.(1) Erasmus, *De duplici copia, verborum ac rerum commentarii duo... Colloquia* (Strasbourg, 1522/3); (2) Erasmus, *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae* (Cologne, 1523); (3) Erasmus, *De octo orationis partium constructione libellus* (Louvain, 1522). Bodleian, Auct. N 4.19, Aristotle, *De natura animalium libri novem* (Venice, 1492). Rex, 'Sixteenth Century', p. 22.

⁶¹ E.g. Barton's identification of two Parisian doctors as opponents of good letters in one of Erasmus' colloquies, Bodleian, Vet. M1 f.11.(2), sig. a6r.

college was by no means sheltered from the politics of the period. Indeed, both Croke and Wakefield would diligently serve the king in his quest for a divorce, even as Fisher worked to oppose the split.

The activities of George Day provide a window into the messy connections between Erasmian reading, humanism and the reformation at the college through the troubled decades of the 1520s and 30s. Day was one of several rising stars at St John's. He received his BA in 1522 and became a fellow the following year.⁶² By then he had attracted the attention of the college's patron, Fisher, who had two of Day's verses printed at the opening of his anti-Lutheran pamphlet, the *Assertionis Lutheranae confutatio*.⁶³ In the remaining years of the decade he was appointed as Linacre professor of medicine, *praelector* in Greek (in succession to Croke) and university orator and acted as a chaplain to Fisher. His mastery of Greek and elegant italic hand suggest that Day was taking on the trappings of humanist learning and culture. Day, however, was moving in a different religious direction. Unlike Fisher, he supported the royal supremacy. Further preferment at court and at Cambridge followed.⁶⁴ In 1537 he was appointed to be both master of St John's and vice chancellor of the university. A year later he was made provost of King's College, Cambridge, by royal grant, before becoming bishop of Chichester in 1543.⁶⁵ Behind the seemingly smooth rise, however, was a complicated and changing religious attitude, for while Day, by his own admission, had gone 'with the world' after university, by the 1540s he was increasingly opposed to aspects of religious reform.⁶⁶

What little we know of Day's library confirms his interest in the mastery of Greek and Latin and a fascination with the text of the Bible and Fathers. In his will of 1556, Day bequeathed copies of the *Complutensian Bible* and the Greek works of Chrysostom and Clement of Alexandria to St John's and King's.⁶⁷ The *Complutensian* may well have been acquired later in life, when Day was asked to work on a short-lived revision of the Great Bible in 1542. Two survivals, however, almost certainly date from Day's time at St John's. One is an Aldine edition of Martial's *Epigrams*, which later entered the royal collection.⁶⁸ The second is a copy of Erasmus' *Moriae encomium*, printed by Froben in Basel in 1522 with the commentary of Gerard Listrius.⁶⁹ The volume also included

⁶² ACAD: 'Day, George'. Malcolm Kitch, 'Day, George (c.1502-1556)', ODNB.

⁶³ Malcolm Underwood, 'John Fisher and the Promotion of Learning', in Brendan Bradshaw and Eamon Duffy (eds), *Humanism, Reform and the Reformation: The Career of Bishop John Fisher* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 41. On St John's prominent role in the anti-Lutheran campaign see, Rex, 'The English Campaign against Luther', pp. 92-5.

⁶⁴ Kitch, 'Day'. *LeP* 18:1, 623.

⁶⁵ Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 214-6.

⁶⁶ Kitch, 'Day'. Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII*, p. 219.

⁶⁷ TNA, PROB 11/38/214. The former is now: St John's College, Cambridge, T.7.4-6, *Vetus testamentum multiplici lingua* (Alcala de Henares, 1514-7), vol. 1 missing.

⁶⁸ CUL, Sel.6.45, Martial, *Epigrammata* (Venice, 1501).

⁶⁹ CUL, Rel.d.52.8, Erasmus, *Moriae Encomium* (Basel, 1522).

several other satirical works with connections to Erasmus' circle in Basel, such as an edition of *Ludus de morte Divi Claudii* (thought to be by Seneca) with notes by Beatus Rhenanus. At the front of both books, Day has left his recognisable italic signature.⁷⁰ Fortunately, the *Moria* remains in its original binding from the workshop of Garrett Godfrey in Cambridge, with panels most frequently found on imprints in the 1520s.⁷¹ Day himself may have bought it from Godfrey's shop, for he recorded a price of 16*d* opposite the title page; a price which closely matches Godfrey's surviving accounts.⁷² The nature of Day's notes in this volume also suggests he was reading it while studying at St John's.

Day read his *Moria* in at least three separate sittings.⁷³ Most of his attention was focused on interpreting Erasmus' use of classical authors and language, regularly relying on Listrius' commentary for help. Nonetheless, he demonstrated an impressive familiarity with this material, including references to, among others, Ovid, Aulus Gellius, Horace, Pliny, Plutarch, Varro, Ausonius, Cicero and Quintilian.⁷⁴ One instance in which Day expanded upon Listrius' notes came when Folly disparagingly mentions the Pythagorean tetrad (the obscure theory that the intervals between the first four numbers were fundamental to all of nature). Listrius mentioned only that the tetrad is contained in a 'most vulgar poem of Pythagoras', before quoting the Greek verses in question.⁷⁵ However, Day recorded in the margin that Pythagoras had given four essential properties of the soul – '*intellectus, scientia, opinio, sensus*' – and that these were discussed in more detail in book one of Aristotle's *De anima*.⁷⁶ Many of Day's jottings refer to his study of Greek and medicine and perhaps took place in the context of teaching. When Folly argued that those devoted to scholarship live shorter lives, Day underlined a portion of Listrius' explanation, from Galen and Aristotle, of the medical reasons for this.⁷⁷ Elsewhere he underlined information on fevers.⁷⁸

Day's study of the classics through the *Moriae encomium* also had a literary perspective, through his evident interest in the satires of Lucian. When Folly claimed for herself those who tell stories of monstrous miracles or lies, Listrius explained that such people could be seen in Lucian's *Philopseudes* and that Thomas More had produced a Latin translation of the speech; a piece of information Day underlined.⁷⁹ Elsewhere Day left an instruction to himself (or another?) to 'read

⁷⁰ For a comparison see: TNA, SP 1/131, fo. 55r.

⁷¹ Oldham, AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) with Godfrey's initials. Oldham had seen the combination on imprints dating between 1503-30. *EBSB*, p. 43.

⁷² *Godfrey*: 503: gives the price of 15*d* for a copy of the *Moria*.

⁷³ The colour of the ink Day used twice changed.

⁷⁴ e.g. CUL, Rel.d.52.8, pp. 136, 148, 151, 160, 177, 220, 255.

⁷⁵ Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, ed. Clarence Miller (New Haven, 2003), p. 18, n. 6.

⁷⁶ CUL, Rel.d.52.8, p. 128: '*4o. P. intellectus, scientia, opinio, sensus. Arist. 1o de Anima Cap. 2o*'.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 201.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 239.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 212.

the *Icaromenippum* of Lucian'.⁸⁰ One Greek character of particular interest to Day appears to have been Timon of Athens, who withdrew entirely from human society in disgust and became a figure of fun among classical writers. When Erasmus makes mention of Timon, Day noted that in Plutarch's *Life of Anthony*, there is a long discussion of Timon's actions, including his 'ridiculous speech concerning the fig-tree' and his 'Epitaph'.⁸¹ Not content to leave things there, however, Day also inscribed Timon's epitaph in the end pages of the *Moria*.⁸² Erasmus had translated Lucian's *Timon, or the Misanthrope*, and this awareness of the Greek satirist's work suggests that Day had a more than passing interest in the ironic potential of Erasmus' writing.

Day's annotating habits suggest that several layers of reading were being constructed. There was the simple task of understanding erudite references and jokes and positioning Erasmus among his friends and enemies. Modern commentators remain uncertain as to what parts of the commentary were truly written by Listrius and which were supplied by Erasmus, but Day clearly found its explanations of controversial or cryptic passages illuminating.⁸³ On top of these elements, then, Day added a stylistic layer, grappling with the work's Lucianic overtones. Day himself dabbled in the literary potential of Erasmian satire. In the poem he composed for Fisher's *Confutatio*, the English scholar rebuked Luther by telling him in Greek to 'go away to the crows' (*Es korakas*). Day almost certainly found this adage in Erasmus' *Adagia* or *Apophthegmata*, where the Dutch scholar explained that 'to go to the crows' meant, 'Begone to perdition [or] Go to hell'.⁸⁴ The poem thus aligned Erasmus under the banner of anti-Lutheranism while signalling Day's broader cultural alliances to humanism.

Yet such an alliance between Erasmus and the extermination of heresy was less clear when Day read the *Moria*. That work, after all, was not just a compendium of classical literature or a cultural icon but a biting satire of religious foibles. Behind Day's notes on various more controversial passages, in fact, is a desire to locate Erasmus' religious views more generally. Listrius' commentary once again proved helpful in this regard by placing Erasmus somewhere between the abuses of traditional religion and the Lutheran reaction. One passage of considerable interest to Day, for instance, was Erasmus' assault on previous efforts at biblical interpretation. Towards the end of the *Moria*, Erasmus extensively criticised Nicholas of Lyra for his interpretation of Luke 22:35-6 where Christ asks the disciples: 'Whoever has a purse should take

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 244.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 160: 'Plutarchus in vita Antonii. ridicula eius oratio de ficum. Epitaph.'

⁸² *Ibid*, end flyleaves: 'Hic sum post vitam miseramque inopemque sepultus / Nomen non queras, Dii lector te male perdant.'

⁸³ J. Austin Gavin and Thomas Walsh, 'The Praise of Folly in Context: The Commentary of Girardus Listrius', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 24:2 (1971), pp. 193-209.

⁸⁴ Erasmus, *Adagia*, II.i.96, *CWE* 33, pp. 73-4.

it, and also his pack; and whoever has no sword should sell his coat and buy one'.⁸⁵ Erasmus was clear that Christ's message was one of peace and that the sword could only refer to the mission of preaching the gospel. Yet in Lyra's interpretation of the passage, Folly detected a far too earthly concern for possessions and warfare: 'And thus', Erasmus complained, 'this interpreter of the divine mind musters the apostles fully equipped with spears, slings, siege-machines and cannons, to preach Christ crucified'.⁸⁶ Nowhere is Lyra identified by Erasmus. However, Listrius had named names in the commentary. Day underlined a large section of Listrius' note to this passage and its ridicule of Lyra's suggestion that Christ 'should call these same apostles to arms and exhort them as worldly knights'.⁸⁷ 'For in the same way that fire and water are contraries, so are Christ and the world; the doctrine of Christ and the opinion of the world'.⁸⁸

Day was also an attentive reader of the notes concerning Folly's criticisms of contemporary Christian devotion and worship. For example, Folly rebukes those who believe that 'fictitious pardons' can buy them time out of purgatory.⁸⁹ By the 1520s, however, such a passage might have seemed eerily resonant of Martin Luther's criticisms of indulgences. Yet Day passed no comment on the issue, instead highlighting the commentary where Erasmus' writings were defended by Listrius:

These are commonly called indulgences, which [Erasmus] does not disapprove of here, if they are true, but he laughs at those which have been counterfeited, and for that reason he added "fictitious" for often certain people pass around bulls which have been made for profit, in order that they might impose them on peasants and the inexperienced.⁹⁰

Day likewise bracketed a large section of Listrius' note on miracles, underlining the suggestion that Christians would be better to believe the gospel than every concocted miracle.⁹¹ Similar attention was paid to Listrius' call to imitate Mary's devotion, rather than an endless cycle of ceremonial observance. 'What is the best worship of God', Day remarked next to the call to emulate Mary's humility and to meditate on the divine scriptures.⁹² He thus seems to have taken seriously Erasmus' calls to base one's life around a renewed biblicism, while finding reassurance in Listrius that the Dutch scholar had not needlessly carped at traditional religion.

⁸⁵ Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, pp. 124-5.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁸⁷ CUL, Rel.d.52.8, p. 337: '*...ipsos apostolos ad arma vocaret, hortareturque eos tanquam milites mundanos...*'.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*: '*Nam quemadmodum ignis et aqua sunt contraria, sic Christus et mundus, doctrinaque Christi et mundi opinio*'.

⁸⁹ Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, p. 64.

⁹⁰ CUL, Rel.d.52.8, p. 215.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 241: '*Quis optimus divorum cultus*'.

Day and Toker fully appreciated that Erasmus had a vital role to play in the cultivation and appreciation of classical languages. They used his works to reflect on the practice of translation, the satiric potential of literature and on his broader calls for religious reform. Neither, however, read the Dutchman's books unfiltered, instead relying on their wider library or the commentaries of others to make sense of Erasmus' writings. Lurking in the background was their wider interest in medicine, a concern that would force them and their peers to look beyond the Erasmian educational programme towards other writers and scholars.

(ii) Philological scholarship in England:

John Claymond and John Caius

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, English humanism was fostered by successive waves of student-travellers to Italy.⁹³ During their time on the peninsula, these English students were often exposed to the cutting-edge techniques of philological and codicological scholarship being pursued by the likes of Angelo Poliziano and Ermolao Barbaro.⁹⁴ Several Englishmen – Thomas Linacre, William Latimer, Cuthbert Tunstall, Thomas Lupset and John Clement, to name a few – would develop contacts with important scholars and printers in the region, particularly the group of Greek scholars working at the Aldine press. Erasmus eagerly sought out these men during his time in England and Italy. Indeed, he relied on Latimer and Tunstall to help him correct the first edition of the New Testament and used Thomas Lupset – another Aldine assistant – as an intermediary when attempting to get a new edition of his *Adagia* published by the Venetian press in the mid 1520s.⁹⁵

Despite these connections, however, historians have often downplayed these Italianate strains in English humanism, preferring to attribute an interest in philology and classical texts to Erasmus. Several reasons have influenced the neglect. The divide between medieval and early modern has played a part, as has the supposedly plodding nature of philological and codicological scholarship. Likewise, several of these English scholars published little, preferring to pursue their interests by collecting and collating, rather than writing for the press. Only by treating these figures

⁹³ Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English Students in Italy, 1485-1603* (Toronto, 1998). Schoeck, 'Humanism in England', pp. 6-10.

⁹⁴ L. Reynolds and N. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 108-46. Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship* (2 vols, Oxford, 1983-93), i, pp. 9-70. Idem, 'Quattrocento Humanism and Classical Scholarship', in Albert Rabil (ed.), *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy* (3 vols, Philadelphia, 1988), i, pp. 332-49. Vittore Branca, 'L'Umanesimo Veneziano alla Fine del Quattrocento: Ermolao Barbaro e il Suo Circolo', in Girolamo Arnaldi and Manlio Stocchi (eds), *Storia della Cultura Veneta*, 3:1 (1980), pp. 123-75.

⁹⁵ Ep. 663, *CWE* 5, p. 124. Ep. 1595, *CWE* 11, pp. 230-6.

on their own terms, however, can a proper understanding of Erasmus' contribution to English intellectual culture be assembled. This section, therefore, analyses two such practitioners of humanist philology – John Claymond (d.1536) and John Caius (d.1573) – to demonstrate that Erasmus' readers developed a critical approach to his works, based on their knowledge of the Italian tradition and their own labours at commenting, collating and editing texts.

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John Claymond deserves a place among the finest humanist scholars of early Tudor England, though his work remains sadly neglected.⁹⁶ Claymond was likely educated at Magdalen College school, Oxford, before proceeding to study at Magdalen itself from 1484. After the usual stint in the faculty of arts, Claymond proceeded to study theology. He was ordained as a priest in 1499 and by 1507 had risen through the ranks at Magdalen to become president. His close association with Richard Foxe, bishop of Winchester, led to his appointment as the first president of Foxe's newly created Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1517, a position he held until his death in late 1536 or early 1537.

The aims and ambitions of Foxe's new college have been much discussed and oft eulogised. Erasmus himself wrote to Claymond in 1519 to celebrate the foundation and its library, 'sacred to all that is best in literature' and 'rich in the three tongues'.⁹⁷ While the Dutchman subtly presented himself as the guiding spirit of Corpus Christi, the library in reality was only in its infancy.⁹⁸ Neither Foxe nor Claymond had visited Italy, but their purchases harkened back to an earlier version of humane letters, one still heavily reliant on manuscripts and Italian humanists. As a start, Foxe bulk ordered the best Italian imprints of Greek authors and raided the library of John Shirwood, his predecessor as bishop of Durham, for Latin texts.⁹⁹ Yet gaps remained. In 1521, Claymond bought several Greek manuscripts from William Grocyn and gradually acquired Hebrew texts in the coming years.¹⁰⁰ To these, Claymond added volumes from his own library, the majority of which were bequeathed to the college on his death.

⁹⁶ Jonathan Woolfson, 'Claymond, John (1467/8-1536)', *ODNB*. Idem, 'John Claymond, Pliny the Elder, and the Early History of Corpus Christi College, Oxford', *EHR*, 112:448 (1997), pp. 882-903.

⁹⁷ Ep. 990, *CWE* 6, p. 406.

⁹⁸ David Rundle, 'Corpus Before Erasmus, or the English Humanist Tradition and Greek Before the Trojans', in Mordechai Feingold and John Watts (eds), *History of Universities: Volume XXXII / 1-2: Renaissance College: Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in Context, 1450-1600* (Oxford, 2019), pp. 103-27. Rodney Thomson, *The Fox and the Bees: The Early Library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford* (Cambridge, 2018).

⁹⁹ J. R. Liddell, 'The Library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in the Sixteenth Century', *The Library*, 4:18 (1938), p. 388. P. S. Allen, 'Bishop Shirwood of Durham and His Library', *EHR*, 25:99 (1910), pp. 445-456.

¹⁰⁰ Liddell, 'Library of Corpus', pp. 389-90.

As a result, over 70 items from Claymond's library have survived, many of them in contemporary bindings and with notes indicating their purchase in Oxford or London.¹⁰¹ Some of the president's books were chained in the college library but others circulated within the college even during his lifetime.¹⁰² Claymond's students, in fact, became very familiar with the president's crabby and often heavily abbreviated handwriting, which littered the margins of many of his books. As John Shepreve noted in an encomiastic poem about his teacher, one could still find in the college's possession 'many books which have been inscribed in the margin, in such a way that you may rarely be able to write more in them. Add to this, that an index would be added to many of them, which the ready and watchful hand rightly organised'.¹⁰³ Claymond's reading practices are still evident in his surviving books which have often had their indexes updated and a battery of notes added to the margins.

It was during his presidency at Corpus that Claymond began his most significant scholarly labour, a vast commentary on Pliny's *Natural History*, explicitly modelled on the work of the late-*quattrocento* scholars Poliziano and Barbaro.¹⁰⁴ This commentary is now dispersed into 20 volumes held in Oxford and Basel.¹⁰⁵ Barbaro was particularly influential for Claymond's thinking in these volumes, for he too had worked on Pliny's text and argued that a scholar could only establish a more accurate text by returning to the relevant manuscripts.¹⁰⁶ Claymond kept abreast of new manuscript readings of Pliny printed by Froben in 1525-6, and the large number of manuscripts purchased for Corpus' library suggest that he hoped to foster this tradition in Oxford.¹⁰⁷ The English scholar also mined his printed books for elucidatory material. His edition of Guillaume Budé's study of classical coinage was heavily culled for relevant information on Pliny.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, Claymond read Erasmus' updated edition of Seneca (1529) with interest, though he showed more concern for the texts themselves than for any commentary offered by the Dutch scholar.¹⁰⁹ Unsurprisingly, it was Seneca's *Naturales quaestiones*, a work of natural philosophy comparable to

¹⁰¹ E.g. CCC, Oxford, phi.F.5.8.(2), Laertius Diogenes, *Vitae et sententiae eorum qui in philosophia probati fuerunt* (Venice, 1493), opening flyleaves: 'Liber Claimondi emptus in quaternionibus londini – ii.s'.

¹⁰² Neil Ker, 'The Provision of Books', in McConica (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford*, iii, p. 458.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Liddell, 'Library of Corpus', p. 390: 'Legerat authores, (quis credat?) legerat, inquam, / Omnes, qui scriptis qualiacunque dabant: / Legerat exacte, non tantum legerat illos, / Ut licet e sparsus undique scire notis: / Aspicias tot scriptos in margine libros, / Sic ut in his raro scribere plura queas. / Adde quod illorum multis accesserit Index, / Quem bene digessit prompta vigilque manus.'

¹⁰⁴ Woolfson, 'Pliny', pp. 882-903.

¹⁰⁵ CCC, Oxford, MSS 178-81, John Claymond, *Commentary on Pliny*, c.1530-6. Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, MS K.I.4 (16 vols), John Claymond, *Commentary on Pliny*, c.1530-6.

¹⁰⁶ Grafton, 'Quattrocento Humanism and Classical Scholarship', pp. 332-49.

¹⁰⁷ Woolfson, 'Pliny', p. 886.

¹⁰⁸ CCC, Oxford, delt.10.6.(1), Guillaume Budé, *De asse et partibus eius Libri quinque* (Paris, 1514). Woolfson, 'Pliny' p. 893.

¹⁰⁹ CCC, Oxford, LLL.L.1412.Se/529, Seneca, *Opera* (Basel, 1529).

Pliny, that drew most of Claymond's attention.¹¹⁰ In fact, as Jonathan Woolfson has shown, though Claymond did draw on Erasmus' works (especially the *Adagia*) to elucidate various aspects of Pliny's text, he was only one of a vast array of humanist authors cited, including Budé, Cuthbert Tunstall, Jakob Ziegler, Étienne L'Aigue and various Italian humanists.¹¹¹

It was primarily as an editor and textual critic, therefore, that Claymond took an interest in Erasmus' writings. He owned Erasmus' first edition of Lorenzo Valla's *Adnotationes* and the New Testament and *Annotations* of 1519.¹¹² Towards the end of his life he purchased Erasmus' *Paraphrases*, the edition of Seneca and three collections of the Church Fathers to which Erasmus had contributed (Jerome (1526), Ambrose (1527), and Augustine (1531)).¹¹³ Claymond made several notes in his copies of Seneca and Jerome, though the latter survives only in the ninth volume. The *Paraphrases* and the editions of Ambrose and Augustine, by contrast, are largely unmarked and may have been bought primarily for the college's use. A further two items were undoubtedly once in Claymond's library but have subsequently been lost. In 1526, Erasmus dedicated his edition of John Chrysostom's *De fato et providentia Dei* to Claymond. The copy now at Corpus, however, was donated in the seventeenth century.¹¹⁴ Claymond's edition of the *Adagia*, perhaps listed in the college's 1589 catalogue, has also disappeared.¹¹⁵

Claymond's engagement with humanist critical methods structured his reading of Erasmus, especially the scholar's biblical writings. The humanist reassessment of the sacred scriptures was of great interest to Claymond, as testified by the presence of Valla, Johann Reuchlin, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola in his library. In his copy of Lorenzo Valla's *Adnotationes*, edited by Erasmus, Claymond marked several passages carefully, including discussions of the papacy and the authority of the Septuagint.¹¹⁶ He showed little interest in commenting upon Erasmus' prefatory letter with its striking arguments for a return *ad fontes sacrae scripturae*. Only in the poem in praise of the Englishman Christopher Fisher, to whom Erasmus had dedicated his edition of Valla, did Claymond appear to recognise the Dutchman, writing the names of Fisher, Erasmus and the monastery of Parc (where Erasmus had found the manuscript of Valla's notes)

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 412-3.

¹¹¹ Woolfson, 'Pliny', pp. 890-3.

¹¹² CCC, Oxford, phi.F.5.8(1), Lorenzo Valla, *In Latinam Novi Testamenti interpretationem adnotationes* (Paris, 1505); del.19.6, *Novum testamentum omne* (Basel, 1519).

¹¹³ CCC, Oxford, LL.L.1410.6/535.(a-b), Erasmus, *Paraphrases* (Basel, 1535); LL.L.1412.Se/529, L. *Annei Senecae Opera* (Basel, 1529); LL.L.1412.Hi/516, Jerome, *Omnia opera* (Basel, 1526), only volume nine; LL.L.1412.Am/527.(1-3), Ambrose, *Opera* (3 vols, Basel, 1527); LL.L.1412.Au/531.(a-f), Augustine, *Opera* (6 vols, Paris, 1531).

¹¹⁴ CCC, Oxford, LL.L.1412.Ch/526.(2), Chrysostom, *De fato et providentia dei* (Basel, 1526). Donated by John Rosewell in 1684.

given by

¹¹⁵ Woolfson, 'Pliny', p. 892.

¹¹⁶ CCC, Oxford, phi.F.5.8(1), Valla, *Adnotationes*, fos 3r, 17r.

in the margins.¹¹⁷ As might be expected, Claymond took a strong interest in the humanist reassessment of the authority of the bible, noting twice in a copy of Lefèvre's commentaries that the author doubted that Jerome had authored the Vulgate.¹¹⁸ On the odd occasion he corrected the French scholar's text with reference to Erasmus' *Annotations*. In Hebrews 11:11, Lefèvre had quoted Paul as speaking of the faith of Sarah, the wife of Abraham, and the power she was given '*in successione seminis*' (in the succession of the seed).¹¹⁹ Erasmus 'marvelled' at that translation and believed that Lefèvre had actually intended for the line to read '*in susceptione seminis*' (in the undertaking of the seed) but that the 'carelessness of the printers' had substituted '*successione*' for '*susceptione*'.¹²⁰ Claymond agreed, writing '*susceptione*' in the margin: 'see Erasmus on the same'.¹²¹ In his edition of the New Testament, Claymond was similarly intrigued by the language and historical context of John 1-2 (the only chapters annotated). He noted the origins of biblical names in Syriac and Hebrew.¹²² In a largely indecipherable note, Claymond linked the baptismal water used by John the Baptist (1:26, 31) to a 'Hebrew phrase', though from where he derived this scrap of information is unclear.¹²³ Elsewhere, when the gospel spoke of the 'tenth hour' (John 1:39), Claymond indicated that time was kept differently among the Jews than in his own age.¹²⁴ He was also struck by the appearance of the rather rare word, *architriclinus* ('master of the feast') in John 2:8, glossing it at the bottom of the page, though again with little regard for Erasmus' commentary.¹²⁵ That said, he took no interest in Erasmus' controversial rendering of John 1:1 as '*In principio erat sermo*', passing over the passage in silence.

Very occasionally, Claymond showed a willingness to read Erasmus' New Testament in a more theological frame of mind. Next to the text of John 1:15-17, for instance, he remarked: '*honore obligationis*' and '*umbra in lege*'.¹²⁶ The exact meaning of these notes is not immediately apparent. The first could be an oblique reaction to Erasmus' suggestion that Christ, even in human form, was far superior to John.¹²⁷ The second reflects Claymond's repeated preoccupation, even in these few

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 45.

¹¹⁸ CCC, Oxford, del.6.14, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, *Commentarii in epistolas Pauli* (Paris, 1512), sigs α2v-3v.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, fo. 254r.

¹²⁰ Erasmus, *Annotationes* (Basel, 1527), p. 657: '*Demiror autem cur Faber maluerit pro conceptione successionem, nisi quod verecundius etiam quam interpres studuit efferre. Aut, quod magis suspicor, librarium incuria, pro susceptione mutatum est successione.*'

¹²¹ del.6.14, Faber, *Commentarii*, fo. 254r: '*Susceptione. Vide Erasmus super eodem*'

¹²² *Ibid*, p. 191. By the name 'Cephas', Claymond wrote '*syriace*' and next to 'Messiah', he noted '*hebraice graece christus*'.

¹²³ *Ibid*, p. 190: '*[?] aqua id est aqua ex hebraeae sermone...*'. Erasmus makes no such comment in the *Annotationes*.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 191: '*non erant diei horae sed inequales ex ?censore*'.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 192: '*Architriclinus se libat [?] sobrius et abstemius et ?poterat ministris*'. Theophylact has remarked on the necessity for the *architriclinus* to remain sober. See, Richard Watson, *A Theological and Biblical Dictionary* (London, 1832), p. 83.

¹²⁶ CCC, Oxford, del.19.6, *Novum testamentum*, p. 190.

¹²⁷ Erasmus, *Annotationes* (Basel, 1527), p. 217: '*Mihi videtur ad dignitatem pertinere, qua Christus etiam ut homo, maior erat Joanne*'.

pages, to interpret John's text as a comment upon the relationship of the Old Law or Old Testament and the coming of Christ and the gospel. This is most clearly seen when Claymond reached the account of Jesus turning the water into wine (John 2:1-10), where he remarked at the foot of the page that 'water is turned into wine, that is, the Old Testament [*vetus lex*] is turned into the gospel'.¹²⁸ Claymond here signalled a willingness to read the text allegorically in a way compatible with a number of patristic, medieval and humanist commentators.

Aspects of Claymond's reading of Erasmus undoubtedly remain obscure thanks to his dense handwriting, cryptic notes and the loss of volumes from his collection. His interest in a philological tradition stretching well beyond Erasmus, however, is mirrored in another reader from the period: John Caius. Like Claymond, Caius was a religiously conservative scholar, closely associated with the foundation of an educational institution, who dedicated much of his life to the critical analysis of classical texts, mainly the writings of the Greek physician Galen.¹²⁹ A more rigorous philological and codicological approach to Galen, Caius imagined, would set contemporary medicine on a firmer footing and he helped to edit, translate and publish several of the doctor's texts between 1544 and 1557. Rather unlike his Oxford forebear, however, Caius pursued these interests by travelling and studying extensively in Europe, rooting out Galenic manuscripts across Northern Italy and forming friendships with leading physicians and naturalists, such as Conrad Gessner.¹³⁰ On his return to England in the mid 1540s he began practising as a physician in London and at court. He used the wealth from his thriving medical practice to help re-found his old college as the newly minted Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, in 1557, developing a friendship with Matthew Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, with whom Caius shared an interest in English antiquities.¹³¹

Prior to his departure for Italy in 1539, Caius seems to have taken a considerable interest in Erasmus' religious writings. In later life, Caius stated that he had produced two manuscript versions of Erasmian texts during these years: an abbreviated edition of the *Ratio verae theologiae* (1518) for Augustine Steward, an alderman from Caius' native Norwich; and a translation of Erasmus' *Paraphrase on the Epistle of St Jude* for another friend.¹³² Both were likely motivated by a vision of Erasmus as a bulwark against religious innovation. Augustine, Caius alleged, had been a

¹²⁸ CCC, Oxford, del.19.6, p. 192: '*vertitur aqua in vinem id est vetus lex in evangelium*'.

¹²⁹ Vivian Nutton, 'Caius, John (1510-1573)', ODNB. Idem, 'John Caius and the Linacre Tradition', *Medical History*, 23:4 (1979), pp. 373-91. Idem, 'John Caius and the Eton Galen: Medical Philology in the Renaissance', *Medizinhistorisches Journal*, 20:3 (1985), pp. 227-52. Idem, *John Caius and the Manuscripts of Galen* (Cambridge, 1987).

¹³⁰ Nutton, *Caius and Manuscripts of Galen*, chap. 4. Anthony Grafton, 'Conrad Gessner and John Caius: The Meanings of Learned Friendship in Renaissance Europe', in Urs Leu and Peter Opitz (eds), *Conrad Gessner (1516-1565): The Renaissance of Learning* (Berlin, 2019), pp. 353-74.

¹³¹ Anthony Grafton, *Inky Fingers: The Making of Books in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass. 2020), pp. 208-31.

¹³² John Caius, *De libris propriis*, in *The Works of John Caius, M.D.*, ed. Ernest Roberts (Cambridge, 1912), p. 70. Idem, *The booke against the sweetyng sicknes*, in *Works*, p. 5.

diligent reader of scripture, but ‘a new persuasion of religion was beginning to sprout in England’ and he could ‘not understand by which paths one should circumscribe the manner of reading and understanding, nor could he find a safe method’.¹³³ Caius also decided to leave out ‘many subtile thinges, made rather for great & learned divines’ than for a layman like Steward.¹³⁴ Likewise, his choice of paraphrase was telling, since the *Paraphrase on Jude* begins with a complaint about pseudo-apostles and schisms in faith.¹³⁵ Caius’ conservatism, in fact, would lead him to oppose the introduction of new Greek pronunciation in England, despite the advocacy of Erasmus in this regard.¹³⁶

It was Caius’ interest in medical humanism, however, that spurred much of his reading of Erasmus. Caius’ activities in these years can be reconstructed from the bequests of books he left to his college and from the inventories and personal descriptions of other items among his papers.¹³⁷ At the time of his death in 1573, Caius owned several works by Erasmus, including copies of the *Lucubratiunculae*, *Moriae Encomium* and a *Paraphrase on John*.¹³⁸ He may have possessed Erasmian editions of the New Testament and Jerome’s letters.¹³⁹ However, his chief interest in the Dutch scholar’s writings was philological, as evidenced by his copies of the *Apophthegmata*, the *Adagia* and a *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* printed by Andreas Cratander which drew its material from the works of Poliziano, Barbaro, Valla, Budé and Erasmus. Caius’ copies of the *Lexicon* and the *Adagia* survive today in the library of Gonville and Caius and help us to assess his reaction to the Dutchman’s works in the light of his medical and philological pursuits.¹⁴⁰ The *Lexicon* survives in an early binding by Garrett Godfrey, suggesting that Caius acquired it while a student in Cambridge in the 1530s, while the binding of the *Adagia* dates from the middle of the century. Both appear to have been given to the college by Caius around the year 1558.¹⁴¹ Caius’ annotations in these works show the evolution of his hand from a neat italic into a messier scrawl in his later years, presumably because he worked on these books from the 1530s until the end of the 1550s, if not later.¹⁴²

¹³³ Caius, *De libris propriis*, p. 70: ‘non tamen quibus limitibus legendi aut intelligendi modum circumscriberet, nec rationem tuto inveniret, scivit. Coepit enim per ea tempora nova de religione persuasio istic in Anglia pullulare.’

¹³⁴ Caius, *The booke against the swetyng sicknes*, p. 5.

¹³⁵ See Chap. 1.

¹³⁶ Caius, *De pronuntiatione Graecae et Latinae*, in *Works*, pp. 1-19. For the wider debate see: John McDiarmid, ‘Recovering Republican Eloquence: John Cheke versus Stephen Gardiner on the Pronunciation of Greek’, *History of European Ideas*, 38:3 (2012), pp. 338-51.

¹³⁷ John Grierson, ‘The Library of John Caius’, in M. Prichard and J. Skemp (eds), *Biographical History of Gonville and Caius College* (9 vols, Cambridge, 1897-1998), vii, pp. 509-26. Elisabeth Leedham-Green, ‘A Catalogue of Caius College Library, 1569’, *TCBS*, 8:1 (1981), pp. 29-41.

¹³⁸ Grierson, nos 48, 58, 121.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, nos 1, 13.

¹⁴⁰ G&C, M.7.20, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* (Basel, 1532). G&C, H.16.24, Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1541)

¹⁴¹ John Caius, *The Annals of Gonville and Caius College*, ed. John Venn (Cambridge, 1904), p. 81: ‘*Dictionarium graecum... chiliades Erasmi*’.

¹⁴² Nutton, ‘John Caius and the Eton Galen’, p. 233.

Caius treated neither the *Adagia* nor the *Lexicon* as complete. Instead, he updated entries and indexes with supplementary details drawn from his reading. Much of this material unsurprisingly derived from Galen. In the *Lexicon*, for example, he noted that the Greek *arbule* is a type of shoe mentioned in the fifth tome of Galen's works.¹⁴³ Similarly, in the index of the *Adagia*, Caius added an entry on the saying 'a fat stomach does not give birth to a gentle mind' drawn from Galen's *Thrasylbulus*.¹⁴⁴ Other additions were drawn from the Greek originals of Plato, Aristotle, Celsus and others, often referencing Caius' own collection of manuscripts. For the adage, *lavare salsum auditum* (washing the brine from one's ears, III.iii.26), Caius noted that the phrase was drawn from Plato's *Phaedrus* and cited by Plutarch in the *Moralia*, 'folio 205 of our manuscript'.¹⁴⁵ More recent authorities included Poliziano and Beatus Rhenanus' commentary on Tertullian.¹⁴⁶ His focus in many of these notes was not merely to extract information on the classical languages in question, but also to reflect on the practice of editing classical writings. By Erasmus' discussion of the word *Sciamacheim* (to shadowbox, IV.vi.48), Caius noted that Poliziano had emended a passage in Cicero's letters on the basis of the same word. Elsewhere he highlighted an entry where Erasmus suggested an emendation to the text of Suidas (II.vi.85).¹⁴⁷ Reading the Herculean Labours (III.i.1), Caius' eye was similarly drawn to a passage where Erasmus lamented that compilations of classical texts had led to the loss of the original authors themselves, with the reader noting that 'epitomes ruined whole works'.¹⁴⁸

Caius was not simply an intellectual magpie but a critical reader in the humanist tradition. On occasion, therefore he expressed dissatisfaction with Erasmus' philological commentary. When Erasmus came to discuss the so-called 'Herculean disease' (II.iv.27), for example, Caius censured the Dutch scholar for building a faulty explanation on a poor understanding of classical texts. Erasmus asserted that some had equated this adage with the 'sacred disease' (*sacer morbus*), so-called because such illnesses were said to be divine in origin and to leave no hope of recovery for the patient.¹⁴⁹ Caius, however, took Erasmus to task for his ignorance, noting in the margin that it would be better to replace the word *sacer* with *magnus* 'since among the ancient Greeks and Latins, "*sacer*" was used for "great", not only for "sacred" [*sanctum*], as in "the sacrum bone" [*sacrum os*] or "great hunger" [*sacra fames*]'.¹⁵⁰ Trivial as this complaint may seem, Caius was in reality implying

¹⁴³ G&C, M.7.20, sig. k5r: '*galenus to.5. fol. 644*'.

¹⁴⁴ G&C, H.16.24, sig. bb1v: '*Crassus venter non gignit mentem tenuem Galenus in Thrasylb.*'

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, sig. bb3r: '*auctore in plato in Phaedrus. Citatur ab auctore quidam graeco peri sarcophagias fol cod. nostri manuscripti 205...*'.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 964. G&C, M.7.20, sig. C2v.

¹⁴⁷ G&C, H.16.24, p. 537.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 631: '*epitome interitus absolutorum operum*'.

¹⁴⁹ Erasmus, *Adagia*, CWE 33, pp. 203-4.

¹⁵⁰ G&C, H.16.24, p. 467: '*contra, magno, quia sacrum magnum apud veteres graecos et latinos, non sanctum solum dicebatur. ut sacrum os, sacra fames*'.

that Erasmus had a shaky hold on his sources and a weak understanding of classical usage. The Greek physician, Aretaeus, after all, had debunked the idea that there was a divine cause for the ‘*morbus magnus*’ and discussed the equivalence of *sacer* and *magnus*.¹⁵¹ Caius was similarly unimpressed by Erasmus’ forays into English etymology. In his discussion of the ‘Cork-man’ (IV.vi.65), the Dutch scholar had proposed that the English word ‘for a man who is obliging and is in no way difficult’, was drawn from the Greek word for cork (*phellos*) and its ability to float.¹⁵² ‘He means “fellowe”’, Caius added, ‘but I do not think that this word derived from *phelleus*, but from it was derived “felles”, that is steep mountains as there are at Furnes[s] Felles” [i.e. in Lancashire]’.¹⁵³ Here, Caius deployed a greater knowledge of English vocabulary and topography to correct the scholarship of Erasmus, though working under the same presumption that English must derive from classical tongues. The passage hints at the ways in which humanism in England had been developing beyond the confines of the Erasmian tradition through an interest in English antiquity in the circles of John Leland and Matthew Parker.

The engagement of Claymond and Caius in a long tradition of philological scholarship, therefore, helps to explain the development of an interested but by no means uncritical approach to Erasmus’ writings in the sixteenth century. Focused as they were on the writings of Pliny and Galen, both men could call upon an independent knowledge of the manuscripts and authorities of the humanist tradition to both reinforce and criticise Erasmus’ labours. Likewise, while Erasmus’ religious writings exercised an important impact on their thinking, their preoccupation with the realms of medicine and natural philosophy, along with their religious conservatism, discouraged them from following some of the more controversial religious lines of enquiry that engaged so many of their peers. If Caius envisioned Erasmus as a ballast against religious innovation in the 1530s, he would equally abandon the Dutch scholar in the debates surrounding Greek at Cambridge in the following decades.

(iii) A third language? Hebrew scholars and Erasmus

Erasmus’ brand of biblical humanism was built on a knowledge of Greek and an intense interest in the New Testament. Throughout his lifetime, however, scholars such as Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Johann Reuchlin and Sebastian Münster had argued for the application of humanist methods to the study of the Old Testament and for the centrality of Hebrew to the

¹⁵¹ Aretaeus, *Medici lib. VIII* (Paris, 1554), p. 84. Caius owned and annotated a copy of this work: Grierson, ‘The Library of John Caius’, no. 88.

¹⁵² Erasmus, *Adagia*, CWE 36, p. 258.

¹⁵³ G&C, H.16.24, p. 967: ‘*intelligitur fellowe socium. sed id non puto natum a phelleus. Sed ab eo natum puto felles. id est montes praeeruptos ut sunt furnes felles*’.

revival of the Christian faith.¹⁵⁴ Erasmus himself was not always a consistent supporter of this third language. While he was happy to praise the efforts of various educational bodies to teach Hebrew, his support for Reuchlin was tepid at best and his contempt for the Jews made him one of the prime exponents of anti-Semitism in the sixteenth century.¹⁵⁵ His English friends, however, were more receptive. Erasmus supplied More, Fisher and Colet with copies of Reuchlin's works.¹⁵⁶ Richard Pace devoted his last years of sanity to a grand project of biblical translation from the Old Testament.¹⁵⁷ This section looks at three figures with a knowledge of the language – William Tait and the brothers, Robert and Thomas Wakefield – whose expertise led them to engage with Erasmus' works. Their reaction to his writings, however, was complex. Indeed, often their different understanding of the humanist project led them to criticise Erasmus and his methods.

Many of these complexities are on display in Robert Wakefield's *Oratio de laudibus et utilitate trium linguarum arabicae, chaldaicae et hebraicae*.¹⁵⁸ Wakefield hailed from Yorkshire but had studied at Cambridge in the 1510s and 20s.¹⁵⁹ He soon attracted the attention of John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, who made him fellow at St John's College in 1519. Shortly thereafter, he travelled to the continent, teaching Semitic languages at Paris, Louvain and Tübingen, in the latter case succeeding Reuchlin as professor of Hebrew. The *Oratio* was delivered on Wakefield's return to Cambridge in 1524, though it was only printed later.¹⁶⁰ Like many humanists, Wakefield noted that both the Church Fathers and the popes had encouraged Christians to learn Hebrew so that they might properly understand the sacred scriptures.¹⁶¹ Yet Wakefield was not content to have Hebrew merely on a par with Greek and Latin. Instead, he argued that Hebrew was the pre-eminent language, for while 'other languages bring only pleasure, this one actually offers salvation'.¹⁶² Hebrew, he contended, was not just a key to the Old Testament but the first language created by God himself and spoken by Christ and the Holy Spirit.¹⁶³ As such, it was possessed of greater

¹⁵⁴ David Price, *Johannes Reuchlin and the Campaign to Destroy Jewish Books* (Oxford, 2011). G. Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew in England: A Third Language* (Manchester, 1983), pp. 18-55. Scott Mandelbrote and Joanna Weinberg (eds), *Jewish Books and Their Readers: Aspects of the Intellectual Life of Christians and Jews in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2016).

¹⁵⁵ M. A. Screech, 'Two Attitudes to Hebrew Studies: Erasmus and Rabelais', in James Kittelson and Pamela Transue (eds), *Rebirth, Reform, and Resilience: Universities in Transition, 1300-1700* (Columbus, 1984), pp. 293-323. Carl Meyer, 'Erasmus and Reuchlin', *Moreana*, 24 (1969), pp. 65-80.

¹⁵⁶ Epp 543, 592, 593, *CWE* 4, pp. 270-3, 397, 398.

¹⁵⁷ Tim Wade, 'Richard Pace and the Psalms', *JEH*, 73:1 (2022), pp. 57-78.

¹⁵⁸ Robert Wakefield, *On the Three Languages [1524]*, ed. G. Lloyd Jones (Binghamton, 1989).

¹⁵⁹ *ACAD*: 'Robert Wakefield'. Jonathan Woolfson, 'Wakefield, Robert (d. 1537/8)', *ODNB*. James Carley, 'Religious Controversy and Marginalia: Pierfrancesco di Piero Bardi, Thomas Wakefield, and Their Books', *TCBS*, 12:3 (2002), pp. 206-45. Richard Rex, 'Humanism and Reformation in England and Scotland', in Magne Saebø, Christianus Brekelmans, Menahem Haran, Michael Fishbane and J. L. Ska (eds), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation* (2 vols, Göttingen, 1996), ii, pp. 524-5. Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew*, pp. 10-1, 106-7.

¹⁶⁰ Richard Rex, 'The Earliest Use of Hebrew in Books Printed in England: Dating Some Works of Richard Pace and Robert Wakefield', *TCBS*, 9:5 (1990), pp. 517-25.

¹⁶¹ Wakefield, *On the Three Languages*, pp. 58-60.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, p. 90.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, pp. 74, 100.

rhetorical and spiritual force and could be considered the source of all human knowledge, including the works of classical philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle.¹⁶⁴ While such comments betrayed Wakefield's interest in the Cabbalistic theories of Pico and Reuchlin, they also served to create an alternative history of humanism, one in which Hebrew was both the epitome of the classical tradition and the ultimate arbiter of Christian understanding.¹⁶⁵

Wakefield, therefore, was happy to criticise Erasmus for his ignorance of Hebrew. Discussing the origins of the name of Jesus, for instance, he was adamant that 'whatever Erasmus says, it is a name which is quite different from that of Joshua, the leader and priest'.¹⁶⁶ He similarly maintained that 'Erasmus and Fabritius Capito are writing nonsense and contradicting Jerome in the *Prologus galeatus* when they say that Syriac is different from Aramaic; they do so because they are ignorant of the language'.¹⁶⁷ Yet Wakefield was also driven to express his admiration for Hebrew in distinctly Erasmian terms. Hebrew, for Wakefield, was 'very similar to the plated Sileni Alcibiades, whose statues were to all outward appearances shaggy, rough and contemptible, but within were full of gems made of rare and precious substance'.¹⁶⁸ Indeed, Wakefield liberally quoted the *Adagia* throughout. These extracts were not simply tools to enliven the *Oratio*. Rather, they signalled Wakefield's allegiance to a certain type of philological scholarship embodied in works such as the *Adagia* or the *Annotations* with their long discussions of the origins, uses and meanings of Greek and Latin phrases. As we shall see, this was something Wakefield shared with his brother, Thomas.

For Christian Hebraists, then, Erasmus was both a model and a rival. Nowhere, perhaps, was this tension more observable than in the reading of the Dutch scholar's edition of Jerome, edited by Erasmus in partnership with the Amerbach brothers and first printed in Basel in 1516. Jerome was the cultural icon for biblical humanists in this period, who had mastered both Greek and Hebrew in order to translate the bible.¹⁶⁹ For humanists, therefore, the Basel edition of his works represented both the most up to date scholarship and a cultural landmark. Erasmus and the Amerbachs separated the saint's writings into genuine and spurious, commented on their style and context and presented the saint's translations in parallel columns to allow for comparison.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 154.

¹⁶⁵ Woolfson, 'Wakefield, Robert', ODNB. On Reuchlin's use of Kabbalah, see Lloyd Jones, *Discovery*, pp. 18-38.

¹⁶⁶ Wakefield, *On the Three Languages*, p. 94.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 186.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 82.

¹⁶⁹ Eugene Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1985). Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Constructions of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 55-82. Richard Rex, 'Humanist Bible Controversies', in James Carleton Paget and Joachim Schaper (eds), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible* (4 vols, Cambridge, 2012-2016), iii, pp. 61-81.

¹⁷⁰ Hilmar Pabel, *Herculean Labours: Erasmus and the Editing of St Jerome's Letters in the Renaissance* (Leiden, 2008).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, among the forty-odd books that can be traced to Robert and Thomas Wakefield is a copy of Jerome's letters (1524), edited by Erasmus and now at Lambeth Palace Library.¹⁷¹ Robert made a series of annotations in the margins of this edition. The nature of some of these comments suggests that Wakefield may have been reading the volume while teaching and studying in the 1520s. The prefaces to this work, for instance, are littered with definitions of rare Latin words or rhetorical terms drawn from Ambrosius Calepinus' *Lexicon*.¹⁷² Elsewhere, Wakefield commented on Jerome's text with reference to other works by Erasmus. He made two comments on the use of adages in Jerome's letter to Furia on widowhood. Anticipating the criticisms that would follow his promotion of widowhood, Jerome had suggested that he was 'knowingly thrusting his hand into the flame'.¹⁷³ Wakefield used the margins of the book to excerpt Erasmus' explanation of this saying from the *Adagia* (III.vi.13): 'that is, I willingly expose myself to difficulties, or danger, and I oppose the wicked'.¹⁷⁴ Immediately below this, he did the same with another proverb, *Sus in volutabro coeni* ('a pig at a wallowing hole', IV.iii.62), 'this adage is suitable for those who fall back into the same shame from which they were formerly expiated'.¹⁷⁵

Occasionally, however, Wakefield made comments that went beyond or criticised Erasmus' approach. In Erasmus' notes on Jerome's first letter to Heliodorus, for example, the scholar had proposed that the saint was referring to Christ's actions in Luke 9 when he rebuked a man for asking to bury his father before following God. Wakefield expanded on Erasmus' discussion by pointing out the traditional doctrine of the seven works of mercy: 'There are six special works of mercy and piety, as is recalled in Matthew chapter 25. And the seventh, that is, to bury the dead, is found amongst the book of Tobit, chapter 2 and chapter 12'.¹⁷⁶ Likewise, when Jerome wrote of a widow importuning a harsh judge in the *Epitaph to Nepotian*, Erasmus had referred the passage to a similar one in Deuteronomy. Wakefield described the Dutch scholar's intervention as 'inept' and cited instead the widow mentioned in Luke 18.¹⁷⁷ On the following page, Wakefield was similarly critical of Erasmus' understanding of Jerome's allusions to biblical passages: 'Erasmus rambles in this place, for Jerome is not speaking of Hiram, King of Tyre, but

¹⁷¹ I am grateful to James Carley for sharing his unpublished list of manuscripts and printed books owned by the Wakefield brothers. See also: Carley, 'Religious Controversy and Marginalia', pp. 236-40. LPL, D65.(J3) [*], *Opus epistolarum divi Hieronymi stridonensis una cum scholiis Des. Erasmi Roterodami* (Basel, 1524).

¹⁷² LPL, D65.(J3)[*], *Opus epistolarum*, i, sig. AA4r: Robert Wakefield defines 'suppetiae' (aids) with wording drawn from Calepinus. See, Ambrosius Calepinus, *Lexicon* (Paris, 1538), col. 1365. USTC 209158.

¹⁷³ Jerome, *Select Letters* (Cambridge, MA, 2013), p. 230: 'sciens et videns in flammam mitto manum'.

¹⁷⁴ LPL, D65.(J3)[*], *Opus epistolarum*, i, p. 85.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 85: 'hoc adagium in eos quadrat qui relabuntur in eadem flagicia a quibus aliquando fuerant expiati.'

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 7: 'Sex sunt opera misericordiae et pietatis precipua apud Matthaeum ca. 25 ac recitata. Et septimum (id est, mortuos sepelire) habetur apud Thobiam, ca. 2. a, et ca. 12.'

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 37.

of Hiram of Tyre, son of the widowed woman as read in 3 Kings 7'.¹⁷⁸ While he read the notes and prefaces of these volumes with attention, then, Wakefield was evidently aware that Erasmus' work would need to be improved.

Other Hebraists were less convinced by Erasmus' editorial interventions, especially when the Dutchman raised doubts about matters of style or authorship. We can see this in the reading habits of a less well-known Hebrew scholar, William Tait. Like many aspiring scholars, Tait had pursued his studies across Europe, beginning at Cambridge in the 1490s, before passing to France and Italy in the 1500s.¹⁷⁹ On his return to England he slowly built a clerical career for himself at court, becoming a prebendary and canon of the royal chapel at Windsor in 1523. Two years later, he was appointed to the council of Henry Fitzroy, duke of Richmond and Somerset. Tait knew Erasmus and, in their only surviving letter of 1521, had passed on a copy of Henry VIII's *Assertio septem sacramentorum*, while encouraging Erasmus to continue 'to fight Christ's battles'.¹⁸⁰ Wakefield praised Tait for his knowledge of Hebrew in the *Oratio*, though where he acquired the language is unclear.¹⁸¹ Leafing through the pages of Tait's copy of Jerome (donated to Gonville and Caius college in the sixteenth century), however, one can be in no doubt about his learning.¹⁸² In the appendix containing both the Hebrew original and Jerome's Latin translation of the psalms, Tait compiled an extensive commentary, referring passages to variants in Greek and Hebrew and citing the authority of Jewish scholars such as David Kimhi and various humanist writers such as Reuchlin, Pietro Galatino and Philip Melancthon.¹⁸³

Tait's remarkable marginalia on the psalms lie beyond the purview of the present discussion. They do provide, however, a useful reference as to when Tait was using the book, since toward the end of this volume he stated that it was the property 'of William Tait, dean and chaplain of the most powerful duke of Richmond and Somerset' and that he had 'finished this same work [i.e. the commentary] on the fifth day of January, 1528'.¹⁸⁴ While acting as Fitzroy's almoner, then, Tait appears to have kept himself busy by working on Jerome.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 38: 'hallucinatur hoc in loco Erasmus, neque, enim de hyram rege tyri loquitur hic hieronymus: sed de hyram de tyro, filio mulieris viduae, ut legitur tercio Regum vii.'

¹⁷⁹ *ACAD*: 'William Tait (d.1540)'. Mordechai Feingold, 'William Tate', in *Contemporaries*, iii, pp. 311-2. George Parks, *The English Traveler to Italy* (2 vols, Rome, 1954), i, p. 628.

¹⁸⁰ Feingold, 'William Tate', p. 312. Ep. 1246, *CWE* 8, pp. 327-8.

¹⁸¹ Wakefield, *On the Three Languages*, pp. 64, 88. Wakefield placed Tait in the list of those who had learnt Hebrew in old age.

¹⁸² G&C, A.5.1-5, Jerome, *Opera* (Basel 1516). For Tait's donation see: John Caius, *The Annals of Gonville and Caius College*, ed. John Venn (Cambridge, Mass., 1904), p. 13. Elisabeth Leedham-Green, 'A Catalogue of Caius College Library, 1569', *TCBS*, 8:1 (1981), pp. 29-41.

¹⁸³ G&C, A.5.4, app., sigs H4r, A6r, F3r, E2r.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, app., sig Q4v: 'volumen guilielmi Taitae, decani sacelli siue capellae poteritissimi ducis Richermundie et somersetiae: eiusdemque opus peractum quinto die Janii: anno salutis 1528.' Tait's beautiful italic can also be seen in his signature: TNA, SP 1/40 fo. 97r.

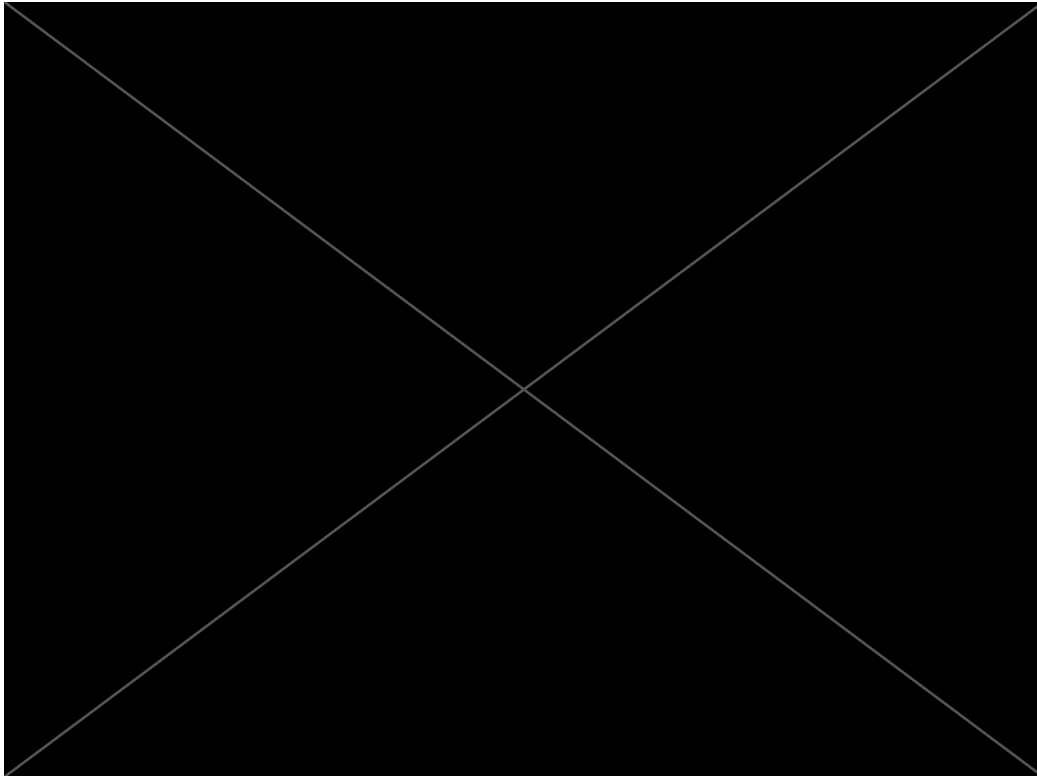


Fig. 10: Tait's signature. G&C, A.5.4, app., sig Q4v.

Tait showed a great interest in Erasmus and Bruno Amerbach's editing of Jerome's Old Testament commentaries. In Amerbach's brief preface to the *Commentaries on the Proverbs of Solomon*, for instance, Amerbach dismissed the work as spurious on the grounds of style and Tait agreed, noting in the margins that 'in Chapter 6, the author also cites St Augustine, whom Jerome was not accustomed to cite'.¹⁸⁵ Elsewhere, however, Tait was uneasy about efforts to challenge the canon of Jerome's writings. Erasmus and Amerbach, for example, had cast doubt on the saint's authorship of the *Commentaries on the Psalms*, alleging that the poor style of the work was not in keeping with the saint. Tait, however, highlighted passages from the commentary that might refute their view. When Jerome wrote that his purpose was 'not to declaim in a rhetorical fashion, but to open the sense of the scriptures', Tait concluded that the passage stood 'against those who think that these commentaries are not Jerome's, since they are in a humble style'.¹⁸⁶ Reaching the discussion of Psalm 3, Tait excerpted a passage from another of the saint's works in which Jerome explained that he had translated this psalm variously.¹⁸⁷ This served to rebut the claims of certain humanists who had argued that the *Commentaries* had favoured words and phrases which Jerome had avoided in his independent translations. The passage, Tait concluded, plainly proved 'that

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, vii, sig A1v: 'super caput 6 hic etiam citat beatum augustinum, quem citare non solet hieronymus'.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, viii, fo. 52v: Jerome: 'Studii enim mei est non declamare more rhetorico, sed scripturarum sensus aperire.' Tait: 'contra eos qui putant hoc commentariolos, divi hieronimi non esse, quod sunt stili humilis.'

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, fo. 2v.

these commentaries are by Jerome, though Bruno Amerbach may think otherwise with Erasmus'.¹⁸⁸ Erasmus' humanist readers, therefore, were more than content to challenge his conclusions, often using the same textual or stylistic methods to dispute his claims.

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At some point, Robert Wakefield's edition of Jerome's letters passed to his younger brother, Thomas, perhaps around the time of Robert's death in 1538. Thomas had also studied at Cambridge, receiving his BA in 1523 and presumably learning Hebrew under his brother's tutelage.¹⁸⁹ In 1540 he was appointed to the newly created regius chair of Hebrew at Cambridge. Whilst he nominally held the position up to his death in 1575, his Catholic sympathies meant that others fulfilled his obligations under Edward VI and Elizabeth I. Unlike his brother, he published little in print, though he dedicated a manuscript work on the relationship of the Greek and Hebrew languages to Henry VIII in 1544.¹⁹⁰ He was nonetheless a prodigious annotator of his books.¹⁹¹ James Carley has traced five Erasmian titles to Thomas Wakefield. Alongside the letters of Jerome that he inherited from his brother, he also possessed editions of the *Annotations* (1527), the *Adagia* (1533), *Ecclesiastes* (1535) and a copy of Irenaeus' *Adversus haereses* (1528).¹⁹² He read his copies of the *Annotations* and *Adagia* almost cover to cover. Like his brother and William Tait before him, Wakefield envisaged his Hebrew studies as both an extension of and an implicit challenge to Erasmus' work. Yet the extent of his reading allowed Wakefield to test Erasmian scholarship to its limits. Moreover, given his long lifespan, Wakefield's reading more clearly registered the effects of religious change on the scholar's legacy.

Robert Wakefield had argued that Hebrew was a divine language which preceded all others and that all words could thus be derived from it. The origins and meanings of words, therefore, should be sought in Hebrew, not in Latin or Greek. Such a sentiment brought Hebraists into immediate conflict with Erasmus, especially in the latter's work on Greek and Latin sayings, the *Adagia*, which by and large ignored Hebrew in favour of the two classical languages. Following his

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 2v: 'aperte videtur hos commentariolos hieonimarios esse, quanquam bruno amorbachius aliter sentiat, cum erasmo.'

¹⁸⁹ *ACAD*: 'Thomas Wakefield (d.1575)'. G. Lloyd Jones, 'Wakefield, Thomas (d.1575)', *ODNB*. Carley, 'Religious Controversy and Marginalia'. Carley, 'Thomas Wakefield, Robert Wakefield and the Cotton Genesis', *TCBS*, 12:3 (2002), pp. 246-65. Carley, 'Lambeth Palace Library in 1611 and Its Contribution to Christian Hebraism', in Mordechai Feingold (ed.), *Labourers in the Vineyard of the Lord: Scholarship and the Making of the King James Version of the Bible* (Leiden, 2018), pp. 30-58.

¹⁹⁰ BL, Add MS 5663, *Locutiones seu phrasae in novo testamento, quae videntur secundum proprietates linguae Hebraeae*, 1544.

¹⁹¹ Carley, 'Cotton Genesis', pp. 251-4. Idem, 'Lambeth Palace', pp. 41-7. Rex, 'Humanism and Reformation', p. 524.

¹⁹² LPL, D65.(J3)[*], *Opus epistolarum divi Hieronymi stridonensis una cum scholiis Des. Erasmi Roterodami* (Basel, 1524). LPL, **D65.(C5), Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* (Basel, 1528). ASL, Harsnett K.b.13, Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1527). ASL, Harsnett H.g.4*, Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1533). Emmanuel College Library, Cambridge, S.7.2.24.(1), Erasmus, *Ecclesiastes* (Basel, 1535).

brother's lead, Thomas Wakefield used his copy of the *Adagia* to provide a series of corrective notes to Erasmus' faulty etymologies. Wakefield, for instance, commented on Erasmus' explanation of the origins of the Greek word, *battologia* (II.i.92). According to Erasmus, *battologia*, the 'Greek word for vain repetition', was derived from the Greek poet, Battus, 'an incompetent poet who composed several prolix hymns in which the same things were repeated over and over again'.¹⁹³ More significantly, the word had been in such wide circulation that Matthew had used it in his gospel, 'for he reports Christ as saying: "When you pray, do not use vain repetitions..."'.¹⁹⁴ Erasmus thus powerfully aligned the study of the classics with the study of the scriptures, since only a true understanding of classical idioms could unlock the scriptures. Wakefield, however, was unconvinced. '*Battologia*', he proposed in the margins, 'is formed from the Hebrew word *bata* which means to speak inconsiderately, as in Leviticus 5 and Proverbs 12'.¹⁹⁵ Such borrowings were common in Greek and Latin, Wakefield concluded, though many had been forgotten in the course of time. Such an approach meant Wakefield often complained that Erasmus had simply wasted his time and that he might not have needed 'to have bestowed so much care on a gnat' if he had merely bothered to learn the Hebrew language.¹⁹⁶

Wakefield, however, was too honest a scholar to simply dismiss Erasmus. In his copy of Erasmus' *Annotations*, he continued to explore the scholar's analysis of the word *bata*. In his translation of the New Testament, Erasmus had altered the text of Hebrews 12:20 from the Vulgate's '*quod dicebatur*' [that which was said] to '*quod edicebatur*' [that which was proclaimed]. He had justified the change in the *Annotations* with reference to the Greek text and commented that the author of the epistle had 'imitated a figure of Hebrew speech' found in Psalm 105/6:33: *Distinxit in labiis suis* [he distinguished with his lips].¹⁹⁷ At first, Wakefield judged that Erasmus had once again misunderstood his Hebrew sources. 'Erasmus did not understand the Hebraism correctly', he commented 'since in the Hebrew the line is "it was spoken inconsiderately"'.¹⁹⁸ When Wakefield compared the passage to that in the Greek Septuagint (LXX), however, his opinion of Erasmus' choice improved. The LXX's rendering of Leviticus 5, in particular, favoured Erasmus because *bata* had been expressed with the Greek *diastello* [to separate or pronounce]. 'Therefore',

¹⁹³ Erasmus, *Adages*, CWE 33, pp. 70-1

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ ASL, Harsnett H.g.4*, Erasmus, *Adagia*, p. 391.

¹⁹⁶ ASL, Harsnett K.b.13, Erasmus, *Annotationes*, p. 392: '*Si novisset paulum usum fuisse hebraica phrasi tum hoc in loco tum fere ubique alias, non opus fuisset tam parvum colasse culicem.*'

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 660.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*: '*Non recte hebraismum intellexit Erasmus, quum in hebraeos pro Distinxit in labiis suis (ps.106) habetur, et inconsiderate locutus est "waybate" quod verbum sonat lubrice loqui ut Levit. 5. Prov. 12: inde videtur formari graecum βαττολογία T. Wak.*'

Wakefield concluded 'I judge Erasmus to have rightly expressed the figure of Hebrew speech however much [Ps 105] does not agree'.¹⁹⁹

While etymological considerations might appear arcane, they were in fact of vital importance, especially for biblical criticism. There was, for instance, considerable debate as to whether the Gospel of Matthew had originally been written in Hebrew (as Jerome asserted) or in Greek.²⁰⁰ Wakefield argued in his one extant work, the *Locutiones seu phrases*, that much of Matthew's language could be traced back to Hebrew expression.²⁰¹ He thus compiled various phrases from the Gospel of Matthew which, Wakefield claimed, reflected the quality of Hebrew speech, rather than Greek (though he made no mention of *bata* and *battologia*). Erasmus had argued on stylistic grounds that the gospel had been written in Greek, not Hebrew.²⁰² But his *Annotations* still provided a wealth of information on such matters. Wakefield, for instance, highlighted and summarised a passage in which Erasmus noted that 'certain people believe that John the Evangelist was the translator of Matthew'.²⁰³ Sometimes information in the *Annotations* was a launchpad for Wakefield's own *Locutiones*. Erasmus had indicated that the fourth-century heretic, Helvidius, had denied the perpetual virginity of Mary by arguing that the text of Matthew 1:25 – 'and [Joseph] knew her not until she brought forth her firstborn son' – had implied that Mary had had other children following the birth of Christ.²⁰⁴ According to Erasmus, Helvidius' opinion entirely ignored 'the propriety of the Hebrew speech' which suggested no such thing.²⁰⁵ Wakefield underlined a portion of this note and labelled Erasmus' citation from the Old Testament as faulty.²⁰⁶ When he came to discuss the passage in the *Locutiones*, however, he began where Erasmus had, examining Helvidius' comments (and Jerome's lengthy rebuttal).²⁰⁷ He expanded on Erasmus' analysis by proposing that a second phrase in this passage had been derived from Hebrew patterns of speech.²⁰⁸ More pointedly, he aligned a knowledge of Hebrew with a defence of orthodoxy, since an ignorance of Hebrew 'had formerly disturbed the church in a marvellous manner and induced great discord against the perpetual virginity of the blessed Mary'.²⁰⁹ Wakefield's scholarship,

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*: 'Tamen Levit. 5 habetur... ut lubrice loquatur: ubi 70ta transtulerunt διαστελλονσα. Sed prov. 12... interpretantur οἱ λέγοντες. Arbitror igitur Erasmus recte expressisse hebraici sermonis figuram quamvis hoc loco non quadrat.'

²⁰⁰ BL, MS Add. 5663. See Helmut Köster, *Introduction to the New Testament* (2 vols, New York, 2000), ii, p. 207.

²⁰¹ Carley, 'Lambeth Palace', p. 46. Idem, 'Cotton Genesis', p. 253.

²⁰² Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ*, p. 159.

²⁰³ ASL, Harsnett K.b.13, Erasmus, *Annotationes* (Basel, 1527), p. 26: 'Quidam arbitrantur Ioannem Evangelistam Interpretem fuisse Matthaei'. Wakefield left similar notes: *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8, 10-11.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11: 'Ex his quoque verbis Helvidiani venantur erroris sui patrociniū, baud animadvertentes Hebraei sermonis proprietatem.'

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²⁰⁷ Wakefield, *Locutiones*, fos 14v-16v.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 14v.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 15r: '... cuius ignorantia olim mirum in modum turbabat ecclesiam, et magnam contra perpetuam beatæ virginis Mariæ inducit discordiam.'

therefore, followed a path laid out for him by Erasmus, even as he parted ways with the Dutchman's knowledge of Hebrew.

Erasmian scholarship provided a framework for Wakefield to delve deeper into matters of biblical translation and authority. One question of fundamental concern to Erasmus and other humanists of the period involved the authorship of the Vulgate. Typically, scholars had ascribed the work to Jerome. Yet when humanists like Wakefield turned to Jerome's writings, they found that the saint had regularly censored the Vulgate for its rendering of Hebrew words or phrases.²¹⁰ The Vulgate Old Testament was itself a translation of a translation, having been rendered from the Septuagint, an early Greek translation compiled before the time of Christ, rather than from the original Hebrew.²¹¹ Reading through Jerome's writings, then, two questions were at the forefront of Wakefield's mind: who was the author of the Vulgate? and how accurate was the Greek Septuagint when compared to the Hebrew?

Wakefield's opinion became clearer when he read Jerome's *Quaestiones seu traditiones hebraicae in Genesim*. The *Quaestiones* was a goldmine of philological information in which Jerome compared the Hebrew, Septuagint and Latin editions of the text of Genesis, often finding that the Hebrew had been misinterpreted.²¹² At Genesis 6:3, for example, Jerome cited a text that was subtly different from the sixteenth-century Vulgate and corrected this variant text by comparing it to the Hebrew.²¹³ Wakefield was here presented with two rival versions of Genesis 6:3 in use by Jerome, neither of which agreed with the Vulgate. He thus concluded that 'it is clear from this place that the common Latin edition is not by Jerome'.²¹⁴ Many comparable passages were annotated with the same conclusion – 'it is established from this place that the common Latin translation should not be ascribed to Jerome...' [Gen 18:10]; and 'one may gather from this place that the common Latin translation was edited after Jerome and amended with regard to his annotations' [Gen 35:16].²¹⁵ His analysis had been assisted by the notes Erasmus had compiled for this volume. In the section on Genesis 13:13, for example, Wakefield underlined Jerome's complaint that the Septuagint had added the phrase 'in the presence of God' to the verse, despite there being no justification for this in the Hebrew text.²¹⁶ Besides the passage, Wakefield noted that 'Erasmus discusses it in this manner: "If "in the presence of God" is added superfluously by the translator,

²¹⁰ Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ*, pp. 50-1, 161-2

²¹¹ Kristin De Troyer, 'The Septuagint', in James Carleton Paget and Joachim Schaper (eds), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible* (4 vols, Cambridge, 2012-2016), i, pp. 267-88.

²¹² Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford, 1993).

²¹³ LPL, D65.(J3) [*], *Opus epistolarum*, iii, p. 207.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 'Ex hoc loco liquet communem latinam aeditionem non esse Hieronymi'.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, iii, pp. 214, 224: 'ex hoc loco convicitur commune latinam translationem Hieronymo non esse ascribenda...'; 'Ex hoc loco licet colligere commune translationem editam fuisse post Hieronymum et emendatam iuxta illius Annotationes'.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, iii, p. 211.

as Jerome says, nor had in the Hebrew text, it is manifest that [the Vulgate], is not purely that which Jerome translated for us from the Hebrew truth'.²¹⁷ Wakefield, nonetheless, remained conscious of the limits of linguistic evidence, pointing out that the Church or some unlearned figure might have altered passages or Jerome himself might 'have changed his mind after having edited the work of Hebrew questions'.²¹⁸

As such cases make clear, Hebrew scholarship quickly encountered topics of religious controversy. Henry VIII had called on scholars like Robert Wakefield to help him read the Old Testament laws on marriage in an effort to prove his case for a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. The older Wakefield had even betrayed his former mentor, John Fisher, in order to defend the king's cause.²¹⁹ As a member of Fitzroy's council, William Tait could not ignore the drift of royal policy either, pointedly paraphrasing a passage of Jerome's attack on Jovinian to conclude that 'all the apostles received the keys of heaven, not only Peter' – a useful sentiment in the context of the Break with Rome.²²⁰ The question of the papacy was clearly at the forefront of Thomas Wakefield's mind as he contemplated Erasmus' works at different stages of his life. In the notes to St Jerome's letter to Nepotian, for instance, Erasmus ironically reflected on Jerome's prescription that all priests and bishops should be poor, contrasting that position with the wealth and status of the Church in the present day. 'What would [Jerome] do in the case of supreme pontiffs who even wage war for wealth and property?' Erasmus wondered. 'Not only do we believe that the Lord has a portion with the popes, but we are even convinced that the spirit of Christ is sheltered in their bosom'.²²¹ Erasmus' mocking tone was too much for Wakefield: 'How craftily these things are written. Nay more, how impiously, unless they are read with a more impartial spirit'.²²²

On other occasions, however, Wakefield appeared less well-disposed to the pontiff. The apostle Paul, for example, lamented in 2 Cor 11:4 that 'if someone comes to you and preaches another Jesus than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough'. In the *Annotations*, Wakefield underlined Erasmus' argument from this passage that we ought not to 'fashion for ourselves another Jesus, laden with powers, laden with authority, dominion, pleasures and with whatever other illusions that this world has, nor overgrown with these more-than-Jewish

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, iii, p. 211: '*Super quo loco hunc in modum Erasmus disserit. "Si in conspectu dei superflue additum est ab interpretibus, ut ait Hierony. nec habetur apud hebraeos, manifestum est hanc aeditionem qua utimur, non esse pure eam quam divus Hieronymus nobis tradidit ex hebraica veritate"*'.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*, iii, p. 211: '*Nisi forte Hieronymus post aeditum opus hebraicarum quaestionum mutavit sententiam?*'.

²¹⁹ Rex, *Theology of Fisher*, pp. 58-9, 166-9.

²²⁰ G&C, A.5.2, iii, fo 16r: '*omnes apostoli claves regni coelorum acceperunt, non solum petrus*'.

²²¹ LPL, D65.(J3) [*], *Opus epistolarum*, i, p. 20: '*Quid ais sanctissime Hieronyme... Quis summis Pontificibus, qui pro censu ac praediis etiam belligerantur?... Et non solum dominum cum his partem habere credimus, verumetiam spiritum Christi in illorum sinu latere persuasum habemus?*'.

²²² *Ibid*, i, p. 20: '*Quam callide haec scriptae sunt? imo impie, nisi aequiori animo legantur?*'.

ceremonies'.²²³ 'This thing is most certainly happening now with us English', Wakefield wrote in the margin, 'indeed, having abandoned Christ, we proclaim the Roman Bishop and embrace him'.²²⁴ In the *Adagia*, too, Wakefield reflected on papal power, especially in response to Erasmus' attacks on papal wealth in the *Sileni Alcibiades*. When Erasmus contrasted Christ's poverty with the pontiffs, Wakefield summarised this as 'a description of the pope and true riches'.²²⁵ He also agreed with Erasmus from a practical standpoint that wealth and worldly responsibility 'will impede the bishop with his duty'.²²⁶ Wakefield is often considered to be a Catholic sympathiser, but such passages suggest his views were more complex when it came to papal authority. Striking, too, is the way that Erasmus' writing sometimes led Wakefield to reflect on the correct mindset for interpreting his work.

Yet there were also times when Erasmus' iconoclastic approach to the texts of the bible and the authority of the Church provoked Wakefield to contempt. The Dutch scholar, for example, had infamously questioned the authority of the Johannine Comma.²²⁷ The controversy centred on whether the received Latin text of 1 John 5:7-8 was accurate when compared to the Greek text. The Latin Vulgate of Erasmus' day read:

7 For there are three that bear witness {in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one: 8 And there are three that bear witness on earth,} the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one.

In this form, the line had come to play an important role in defending the Trinity against the views of the Arians.²²⁸ When Erasmus consulted the extant Greek manuscripts of the passage, however, none had the Comma (the section between 'in heaven...' and '...on earth'). In 1516 and 1519 he omitted the Comma from his Latin translation of the verse, though he restored after 1522 following a conservative backlash and the arrival of a manuscript from England. Erasmus was less repentant in his annotation on the passage. There, he noted that neither Cyril nor Bede had referenced the Comma, and he heavily implied that Jerome had doctored the Latin text in order to bolster the doctrine of the Trinity. In one instance, Erasmus even called Jerome 'violent and shameless, fickle and inconsistent'.²²⁹ Wakefield was incensed: 'How cunningly he distorts

²²³ ASL, Harsnett K.b.13, Erasmus, *Annotationes*, p. 496.

²²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 496: 'Id nunc nobis Anglis certissime Euenit. Relicto enim christo Romanum Episcopum praedicamus eumque amplectimur.'

²²⁵ ASL, Harsnett H.g.4*, Erasmus, *Adagia*, p. 692: 'pontificis et veri copi descriptio.'

²²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 693: 'Quae episcopum a suo munere impediunt.'

²²⁷ McDonald, *Biblical Criticism*, pp. 13-55.

²²⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 1-13.

²²⁹ McDonald, 'Appendix: Translation of Erasmus' Annotations on the Johannine Comma (1516-1535)', in McDonald, *Biblical Criticism*, p. 317.

Jerome'.²³⁰ Likewise, when Erasmus argued that those blindly defending the passage were doing more harm to the Church than good and that only reason (*ratiocinatione*) could defeat the opinions of the Arians, Wakefield's conclusion was that Erasmus 'favours the Arians'.²³¹ Wakefield could be equally dismissive of Erasmus' deductions in other passages. 'I judge that Erasmus in no wise understood Paul when he wrote these things', was his summary of Erasmus' efforts to explain the disjuncture between Paul and James' accounts of the role of works in faith.²³² What Wakefield himself thought of works and faith is unclear, since he offered no further commentary.

Wakefield's books and marginalia demonstrate the ways in which the reading of Erasmus opened up a series of interlocking questions about language, the texts of the bible and Church Fathers and faith more generally. For Hebrew scholars like William Tait or the Wakefield brothers, it was necessary to supplement Erasmus' works, either by extending a critical eye towards his editorial stance, or by correcting his interpretation of Hebrew. Perhaps most importantly, these scholars were at odds with Erasmus over the relative status to be afforded to the biblical languages and saw themselves as the true heirs to Jerome's biblical scholarship. They thus found Erasmus' writings both enlivening and frustrating in equal measure.

²³⁰ ASL, Harsnett K.b.13, Erasmus, *Annotationes*, p. 696: '*Quomodo astute depravat Hieronymum*'.

²³¹ *Ibid*: '*favet Arianis*'.

²³² *Ibid*, p. 668: '*Arbitror Erasmus nequaquam paulum intellexisse, quum haec scribat. Praesertim quum paulus scripsit, Iustificati igitur gratis per illius gratiam*'. The comment appears to apply to Erasmus' contention that Paul in the Epistle to the Romans had condemned 'faith in works' only in the sense of the 'observation of the law of Moses', rather than a complete rejection of works.

Chapter 6

Erasmus and the religious orders



At one time in his life, Erasmus had been a member of the religious orders. Around the age of twenty, he entered the Augustinian priory of Steyn, a house where the canons were encouraged to focus on Christ as a pattern of their lives and to study the scriptures.¹ The vocation may initially have suited him and his early letters often paint a picture of a young man contentedly reading by candlelight.² As his intellectual ambitions grew, however, he slowly removed himself from Steyn. He received a papal dispensation releasing him from his vows in 1517 and never returned to the religious life.³ In later life, Erasmus produced contradictory statements on the value of the monastic profession. While satires such as the *Moriae Encomium* were filled with ribald criticisms of their intellectual talents, superstition and way of life, he also produced moving devotional works for communities of nuns in England and elsewhere.⁴ Erasmus edited his works to ambiguous effect. In 1521, he published a tract he had begun writing while still a canon in the 1480s, *De contemptu mundi*.⁵ In the opening eleven chapters, Erasmus praised the vocation. Sometime prior to the piece's printing, however, he composed a final chapter which levelled a series of criticisms at current monastic discipline. As so often, then, Erasmus had set down multiple versions of himself on paper, leaving ample room for discussion and debate about his true motives and feelings towards the orders.

The scholar's attacks on the religious life have generally appealed to English historians eager to explain the origins of the reformation in England. Dom David Knowles' suggestion that Erasmus laid the foundations for the suppression of religious houses under Henry VIII has proved particularly influential.⁶ In this view, the Dutch scholar's attacks on the empty observation of ritual in a monastic setting and his antipathy towards the stranglehold of the religious orders at European universities became part of the 'mental furniture' of the period. Members of the orders themselves

¹ Schoeck, *Erasmus*, i, pp. 93-7. Richard L. DeMolen, 'Erasmus' Commitment to the Canons Regular of St. Augustine', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 26:4 (1973), pp. 437-43.

² Schoeck, *Erasmus*, i, p. 98.

³ Ep. 447, *CWE* 3, pp. 6-7.

⁴ Joan Greatrex, 'After Knowles: Recent Perspectives in Monastic History', in James Clark (ed.), *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England* (Woodbridge, 2002), p. 47. Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, pp. 98-103. Erasmus, *Epistola consolatoria in adversis*, *CWE* 69, pp. 185-201.

⁵ Erika Rummel, 'Introductory Note', in *CWE* 66, pp. 130-3.

⁶ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, iii, pp. 141-156.

were understandably unimpressed. Henry Standish, a friar, bishop and popular court preacher, publicly opposed Erasmus' translation of the New Testament, and attacks on the scholar circulated among the Carthusians.⁷ There is some evidence that the religious orders also provided an audience for the works of Erasmus' continental critics. William Atherold, a Cluniac monk of Lewes in Sussex who had studied at Oxford and Cambridge, owned a copy of Jacobus Latomus' *De trium linguarum dialogus*, a thinly veiled attack on Erasmus and the humanist programme to study Greek and Hebrew.⁸ Following the dissolution, English Protestants also frequently mined Erasmus' works for evidence of the ignorance and corruption of the monastic orders.⁹

Recent work by Joan Greatrex, Mary Erler and James Clark, however, has balanced these negative assessments of Erasmus' reception and impact upon the religious orders in England by pointing to the widespread evidence of monastic interest in university education, humanism and reform.¹⁰ Numerous studies of the Bridgettine Abbey of Syon have emphasised that the brothers were by no means out of step with Erasmus.¹¹ Richard Whitford, a friend of Erasmus since his time in Paris, numbered among their members and their library contained Erasmus' editions of Euripides, Lucian, St Jerome and Lorenzo Valla, along with his New Testament, *Annotations* and the *Paraphrases*.¹² We have already seen contemporaries calling upon the manuscript collections of friars to help assess Erasmus' New Testament. This chapter builds on this emerging picture. It looks in detail at the reading of Benedictines and Austin Canons – two orders with close connections to Erasmus, the English court and universities – and demonstrates that Erasmus' works were by no means incompatible with the religious vocation. In fact, Erasmus was often used to express a desire for reform or to reimagine the religious orders along humanist lines, either by close attention to his literary and biblical writings, or by exploring devotional writings Erasmus had penned in earlier years.

⁷ Daniel Kinney, 'Introduction', *CWM* 15, pp. xli-xlv.

⁸ St John's College, Cambridge. Dd.10.4.(9). Jacobus Latomus, *De trium linguarum dialogus* (Antwerp, 1519): 'Iste est liber domini William Atherold...'. *ACAD*: 'Atherold, William'.

⁹ Gregory Dodds, 'An Accidental Historian: Erasmus and the English History of the Reformation', *Church History*, 82:2 (2013), pp. 273-92.

¹⁰ Greatrex, 'After Knowles', pp. 35-47. Mary Erler, *Reading and Writing during the Dissolution: Monks, Friars, and Nuns, 1530-1558* (Cambridge, 2013). James Clark, 'Humanism and Reform in Pre-Reformation English Monasteries', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 19 (2009), pp. 57-93.

¹¹ Alexandra Walsham and E. A. Jones, *Syon Abbey and Its Books: Reading, Writing and Religion, c.1400-1700* (Woodbridge, 2010). Alexandra Da Costa, *Reforming Printing: Syon Abbey's Defence of Orthodoxy, 1525-1534* (Oxford, 2012).

¹² Vincent Gillespie, *Syon Abbey* (London, 2001), pp. 135, 157-8, 159, 160, 162, 173.

(i) Benedictines and Erasmus

By the start of the sixteenth century the Benedictines were already showing a marked interest in humanist and reformist literature.¹³ Erasmus could count English Benedictines among his acquaintance.¹⁴ Moreover, growing numbers of the order were studying in Oxford and Cambridge, with larger houses often supporting multiple students through several years of education.¹⁵ While there, many Benedictines and other religious encountered Erasmus' books. Garrett Godfrey had several customers among the religious orders, including some who bought copies of the *Adagia* and *Paraphrases*.¹⁶ The cathedral priory at Worcester sent several of its younger members to study in Oxford, some of whom got their hands on Erasmus' writings. Humphrey Webley was resident at Gloucester College, Oxford, for approximately a decade between 1519 and 1529.¹⁷ While there, he acquired a copy of Erasmus' *Moriae Encomium*, printed at Antwerp in 1512, of which only the title page survives.¹⁸ This fragment suggests that students like Webley may have compared Erasmus to ancient literary and rhetorical writers, since the title page includes an extract from the speeches of Apuleius, many of which were encomiastic in style like the *Moria*.¹⁹ Erasmus may even have found his way into the institutional collections of colleges devoted to the religious orders. A surviving list of biblical commentators compiled by a Franciscan in the fourteenth century and added to by later owners (probably the friary itself or an Oxford college for friars) suggests that, prior to the dissolution, the friars may have been reading the *Annotations* and *Paraphrases*.²⁰

A vibrant picture of the appeal of Erasmus and humanism to members of the religious orders who had studied at university can be found in the letters of Robert Joseph.²¹ Joseph was a Benedictine monk of Evesham who studied at Gloucester College, Oxford, between 1523 and 1529. On returning to his monastic house, he penned a number of letters to fellow monks and

¹³ James Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 317-22.

¹⁴ C. Knighton, 'Richard Bere', in *Contemporaries*, i, pp. 128-9. Catherine Gunderson and Peter Bietenholz, 'Richard Kidderminster', in *Contemporaries*, ii, pp. 260-1.

¹⁵ Joan Greatrex, 'The English Cathedral Priories and the Pursuit of Learning in the Later Middle Ages', *JEH*, 45:3 (1994), p. 409.

¹⁶ *Godfrey*: 228, 231, 1014.

¹⁷ *BRUO: 1501-40*, p. 413.

¹⁸ It was used as binding material in: Bodleian, 8° M.122 Th., John Major, *In psalmos dauidis paraphrasis* (Wittenberg, 1574). Webley describes himself as 'Oxoniensis scholastici et Monachi'.

¹⁹ An extract from Fragment III: '...possit perfici sed omnibus derme ante est spei rudimentum quam rei experimentum'. The whole line reads: 'And indeed nothing at all can be perfect at its first stage, but hopeful aspiration usually precedes practical application in every field'. Discussing Marsyas' skill in music. Apuleius, *Florida*, trans. Christopher Jones (Cambridge, 2017), p. 251.

²⁰ Bodleian, MS Bodley 685, *Tabula septem custodiarum*, 1349-s. xvi.

²¹ Dom Hugh Aveling and W. A. Pantin (eds), *The Letter Book of Robert Joseph: Monk-Scholar of Evesham and Gloucester College, Oxford, 1530-3* (Oxford, 1969). Hereafter: *Letter Book*.

scholars which reveal his wide interest in good letters. Joseph chiefly aspired to write ‘polite’ Latin in keeping with humanists like Erasmus and he established a large network of correspondents to help practise composition.²² His letters are peppered with phrases pulled from the *Colloquies* and *Adagia* and he admitted that he had tried to imitate Erasmus and ‘pure Latinity’, even if ‘smatterers’ chose to criticise him.²³ He frequently commented upon his own and others’ epistles, revealing a deeper knowledge of Erasmus’ literary theories. When a correspondent complained of too many letters, Joseph held off sending a further missive and cited Erasmus’ colloquy, *Domestica confabulatio* (1523): ‘Nothing is elegant which goes on forever and the rarer use commends pleasures’.²⁴ Joseph likewise defended his use of the rare noun, *laturarius* (porter). ‘Do not call an unfamiliar word obsolete’, he added, ‘as Erasmus says, no word is obsolete, if it is used even by one good author’.²⁵ Such passages not only demonstrated his indebtedness to Erasmus, but also his understanding of the need for discretion, variation and philological knowledge when writing letters.

If Joseph frequently cited Erasmus, he was nonetheless familiar with a wide range of humanist writings on ancient coinage (Guillaume Budé and Leonardus de Portis), the reform of legal studies (Budé and Richard Pace), and the commentary of Aristotle (Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples).²⁶ He also knew that Erasmus had his detractors. He appears to have read Edward Lee’s attack on Erasmus’ New Testament translation. Returning the ‘writings of Lee’ to William Dingley, rector of Stow-on-Wold, he stated cryptically that ‘it will be plain what my muse can do’, perhaps because he had critically annotated the work in order that Dingley might know his thoughts.²⁷ ‘Many evil things hover about and are imputed to [Erasmus]’, he told another correspondent, ‘I would wish that poem of Lily to be thrown before all the slanderers of Erasmus: “The learned Erasmus is slandered by the ignorant horde, but yet Erasmus will be a light to this world”’.²⁸ Such a commitment to Erasmus did not preclude Joseph from admiring elements of scholastic learning. Most notably, he defended Scotus from various attacks. ‘Just as they are wrong who spend their whole life weaving syllogisms out of Scotist subtleties’, he advised a fellow monk studying at Oxford, ‘so they are wrong who point the finger of scorn at scholastic arguments and think Scotus

²² Aveling and Pantin, *Letter Book*, p. xxviii.

²³ Ep. 114, *Letter Book*, p.180: ‘*Latinitatem synceram*’.

²⁴ Ep. 174, *Letter Book*, p. 251: ‘*Nil suave quod perpetuum. Et voluptates commendat rarior usus. - Colloquies Domestica confabulatio*’.

²⁵ Ep. 56, *Letter Book*, p. 79.

²⁶ See, Epp. 14, 15, 20, 28, 32, 35, *Letter Book*.

²⁷ Ep. 40, *Letter Book*, p.50: ‘*Verum quando domum lepidissima scripta Leei / Mittemus, possit quid musula nostra patebi?*’.

Dingley’s copy of the works of Augustine, partially edited by Erasmus, may survive: Magdalen College, Oxford, Old Library, e.11.1-4, 6, 9, 10, St Augustine, *Opera* (Basel, 1528).

²⁸ Ep. 24, *Letter Book*, p. 31. ‘*Plura de illo mala volitant atque referuntur, sed fortassis a malis. Oderunt lucem tenebre. Ego omnibus Erasmus lacerantibus obiici cupiam illa Lili carmina: Doctus ab ignavo coetu laceratur Erasmus / Attamen huic seculo lumen Erasmus erit.*’

has nothing worth having'.²⁹ He was perfectly capable of steering what he called a 'middle course' between 'men of polite letters' and older educational forms.³⁰

Some commentators have dismissed Joseph's humanism as superficial, a mere stylistic gloss. William Bruneau, in particular, thought that little of Erasmus' religious message had cut through. 'Nowhere', he argued, 'do we find quotation of Erasmus's stirring pleas for "inner religion" and widespread learning', nor did Joseph truly grasp the 'full importance of the Erasmian *pietas*'.³¹ On closer inspection, however, Joseph frequently borrowed from Erasmus' writings when discussing religious matters. Writing of the need for Christian piety and eloquence in 1530, Joseph noted how 'Lactantius, when defending the Christian religion against the heathen, prayed to have the eloquence of Cicero'.³² The sentiment is lifted with minor alterations from the famous opening line of the *Paraclesis*.³³ The *Paraclesis*, in fact, inspired several reflections from Joseph on the scriptures. In near identical fashion to Erasmus, Joseph contrasted the ways in which Christians 'kiss the letters of a friend... carry them around in our lap' yet have seldom read the bible.³⁴ If an absent friend could be present through their letters, Joseph argued, so Christ would be present in his gospels, since he promised to be 'with us until the end of time' (Matt. 28:20). Again, Erasmus had made the same point with the same biblical citation in the New Testament, arguing that Christ 'even now lives, breathes, speaks in his letters, I might almost say more effectually than when he walked among men'.³⁵ Elsewhere Joseph bemoaned with Erasmian fervour that the reformation had left 'the seamless tunic of Christ torn to shreds'.³⁶ Joseph's subtle variations on the *Paraclesis* reveal that he shared Erasmus' desire to harness secular learning for Christian purposes. 'I am amazed', he complained in another letter, 'at some prelates who hold so superstitiously to the rules of St Benedict in order that they may keep all their subordinates from the gymnasium of letters, as if from a brothel'.³⁷ In Joseph, then, we find a powerful fusion of Erasmus' literary and religious ideas and a desire to reimagine the religious life along humanist lines.

²⁹ Quoted Aveling and Pantin, *Letter Book*, p. xxxiv.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ William Bruneau, 'Humanism, the University and the Monastic Life: The Case of Robert Joseph, Monk of Evesham', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 20:3 (1972), p. 292.

³² Ep. 77, *Letter Book*, p. 110: 'Lactantius ille Firmianus, Christianam religionem adversus Ethnicos defensurus, votus expetebat eloquentiam prope Ciceronianam sibi deitus insillari.'

³³ Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum* (Basel, 1516), sig. aaa3v: 'Lactantius ille Firmianus... Christianae religioni patrocinaturus, adversus ethnicos, cum primis optat sibi dari eloquentiam, Tullianae proximam, improbum ratus opinor optasse parem.'

³⁴ Ep. 121, *Letter Book*, p. 187: 'Amici literas exosculamur, circumferimus in sinu, nec vel millies sat est perlegisse'. Erasmus *Novum Instrumentum*, sig. aaa6r: 'Literas ab amiculis scriptas, servamus, exosculamur, circumferimus, iterum atque iterum relegimus'.

³⁵ Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum*, sig. aaa6r: 'qui quod pollicitus est se semper nobiscum fore usque ad consummationem saeculi, in his literis praecipue praestat, in quibus nobis etiamnum vivit, spirat, loquitur, pene dixerim efficacius, quam cum inter homines versaretur'.

³⁶ Ep. 165, *Letter Book*, p. 244: 'Quem vel prudentissimum non quateret formidulosa admiratio, quum perpenderit illam tunicam Iesu inconsutilem ita quoquoque distrabi?' C.f. Erasmus, *Colloquies*, CWE 39, p. 592.

³⁷ Ep. 28, *Letter Book*, p. 35: 'Unde non satis mirari prelatos quospiam valeo, qui tam superstitiose divi Benedicti regule inherent, ut subditos omnes ab epistolari palestra, tanquam a lupanari, arceant'.

A combination of university education and benevolent leadership allowed many religious communities to accommodate Erasmus' writings within their daily lives and reading. The Benedictines of Worcester were not only in regular transit to and from Oxford but their prior, William More, was also purchasing books for the community from London, including a five-volume edition of Jerome's writings, most likely that edited by Erasmus, bought in July 1523.³⁸ It was at Durham, however, that university contacts and clerical leadership combined to create one of the more impressive collections of Erasmian books.³⁹

In 1529, Cuthbert Tunstall was appointed bishop of Durham. As we have seen, the new bishop and his household brought with them a number of books by Erasmus, many of which were bequeathed to the monastic community by Robert Ridley.⁴⁰ The community had already acquired the works of Ambrose from Ridley by 1534 and later inherited folio editions of Jerome and Augustine, all edited in whole or part by Erasmus.⁴¹ A second copy of Jerome's letters, printed in Basel between 1524 and 1526, must also have arrived in Durham through Ridley.⁴² When the priory was dissolved in 1541 many of the priory's former members and their books were absorbed into the new cathedral structure. This institutional continuity ensured that a large portion of the priory's library remains in situ and has allowed several scholars to study the reading habits of the house and its members from the late-medieval to the early modern period.⁴³ Following in their footsteps, we can turn our attention to one volume in particular – Ridley's copy of the letters of Jerome – which passed from Ridley to several members of the Durham community.

Three members of the priory are known to have owned the volume. In 1536, William Wylom, a monk and later cathedral canon, recorded that he had received the book from 'Master Wylliam Bennett, doctor and professor of sacred theology and prior of Finchale'.⁴⁴ Bennett was another Durham monk who in 1536 was appointed as prior of Finchale, a nearby cell of the cathedral priory often used as a retreat or retirement posting for the monks. Wylom owned the

³⁸ J. Wilson, 'The Library of Printed Books in Worcester Cathedral', *The Library*, 2 (1911), p. 31.

³⁹ Elizabeth Biggs, 'Durham Cathedral and Cuthbert Tunstall: A Cathedral and Its Bishop during the Reformation, 1530-1559', *JEH*, 71:1 (2020), pp. 59-76.

⁴⁰ Harvey, 'Reaction to Revival'. See Chap. 4.

⁴¹ DCL, D.VII.23-24, Ambrose, *Opera* (2 vols, Basel, 1527). DCL, D.VII.6-11, Augustine, *Omnia opera* (11 vols, Paris, 1531). DCL, D.VII.1-5, Jerome, *Omnia opera* (9 vols, Basel, 1516) and *Index* by Oecolampadius (Basel, 1520).

⁴² DCL, Chapter D. VI.37, Jerome, *Opus epistolarum* (3 vols, Basel, 1524). This volume is bound by Garrett Godfrey and contains Ridley's marginalia.

⁴³ A. J. Piper, 'The Libraries of the Monks of Durham', in Malcolm Parkes and Andrew Watson (eds), *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts & Libraries: Essays Presented to N.R. Ker* (London, 1978), pp. 213-49. Idem, 'Dr Thomas Swalwell: Monk of Durham, Archivist and Bibliophile (d.1539)', in *Books and Collectors 1200-1700. Essays presented to Andrew Watson* (London, 1997), pp. 71-100. A.I. Doyle, 'The Printed Books of the Last Monks of Durham', *The Library*, 10:3 (1998), pp. 203-219. Richard Gameson (ed.), *Manuscript Treasures of Durham Cathedral* (London, 2010). Anne Thayer, 'Ministry in the Margins: Thomas Swalwell, OSB, and His Marginal Notes for Preaching on the Clergy', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 47:3 (2016), pp. 599-627.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* flyleaves: 'Liber D. Wylliami Wylom, ex dono magistri Wylliami Bennett, Sacre Theologie professoris, doctoris, & ffynkball prioris.'

book up until his death in 1556 when another ex-monk and cathedral canon, Nicholas Marley, indicated below Wylom's inscription that the book had passed to him following the latter's death in September 1556.⁴⁵ Marley was expelled from the cathedral chapter in 1560 on account of his conservatism. He found refuge with the recusant Tempest family, who inherited a considerable number of the priory's books from Marley, including this one.⁴⁶ Only later did this volume return to the cathedral's collection. The careers of Wylom, Bennett and Marley were similar in several respects. All three had studied at Oxford. Wylom was there from 1516 to 1517, before returning to the priory to become in turn the Chamberlain, Third Prior and Feretrar, the latter role making him responsible for the shrines of St Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede.⁴⁷ Bennett spent many years at Durham College, Oxford, between the 1520s and 30s, receiving his doctorate in theology in 1535 and in the same year becoming prior at Finchale until the dissolution.⁴⁸ Marley arrived at university around the year 1530, supplicating for a BTh in Oxford in 1538 after eight years of studying logic, philosophy and theology.⁴⁹ All three were subsequently appointed as canons in 1541 when the former monks were employed within the new cathedral chapter.⁵⁰

Neither Bennett nor Marley left much of a mark in the letters of Jerome. Wylom, however, annotated the book in several places, many of which suggest that he was interested in both the scholarly and devotional properties of this Erasmian volume.⁵¹ He glossed Latin words with which he was unfamiliar and left cross-references to passages with similar material.⁵² He read with care Erasmus' prefaces and *Life of Jerome* and showed some engagement with the Dutch scholar's notes and rhetorical commentary that followed each of Jerome's letters. In the notes on Jerome's epitaph for Nepotian, for example, Erasmus explained that the phrase 'mine, yours, ours' was intended to add emphasis, a point Wylom duly noted.⁵³ Nor was Wylom afraid to supplement the volume with his own knowledge. When Erasmus argued that no one had lived longer than Methuselah (who died at the age of 909 according to the Dutch scholar), Wylom provided the counterexample of the giant Ruanus, mentioned in the legend of St Patrick. 'Ruanus lived 1400 years in Ireland up to the time of St Patrick', he wrote in the margin, adding further that the giant had told Patrick 'of

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ A. I. Doyle, 'The Library of Sir Thomas Tempest: Its Origins and Dispersal', in G. Janssens and Flor Aarts (eds), *Studies in Seventeenth-Century English Literature, History and Bibliography: Festschrift for Professor T.A. Birrel on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (Amsterdam, 1984), pp. 83-94.

⁴⁷ BRUO: 1501-40, p. 646.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43. On Finchale, see Richard Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-1450* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 310-11.

⁴⁹ BRUO: 1501-40, p. 379.

⁵⁰ Doyle, 'The Library of Thomas Tempest', pp. 83-6.

⁵¹ Wylom's hand can be identified through a comparison with Durham University Library, Cosin MS V.ii.6, Symeon of Durham, *Historia Ecclesiae Dunelm.*, fos 6v, 12v, 18r-v.

⁵² DCL, Chapter D. VI.37, i, sigs AA5r-BB3v.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, i, p. 28: '*expressio loquendi emphasem*'.

the antiquity and race of the people...'.⁵⁴ By Jerome's discussion of the marital customs of the Britons and Scots (which the saint had heard tell of in Gaul), Wylom copied in a similar account from Caesar's *Gallic Wars* (Book 5.14).⁵⁵ Wylom thus used a mixture of classical and traditional material to supplement Erasmus' commentary on Jerome. Elsewhere, it was clear that Wylom was annotating the volume in a more devotional frame of mind. He placed flags or wrote '*monachi*' in Jerome's letter concerning the protection of virginity.⁵⁶ When the saint complained of the difficulties of living in proximity to the sinful city, Wylom noted that this was also a problem in '*dunbelmia*', that is, Durham.⁵⁷ He thus likened Jerome's writings to his own situation in Durham, perhaps while still a monk in the late 1530s.

The Benedictines, therefore, were perfectly open to the fusion of secular and religious, scholarly and devotional matter to be found in Erasmus' writings. Copies of the scholar's works, especially his educational and biblical commentaries could be found in the hands of many members of the order. Nicholas Marley owned two octavo editions of the *Paraphrases*.⁵⁸ Monk Bretton priory had been dissolved in 1538, but four former monks moved to a house in Worsborough to keep the community and its goods together. Following the death of the last prior, William Browne, in 1557, a catalogue of the possessions of the former monks was made, revealing two editions of the *Colloquies* and Erasmus' New Testament.⁵⁹ If Joseph's loyalty to Erasmus has often caught the attention of historians, we should neither ignore the subtler process of accommodation witnessed in the pages of Wylom's book, nor the continuing attraction of the scholar's works to conservatives like Nicholas Marley. Indeed, one suspects that for Marley, as for many others, Erasmus' writings provided a point of continuity, even as the religious climate changed dramatically.

(ii) Austin Canons: John Ramsey, Thomas Paynell and Merton Priory

If Erasmus had left his life at Steyn to pursue a life beyond the cloister, members of his own order remained committed to fostering his legacy. This was particularly true of two canons at the Priory of St Mary's at Merton in Surrey – John Ramsey and Thomas Paynell – who read, annotated and translated the Dutch scholar's writings over the course of several decades.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, i, p. 19: '*Ruanus vixit 1400 annis in hybernia usque ad tempus sancti patricii qui eum informavit de antiquis hominum et gestis*'.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, ii, p. 76: where Caesar points out that the Britons often held wives in common.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, i, pp. 146-55.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, i, p. 119.

⁵⁸ Ushaw College, XVII.E.5.6, Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Euangelium secundum Ioannem...* (Basel, 1534). Ushaw, XVIII.A.8.12, Erasmus, *Tomus secundus continens paraphrasim D. Erasmi Roterodami in omnes epistolas apostolicas...* (Basel, 1534). These later passed to Sir Thomas Tempest.

⁵⁹ Richard Sharpe, James Carley, Rodney Thomson and Andrew Watson (eds), *English Benedictine Libraries: The Shorter Catalogues* (London, 1996), pp. 277-8, 287.

In the early sixteenth century Merton priory was one of the larger houses of Austin Canons.⁶⁰ The priory was a prominent stopping point for travellers to and from London and well-connected to both Erasmus and the English court.⁶¹ Its priors had taken an active role in regulating and reforming the order during the early sixteenth century.⁶² Canons were regularly sent to study at St Mary's College, Oxford, where Erasmus had once resided.⁶³ Ramsey, formerly John Bowle, arrived at Oxford in 1513 and was confirmed as a Bachelor of Theology in 1522. In 1528 he became the '*prior studentium*' of St Mary's, though he was appointed as prior back at Merton shortly afterwards. Paynell probably also spent time in Oxford, before heading to Paris for further study.⁶⁴ There remain significant uncertainties about Paynell's later education and biography, not least because at least two other Thomas Paynells are known to have been active in the period.⁶⁵ Most problematically, it is unclear whether Paynell studied in Louvain during the controversy between Erasmus and Edward Lee. In 1520, Thomas Lupset published a letter addressed to a 'Thomas Paynell' in support of Erasmus and stated that the latter was studying with Lee's brother.⁶⁶ As Geoffrey Eatogh and A. F. Pollard noted, however, there are several plausible candidates for this Paynell, including a Thomas Parnell who studied with Bale in Louvain.⁶⁷ Wherever he had studied, on his return to England Paynell became a prolific translator of classical, humanist and medical tracts. He may have accompanied Christopher Mount on an embassy to the diet of Frankfurt in 1539, though this might also have been his relative, Thomas Paynell, a merchant of Boston.⁶⁸ He was presented to the London rectory of All Hallows Honey Lane in 1545 and served as a royal chaplain to all three of Henry VIII's children. Ramsey's later career was less eventful. He was in contact with Cromwell in the 1530s and secured a large pension and house when Merton was dissolved in 1538.⁶⁹ A 'Mr Bowle' of Trinity Lane was implicated in a Catholic book network in the reign of Edward.⁷⁰ His conservatism is probably suggested by the fact that he was made a canon of the royal chapel at Windsor in 1557 by Philip and Mary.⁷¹

⁶⁰ Alfred Heales, *The Records of Merton Priory in the County of Surrey* (London, 1898).

⁶¹ Richard Schoeck, 'William Salyng', *Contemporaries*, i, p. 191.

⁶² TNA, E 135/1/9.

⁶³ Nicholas Orme, 'The Augustinian Canons and Education', in Janet Burton and Karen Stöber (eds), *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 213-32. At the dissolution in 1538 there was still a canon of Merton at St Mary's College: *L&P* 13:1 (1538), 779, p. 292.

⁶⁴ *BRUO: 1501-40*, pp. 437-8. William Stevenson and Herbert Salter, *The Early History of St John's College, Oxford* (Oxford, 1939), p. 135.

⁶⁵ Geoffrey Eatogh, 'Paynell, Thomas, (d.1564)', *ODNB*.

⁶⁶ Gee, *Life and Works of Lupset*, p. 75.

⁶⁷ Eatogh, 'Paynell'. A. F. Pollard, 'Thomas Paynell', *Times Literary Supplement* (26 Feb 1931), p. 154. In his entry on Paynell's writings, Bale makes no mention of Louvain and complains of his 'monkish superstition': Bale, *Catalogus*, p. 754.

⁶⁸ *L&P* 14:1, 342.

⁶⁹ TNA, SP 1/70, fo. 219r. *L&P* 13:2, 1196.

⁷⁰ Brigden, *London*, p. 454.

⁷¹ *CCEd*: 'John Bowle [175132]'. TNA, PROB 11/41/41.

Aspects of both men's intellectual pursuits can be gleaned from their surviving books. Paynell bequeathed around 94 items to the newly founded St John's College, Oxford, several of them featuring his '*Paynelli et amicorum*' signature.⁷² Ramsey's library was likely dispersed at his death and only eight items can now be linked to him in various repositories.⁷³ Among both men's books are several Erasmian items which can take us closer to the multifaceted appeal of Erasmus' works for members of the religious orders.

Despite his reputation for attacks on the monastic life, Ramsey and Paynell considered Erasmus to have written several devotional works in keeping with their profession. Ramsey, for instance, owned a copy of the *Enchiridion* and other devotional pieces bound with Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi*.⁷⁴ On the title page, Ramsey has signed his name twice: the first pointing out that it was a '*Liber beate Marie Merton possessor Ramsey*' and the second, presumably after 1538 referring to '*Joannes bowle olim Ramsey*'.⁷⁵ There is underling throughout the volume, including in one section of the *Enchiridion* where Erasmus takes issue with the mindless recitation of prayers in a monastic setting.⁷⁶ Whilst these underlinings might have been undertaken by a later reader, there is no doubt that it is Ramsey's hand which left several notes by two of Erasmus' prayers.⁷⁷ The *Paean Virgini matri dicendus* and the *Obsecratio ad virginem matrem Mariam in rebus adversis* are short devotional pieces directed to the Virgin Mary. The canons of Merton presided over the church dedicated to Mary and presumably felt a special affinity towards her. Ramsey's notes all address '*Maria*'. When Erasmus wrote of Mary as 'the mother of God, but [who is] also addressed as that mother of mercy', Ramsey noted '*Maria mater dei et mater misericordiae*'.⁷⁸ Mary's clemency was also highlighted. In the *Obsecratio*, Erasmus asked Mary 'to be my protectress [*servatrix*], my salvation, my only and most certain refuge' and Ramsey approvingly echoed the passage in the margin '*Maria hic appellatur servatrix, salus, unicum ac certissimum perfugium*'.⁷⁹

Erasmus was important to Ramsey, therefore, as a devotional writer whose Marian devotion chimed with the context of worship at Merton. Erasmus could also be made to work with the religious life in other ways. In 1537, Ramsey asked Paynell to translate another of the

⁷² Stevenson and Salter, *Early History*, p. 133. Emden's list of the Paynell bequest is inaccurate: *BRUO: 1501-40*, p. 728.

⁷³ See the entries in *MLGB*. For Ramsey's books see, James Clark, 'The Regular Clergy', in Vincent Gillespie and Susan Powell, *Companion to the Early Printed Book in Britain* (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 176-206.

⁷⁴ Bodleian, 4^oZ 33 Th.(1) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani, saluberrimis praeceptis refertum... Et Basilii in Esaiam commentariolus... cum aliis* (Cologne, 1519); (2) *Eximii doctoris Hieronymi Stridonensis vita* (Basel, 1519).

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, t.p.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, fo. 19v-20r.

⁷⁷ The hand conforms both with Ramsey's inscription, his surviving letters and annotating habits in his other books. E.g. TNA, SP 1/70, fo. 219r.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, fo. 133v.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, fo. 140v.

Dutch scholar's early writings: *The comparison of a virgin and a martyr*.⁸⁰ Erasmus had written this work for a community of nuns in Cologne, dwelling at length on the excellency of their way of life and comparing it to the suffering of the martyrs of the church.⁸¹ Paynell's decision to publish a work so explicit in its recommendation of the religious life on the eve of the dissolution was striking. Indeed, Erasmus' text often suggested that virgins had preserved the faith at moments of great peril. When Christ hung upon the cross, 'Peter, whiche was thoughte to have a wyfe, coulede no where be founde, but the vyrgyns, Mary the mother of Iesu and Iohn, abode faste by the crosse'.⁸² Paynell had pursued a similar strategy in his translation of Erasmus' *De contemptu mundi* (1531). While Erasmus had notoriously added several complaints about the monastic life to this work, Paynell's preface was unrepentant in its advocacy of his vocation. While contemporaries, Paynell alleged, may find much to complain about in religious men

yet there is none be he never so delycately gyven to pleasure, or swarved so farre wyde from the true beleve, that can so malyciously blame or barke agaynste relygyon: but that he shall fynde an hundred agayne that were nat onely vertuous and perfecte good men, but also moste excellently lerned, the whiche do highly magnifie and preyse religion, ye and with longe eloquent orations and pistils they exhorte and sterve the doulce delycate felowes of the worlde, that be ignorante, what a swete, what a quiete, and what a holy lyfe is ledde in religion, to come thereunto.⁸³

In the eyes of Ramsey and Paynell, the writings of their fellow canon Erasmus provided not a damning critique of declining monastic discipline, but rather a portrait of a spiritually vital and learned community.

Paynell's decision to place 'elegant orations and pistils' at the heart of his vision of the religious orders is striking, especially given his evident interest in the humanist education and literary agenda. Paynell, for instance, owned an imprint containing the Dutch scholar's *De duplici copia*, *De ratione studii* and *De puero Iesu*.⁸⁴ This work was brought together in a contemporary Parisian binding with 16 other educational tracts, many of them basic grammars, thesauruses and letter collections printed in the French capital.⁸⁵ Such details suggest that Paynell acquired the volume while studying in Paris and its pages are annotated by several contemporary hands. His copy of the *Moriae encomium* is similarly bound with a series of humanist orations (printed 1518-19) such as Tunstall's *In laudem matrimonii oratio*, Ulrich Zasius' funeral oration for the Emperor Maximilian and

⁸⁰ Thomas Paynell, *The comparison of a virgin and a martyr* (London, 1537).

⁸¹ Louis Perraud, 'Introductory Note', *CWE* 69, pp. 154-7.

⁸² *Ibid.*, fo. 12v.

⁸³ Thomas Paynell, *De contemptu mundi* (London, 1531), sigs A2v-3r.

⁸⁴ SJC, Oxford, HB4/6.a.3.1.(16) Erasmus, *De duplici copia... De ratione studii... De puero Iesu* (Paris, c.1512-20)

⁸⁵ Gid, *Catalogue des Reliures Francaises Estampées à Froid*: RC.e(4) and FL.j(5) [c.1516]. For a similar binding see, Selwyn, *Geste*, p. 243.

a pamphlet in support of the Hebrew scholar, Johann Reuchlin.⁸⁶ Paynell's hand cannot be identified in either volume.⁸⁷ However, the collection of imprints is highly suggestive of his attentiveness to contemporary humanist educational methods, literature and the broader debates surrounding humanism.

The canons had also come to know Erasmus' biblical writings. Both Paynell and Ramsey owned copies of the *Paraclesis*. Paynell's copy somehow found its way to the British Library.⁸⁸ This is in a contemporary binding by John Reynes and contains an intriguing mix of Erasmian tracts, Polydore Vergil's *De prodigiis*, a collection of verse renditions of psalms by evangelical humanists such as Melanchthon and Helius Eobanus Hessus, and the *Compendium of Divine Love* by the Carthusian theologian, Jean Perceval. The latter pamphlet argued for the necessity of works in salvation and provided advice for those living lives of poverty or celibacy. How Paynell squared this with Vergil's notorious criticisms of monastic visions or the confessional allegiance of Melanchthon is unclear.⁸⁹ Ramsey acquired his copy of the *Paraclesis* through an edition of the works of Athanasius to which the printer had added Erasmus' work as a preface.⁹⁰ Ramsey's inscription is still visible on the title page, though a later reader has erased it. He evidently purchased the volume while still a canon and recorded a price of 5 shillings on the title page. The volume later fell into the hands of a younger canon at Merton, John Salyng, who, like Paynell, wrote his name '*et amicorum*'.⁹¹ Though his inscription has been mutilated, the book was later in the possession of William Latymer, one time chaplain to Anne Boleyn and prebendary of Westminster Abbey.⁹² Its rapid circulation between Ramsey, Salyng and Latymer is also reflected in the variety of contemporary notes within its margins. Ramsey's hand, however, can be identified commenting on Athanasius' commentary on Romans (actually authored by Theophylact), and several of his comments reveal an interest in Erasmian biblical commentary.

⁸⁶ SJC, Oxford, P.scam.1.loweshelf.25.(1), Erasmus, *Moriae Encomium* (Basel, 1519); (2) Tunstall, *In laudem matrimonii oratio* (Basel, 1519); (3) *Vivat Rex Carolus* (?Frankfurt, 1519); (4) ?Grapheus, *Divi Caroli Imp Caes., Opt. Max, Desyderatissimus ex Hispani in Germaniam reditus* (Antwerp, nd); (5) Melanchthon, *Oratio Funebris Dicta Divo Maximiliano Caes. Vuitenburgae* (Basel, 1519); (6) Ulrich Zasius, *Oratio, Friburgi in funere D Maximiliani Imp Aug habita* (Basel, 1519); (7) Ulrich von Hutten, *Triumphus Doc. Reuchlini* (Hagenau, 1518).

⁸⁷ In the endleaves of the *Moria* volume is a Greek inscription beginning: 'βαρετου βρυταννου βυβλωσ...', perhaps 'the book(s) of Barrett of Britain'. An English student named Thomas Barrett matriculated at Louvain in 1518, see: Henry De Vocht, *Monumenta Humanistica Lovaniensia: Texts and Studies about Louvain Humanists in the First Half of the XVth Century* (Louvain, 1934), p. 15. Might this link Paynell to study in the city?

⁸⁸ C.66.d.18.(1) Jean Parceval, *Compendium divini amoris* (Paris, 1530); (2) Erasmus, *Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo* (Antwerp, 1530); (3) *Psalmi omnium selectissimi, afflictis conscientis* (Hagenau, 1530); (4) Polydore Vergil, *Dialogorum de prodigiis libri tres* (Basel, 1531); (5) Erasmus, *Paraclesis* (Basel, 1520).

⁸⁹ Hay, *Vergil*, p. 42.

⁹⁰ Ampleforth Abbey, C023a, *Athanasii episcopii Alexandrini sanctissima, eloquentis simaque opera... una cum doctissima Erasmi Roterodami ad piem lectorem paraclesi* (Paris, 1519).

⁹¹ *Ibid*, in the endleaves between volumes. Salyng may also annotated one of Paynell's books: SJC, Oxford, HB4/6.a.3.1.(5), sigs A3v-4r.

⁹² My thanks to Brother Anselm of Ampleforth for providing a high-resolution image to allow me to reconstruct the inscription. C.f. with the inscription in the books Latimer donated to Westminster Abbey: WA, S.4.37-38.

Two themes were central to Ramsey's notes on this Romans commentary: the life and apostleship of Paul; and a refutation of Luther's concept of justification. Reformation debates clearly informed Ramsey's reading of certain passages. In the discussion of Rom 2:7, for instance, Athanasius stressed the necessity of works for salvation and Ramsey noted how the saint 'openly disagrees with Luther'.⁹³ Origen, too, was cited by Ramsey to rebut evangelical notions of a predestined elect. By Rom 1:17, Ramsey summarised Origen's view that 'no one is excluded from salvation, whether he may come as a Jew, Greek or barbarian'.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, most of Ramsey's annotations focus on aspects of Paul's biography and behaviour. At times, he supplemented Athanasius' discussion with information drawn from other sources, especially Erasmus' *Annotations*.⁹⁵ By Athanasius's discussion of Rom 1:14-5 (*Itaque quod in me promptum est*), for example, Ramsey referred to the *Annotations*, presumably for its explication of Paul's preaching to other gentiles, though Ramsey's note is now extensively trimmed.⁹⁶ Long passages from Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* were also copied in by Ramsey at the head and foot of several pages, usually making similar points with regard to Paul. Thus, when Paul was prevented from coming to Rome (Rom. 1:13), Ramsey noted Origen's view that Paul had either been prevented 'in one way by God, [or] in another by Satan'.⁹⁷ A second contemporary hand has also made various comments on Erasmus' discussion of Origen, noting by Rom 1:5 that when Paul states that his apostleship extended to all nations, 'certain people want the matter to be understood hyperbolically and thus Erasmus shows that Origen wished the same'.⁹⁸ Both Ramsey and this second reader, therefore, used Erasmus' works to better understand both Paul's apostolic powers and the writings of early Christian authors.

Ramsey's notes obliquely linked Erasmus with a defence of orthodoxy. Paynell would develop the connection most fully in his later work. In the 1540s and 50s, he translated St Bernard's *De modus vivendi* and compiled scriptural works for both Edward VI and Mary I.⁹⁹ At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, he returned to the writings of Erasmus, producing an edition of the scholar's *Complaint of Peace* and dedicating it to Anthony Browne, Viscount Montague, who had spent much of the parliamentary session of 1558 arguing against religious change.¹⁰⁰ Paynell's preface also

⁹³ Ampleforth Abbey, C023a, fo. 6v: '... divi athanasi aperte dissidet [?]iani lutheri...' The note is mutilated.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 4r: 'Iusticia enim Dei in Evangelio revelatur per id, quod a salute nullus excipitur, sive Iudaeus, sive Gracus, sive barbarus veniat...'

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, fos 3r-6v.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 4r.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 3v: 'ab Origene. uno modo a deo, alio a Satana'.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 3r: 'quum dicat paulus in omnibus gentibus, quidam uolunt id intellegi hyperbolice et ita ostendit erasmus origenem hoc voluisse'.

⁹⁹ Thomas Paynell, *A compendius and a moche fruytefull treatyse of well liuyng* (London, 1545). Idem, *The pithy and moost notable saynges of al scripture* (London, 1550). Idem, *The Pandectes of the evangelycall lawe* (London, 1553).

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Paynell, *The complaint of peace* (London, 1559). J. G. Elzinga, 'Browne, Anthony (1528-1592)', ODNB.

expressed concern at the direction of religious change under the new queen. ‘Everye mannes headde’, he proposed, ‘is busye & unquyet, gyven al to newfanglenes, the very mother of all commotions uprores, debates, battel and murther’.¹⁰¹ Erasmus was especially apt for the present moment, Paynell argued, since ‘He in his tyme, coulde no wheres... find wher to bestowe [peace] quietly: such tempestes, and surges of Controuersye a rose in every Citie and Region throughoute all Christendome’.¹⁰² Paynell thus transformed Erasmus into a lament for a divided Christendom and perhaps also for Paynell’s own separation from his monastic vocation. But while conservatives like Gardiner had sometimes complained at Erasmus’ wanton pen, Paynell turned the scholar’s outspokenness into a virtue. The Dutchman ‘coulde not temper hym selfe, nor yet his penne, but neades he must write unto the worlde this true and eloquent complaint’.¹⁰³ Paynell, therefore, recommended Erasmus as a model of wise counsel, just as Montague was embarking on a conservative rear-guard action against the Elizabethan settlement.

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Four major themes were developed by the canons of Merton in their reading of Erasmus. First and foremost, they explored the relevance of Erasmus’ early devotional writings to their own vocation, connecting Erasmus with Marian devotion and a defence of the religious life. Paynell’s library, in particular, demonstrated how the Dutch scholar’s literary and educational writings had found an audience among the religious orders, albeit in the context of a wide array of other grammatical, rhetorical and literary writings. A more theologically ambitious version of Erasmus was worked up in the margins of Ramsey’s Athanasius volume, one which could assist in the study of the scriptures and Paul’s apostleship. Finally, confessional pressure was brought to bear on Erasmus’ reputation, such that his complaints about the state of contemporary Europe could resonate with those resisting religious innovation in England.

Erasmus embodied a vision of reform to which many members of the religious orders had committed themselves prior to the dissolution. His advocacy for educational and devotional renewal, along with his commitment to studying the scriptures, resonated with university educated monks and canons who mined his prayers, poems and treatises for material in keeping with their daily lives, scholarly interests and confessional context.

¹⁰¹ Paynell, *The complaint of peace*, sig. A2v.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, sig. A2r.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, sig. A2r.

Conclusion



In one of Nicholas Harpsfield's dialogues, the characters fall to discussing the reputation of Erasmus. 'No one', Irenaeus the Englishman contends, 'wrote more sensibly about him than Julius Caesar Scaliger... "Plainly he was a great man, but he would have been greater, if he had been willing to be less"'.¹ The conversation then turns to the question of whether Erasmus continued to disapprove of the worship of relics up until his death. Irenaeus confesses that he is somewhat stumped:

Whether he ever disapproved of the worship of them, I cannot say for certain. His writings testify many things against him... However, having been admonished and reproved by others... the old man in his later years then examined the judgement, and having ripened, as it were, he seems to have joined his whole self to the authority of the church...²

The exchange neatly encapsulates the divided reaction of English contemporaries to Erasmus in the sixteenth century. On the one hand, Erasmus was deeply admired for his learning and authority. Yet on the other, he had become a source of concern and confusion. Perhaps he had overstretched himself in pursuit of fame? And what was one to make of his contradictory statements on the reformation?

Harpsfield's mixture of admiration and contempt, this thesis proposes, was not unique. From the outset, readers adopted a critical approach to Erasmus and his books. In many cases, Erasmus had provided only a starting place. In works such as the New Testament, English readers constantly looked to improve upon his efforts, working with both the scholar himself and their own networks to supplement his achievement. Countless marginal notes testify to the need to place Erasmus in dialogue with other authorities or to dispute his conclusions. Such processes were at their most pronounced among England's humanist community. Just as Erasmus had compared manuscripts, commented on the translation and derivation of words and argued for the primacy of his methods and conclusions, so his English counterparts subjected his works to the same standards, offering their own readings, meanings and complications in the margins of the

¹ Nicholas Harpsfield, *Dialogi sex contra summi pontificatus, monasticae vitae, sanctorum, sacrarum imaginum oppugnatores, et pseudomartyres* (Antwerp, 1566), p. 382: 'Non aliud sane, quam quod Iulius Caesar Scaliger... de eo scripsit: magnum scilicet fuisse Erasmus, sed maiorem eum futurum si minor ille esse voluisset'.

² *Ibid.*: 'An ille unquam omnem earum cultum improbarit, non possum pro certo dicere. Multa vero ei in se libri eius testantur... De quibus tamen ab aliis saepe admonitus et interpellatus, cum serio cogitasset, eaque iam aetate proventus maturiore iudicio examinasset, et quasi concoxisset, totum se ad Ecclesiae auctoritatem, quae ad obitum ei semper fuit gravissima, contulisse videtur'.

Annotations, *Adagia* and other such works. Even those at England's newly founded humanist colleges did not always meet Erasmus on his own terms but approached him through commentaries and related literatures. If Erasmus portrayed himself as the embodiment of humanism, the evidence of his readers suggests a far more dynamic picture, one filled with rivalries and competing outlooks. This thesis has pointed to two lines of scholarly enquiry – the study of Hebrew and the reception of classical medicine and natural philosophy – which especially deserve to be treated on their own terms, rather than conflated with Erasmus' scholarly agenda. One benefit of studying the manuscripts and printed books which passed through contemporaries' hands, then, would be to liberate the study of humanism in England from Erasmus.

Overlaying these deeper, scholarly readings was a growing need to make Erasmus work in the context of the English reformation. Historians have often argued that Erasmus had a moderating influence on religious debate in the country. James McConica spoke reverently of the 'secret streams of learning and evangelism which flowed beneath the more obvious landmarks of Reformation debate [and] which drew their vigour from the writings of Erasmus and his friends'.³ More recently, Gregory Dodds has asserted that Erasmus' legacy 'became a counterpoint to the emerging dominance of Calvinist theology within English religious culture'.⁴ Yet for all his supposed moderation, Erasmus had in fact left several traces of confessional thinking for English readers to follow.⁵ In their printed tracts, translations and marginal annotations, English contemporaries strove to create a harmony between Erasmus and their own religious outlook. This often led them away from the scholar's devotional or irenic writings, into the thickets of biblical and patristic scholarship where he had laboured with equal vigour. Readers on both sides of the confessional divide edited Erasmus' legacy. Conservatives were certainly unimpressed with the scholar's handling of many controversial matters. But for all the accusations of Arianism, apostasy and Lucianic contempt, there were equally those who quietly reworked Erasmus in defence of the religious orders or the doctrines of the emerging Catholic church. Evangelicals, too, explored the connections between Erasmus' thought and that of continental reformers, especially with regard to Erasmus' Pauline commentaries. Indeed, if we look beyond the quarrels of Erasmus and Luther, a variety of alternative models for humanist scholarship in service of evangelical faith existed, not least those of Melanchthon and Oecolampadius. In the margins of Erasmus' works, therefore, humanism and the reformation were becoming ever more entwined, even as the theological ground was shifting away from Erasmus' complex position.

³ McConica, *English Humanists*, p. 281.

⁴ Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus*, p. 3.

⁵ Menchi, *Erasmus in Italia*, pp. 15-20.

Politics provided another spur to the confessionalisation of Erasmus. Henry VIII and his successors closely tied their own authority and actions in the church with the scholar. Several factions at court strove to align Erasmus with their defence of religious orthodoxy, support for vernacular scripture or belief in the necessity of obedience to the crown. The result was not greater agreement but greater scrutiny on Erasmus' historical circumstances, motives and style of writing. Alongside these instrumental readings of the Erasmian project, however, were other strands of interpretation. Several readers, for instance, took a serious interest in Erasmus' devotional writings. From Henry VIII through to William Bowerman and John Ramsey, English contemporaries continued to use Erasmian prayers, poems and paraphrases as aids to worship, even if their devotions were sometimes inflected by a desire to resist the English reformation. The variety of reading techniques revealed in this study is testament to the ways in which book history can bring us closer to the circles in which Erasmus' works were discussed and create novel connections between his writings and those of others, while also forcing us to think more imaginatively about the processes of intellectual reception, albeit within the constraints of uneven survival and the challenges of marginalia.

By 1550, Erasmus had become a deeply divisive figure in England. His reputation was caught between competing political and confessional factions and subject to a range of critical and pious readings. The result was that the scholar's intellectual project was increasingly fragmented, even as his learning and scholarly labours were idolised. Fragmentation was made easier by the sheer scale of the scholar's literary productions and the practices of scribes and printers who carved up and repackaged his writings for different markets and audiences. Such processes, we might note, are still in operation today. If Erasmus' contemporaries were led to question the historical circumstances and motives which had informed his writings, so later generations remain fascinated by his complex persona and the turbulent times which shaped him. Then and now, of course, Erasmus eludes us.

Annotated bibliography of printed volumes

The rationale behind this annotated bibliography is to supply the reader with further information on the physical volumes discussed in the body of the text. While a bibliography would usually simply list the locations, shelfmarks, dates and titles of works cited, in the present case this would not adequately convey the substance of the sources and their use in the thesis. Book history is a difficult and often inconclusive enterprise. I have justified my attributions of ownership and dating within the body of the thesis itself and likewise explained where speculation and certainty part ways. However, additional material may be useful to the reader and provoke further study.

For clarity and brevity, this appendix borrows some of the conventions of modern rare book catalogues. However, it is focused on evidence which may shed light on the sixteenth-century context of the works, rather than on every facet of the physical condition of the book. For example, bindings from the sixteenth century will receive a detailed description, whereas those from later periods will not. Words such as ‘contemporary’, ‘secretary’ and ‘italic’ are used as broad descriptors of time and style.

Albert Sloman Library, University of Essex, Colchester:

Harsnett, H.c.4-7

St Jerome, *Omnia operum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi* (Basel, 1516)

All four volumes in a ?contemporary vellum binding with holes for three ties. Foreedges stained red. Part of Samuel Harsnett’s collection. Some underlining and a single ms note in a small hand but otherwise unmarked.

Harsnett, I.a.12

(i) Erasmus, *Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae* (Basel, 1519)

(ii) *Epistola Pauli ad Romanos D. Erasmo interprete: rerum theologicarum, et summa, et methodum continens* (Wittenberg, 1520);

(iii) several Greek texts with Wittenberg imprints of the same year: *E Luciano. Hercules Gallicus. Ex Thucydide. Oratio quaedam contra leges; Exercitamentum Graecae lectionis; Plena eruditionis epistola divi Pauli ad Galatas*. (all Wittenberg, 1520)

(iv) Galatians in Latin (not Vulgate or Erasmus), with an evangelical ‘argumentum’ to begin

(v) Poem: ‘Christiane sapientie oracula / Hec menstrat a deo scripta tabula...’

(vi) Notes under the heading: ‘*De miseriis curialium*’. Perhaps a paraphrase of Piccolomini’s *De miseriis curialium*. An extract from the decretals, citing St Chrysostom on ‘primacy’. Another extract from Antonio Loschi(?), ‘*Magna res est eloquentia*’.

Contemporary pigskin binding, faded, rebaked and raised on three bands. Likely of German or Swiss origin, though badly rubbed making roll tools unidentifiable. Signed: Leonard Dulcens[-us/-er?] (or: Dulse), fl. 1525-1545, physician to Mary Tudor, Dowager Queen of France. Other unidentified names throughout the volume, perhaps late-sixteenth century: ‘Thomson’, ‘Burkins(?)’, ‘Thomas Scughed(?)’ ‘Richardus’. Part of Samuel Harsnett’s collection. Mixture of ms in Latin and English in at least four different hands. Note: (i)-(iii) are printed; (iv)-(vi) in manuscript; (iv)-(v) in the same, neat humanist italic hand (β), which also annotated (ii); (vi) in a more mixed hand (α2), not dissimilar from Dulse’s inscription (α1), (vi) begins on the verso of final page of (v).

Harsnett, H.h.2

Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522)

Contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey using Oldham rolls AN.f(1), with DI.a(1) [1503-30]. Section of the tp has been ripped out, leaving only the letter ‘R[]’ from a possible ownership inscription. Part of Samuel Harsnett’s collection. Underlining and several contemporary ms.

Harsnett, H.b.2

(i) *Io. Frobenius Pio lectori... D. Erasmi... praefationem ad nuper electum pontificem Romanum Adrianum... Arnobii Afri... commentarios... Erasmi Roterod. commentarium in psalmum: Quare fremuerunt gentes* (Basel, 1522)

(ii) *Maximi Tyrii Philosophi platonici sermones e graeca in Latinam linguam versi cosmo paccio interprete* (Basel, 1519)

(iii) *Stunica, Annotationes contra D. Erasmus Roterodamum in defensionem translatio. Annotationes contra Iacobum Fabrum* (Paris, 1522)

(iv) Lorenzo Valla (ed. Erasmus), *Novi Testamenti interpretationem* (Paris, 1505)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll HE.d(1) with Orn.A(2) [1505-27]. Price marks: 'pryss iis vid'; 'iii.'. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. Some underlining and odd contemporary ms, esp in (iv).

Harsnett, K.b.13

Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1527)

Contemporary binding with Oldham roll AN.b(1) and Orn.A(1) [1479, 1495, 1503-42]. Early fore-edge title. Signed on the tp: 'Thomas wakefeld' (see Carley, 'Marginalia'). Contemporary ms throughout in Wakefield's hand.

Harsnett, H.c.11

Seneca, *Opera... per Des. Erasmus Roterod. ex fide veterum codicum* (Basel, 1529)

Contemporary binding, using a now faded roll similar to Oldham RP.a(1 or 2) or RP.f and a rose stamp (Oldham 38). Rebacked. Price mark: 10s. Signed in neat italic hands on tp and opening leaves: 'Tho. Leucas' and 'John Fielde, *Catanb: Aulæ Pembroch?*'. Both students at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in the 1580s and 90s. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. Some underlining.

Harsnett, K.h.19-25

Augustine, *D. Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi, Omnium operum...i per Des. Erasmus Roterodamum* (Basel, 1529)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll FP.b(2) [1529-42]. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. Contemporary ms, including tadpoles, in most volumes, particularly *De doctrina christiana* (vol. 3).

Harsnett, H.g.4*

Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1533)

Contemporary binding with the arms of Archbishop Whitgift tooled in gilt. Contemporary ms throughout work in hand of Thomas Wakefield. Whitgift inherited Wakefield's library in the 1570s, from which it passed into the collection of Samuel Harsnett.

Harsnett, K.f.10

Hilary, *Opera* (Basel, 1535)

Contemporary binding, probably using Oldham roll HE.g(4) with Orn.C(4) [1526-34]. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. No ms or other inscriptions.

Harsnett, I.a.13

(i) Dictionary of Cicero

(ii) Erasmus, *Epitome libri de copia verborum* (Paris, 1535)

(iii) *Catonis disticha moralia, cum scho Des. Eras. Rot....* (Basel, 1536)

In a plain later binding. Signed in (iii): 'John Lovyll his booke'; '*Sum liber danielis duckfeildi?*'. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. Long contemporary ms addition at end of (ii) of 'vocabula bona'.

Harsnett, K.c.8

Origen, *Opera* (Basel, 1536) [only vol. 2]

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll DI.h(3) [1521-37]. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. Contemporary ms in volume, particularly concerned with heresy and dissent from the church.

Harsnett, I.a.16-17

Erasmus, *Tomus primus [secundus] paraphraseon* (2 vols, Basel, 1540)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll SW.b.(4), corner fleurons and central tool. Rebacked with foredge titles. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. Some underlining in vol. 1.

Harsnett, H.g.17

Erasmus, *In Novum Testamentum annotationes* (Basel, 1540)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll FP.b(2) [1529-42]. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. The odd bit of underlining in Pauline epistles but otherwise unmarked.

Harsnett, K.c.4-7

St John Chrysostom, *Divi Ioannis Chrysostomi archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opera* (Paris, 1546)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll MW.d(2) and MW.d(5) [1534-52], with printed waste possibly from the Geneva Bible. Signed: 'William Painterus', probably matr. sizar from St John's College, Cambridge, in 1554. Part of Samuel Harsnett's collection. Neat italic notes throughout, probably in Painter's hand.

All Souls College, Oxford

g.infra 1.12

Symplicius of Cilicia, *Hypomnemata in Aristotelis Categorias* (Venice, 1499)

Contemporary binding by Venetian Apple Bindery. From the bequest of Sir John Mason to the college in 1566.

4:SR.73.g.6

Hilary, *Lucubrationes* (Basel, 1523)

Blind-tooled calf binding. Foreedges possibly stained blue. From the bequest of David Pole, bishop of Peterborough to the college in 1568. Very occasional contemporary underlining and ms.

g.infra 2.6

Themistius, *Omnia opera* (Venice, 1534)

Contemporary binding by Venetian Apple Bindery. From the bequest of Sir John Mason to the college in 1566.

4:SR.79.f.9

Erasmus, *Paraphrases in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1535)

Half-bound on boards covered in marbled paper. Binding repaired in 1979 (OUP). From the bequest of Sir John Mason to the college in 1566. MS additions by Mason, especially in the gospel of John.

4:SR.79.f.10

Erasmus, *Paraphrases in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1535)

Half-bound on boards covered in marbled paper. From the bequest of David Pole, bishop of Peterborough to the college in 1568. No contemporary ms.

t.8.5

Erasmus, *Ecclesiastae siue De ratione concionandi libri quatuor* (Antwerp, 1539)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham FP.b(5) [1536-41]. Evidence of chaining and ties. Initials H.S. cut into upper board. Seventeenth-century college inscription on tp. Contemporary ms additions throughout volume in at least two hands.

4:SR.73.g.13

Cyprian, *Opera* (Basel, 1540)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

Ampleforth Abbey:

C023a

Athanasius, *Eloquentis simaque opera... una cum doctissima Erasmi Roterodami ad piem lectorem paraclesis* (Paris, 1519)

In plain leather binding, perhaps of late sixteenth century, with single blind fillet frame and blind-tooled fillet running vertically across cover. TP signed by John Ramsey, canon of Merton; John Selyng, canon of Merton; deleted inscription of William Latymer bequeathing this book to Westminster Abbey. Later signatures: 'Michaelis Pauli, Roberti Harris, & alior. Frat. Mon. Bened.' (?17th cent); 'Tho Hargraves'; 'Bibl. Ampleforth'. Probable chain of sixteenth-century provenance: Ramsey->Selyng->Latymer. Some underlining in the *Paraclesis* and extensive ms throughout the commentary on Romans by several hands, including Ramsey, ?Michael Paul, and two unattributed sixteenth-century hands. See *MLGB3*.

Auckland Public Library, New Zealand:

ERAS 1522

Erasmus, *In Novum Testamentum ab eodem tertio recognitum, Annotationes...* (Basel, 1522)

Back cover remains in a contemporary blind-tooled binding. Front cover in later leather binding. Signed on tp: 'Sum Nicolai Udalli. 1537' (i.e. Nicholas Udall); 'Joannis brikyndensis p[re]cium 8d', possibly John Brickenden, fellow of St John's Cambridge 1516 and later conservative cleric. Later in the collection of Sir George Grey. A few scattered ms, one of which may be by Udall.

Bodleian Library, Oxford:

Vet. B1 e.18

(i) *Opuscula aliquot Erasmo Roterodamo castigatore et interpraete* (Louvain, 1515)

(ii) Erasmus, *Parabolarum, sive similium liber...* (Louvain, 1515)

(iii) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (Louvain, 1515)

(iv) *Aliquot Epistolae* (Louvain, 1517)

(v) Erasmus, *Apologia... ad Iacobum Fabrum* (Louvain, 1517)

(vi) Cicero, *Oratio pro A. Licinio Archia poeta... cum commentarius P. Beroaldi* (Louvain, 1517)

(vii) *Fabularum quae hoc libro continentur interpretes atque autores...* (Louvain, 1517)

Later (?18th) binding with gilt tooled spine. Book label: Stafford Northcote, 1st Earl of Iddesleigh (1818-1887). Pencil note: 'Bt from H.W. Pratley (Hall's Bookshop) / Tunbridge Wells'; Gift to the Bodleian from Arthur A. Houghton. Signed on tp of (i): 'Sum Johannis Blaxtoni liber', i.e. conservative cleric (d.1574), signs again at bottom of page with Greek motto; 'Jasper Bridgeman A.D. 1614'; 'George Potter'. Price mark: 'vi^d'. Contemporary red ink ms throughout.

Antiq.e.GS.1515.1

Janus Damianus, *Ad Leonem X... de expeditione in Turcas elegeia...* (Basel, 1515)

Modern binding. End leaves inscribed: 'Sum Samuelis Bouilly Scaphusiam Heluetij Anno post mortem Christum 1575'. BM duplicate sale. Some contemporary ms.

Antiq.e.X.11

(i) *Opuscula Plutarchi nuper traducta, Erasmo Roterodamo interprete* (Louvain, 1515)

(ii) Erasmus, *Scarabeus, cum scholiis* (Louvain, 1517)

(iii) Erasmus, *Sileni Alcibiadis, cum scholiis I. Frobenii* (Louvain, 1517)

(iv) Erasmus, *Bellum* (Louvain, 1517)

Modern binding with marbled paper. Signed: James Gordon, W.J. Note of purchase: W. Brown Jan 10 1918, which may have resulted in dividing volume between the Bodleian and BM. Correspondence on the inside between A.W. Pollard and P.S. Allen about the purchase from Brown. Contemporary ms, including underlining and manicules. Greek inscription on colophon.

H.3.3-7

Jerome (ed. Erasmus), *Opera* (Basel, 1516)

Later binding. TP signed: 'Ex dono Thome Stanbrigi artium magistri huius collegii quondam Socii qui obiit anno domini 1522'. Given to Magdalen College, Oxford, by Stanbridge. Some scattered contemporary ms throughout the 5 volumes. See MLGB3.

Mar. 860

(i) Erasmus, *Ioannes Frobenius lectori. Habes iterum Morias encomium, una cum Listrii commentariis...* (Basel, 1516)

(ii) Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani saluberrimis referta praeceptis* (Basel, 1516)

(iii) Erasmus, *Sileni Alcibiadis cum scholiis I. Frobenii. Scarabeus, cum scholiis*. (Basel, 1517)

(iv) Erasmus, *Bellum* (Basel, 1517)

Contemporary ?pigskin binding, with remains of clasps. Book label: Georgius Klok, MD. Some ms notes in black and red italic hand.

Don. e.8

(i) Erasmus, *Epistolae aliquot illustrium virorum ad Erasmum Roterodamum* (Martens, Louvain, 1516?)

(ii) Erasmus, *Aliquot epistole saneque elegantes...* (Louvain, 1517)

(iii) Erasmus, *In epistolam Pauli Apostoli ad Romanos Paraphrasis* (Louvain, 1517)

Modern binding. Note on flyleaf records purchase from International Antiquariaat, Amsterdam, Dec 1930. MS in contemporary hands.

Vet. D1 e.77

Erasmus, *Scarabeus per Eras. Roterodamum cum scholiis I. Frobenii. Scarabeus, cum scholiis* (Basel, 1517)

Modern binding. Gift to Bodleian from Arthur A. Houghton. One ms note copying Greek, otherwise unmarked.

4° A 9 Art BS [13 miscellaneous tracts, c.1490 to 1655]

...

(v) Erasmus, *Dialogus viri cuiuspiam eruditissimi festiuus sance ac elegans, quomodo Iulius II* (Louvain, 1518)

...

Later leather binding (?xvii) when this collection of texts was presumably brought together. Early foredge title. TP of (v) contains signature of 'R. ?Burbank' in a later hand. No ms in (v).

Antiq.f.X.20

Erasmus, *Dialogus viri cuiuspiam eruditissimi festiuus sance ac elegans, quomodo Iulius II* (Paris, ?1518)

Modern binding. Note in the flyleaves from Goldschmidt and Co, 45 Old Bond Street. Purchased by the Bodleian in Oct 1925. No ms.

Vet. D1 f.70

Erasmus, *Familiarium colloquiorum formule. Et alia quedam per Desi. Erasmum Roterodamum* (Erfurt, 1519)

Vellum binding. Purchased from Goldschmidt Car 98/48. Bodleian acquisition stamp 1952. Very heavy ms.

Vet. F1 f.16

(i) *Luciani Opuscula Erasmo Roterodamo interprete* (Florence, 1519)

(ii) *Quae toto volumine continentur. Pacis querela. De regno administrando. Institutio principis Christianni... Item ex Plutarcho... Sileni Alcibiadis* (Florence, 1519)

Contemporary ?Italian binding with gilt and blind tooling, with small ms waste. Remains of early foredge title. Book label: Presented to Bodleian in June 1944 by George Smith, Esq. An early owner has excised Erasmus' name from the volume, presumably after the placing of Erasmus' works on the papal index.

4o.E 6 Art.Seld.

- (i) Erasmus, *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae... Contestatio Erasmi adversus seditiosas calumnias* (Louvain, 1519)
- (ii) Robert Whittington, *Roberti Whittintoni lichfeldiensis grammatices magistri et prothovatis Anglie in florentissima Oxoniensi academia laureati lucubrationes* (London, ?1517)
- (iii) Virgil, *Bucolica virgilii cum commento familiari* (London, 1514)
- (iv) Erasmus and Lily, *Absolutissimus de octo orationis partium constructione libellus. De constructione figura Ioannes Sulpitius* (Paris, 1515)
- (v) *Contenta in hoc opere sunt haec. Catonis praecepta moralia.... ab Erasmo. Angeli Politiani in Epicteti stoici Enchiridion* (Strasbourg, 1519).
Plain binding, perhaps 18th/19th century. Price mark '20d'. Signed in (v): 'Thomas Rousse'. Contemporary ms in English and Latin in (iv).

4o.Z 33 Th.

- (i) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani ... cum aliis* (Cologne, 1519)
- (ii) Erasmus, *Vita Hieronymi* (Basel, 1519)
Contemporary binding, using Oldham panels ST.6 and ST.26 [1511-33]. TP signed by John Ramsey, canon of Merton: 'Liber beate marie merton possessor Ramsey' and later 'Joannes Bowle olim Ramsey'. Price mark 2s with date 1612. Few ms by Ramsey in (i). See MLGB3.

Broxb. 15.3

- Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Basel, 1519)
Contemporary binding, using panels Oldham BIB.4 and RO.19 [1503, 1509-34]. TP inscription: 'Burbanco [?] dedit Thos. Lupsetus', possibly recording the gift between Thomas Lupset and William or Thomas Burbank. Also 'Nicholas Willes' and 'Robertus Robson'. Book label of Charlton of Hesleyside (1905). Part of Albert Ehrman's collection presented to the Bodleian in 1978. Contemporary ms and underlining throughout, including some English notes in mid-sixteenth century secretary hand.

Broxb. 32.9

- Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani... cum aliis* (Cologne, 1519)
Contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) and HE.b(1) [1504-21]. Book plate with motto: 'Pro viribus summis contendo'. Signed: 'B.M. Marsh 1806'; 'Timothy Adamson'. Part of Albert Ehrman's collection presented to the Bodleian in 1978. Several pen flourishes on tp and scattered contemporary ms throughout.

Douce I.36

- Erasmus, *Dialogus viri cuiuspiam eruditissimi festivus sane ac elegans, quomodo Iulius II* (Strasbourg, ?1519)
Later binding, with marbled papers. Douce's bookplate in front. No ms.

8° E 12 Art BS

- (i) Erasmus, *Dialogus viri cuiuspiam eruditissimi festivus sane ac elegans, quomodo Iulius II...* (?Antwerp, ?1520)
- (ii) Jacobus Sobijs, *Henno rusticus. Libertas Germanica, dolor iniuriae* (Basel, 1520)
- (iii) Franciscus Taegius, *Candida et vera narratio dirae ac chronicae Papiæ obsidionis* (Cologne, 1525)
- (iv) *Disputatio inter clericum et militem super potestate prelati ecclesiae atque principibus terrarum commissa sub forma dialogi* (London, ?1531)
Modern binding. TP of (i) signed: 'E libris Edm. Pocockii'. From the collection of Edward Pococke (d.1691). No ms.

Lawn e.60

- Catonis disticha [Catho cum commento]* (London, c.1520)
Later binding (?xvii). Rebacked. Fragment of work preserved as waste papers for another binding. Contemporary ms annotations.

Vet. A1 b.12 [collection of printed fragments]

...

(xii) *Catonis disticha [Catho cum commento]* (London, ??)

Disbound fragments containing 7 leaves. Harold Marshall Collection of early English printed fragments.

Broxb. 80.7

Erasmus, *Tomus secundus continens paraphrasim... in omneis epistolas apostolicas* (Basel, c.1520)

Contemporary binding using Oldham panels AC.9 and 10 [1509-28]. MS waste in binding. Remains of clasps. TP signed: 'Thomas Leigh' (xvi/xvii). Probably not the lawyer (d.1540) associated with dissolution since signature differs from those in surviving correspondence. Several other candidates including Lord Mayor of London (d.1571). Colophon signed: '*Johannes ?Clever est huius libri possessor*', possibly the Oxford BA 1528-9; '*Johannes Lypsonus est huius libri possessor*'. Ehrman bookplate. Some contemporary ms.

Byw. R. 6.30

...

(iii) Erasmus, *[Para] Familiarium colloquiorum formulae...* (Paris, 1520)

Contemporary binding, perhaps in French style, using a floral roll akin to that used on BL, Davis 318. Sales catalogue entry from Gougy, March 1904. Scattered ms.

Mar. 876

Erasmus, *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae* (Cologne, 1520)

Modern marbled binding. From the collection of Georgius Klok, MD, Frankfurt ad Moenum.

Byw. M 6.17

(i) Erasmus, *Antibarbarorum... liber unus* (Basel, 1520)

(ii) Erasmus, *Bellum* (Basel, 1517)

(iii) Erasmus, *Sileni Alcibiadis, cum scholiis I Frobenii. Scarabeus, cum scholiis* (Basel, 1517)

(iv) Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani saluberrimis referta praeceptis* (Basel, 1516)

(v) Erasmus, *Liber cum primis pius, de praeparatione ad mortem. Accedunt aliquot epistolae seriis de rebus* (Basel, 1534)

Plain binding with corner fleurons (?17th). Signed: 'Auxilium meum a d[omi]no. Robertus ?Hille'; 'Dedit... Parkhurst Arm. com. Pal. Dunelm, Cancellarius, 1744'. Catalogue pasted in from 1911 describing various works for sale at Pickering and Chatto. Contemporary ms notes in italic hand throughout.

Mar. 888

Erasmus, *Sileni Alcibiadis, cum scholiis adiectis* (Cologne, 1520)

Modern binding. Book label: 'Georgius Klok, MD'. Heavy contemporary ms throughout, perhaps of German origin, including long note at end concerning Prior of Freiburg Charterhouse, Gregor Reich.

A.10.23 Linc

(i) Euripides, *Hecuba. Iphigenia in aulide* [Greek] (Louvain, 1520)

(ii) Aristophanes, *Ploutous* (Louvain, 1518)

?Later vellum binding. Remains of ties. Bodleian shelfmark on fore-edge. In opening leaves: 'John Barton; and "Thomas Barlow", i.e. bishop of Lincoln (d.1691); "To. John" (plate xvi). Extensive ms, possibly in Barlow's hand.

Allen f.82

Erasmus, *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae, in gratiam iuuentutis recognita, et auctae ab Erasmo Rotterodamo. Ad haec per eundem, Brevis de copia praeceptio. Modus, sive ratio studendi. Repetendae lectionis norma. Contestatio adversus seditiosas calumnias. Dialogi duo Christofori Hegendorffphini* (Strasbourg, 1521)

Modern binding. Fore-edges stained red. Signed: C.B. Kraut 1841. Loose papers from E.P. Goldschmidt and Basil Blackwell. No ms.

C.15.9 Th.

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522)

Contemporary binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham rolls AN.f(2) and FL.a(1) [1477, 1502-31]. MS pastedowns on wooden boards. Signed 'Joannis Newmanij codex' in opening flyleaves with price: 5s 6d. Several candidates at University of Cambridge in early 16th cent. (Venn). Later excised signature on tp: '[] Bernard'. No ms.

I.7.19 Th.

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522)

In a later binding. Without provenance or ms.

Vet. M1 f.11

(i) Erasmus, *De duplici copia, verborum ac rerum commentarii duo, plerique in locis aucti* (Strasbourg, 1522)

(ii) Erasmus, *Colloquia* (Strasbourg, 1523)

Contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey using Oldham panel HE.31. HE.31 usually with RO.18 but front cover has been repaired. Contains ms waste in binding. Signed: 'Leonard Barton' (?d.1531).

'Hollandus' several times. On tp: 'Stirbridge'; 'Hargraves Sd Coll. John. pret. 5[?d]'. Price at head of tp: 'xiii^d'. Some extracts from poets in opening flyleaves.

Vet. D1 f.109

(i) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Strasburg, 1523)

(ii) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (Basel, 1524)

(iii) Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1532)

Some contemporary ms.

Vet. E1 f.128

Erasmus, [Para.] *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Paris 1523)

Note recording purchase: 'Bt from Van Gendt. Cat 13/235'. Some scattered ms.

Broxb. 27.2

Erasmus, *Paraphrases in aliquot Pauli apostoli epistolas* (Basel, 1523)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham panels RO.17 and HE.27 ['R.L.'] [1490, 1512, 1519, 1523-35]. MS waste in binding. Remains of holes for ties. TP signed: 'George Goodwyn'. Later on he signs again with dates 1574, 1578 and 1579. Also: 'Belingforde 1579'; 'George ?Duke' (?xvii). Price marks: 12d (Goodwyn?); 'pretium 10d 1612'. Contemporary ms in at least two hands.

Broxb. 21.9

(i) Erasmus, *Querela pacis undique gentium eiectae profligataeque* (Strasbourg, 1523)

(ii) Erasmus, *Sileni alcibiadis... Eiusdem Scarabeus* (Deventer, 1524)

(iii) Cyprian, *De oratione dominica sermo* (? , 1525)

(iv) Erasmus, *Modus orandi deum* (Strasbourg, 1525)

Contemporary binding with St Roch panel, similar to Oldham ST.49, though perhaps of Low Countries origin. MS waste in binding. Book labels: 'Le comte de Nedonchel'; 'Bibliotheca Elseghemensis'. Note states: 'Bought in Delft from some bookseller'. Part of Albert Ehrman's collection presented to the Bodleian in 1978. No ms.

Arch A.e.81

(i) Erasmus, *De contemptu mundi epistola* (Antwerp, ?1523)

(ii) Erasmus, *Dialogus viri cuiuspiam eruditissimi festivus sane ac elegās, quomodo Iulius II...* (Louvain, 1518)

(iii) Cuthbert Tunstall, *In laudem matrimonii oratio* (Basel, 1519)

(iv) Ulrich von Hutten, *Aula dialogus. Phalarismus Huttenicus dialogus. Febris dialo...* (Paris, 1519)

(v) Jodocus Clichtoveus, *De doctrina moriendi opusculum* (Paris, 1520)

(vi) Erasmus, *Libellus de conscribendis epistolis* (Cambridge, 1521)

Contemporary binding, possibly by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham roll FL.a(1) [1512-43]. 'R. Smyth' inscribed on binding. Signed on tp (i): 'Guilielmus Redman me possidet' [partially excised] (prob. matr. Trinity

College, Cambridge, 1559); 'Esdras Blande', several times (prob. matr. Trinity College, Cambridge, 1565). Their sons, however, also shared these names. Price: 2s. Some ms in end leaves.

8o G 289 Th.

Erasmus, *Spongia.. adversus aspergines Hutteni* (Basel, 1523)

In a modern binding. TP inscription: '15 M 60 *Auxilium meum a domino H.b. Bascijio...*'. No ms.

Vet. D1 e.242

Ulrich von Hutten, *Expostulatio* (Strasbourg, 1523)

In a modern binding. Bodleian 1959. Some faded pencil notes in German in a later hand.

Byw. M.6.21

(i) Erasmus, *Spongia... adversus aspergines Hutteni* (Basel, 1523)

(ii) Erasmus, *Apologia adversus articulos aliquot per monachos quosdam in Hispaniis* (Basel, 1529)

(iii) Erasmus, *Responsio... adversus febricantis cuiusdam libellum* (Basel, 1529)

In a contemporary binding, with two roll frames, though tools now very faded. Remains of clasps. Some ms in contemporary hands and some pencil ms by 'Dr Kloss'. From the collection of Ingram Bywater, d.1914.

Tr.Luth.155

(i) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (Basel, 1524)

(ii) Ulrich von Hutten, *Expostulatio... Othonis Brunfelsii... responsio* (Strasbourg, 1523)

...

Collection of miscellaneous sixteenth-century tracts in a later parchment binding. Signed: 'Johann Enligande.. D^o c.1560. Scattered ms in various hands.

8° D 267 BS

(i) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio diatribe, sive collatio* (Antwerp, 1524)

(ii) Erasmus, *Hyperaspistes diatribae adversus Servum arbitrium Martini Lutheri* (Basel, 1526)

(iii) Erasmus, *Hyperaspistae liber secundus...* (Basel, 1527)

Signed: 'B.S. ?Daley'; 'Biblick. Codd[?]ana emi a. 1712...'. Later ms notes (?18th) referencing both Erasmus' letters and discussing reformation in Luther's time.

Douce E 27

(i) Erasmus, *Exomologesis siue modus confitendi cum aliis* (Basel, 1524)

(ii) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (Basel, 1524)

Scattered ms in (i).

Toynbee. 424 [collection of Parisian grammatical and educational works, from mid. 1520s]

...

(vi) Erasmus, *Sileni Alcibiadis, per Des. Erasmus Roterodamum. Cum scholiis Ioannis Frobenii* (Paris, 1527)

Modern binding. Bodleian acquisition stamp: 1913. Scattered ms in small italic hand.

8o Rawl. 753

(i) Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christen man* (Antwerp, 1528)

(ii) *An exhortation to the diligent study of scripture* (London, c.1534)

In a plain leather binding with corner fleurons, perhaps contemporary. Contemporary ms notes and manicules throughout. On fo. 70v is a note concerning Sir Thomas White and the founding of St John's College Oxford. MS may date from c.1598, the date recorded by the colophon.

Mar. 364

(i) William Roy (tr.), [Para.] *An exhortation to the diligent studye of scripture.... An exposition in to the seventh chaptre of the first pistle to the Corinthians* (Antwerp, 1529)

(ii) William Tyndale, *The fyrst boke of Moses called Genesis* (Antwerp, 1530)

In a dark leather binding with corner fleurons, perhaps contemporary. From the collection of Thomas Marshall, d.1685. No ms.

A.8c.12 Th.

Alberto Pio, *Alberti Pii Carporum comitis illustrissimi & viri longe doctissimi, preter praefationem & operis conclusionem, tres & viginti libri in locos lucubrationum variarum D. Erasmi Roterodami, quos censet ab eo recognoscendos & retractandos* (Paris, 1531)

Contemporary Oxford binding, using Oldham roll MW.d(11) [1534-1614; Ker XX(I)] Remains of bookclasp and outer foreedges stained red. MS pastedown. No provenance or ms annotations.

Vet. D1 f.11

Erasmus, *Apologia adversus rhapsodias querimoniarum Alberti Pii* (Basel, 1531)

In a later binding. Signatures of Thomas Cranmer and John, Lord Lumley (See Selwyn). Acquired by Bodleian after 1936. Some ms in an italic hand, though not Cranmer's.

8o A 82 Th.

Arnobius, *In omnes psalmos commentarii* (Cologne, 1532)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes, using Oldham panels BIB.17 with ST.9 [1504, 1507, 1512-42, though BIB.17 in second state 1537-41]. Remains of clasps and ms waste in binding. Also an early foreedge title: '*Arnobius in psal.*', with Bodleian shelfmarks added later. TP signed '*Robertus Russell*' (?late-16th/17th cent) with an extract from Jerome also in Russell's hand. Russell may be the student of Christ Church Oxford (d.1626), BA 1576 (Pearson, *Oxford*, p. 217). In the end leaves is an earlier inscription from Ps.110. Some contemporary notes between A2v-A4r.

Douce Adds 142 [Collection of English printers' devices]

...

(44a-b) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, May 1538)

(45) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, August 1538)

(46) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1544)

(47) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, n.d.)

From the Douce collection of printers' devices. Four editions of the *Enchiridion* produced by John Byddell.

Allen c.1

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1542)

Contemporary Oxford binding, using Oldham HM.d(1) [1506, 1530-43, 1573]. Initials 'I.H.' tooled into the binding. Remains of leather clasps and mss waste in binding. TP signed: 'Thomas Godwyn' [Ker thought Godwyll]. Probably the probationary fellow at Magdalen College, Oxford, c.1544, and later bishop of Bath and Wells (d.1590) (c.f. Yale, Beinecke, If M81 r516.). Also signed: '*1745 H. Webber ex aula R.M. virginis*'. Bodleian acquisition stamp 1953. From collection of P.S. Allen. Contemporary ms and underlining, perhaps by Godwyn, one of which refers to Edward Lee '*nuper episcopus eboriensis*'. Pencil additions possibly by Allen.

Tanner 87

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1544)

Later binding. New papers inserted. Final leaf badly mutilated. On sigs A1v-2r: '*Sum Nicholai ?L[] postea R. Cobbe*' (?xvi). TP signed by Thomas Tanner (d.1735). No ms.

Vet. A1 f 46

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1544)

Later binding. Rebacked. New papers inserted. Foreedges stained red. Copy lacks several pages. Occasional ms, including later writer working out years elapsed between 1518 and 1661.

Tanner 75

(i) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1548)

(ii) *Two bookes of Saint Ambrose byshoppe of Mylleyne* (London, 1561)

Later binding. Half the foredge stained in red and half in black. New papers inserted. TP of (ii) signed by Thomas Tanner (d.1735). In the endleaves is the following verse: 'Raynolde whyn thow Wyrts wyll & stone / I wyll Ryde to Rome on my throne' (xvi). Some corrections to text but otherwise unmarked.

OO 96 Th.

The first tome or volume of the paraphrase vpon the newe testamente (London, 1548)

Disbound edition, containing only Luke, John and Acts. On fo.121r are a set of contemporary names: 'Philippus Gowchens scripsit hoc'; 'Jbonnes ?Tolles'; 'Jbonnes boultens est testis'; '[?] Gulielmus'. Philip Gooch and several John Houltts passed through St John's College, Oxford in the last decades of the sixteenth century. By the colophon of Acts: 'John Smithe'; 'By me John Edward'; 'thomas'. Scattered contemporary ms throughout, esp. on colophon.

OO 98 Th.

The first tome or volume of the paraphrase vpon the newe testamente (London, 1548)

Modern binding. At the end of Luke are two contemporary signatures: 'lawrence waterward of the Northemelys hawse'; 'Wylhelms Wrightingtonnes martoniensis me possidet'. TP signed: 'John ?Morse Howard Morse' (later a note in this hand dated 1777). Large pen flourishes with 'Samuel' and 'Hopkins his book'. Very occasional ms. A later hand has supplied the missing page of Acts in manuscript.

OO 99 Th.

The first tome or volume of the paraphrase vpon the newe testamente (London, 1548)

Contemporary Oxford binding, using Oldham roll FL.c(1) [Oldham: 1578; Pearson: c.1550-60, 1585-1631]. Rebacked. New papers inserted. Signed: 'Richard Holland' (xvi/xvii); 'Thomas' and the dates 1611 and 1575; 'John ?Gooby 1755'. Contemporary ms in preface to Luke. Also another hand wrote out an alphabet and prayer (?xvii).

OO 100 Th.

The first tome or volume of the paraphrase vpon the newe testamente (London, 1548)

Modern binding. New papers inserted. Dates have been cut out of the tp. Bound with a smaller edition of Acts. Extensive contemporary ms throughout.

OO 102 Th.

(i) *The first tome or volume of the paraphrase vpon the newe testamente* (London, 1548)

(ii) *The seconde tome or volume of the paraphrase vpon the newe testament* (London, 1549)

Modern binding. Some damage to the spine and new papers inserted. (i) missing a tp and begins with Acts. Some contemporary ms, especially in (ii).

OO 101 Th.

The first tome or volume of the Paraphrases vpon the newe testament (London, 1551)

Modern binding. Foredges dyed red. Missing several pages of prefaces. Some later ms. Paired with OO 103 Th.

OO 103 Th.

The first tome or volume of the Paraphrases vpon the newe testament (London, 1551)

Modern binding. New papers inserted. Copy missing several pages, especially in Revelation. Occasional contemporary ms. Paired with OO 101 Th.

Denyer 22-23

(i) *The first tome or volume of the Paraphrases vpon the newe testament* (London, 1551)

(ii) *The seconde tome or volume of the Paraphrase vpon the newe testament* (London, 1552)

Now a two-volume set, though may have been brought together at a later stage. (i) in a ?later binding, though extensively repaired and rebacked. (ii) in a later binding. Gilt Bodleian crest tooled onto both (i) and (ii). Foredges sprinkled red. New papers inserted. TP of (i) signed: 'Rosse' and 'Jo. ?Jerefy'. (i) signed throughout by 'Richard Clarke 1662' (often erased); 'Richard Pullen his booke 1663' ('His Granmothers Gifft') and 'William Pullen 1663'. Both bequeathed to the Bodleian by Mrs Eliza Dennis Denyer (1824).

Very occasional ms in (i), including a faint contemporary note in the endleaves. No contemporary provenance in (ii). Contemporary ms, particularly in the index.

8o S 308.Art

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, c.1551-3)

Devereux assigns this book to c.1551-3, though catalogue suggests c.1540. ?Later binding. Foreedges stained red. No ms.

8° M.122 Th.

John Major, *In psalmos Davidis paraphrasis* (Wittenberg, 1574)

Contemporary binding. The back flyleaves of this volume contain the tp of Erasmus' *Moriae encomium* (Antwerp, 1512) with the signature: 'Liber huius . . . di Wobley Oxoniensis scholastici et Monachi', that is Humphrey Webley, monk of Worcester and student of Gloucester College between 1519 and 1529 (Emden). Also signed: 'Myles Hoxton owneth this book' and 'Edmund Bradleus me iure vendical' (twice), possibly with date 1567. A contemporary owner has left some ms from Apuleius' *Florida* alongside these signatures. See MLGB3.

Brasenose College, Oxford:

UB/S II 38 / UB/S II 53

(i) Lorenzo Valla, *Adnotationes* (Paris, 1505)

(ii) Lefèvre d'Étaples, *Commentariorum in epistolas beatissimi Pauli Apostoli* (Paris, 1515)

Contemporary Oxford binding, using Ker roll XIX in its pre-1590 state. Some underlining and ms in (ii).
(ii) perhaps recorded in catalogue of Brasenose library in 1556 (see MLGB3). Valla mentioned in college catalogue c.1663, but presumably in the library from at least the 1590s. Information provided by Sophie Floate.

Latham A.7.10

J. Arboreus, *Theosophiae* (Paris, 1540)

Signed by William Chedsey.

Bridwell Library, Southern and Methodist University, Texas, USA:

AEN4977

Erasmus, *Paraphrases Erasmi Roterodami in aliquot Pauli apostoli epistolas* (Basel, 1523)

In a contemporary panel binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham panel RO.18 and HE.31 [1505-38], with remains of both printed and ms waste in binding. Holes for ties. Signed: Simon Heynes; 'S.G. Sanfried Aug 4 1967'. A single contemporary ms note, probably not by Heynes.

British Library, London:

C.107.D.12

Erasmus, *Collectana adagiorum veterum D. Erasmi* (Strasbourg, 1512)

Modern marbled binding. Foreedges stained red. British Museum stamp '4 OCT 70'. Contemporary ms, some perhaps in German, others in Latin.

C.117.d.6 [various tracts]

...

(xi) Erasmus, *Expostulatio Iesu cum homine...* (Deventer, 1513)

Bound in a plain leather binding, rebaked in 1925. Foreedges stained red. Signed: 'Ex libris Caroli Kaminskí'. From (iv) onwards remarkable number of very small contemporary ms. Also an index in same hand at end.

12430.e.27

Erasmus, *Erasmi Roterodami μωρίας ἐγκωμιον, id est Stultitiae laus* (Strasbourg, 1514)

Modern marbled binding. MS in contemporary hands but no accompanying provenance.

C.60.h.9 [various tracts printed at Deventer]

(i) Erasmus and William Lily, *Libellus de constructione octo partium* (Deventer, 1515)

...

Modern BM binding. Extensive ms throughout, though no contemporary provenance.

C.67.e.23

Erasmus, *De duplici copia* (Paris, 1515)

Binding by 'N.H' using Oldham panels Quad1 and Quad2 [1502-1524]. British Museum stamp '18 JY 1900'. No ms.

1067.m.25

(i) *Luciani Samosatensis deorum Dialogi* (Strasbourg, 1515)

(ii) Erasmus, *Epistolae aliquot illustrium virorum ad Erasmum Roterodamum* (Louvain, 1516).

Modern BM binding (1930). Stamp: 'Bibliotheca Heberiana'. Signed by several members of the Banyard and Throckmorton families and filled with material relating to their family. Record of repayment from 'Thomas Bateman' from his cousin, 'lyonell Throckm[or]ton' in 1562. Later in the possession of Thomas Baker.

486.a.1

(i) *Sanctologus Flandriae Stephani Comitis Bellocassii* (? , 1515)

(ii) Erasmus, *Eximii doctoris Hieronymi Stridonensis vita* (Cologne, 1517)

In modern BM binding (1924). From the Hans Sloane collection. MS in (ii) perhaps late 16th/17th.

1012.c.4

(i) Erasmus, *Enarratio in primum Psalmum* (Louvain 1515)

(ii) Erasmus, *Enarratio pia juxta ac docta in Psalmum XXXIII* (Basel, 1531)

Modern BL binding (1997). Foreedges of (ii) stained red. Signatures on tp of (ii): Thomas Cranmer and Lord Lumley. Selwyn 111 and 113. MS in (ii) probably that of Henry VIII (see Chap. 3).

10905.d.7

Erasmus, *Epistolae aliquot illustrium virorum ad Erasmum Roterodamum* (Louvain, 1516)

Modern blue binding. BM accession stamp '6 May 50'. Odd piece of contemporary ms.

3837.c.34

(i) *Divi Amedei episcopi Lausaniae de maria virginea matre Homiliae octo...* (Basel, 1517)

(ii) Erasmus, D. Erasmi.... *Lucubrationes* (Strasbourg, 1516)

Plain modern binding. BM accession stamp '6 Jan 63'. Extensive contemporary ms in (ii), though in continental hand.

C.110.d.10

(i) Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus... Argumenta in omneis epistolas Apsolorum* (Louvain, 1517)

(ii) Erasmus, *In epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Romanos paraphrasis* (Louvain, 1517)

Plain parchment binding. Foreedges speckled red. Signed: 'Robertus Day ex dono Richardi Rudd'; 'Will. Walker ex legato Robti Day [or Kay/Lay/Ray] soceri su[is]' (late 16th/17th). In endleaves: 'Philip Griffen ?Wandford'. Heavy red ms in neat italic hand.

4401.e.7

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (Basel, 1518)

Modern binding by Cedric Chivers of Bath (1989). Foreedges stained red. Signed: Jacob Cend[er] on tp. Scattered ms throughout volume, though perhaps not in English hands.

551.b.1

(i) Erasmus, *Declamationes duae* (Cologne, 1518)

...

Modern BM binding (1982). Foreedges of (i) appear to have been stained red, though very faint. MS probably in the hand of John Toker. Possibly part of the library of Thomas Cranmer (Selwyn 464).

697.d.5

- (i) Erasmus, *Querela pacis; De morte declamatio...* (Louvain, 1518?)
- (ii) Erasmus, *Scarabeus* (Louvain, 1517)
- (iii) Erasmus, *In epistolam pauli apostoli ad Romanos Paraphrasis*
- (iv) Erasmus, *Bellum*, (Louvain, 1517)
- (v), Erasmus, *Sileni Alcibiadis* (1517)
- (vi) Cato, *Disticha moralia*

Modern BM binding (1937). Damaged signature on tp: '[]ancham'. Some underlining.

12304.ee.3

Erasmus, *Adagia* (Strasbourg, 1519)

Modern BM binding. Signed: 'Georgius Rottu[?]p[er]ge' and 'Geo Rot'. Probably of German origin. MS index added in 1521 according to note.

C.81.b.25

Erasmus, *Institutio principis christiani* (Basel, 1519)

Some red ink ms in the hand of Thomas Cranmer.

C.66.c.20

- (i) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in duas epistolas Pauli ad Corinthios* (Louvain, 1519)
- (ii) Erasmus, *In epistolam Pauli ad Galatas Paraphrasis* (Louvain, 1519)
- (iii) Erasmus, *In epistolam Pauli ad Romanos paraphrasis* (Basel, 1518)

Contemporary binding by Johann Siberch using Oldham HE.b(4) [1508-20], with ms waste. Price mark: ii.s vii.d. MS in multiple contemporary hands. At back of book signed 'Mr Beatis Cardinall Colledge oxon' [?]William Betts, d.1536]. Book label of J. T. Jolly.

1010.b.7 [various tracts]

- (?) Erasmus, *Enchiridion Militis Christiani... Et Basilii in Esaia commentariolus, eodem interprete. Cum alijs quorum. Catalogum pagellae sequentis Elenchus indicabit* (Cologne, 1519)

Modern binding. From the library of Henry VIII at Westminster (Carley 293, H2.182, p. 58). Some ms in a shaky contemporary hand.

1075.m.3

Erasmus, *Collectanea adagiorum* (Hagenau, 1519)

Contemporary ms.

698.e.42

Erasmus, *Desyderii Erasmi ad Reverendissimum Moguntinensium Praesulem... Epistola* (?Wittenberg, 1520).

Modern binding with marbled papers. Lots of ms but not in English hands. No contemporary provenance.

3021.a.18

- (i) Erasmus, *Paraclesis* (Basel, 1520)
- (ii) *Evangelia et epistolae quae diebus festis in templis leguntur, ex translatione D. Erasmi Roterod. cum eiusdem annotationibus...* (Cologne, 1533);
- (iii) Erasmus, *De contemptu mundi epistola* (Basel?, 1523)
- (iv) Erasmus, *Spongia... adversus aspergines Hutteni* (Basel, 1523)
- (v) Hutten, *Exposulatio; Othonis Brunfelsii Pro Ulricho Huttano defuncto, ad Erasmi Roter. Spongiam Responsio*

- (vi) Erasmus, *De prep. ad mortem* (Cologne, 1536)
 In a modern BM binding (1937). Heavy ms, especially in (i), though hand looks continental in style. TP of (ii) signed 'Johannes Alltenndorffer'.

C.66.c.10

- (i) Erasmus, *Epistolae aliquot selectae ex Erasmicis* (Louvain, 1520)
 (ii) *A. Persii Flacci Satyrae luculentissimi expharsi et scholiis* (Cologne, 1522)
 (iii) Agostino Dati, *Opusculum in elegantium precepta* (Limoges, 1518)
 Binding by Nicholas Spierinck using Oldham panels Bib.2 and ST.37 [1503, 1508-28, 1540]. Large amounts of contemporary ms, esp. on tp. 'Ex libris Rippon...' (?18th).

999.d.1

- (i) Euripides, *Hecuba* (Louvain, 1520)
 (ii) Euripides, *Iphigenia in aulide*
 (iii) *Euripidis tragoediae duae, hecuba, & Iphigenia in Aulide, latinae factae, Des. Erasmo* (Cologne, 1519)
 (iv) *Aristophanis comici facetissimi, nubes ac plutus, comoediae, ut elegantissimae* (Hagenau, 1528)
 Modern BM binding (1937). Foreedges of (i)-(iii) stained red. Signed on tp: 'Sum Tokeri nec[?] muto domum'; Thomas Cranmer and Lord Lumley (Selwyn 474, 475). And on the verso: 'Liber Joa[n]nis Toker Collegi Card. in Oxon'. Price: '[i]iis iiiid'. Extensive ms by Toker in (i) and (ii), mostly in Greek.

697.b.9

- (i) Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus compendio* (Basel, 1520)
 (ii) Erasmus, *Paraclesis...* (Basel, 1520)
 (iii) Erasmus, *Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo, et obiter enarratus Psalmus XXVIII* (Cologne, 1530)
 Signed on tp: Lumley. 'Sum Humphrey Lloyd'. Long ms note at back.

C.47.e.2

- Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus compendio perviendi ad Veram Theologiam. Paraclesis...* (Basel, 1521)
 Binding by Garrett Godfrey using Oldham panels RO.18 and HE.31 [1505-38]. Price marks: xid. xiiid (1583). 'Antho. Lyntoni libellus. 1583'. Contemporary ms in two hands, one probably Lynton.

C.46.d.16

- Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1522)
 Binding by Garrett Godfrey using Oldham panels RO.18 with HE.31 [1505-38] with ms waste. Foreedge title: 'Stulticiae laus'. Signature 'Joh[n]' on ms pastedown and English inscription. Contemporary ms.

C.69.ff.8

- Erasmus, *Epistola nuncupatoria...Exhortatio ad studium Evangelicae lectionis. Paraphrasis in Evangelium Matthaei* (Basel, 1522)
 Contemporary binding using Oldham Panels RO5-6 and IN(2) 935. Signed: 'j ashlocke[?r]', pr. xxd. Book label 'Ex libris M. A. Elton'.

1083.d.1

- Erasmus, *De conscribendis epistolis* (Cologne, 1523)
 Modern BM binding (1950). Signed tp: Thomas Cranmer and Lord Lumley (Selwyn 468). In end flyleaves: 'Liber Joannis Toker Collegij Card. in oxon'. Extensive ms notes by Toker.

697.b.3

- (i) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (Basel, 1524)
 (ii) Erasmus, *Hyperaspistes diatribae* (Antwerp, 1526)

...

Modern BM binding. Foreedges of (i) and (ii) stained red. Thomas Cranmer ms. Signed: Thomas Cranmer and Lumley (Selwyn 108, 110). Also in an unknown hand: 'Thomas Cranmar I recomende me unto you'.

697.b.6

(i) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (Strasbourg, 1524)

...

Signed: Thomas Cranmer and Lord Lumley (Selwyn 115). Some faded ms, possibly in the hand of Cranmer.

3913.f.15 (2 vols)

Erasmus, *Tomus primus paraphraseon D. Erasmi Roterodami in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1524)

Prince of Wales binding. Signed: Thomas Cranmer (Selwyn 44). Likely Cranmer underlining.

3913.k.4 (2 vols)

Erasmus, *Tomus primus (secundus) paraphraseon D. Erasmi Roterodami in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1524, 1526, 1523)

Modern BM binding (1936). Fore-edge title: '*paraphrasis in evangelia*' and '*paraphrasis in paulum*'. 'HR' monogram of Henry VIII. From Henry VIII's library at Westminster (Carley 685. H2.454, p.96). MS in Henry VIII's hand and another contemporary hand.

689.a.3

Erasmus, *In primum et secundum psalmum exactissimae enarrationes, in tertium paraphrasis, iam denuo per autorem recognitae. His accessit in psalmum quartum concio* (Basel, 1525)

Modern BM binding. 'HR' monogram of Henry VIII on tp. From the library of Henry VIII at Westminster (Carley 291, H2.180, p. 58). No ms.

C.67.d.17

Lorenzo Valla, *Laurentii Vallae... in Novum Testamentum annotationes, apprime utiles* (Basel, 1526)

Contemporary binding using Oldham panels BIB.8 and TRIP.14 [n.d., 1509, 1522-c.1530]. Signatures: '*Sum nymani liber. emptus a dramto*' [erased]; '*Initium sapientiae timor domini Sutton*'; '*liber helie dugdell ex dono magistri Sutton xvid*' (all 16th). Possibly John Wyman, fellow of Magdalen, Oxford c.1531 (c.f. his signature on Bod Vet.M1 c.2(1)). Few contemporary ms.

851.a.1

Erasmus, *Enchiridion* [Spanish] (1527)

From the Henry VIII's library at Westminster (Carley 294, H2.183, p. 59). Possibly from the collection of Catherine of Aragon.

1006.a.13

Erasmus, *Novi Testamenti postrema aeditio per Erasmus Roterodamum* (Antwerp, 1527)

Modern BM binding. From Henry VIII's library at Westminster (Carley 563, H2.350, p. 83). No ms.

848.a.2

(i) Erasmus, *Exhortation au peuple* (Antwerp, c.1527-9)

(ii) Luther, *La maniere de lire levangile* (Antwerp, ?1529)

(iii) Luther, *Sermon au jour de l'ascension* (Antwerp, c.1527-29)

(iv) Luther, *Des bonnes ouvres sus les commandemens de Dieu* (Antwerp, c.1527-9)

Probably from the collection of Anne Boleyn (Carley 'French evangelical books').

C.37.a.22

(i) Du Molin, *Notable et utile traicte du zele et grant desir que doibt avoir ung vray chrestien* (Strasbourg, 1527)

(ii) Luther, *Sermon de la maniere de prier Dieu et comment on doibt faire processions et rogations* (Antwerp, c.1527-9)

(iii) Erasmus, *Exhortation au peuple* (Antwerp, c.1527-9)

(iv) Luther, *Prophetie de Iesaie de lenfant nouveau en Jesuchrist* (Strasbourg, 1527)

(v) Wolfgang Schuch and François Lambert, *Epistre chrestienne envoyee a tresnoble prince monseigneur le duc de Lorayne* (Strasbourg, 1526?)

(vi) *Sentence de frere Jehan Guibert heremute de Liury* (Paris, 1527?)

Modern BM binding (?1920). From Henry VIII's library at Westminster (Carley 621, H2.406, p. 89). Probably from the collection of Anne Boleyn. No ms.

C.66.d.12

Lucian, *Opuscula quaedam, Erasmo Rote. et Thoma More interpretib.* (Lyon, 1528)

Binding by Nicholas Spierinck using Oldham roll HE.b(3a) and Stamp 94 with ms waste. [Combination only on this book. Roll 1518-31]. Signed: 'I john ?english his book witness john ?Deanes'. 'Phil. ?Goldens'. 'Rober[t] Godfrey 1639'. Occasional underlining.

C.108.a.13

Erasmus, *De recta latini Graeci sermonis pronuntiatio... Dialogus. Eiusdem Dialogues cui titulus, Ciceronianus* (Basel, 1528)

Contemporary binding using Oldham panels RO.23 and AN.26 [1505-25]. Signed: 'John Taylor' (16th?); 'Richard Rillingbeck (17th?)'. Book label of George Dunn of Woolley Hall. Few ms on final leaf.

C.189.bb.21

Erasmus, *Libellus novus... de pueris institutendis, cum aliis* (Basel, 1529)

Contemporary binding, probably of German origin. Bookplate of Georg Richard AN 1622. Foreedges stained green. Holes on covers, possibly for ties. Faded inscription in the endleaves. Red ms throughout.

C.66.d.18

(1) Jean Parceval, *Compendium divini amoris* (Paris, 1530)

(2) Erasmus, *Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo* (Antwerp, 1530)

(3) *Psalmi omnium selectissimi, adflictis conscientis* (Hagenau, 1530)

(4) Polydore Vergil, *Dialogorum de prodigiis libri tres* (Basel, 1531)

(5) Erasmus, *Paraclesis* (Basel, 1520)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes using Oldham panels ST.9 and BIB.17 [1504, 1507, 1512-42]. Fore-edge title: 'Geuen by master Thomas Paynell...'. Probably part of Paynell bequest to St John's College, Oxford, c.1564. No ms.

L.17d.14

(i) *Determinatio facultatis theologiae in schola Parisiensi* (Paris, 1531)

(ii) *Annotationum Natalis Bedae ... in Jacobum Fabrum Stapulensem libri duo. Et in Desiderium Erasmus* (Paris, 1526)

Modern binding by Cedric Chivers, Bath, 1989. Bookplate 'Resid. Tolos S. J.'. Occasional underlining. One later note (17th/18th) on baptism.

C.82.a.13

Erasmus, *Novi Testamenti* (2 vols, Basel, 1532).

Bound in contemporary trade binding with blind and gold tooling. Rebacked, holes for ties and foreedges stained black. Formerly believed to have belonged to Elizabeth I. Several ms, many markedly evangelical in tone, in a neat italic hand not dissimilar to that of the queen.

3913.k.8

Erasmus, *Tomus secundus contiend Paraphrasim D. Erasmi Roterodami. In omneis epistolas apostolicas* (Basel, 1532)

Later royal binding. From Henry VIII's library at Westminster (Carley 853, H2.538, p.108). MS in a neat contemporary italic hand from 2 Cor. onwards.

697.b.4

Erasmus, *Enchiridion* (French) (Lyon, 1532)

From Henry VIII's library at Westminster (Carley 305, H2.194, p. 60).

G.11983

Erasmus, *A booke called in latyn Enchiridion militis christiani* (London, 1533)

Later binding with name and arms of Thomas Grenville. MS in later hand.

C.110.a.37

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1534)

Modern BM binding. New papers inserted. Foreedges in gilt. Some pencil markings in early pages. Pope's name erased (a6v). Otherwise no ms.

C.108.bb.29

(i) Erasmus, *Ye dialoge called Funus* (London, ?1534)

(ii) Erasmus, *An epistell... concernyng the forbedyng of eatyng of fleshe, and lyke constitutyons of men* (London, 1535)

(iii) *The dialoge between Julius the seconde, Genius, and saynt Peter...* (London, 1534-5)

Contemporary binding using unidentified panel stamps in blind. Front cover features a frame foliage and two medallions, one a rose and one a shield. The back cover uses a St George and the dragon motif. Remains of clasps. New papers inserted. (i) is missing several pages, including the tp. Contemporary ms throughout (ii) and (iii).

C.53.gg.36

Erasmus, *An epistle... concernyng the veryte of the Sacrament of christes body and blude* (London, 1535)

Modern BM binding with marbled papers. Throughout the text are a series of red pencil markings in the margin and an indecipherable note on sig. C2r.

C.51.aa.9

Erasmus, *Paraphrase upon ye Epistle of saint Paule unto his discypyle Titus* (London, 1535)

Modern binding. Foreedges sprinkled red. New papers inserted. Accessioned by BM in 1907. No ms.

C.110.b.31

Erasmus, *A hylte treatise of the maner and forme of confession* (London, c.1535)

Modern BM binding (1923). TP supplied by facsimile and missing other pages. Some contemporary ms throughout, though badly trimmed.

Davis 12

Erasmus, *Enchiridion* (Antwerp, 1537)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

C.25.b.27

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum per Desiderium Erasmum* (Antwerp, 1537)

Contemporary binding with gold tooling: 'NOVVM / TES / ERA / IN / TER'. From Henry VIII's library at Westminster (Carley 1216, H2.1216, p. 206). No ms.

C.128.f.8

Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1540)

Contemporary ?Oxford binding with Oldham panel HM27 [1516. 1525-44]. Initial 'E.N. on tp. Signed 'Johannes Moorus' and 'Jo. More liber 1561'. Price mark 'xviid'.

C.37.a.31

(i) Erasmus, *An exhortacion to the diligent studye of scripture* (London, ?1540)

(ii) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (London, 1544)

(iii) Erasmus, *A preparation to deathe* (London, 1543)

Modern BM binding (1961). Several signatures of 'John D/Pownsard' (xvii/xviii). A number of pen trails and other ms waste in front leaves. BM acquisition stamp: 15 MA: 52. Some contemporary ms and underlining in (ii). Later ms in (iii).

696.a.43

- (i) Erasmus, *Preparation to death* (London, 1543)
- (ii) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1544)

Later red leather binding. Rebacked (BM 1950). New papers inserted. Foreedges may once have been stained. TP inscriptions: 'Thomas Walcot' (xvi); 'William Walcot' (1620); possibly a Thomas Walcot junior excised at bottom. All perhaps members of the Lincolnshire family. Bookplate of Sir Charles Cave (d.1922). Some scattered ms in English and Latin, though book mainly used to practise handwriting.

C.188.a.74

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani, whiche may be called in Englysshe, the hansom weapon...* (London, 1544)

Contemporary binding using Oldham panel MISC.3. Remains of yellow ties. Signed: 'Jhon ?Roynon'. No ms.

C.25.c.25

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1544)

?Later velvet binding. Gaufered edges and new papers inserted. Possibly rebacked, though front board loose. One of the pages has been damaged by fire. No ms.

C.37.a.33

Miles Coverdale, *A shorte recapitulacion or abrigement of Erasmus Enchiridion* (Antwerp, 1545).

Modern binding. Gilt foreedges. New papers inserted. Bookplate of Thomas Jolley, Esq. FSA. BM acquisition stamp: 22 JY 69. No ms.

C.124.aaa.19

- (i) Thomas Elyot, *A preservative agaynste deth* (London, 1545)
 - (ii) Erasmus, *A comfortable exhortacion agaynst the chaunces of death* (London, 1553)
- Modern BM binding (1937). Signed: 'John Brand'; 'Rebecca Jorden her book'. One or two ms.

3925.b.31

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, 1548)

Inscriptions on tp possibly washed out. One ends 'A.B.'. A later hand marks up the table of contents. Contemporary and later ms throughout, in English and Latin.

C.192.b.13

The first tome or volume of the paraphrase of Erasmus (London, 1548)

Plain later binding. Foreedges stained red. Bookplate of George Goyder. Very occasional ms, including a drawing of a chalice, traced from the paper's watermark.

3925.b.30

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (London, ?1550).

Contemporary signature on tp: 'this is Ierime grene', possibly a Jerome Green. No ms.

C.132.i.14

- (i) *A true reporte of the death & martyrdome of M. Campion Iesuite...* (n.p., 1581)
 - (ii) Erasmus, *De intericto esu carniū* (Cologne, 1522)
 - (iii) *Concio Jo. Harpsfieldi habita eorum Patribus et flecto in Ecclesia Paulina...* (London, 1553)
- Plain binding (?18th) with gilt tooling. (iii) signed: 'Thomas Hare 1553'. Continuous page numbers added to (ii) and (iii), suggesting they were brought together first. Bookplates: 'Spencer Compton VIII Duke of Devonshire, Chatsworth House, bookcase 112, shelf E [1833 - 1903]'; 'William Constable Esq'.

Cambridge University Library:

S61:29.a.5.12

Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1515)

In a modern binding. Bookplates: William Stirling Maxwell; and CUL reading '*Liber emptus ex legato Arturi Bromby Wilson-Barkworth, LL.D.*'. TP with several inscriptions and a deleted signature in a neat italic hand, ending: '[] pedit Kalendis Iunii Anno Domini D.XVII'. This same hand (xvi) has also compiled long extracts from the *Adagia* on blank pages at the front and back of the volume.

Rel.c.51.2

(i) Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1515)

(ii) Plutarch, *Opuscula... nuper traducta Erasmo Roterodamo interprete* (Basel, 1514)

In a contemporary binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham rolls HE.b(3) [1493, 1502-15]. Holes for ties. Signed: 'John Tooker' (late-16th cent) with price '5[d/s]'. Deleted inscription at base: '?Liber.... facultatis in scholia ne ?narchiana professoris 29 20'. No ms.

Rel.c.51.3, Thomas More, *De optimo reip. statu deque nova insula Utopia* (Basel, 1518)

See Rex and Butterfield (2016).

Rel.a.51.6

Jerome, *Opera* (Basel, 1516) [only vols 5 and 6]

In a contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) [1503-30]. A few scattered, contemporary ms.

Rel.c.51.1

(i) Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1519)

(ii) Oecolampadius, *De risu paschali* (Basel, 1518)

(iii) Erasmus, *Scarabeus* (Basel, 1519)

In a contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) [1503-30]. MS waste in binding, including some accounts. Remains of clasps and a embossed fore-edge title. Signed: 'John Paynell' (xvi); 'John Holdsworth... 1730'. Contemporary price mark '20d' in endleaves. Bewildering amount of contemporary and later ms in several hands throughout.

Rel.d.51.15

Erasmus, *Epistolae Pauli Apostoli, Iacobi, Petri, Ioannis, Iudae, et Apocalypsis Ioannis, ad graecam veritatem, et veterum latinorum codicum fidem recognitae* (Louvain, 1519)

In a contemporary binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham roll AN.f(2) with diamond shaped tool [1521-33]. Remains of clasps and musical ms used as waste in binding. TP signed: 'Sir Thomas Tempest Baronet' (1642-91). In the end leaves: '*Iste liber est fratris Rolandi Hardyng prior [...]...*', possibly Roland Harding, prior of Newcastle Blackfriars in 1539. Tempest certainly acquired many books from monastic sources in County Durham. Presented to CUL in 1923 by Francis Jenkinson. Early price mark in end leaves: '26d'. Large amounts of contemporary ms, especially in front and back leaves.

BSS.130.B19.1-2

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum omne* (Basel, 1519)

A two-volume edition, though it appears the books were paired at a later stage. Vol. 1 (containing the New Testament text) is bound in a contemporary pigskin binding, probably continental in origin with the remains of metal clasps. Vol. 2 (*Annotationes*) in a contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) [1503-30], with ms pastedowns and remains of large leather clasps (unlike vol. 1). TP signed: 'Guido Dobins', probably the clergyman of Hampshire, c.1590-1620. Another contemporary signature erased: 'W. ?Ty[?]'. Presented by the Revd D Cracknell Oct 1818. Very occasional ms notes in vol. 1. In vol. 2 a large number of contemporary ms, including red ink italic hand which makes mention of the Franciscan collector, Richard Brynkley (d.1527), and another contemporary secretary hand.

Rel.d.52.8

Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1522)

In a contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) [1503-30]. MS pastedowns onto pasteboards. TP signed: '*Georgius Deus*' = George Day, later bishop of Chichester (d.1556). Day has also recorded the price: '16*d*'. MS throughout in Day's italic hand.

Rel.d.52.28

(i) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Evangelium secundum Ioannem* (Basel, 1523)

(ii) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Evangelium Marci* (Basel, 1524)

In a contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham panels RO.18 and HE.31 [1503-38]. MS waste used as flyleaves and an early foreedge title: 'Ioh[an]em'. TP signed: 'Sum Ni. Felton' (xvi/xvii). In flyleaves: 'Library at Fulness 1812. Gift of Mrs Baker. No ms.

Sel.2.17

Suetonius (ed. Erasmus), *Vitae XII Caesarem* (Basel, 1533)

In a contemporary binding, using Oldham roll HE.h(1) with Orn. C(4) [1511-35]. Early foreedge titles on side and bottom of textblock. Remains of clasps and ms waste visible in the trench. TP signed by Thomas Cranmer and Lord Lumley (Selwyn 372). Some underlining and stars, though probably not by Cranmer.

Young.25

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum omne* (Basel, 1535)

In a later binding with the royal coat of arms. Foreedges stained green. Signed: J. Fuller Rapell. Bookplate recording donation to the library from Arthur William Young in 1533. TP signed Thomas Cranmer and Lord Lumley (Selwyn 43). Some ms and underlining by Cranmer.

Chetham's Library, Manchester:

Byrom 2.C.2.10

Plutarch (trans. Erasmus), *Opuscula Plutarchi nuper traducta* (Louvain, 1515)

Modern binding, with new papers inserted. From the bequest of John Byrom (1870). Chetham's bookplate. One page has contemporary ms, badly trimmed by rebinding.

MUN.7.B.2.6

Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel, 1516)

Modern binding. Foreedges are marbled and marbled papers inserted at either end. Lacks a tp. One reader has added some chapter divisions and a single ms note on p.165. [Munby?]

Byrom 2.I.4.34

(i) Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani* (Basel, 1519)

(ii) William Lily, *De octo partium orationis constructione* (Basel, 1517)

Modern binding which preserves original ms waste from former binding. Opposite the tp is a table of contents in an contemporary italic hand (xvi). Signed: 'John Amcottes'; 'Thomas Chapman'; 'Christophorus Brow[n]'; 'Wm. Assheton' (all xvi). Contemporary ms throughout, several relating to law and history. John Amcottes likely the common lawyer, admitted to Clement's Inn, c.1530/1, then of Inner Temple (see Baker). Several alternatives for Chapman and Brown, but perhaps also associated with the Inns in the 1550s and 60s. Price mark by Chapman's signature: '?xxd'. Erased price mark in end leaves: '*p[re]ciu[m] huius libri* []'.

Gg.5.10

(i) Erasmus, *Reponsio ad annotationes Eduardi Lei. Apologia de In principio erat sermo...* (Basel, 1520)

(ii) Erasmus, *Epistolae aliquot eruditorum virorum* (Basel, 1520);

(iii) Jacobus Latomus, *De trium linguarum, & studii Theologici ratione dialogus* (Antwerp, 1519).

(iv) Erasmus, *Apologia resellen suspensiones quorundam dictitantium dialogum D. Jacobi Latomi* (Antwerp, 1519)

(v) Erasmus, *Eximii doctoris Hieronymi Stridonensis vita* (Basel, 1519)

Modern binding. Foreedges sprinkled red. tp of (ii) has several signatures (xvii) 'Yor lovinge frend/ R. Draper'; 'H. Sydney'; 'A Anderson'. MS notes by two readers, in later hands (xvi/xvii). On the inside cover

is a note recording that the book was lent to John Jortin when he was researching Erasmus' life. Several ms by Jortin.

Byrom 2.I.5.9

Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1520)

Modern binding by Charles Winstanley of Manchester. TP signed by Byrom and a now illegible contemporary inscription. Much contemporary ms, especially in the opening pages.

Gg.5.6

(i) Erasmus, *De duplici copia* (Basel, 1520-29?)

(ii) Erasmus, *De conscribendis epistolis* (Basel, 1522)

Modern binding, by Thomas Carter, Manchester. New papers inserted and foreedges dyed green. Items appear to have been bound out of order. TP of (i) inscribed: 'M. Andreas Lokert - Stebinsonum' and note of purchase 'Empsj 6. s. 19. Martij 1612'. Some contemporary ms throughout.

C.9.40

Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522)

Plain leather binding, (?xvii). Foreedges stained red and remains of a chain mark on back board. Single manicule by discussion of Johannine Comma.

Byrom 3.F.2.42.

(i), Erasmus, *Concionalis interpretatio, in Psalmum LXXXV* (Basel, 1528)

(ii) Erasmus, *Modus orandi deum* (Froben, 1525)

(iii) Erasmus, *De immensa dei misericordia... Virginis et martyris comparatio...* (Basel, 1524)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using a panel reminiscent of Oldham BIB.7 and a saint panel, perhaps depicting St Barbara, though both panels are now quite worn. Unidentified contemporary printed work in French used as pastedowns, perhaps suggests the work was French in origin. Remains of holes for ties. A few passages marked with ink in the margin in (i) and (ii).

Nn.14.8-9

Aristotle, *Aristotelous hapanta* (2 vols, Basel, 1531)

Contemporary binding by Garrett Pilgrim of Oxford, using Ker roll III with Orn.14 [c.1520-36]. Both rebounded and with remains of clasps. MS pastedowns perhaps removed. TP signed: 'Johannes Forsterus' (xvi); 'lib[er] Guil. Martialis' (xvi); 'Jacobus Bradshaghe' (xvii). Several candidates, but likely that Forster and Martial at Merton College, Oxford, in the 1530s and 40s. Occasional ms in two hands.

Rr.8.9

Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1532)

Modern binding. Foreedges sprinkled red and new papers inserted. Inscription on tp has been washed out. Two contemporary ms notes in an italic hand.

Nn.20.4-7

St Jerome, *Omnia opera quae extant* (9 vols in 4, Paris, 1534)

Vols 1 and 3 in contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham rolls SW.b(3) and RP.a(2) [1532-43]. Rebacked. Vol. 2 in a modern binding. Remains of parchment tags in 2 for navigating between sections. TP has the signature of 'Jacobus Pilkington', i.e. James Pilkington (d.1576), bishop of Durham. TP to vol. 1 also has lengthy extracts from later owner (xvi/xvii) from Jerome. Pilkington and others have supplied long tables of contents near the start of each volume. Occasional ms from Pilkington and a later owner (xvi/xvii).

MUN.7.c.4.2

Erasmus, *The paraphrase of Erasmus Roterdame vpon the epistle of saint Paule unto his disciple Titus* (London, 1534)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, probably from mid-sixteenth century, using a fillet frame, corner fleurons and a cornucopia stamp. The latter is similar in design to the tool in use in Cambridge in mid-century (see Selwyn, Geste, p. 317, CS 2 [1551]). No ms.

I.2.6

Erasmus, *Tomus primus[-secundus] Paraphraseon Des. Erasmi Roterodami* (2 vols in 1, Basel, 1535)

Modern binding. New papers inserted and foreedges stained red. TP has been repaired, perhaps obscuring an inscription. A single contemporary ms in preface to Paraphrase on Luke.

Byrom 2.I.7.9

Ambrose, *Omnia opera* (Paris, 1539)

Modern binding. Foreedges stained red and new papers inserted. TP signed: 'Joannes ?Standisse oxon. 1552 [or: 1557]' and the motto 'memorare novissima tua' (Sirach 7:40); 'Robertus Whittell. R.W.' (xvi/xvii); 'Byrom'.

Contemporary ms notes throughout in two hands (xvi and xvi/xvii), including updating the index. The later hand which cites Erasmus and Bellarmine may be Whittell's.

MUN.7.C.2.1, *Biblia Sacra* (Paris, 1552)

Owned and annotated by John Bradford (d.1555).

Corpus Christi College, Oxford:

phi.F.5.8

(i) Valla, *In Latinam Novi Testamenti interpretationem adnotationes* (Paris, 1505)

(ii) Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae et sententiae eorum qui in philosophia probati fuerunt* (Venice, Peregrinus de Bononiensis, 1493)

(iii) Eusebius, *Evangelica praeparatio* (Venice, 1501)

(iv) Orosius, *Historiarum liber primus* (Venice, 1500)

Later binding, seemingly bringing together works that were previously unbound in Claymond's day, since they are a rather different size. Item 191 in 1589 catalogue.

delt.6.14

Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, *Commentarii in epistolas Pauli* (Paris, 1512)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham roll FL.a(4) with Pearson ornaments 18/18b [c.1520-36]. Probably the work of Garrett Pilgrim. Remains of clasps and holes for chain. From the gift of John Claymond to the college and containing an inscription to pray for his soul. Item 288 in 1589 catalogue. MS in Claymond's hand throughout.

delt.19.6

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum omne* (Basel, 1519)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham roll FL.a(3), with Pearson ornament 8. Catalogue attributes this binding to Thomas Uffington, though Pearson has suggested that William Howberg might instead have used these tools. Remains of clasps and holes for chain. Foreedges dyed red, though now faded. Inscription records date of Claymond's gift of this volume as 1526. Probably item 190 in 1589 catalogue. MS in Claymond's hand in John's gospel. Later ms in endleaves.

LL.L.1412.Hi/516

Jerome, *Omnia operum* (3 vols in 2, Basel, 1526)

Imperfect. This set brings together vol. 9, bequeathed by John Claymond, and vols 5-6, bequeathed by Thomas Turner in 1714. Claymond's volume in contemporary binding by John Reynes, using Oldham roll AN.b(2) and orn. 438. MS in Claymond's hand.

LL.L.1410.6/535a and /535b

Erasmus, *Tomus primus[-secundus] paraphraseon* (2 vols, Basel, 1535)

Later binding for both vols. Rebacked. Possibly item 285 in 1589 catalogue. Signed 'R. ?Burghill' (xvi/xvii) in end leaves of vol. 1. On tp of vol. 1 the printer's device has been cut out. Some contemporary pen flourishes and occasional marks in the margins throughout (vol. 1); red pencil marks throughout (vol. 2). Later ms (xvii) recording the location of these works in Erasmus' 1540 *Omnia opera* on tp of vol. 1. Printers device at end of vol. 2 has been partially traced with initials 'S.B'.

Durham Cathedral Chapter Library:

D.VII.1-5

Jerome, *Omnia Opera* (9 vols in 5, Basel, 1516)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls HE.b(2) and DI.a(1) [1496, 1504-26] and with ms waste in binding. TP signed by Robert Ridley (d.1536) three times. Part of Ridley's gift to the monks of Durham Cathedral. Later signed: '*Liber Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelm'*'. MS annotations by Ridley throughout.

D.VII.6-11

Augustine, *Opera* (11 vols in 7, Paris, 1531)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham rolls HM.a(7), RP.a(5) and FP.a(6) (with initials F.I.). Oldham had not seen all three rolls used in combination like this, though he had seen the rolls in various pairings for books with imprint dates: 1523, 1531, 1531-8, 1538-51. Evidence of chaining. TPs signed by Robert Ridley, multiple times. Part of Ridley's gift to the monks of Durham Cathedral. Later signed: '*Liber Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelm'*'. MS annotations by Ridley throughout.

D.VII.23-4

Ambrose, *Omnia Opera* (4 vols in 2, Basel, 1527)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham roll SW.b(3) and orn. E(1) [1522]. Perhaps once had clasps. TPs signed by Robert Ridley, multiple times. Given to the monks of Durham Cathedral in 1534: '*liber monasterij dunelmensis ex dono Roberti Ridlei ad.1534'*'. MS notes throughout by Ridley.

D.VI.37

Jerome, *Opus epistolarum* (3 vols in 1, Basel, 1524-6)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) [1503-30]. Remains of clasps and a fore-edge title: '*Omnes epistolae hieronymi...*'. On the tp signatures of several Durham monks: '*liber quondam Wyllyami Wylom. ex dono magistri Wyllyami Bennett. Sacre Theologie professoris, doctoris, & de ffynkball prioris 1536'*'; '*Nunc autem D Nicholai marley ex dono eiusdem D William Wylom qui abijt Anno domini 1556'*'. TP also signed: 'Sir Thomas Tempest' (17th Cent). MS annotations by Wylom and Ridley throughout. This book was probably also given to the monks by Ridley. Nicholas Marley took several books to the household of the Tempests when he was deprived under Elizabeth I.

M.III.b.1

Erasmus, *Opus conscribendis epistolis ... Parabolium* (Basel, 1522)

In a contemporary blind-tooled binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) with HE.b(2). The initials 'I.M.' tooled onto the front cover. Remains of ms pastedown. Signed: 'Robert Th[]' (16th cent); 'Walter Adams his booke 1639' and an extract in Adams' hand from Rudolf Agricola about Erasmus. Bequeathed to the cathedral by John Bonres SDP. In the end leaves is a poem signed 'John Weydson' in a late-16th or 17th cent hand. Some ms annotations in 17th cent hand throughout.

R.V.34.

(i) Erasmus, *Paraphrasin in evangelium Matthaei* (Basel, 1522)

(ii) Erasmus, *In evangelium Marci paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)

(iii) Erasmus, *In evangelium Lucae paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)

(iv) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium secundum Ioannem* (Basel, 1523)

In a plain leather binding (17th cent) with tooled corner fleurons. Text block sprinkled red. Unmarked.

Exeter Cathedral:

Strongroom C52

Hilary, *Lucubrationes* (Basel, 1523)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

Folger Library:

PA8517.P3 J4 1524a Cage

Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium secundum Joannem* (Basel, 1523)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

220-606q

Ambrose, *Commentarij in omnes Divi Pauli epistolas* (Cologne, 1532)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge:

A.5.1-5

Jerome, *Opera* (9 vols in 5, Basel 1516)

Later binding. Rebacked. Foredge numbers from 18-22. Vol. 1 bound out of order. At the end of vol. 4: '*volumen guilielmi Taitae, decani sacelli siue capellae poteritissimi ducis Richermundie et somersetiae: eiusdemque opus peractum quinto die Janii: anno salutis 1528*'. i.e. William Tate (d.1540). Scattered ms in Tait's italic hand throughout, but especially heavy in the appendix to vol. 4.

M.5.18

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Basel, 1518)

Contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls AN.f(1) and HE.b(1) [1504-21]. Remains of clasps. Foreedges dyed red and with number 41 and illegible title. Rebacked. MS waste in binding. Endleaves signed: 'Joannes skippe', chaplain to Anne Boleyn and later bishop of Hereford (d.1552). Book label of Branthwaite 1619. Price mark on tp: 'x*d*'. One piece of underlining in text but contemporary ms in endleaves, including an extract from the psalms. c.f. the hand with that in the endleaves of M.6.16.

M.6.16

Lucian, *Saturnalia, Cronosolon* (Basel 1521)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll AN.e(1) [W.G./I.G.] and orn. E.(1) [1506-25]. Remains of clasps. Foreedges stained red with numbers '11' and '12'. Rebacked. Binding originally had ms waste as ink has rubbed onto wooden boards. Branthwaite bookplate, 1619. Italic notes in the end perhaps by Branthwaite, c.f. the hand with that in the endleaves of M.5.18.

F.3.1

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522)

Contemporary binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham rolls AN.f(2) and DI.a(2) [1493, 1502-28]. Remains of large leather clasps and foredge title '*Novum testamentum*' and '20'. Rebacked. MS waste in binding. Opposite tp: '*Collegio de Gonville et Caius, Edwardus Crome theologiae doctor, et huius collegii olim socius, dono dedit. Anno Domini 1561*', i.e. Edward Crome, noted evangelical (d.1562). No ms, except for a large red pencil drawing of a contemporary soldier in the endleaves. Originally part of a set with F.4.27.

F.4.27

Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522)

Contemporary binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham rolls AN.f(2) and DI.a(2) [1493, 1502-28]. Remains of clasps and foredge title '*Annotationes Erasmi*' and '21'. Rebacked with new papers. MS waste in binding. On tp.v: '*Collegio de Gonville et Caius, Edwardus Crome theologiae doctor, et huius collegii olim socius, dono dedit. Anno Domini 1561*', i.e. Edward Crome, noted evangelical (d.1562). No ms. Originally part of a set with F.3.1.

F.5.17

(i) Arnobius, *Commentarii in omnes psalmos* (Basel, 1522)

(ii) Cassiodorus, *Psalterii davidici expositio* (Paris, nd)

Badly worn contemporary binding, using an unidentified AN roll and Oldham orn. A.(8). Foredge number: '19' written over an earlier foredge title. TP inscription: '*[Orate] pro anima Nicholae Shaxton...*', i.e. Nicholas Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury (d.1556). Single piece of contemporary ms in (i).

F.10.21,

- (i) Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus... Paraclesis* (Basel, 1522)
- (ii) Erasmus, *Enchiridion* (Strasbourg, 1523)
- (iii) Erasmus, *Modus orandi deum* (Basel, 1524)
- (iv) Erasmus, *Precatio dominica* (Paris, 1523)
- (v) Erasmus, *Exomologesis* (Basel, 1524)
- (vi) Erasmus, *De immensa dei misericordia... Virginis et martyris comparatio* (Antwerp, 1524)
- (vii) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (Basel, 1524)

Later plain leather binding with corner fleurons. Rebacked. Foreedges stained green. Later tables of contents (xvii/xviii, xix) in front leaves. Front leaves record: '*Caius co[ll]. Lib ex dono J. ?HP.* Contemporary tp inscription: '*Spe meliore*'. Contemporary price mark on tp of (iii) '19d'. Contemporary ms throughout, much of it extensively trimmed. Same contemporary hand annotates (iii)-(vii), suggesting that they were originally part of a volume and only later united with (i) and (ii). Hence also the price mark on tp of (iii).

F.10.24

- (i) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium Matthaei* (Basel, 1523)
- (ii) Erasmus, *In evangelium Marci paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)

Later binding with fillet frames and corner fleurons. Foreedges perhaps once stained green. College bookplate. TP signed: 'Anne Cooke Bacon 1558'. Also her 'AC' monogram. TP of (ii) also signed by Cooke Bacon. No ms.

F.3.3

- (i) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium Matthaei* (Basel, 1522)
- (ii) Erasmus, *In evangelium Marci paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)
- (iii) Erasmus, *In evangelium Lucae paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)
- (iv) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Evangelium secundum Ioannem* (Basel, 1523)

Later, speckled calf binding with gilt embossing to edges. Possibly rebacked though front board now coming away. Foreedges sprinkled red. New papers inserted at front, by W.H. Lawrence of Cambridge. Tags used to divide sections though were subsequently trimmed. TP inscription: '*orate pro animo Nicholai Shaxton... 1556*', i.e. Nicholas Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, d.1556. Very occasional contemporary ms in (iii) and (iv), same as annotator of F.3.4.

F.3.4

- (i) Erasmus, *In acta apostolorum paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)
- (ii) Erasmus, *Tomus secundus continens Paraphrasim in omnes epistolas apostolicas* (Basel, 1523)

Later, speckled calf binding with gilt embossing to edges. Possibly rebacked though front board now coming away. Foreedges sprinkled red. New papers inserted at front, by W.H. Lawrence of Cambridge. Tags used to divide sections though were subsequently trimmed. Presumably also the copy of Nicholas Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, d.1556, given connection to F.3.3. Contemporary ms in prefatory materials, in identical hand to F.3.3.

G.8.21

Pliny, *Historia mundi* (Basel 1525)

Contemporary binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham AN.f(2) and DI.a(2) [1493, 1502-28]. Remains of clasps and chain mark at lower edge of both boards. Foreedge number '17'. MS waste used as pastedowns have been lifted and new papers inserted to protect them. Inscription on tp.v records the book as the gift of Thomas Wendy, c.1560. Very occasional contemporary ms.

M.24.41

Erasmus, *Hyperaspistes* (Basel, 1526)

Contemporary binding, with triple panels very similar in design to Oldham TRIP.5 or 6 [1516-27], with same legend, but with different sequence of animals through the central panel (deer, lion, eagle, dragon). Similar designs were used in Low Countries but probably an English bindery, due to provenance. Remains of ms waste used as spine support and pastedowns. Remains of holes for ties and foreedges stained red. Partially erased inscription (?late xvi) in front leaves: '*Thomas F[] / Christopher ?Hampton me per [] teste tutore D. B. qui eundem Hamptonum convitiatus est / Scripsit ?N.N.*'. Also: 'Frances ware'. Bookplate of William

Branthwaite, 1619. Scattered contemporary ms throughout. Also a small contemporary extract from Galatians on front board.

A.5.11-15

Chrysostom, *Omnia opera* (5 vols, Basel, 1530)

Later leather binding. Rebacked with new papers inserted by W.H. Lawrence of Cambridge. Foreedges sprinkled red. TP of vol 3 has inscription: '*Ex dono doctoris Shaxton...*', i.e. Nicholas Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, d.1556. Occasional ms (though often trimmed by rebinding), some by Shaxton.

M.24.40

(i) Erasmus, *Apologia adversus rhapsodias... Alberti Pii* (Basel, 1531)

(ii) Paul of Aegineta, *Pharmaca Simplicium* (?Strasbourg, 1531)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham roll FL.a(1) [1512-43]. Remains of holes for ties. Foreedge stained red. Numbers '8' and '42' on foreedges. Rebacked. MS waste used as pastedowns. Bookplate of William Branthwaite, 1619. MS throughout in two contemporary hands.

M.24.43

(i) Erasmus, *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae* (Basel, 1532)

(ii) Erasmus, *Dilutio eorum quae Iodocus Clichoveus... Epistola... de delectu ciborum... In elenchum Alberti Pii brevissimi, a scholia* (Basel, 1532).

Later binding of mid-seventeenth century. TP signed: '*Gulielmi Chedsey*', i.e. William Chedsey, former president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford and Marian cleric (d.1577). An erased inscription above it: 'm. [?]icher'. Later in the possession of William Branthwaite, who donated the book to the college in 1619. MS throughout in Chedsey's hand (see chap. 4).

M.7.20

(i) Budé, Erasmus and others, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* (Basel, 1532)

(ii) *Farrago libellorum quos omnium maxime graecarum literarum candidatus lectu frugiferos fore duximus* (Basel, 1532)

Contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham roll AN.f(1) [1504-34]. evidence of chain staple at bottom of front board and remains of clasps. Foreedge number: '12'. Rebacked. MS waste used in binding. TP: '*Collegio suo Joannes Caius dono dedit*', i.e. John Caius (d.1573), second founder of Gonville and Caius. Another inscription to the same effect has been cut out. Scattered ms in Caius' hand.

F.15.13

(i) Haymo (ed. Erasmus), *Pia, brevis ac dilucida in omnes psalmos explanatio* (Freiburg 1533)

(ii) Haymo, *Homiliarium...* (Cologne, 1537)

Contemporary binding, using an unidentified FC roll. Repeatedly signed: '*Sum Johannis Blaxton liber*' with his initials and his Greek motto, i.e. the conservative cleric (d.1574). TP inscribed with German motto: '*Gott erhalte die seinen. 1572*'. Heavy contemporary ms in at least two hand in (ii). One annotator clearly connected to German hand, the other very similar to ms in other books owned by Blaxton. Envelope with book labelled original labels.

M.24.48

Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Evangelium Lucae* (Basel, 1534)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham roll FL.a(1) [1512-43]. Remains of holes for ties. Rebacked. Foreedges dyed red and numbers '2' and '17'. MS waste used as pastedowns. Branthwaite bookplate. No ms.

A.3.25

Irenaeus (ed. Erasmus), *Opus... in quinque libros digestum* (Basel, 1534)

Leather later binding. New papers inserted and rebacked. TP inscription: '*Ex dono reverendi doctoris Shaxton...*', i.e. Nicholas Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, d.1556. Scattered contemporary ms in text and index.

F.16.20

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1535)

Contemporary binding, perhaps using Oldham roll FL.b(5) [1536]. Chain mark at top of front board. Fore-edge number '3'. Remains of straps. Rebacked. New papers inserted, though formerly had ms waste in binding, as ms has rubbed onto back board. TP contains inscription: 'Ex dono reverendi doctoris Shaxton...', i.e. Nicholas Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, d.1556. No ms.

M.22.15

Erasmus, *Ecclesiastae* (Basel, 1535)

Contemporary binding, using an unidentified FP.a roll, with corner fleurons. Binding now badly rubbed. Fore-edges stained red and with number '6'. Remains of holes for ties. Rebacked. TP inscription: 'Richardus Michellus' (late xvi/xvii) with motto. Extensive underlining and contemporary ms throughout.

H.16.24

Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel, 1541)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll RP.a(1) [1525-59]. TP inscribed: 'Collegio suo Joannes Caius dono dedit', i.e. John Caius (d.1573), second founder of Gonville and Caius. MS throughout in Caius' hand.

Henry Huntington Library, California, USA:

342263

Erasmus, *Declarationes Des. Erasmi Roterodami, ad Censuras Lutetiae vulgatas sub nomine Facultatis Theologiae Parisiensis* (Basel, 1532)

In a plain, blind-tooled binding, perhaps contemporary. TP signed three times by Robert Ridley (d.1536). MS notes by Ridley throughout.

Hereford Cathedral: [from catalogue]

H.1.7, H.1.9-12, H.2.1-5

Augustine, *Opera* (Basel, 1522-9)

Owned by Richard Sparcheford (d.1560).

I.I.1-5

Jerome, *Opera* (9 vols in 5, Basel, 1524)

From gift of Sir John Prise (d.1555). See Ker 'Prise'.

H.I.1-3

Ambrose, *Opera* (3 vols, Basel, 1527)

From gift of Sir John Prise (d.1555). See Ker 'Prise'.

H.VI.1-5

Chrysostom, *Opera* (5 vols, Basel, 1530)

From gift of Sir John Prise (d.1555). See Ker 'Prise'.

G.6.1

Cyprian, *Opera* (Basel, 1530)

Owned by Peter Vannes (d.1563).

H.V.1

Basil, *Opera* (Basel, 1540)

From gift of Sir John Prise (d.1555). See Ker 'Prise'.

John Rylands Library, Manchester:

Spencer 18173

Basil (ed. Erasmus), *En amice lector thesaurum damus D. Basilium sua lingua loquentem* (Basel, 1532)

Later binding for Earl Spencer. TP signed: 'Thomas Cantuariensis', i.e. Thomas Cranmer; 'Lumley'. Also signed: '1731 Henry Lord B[ishop] of Hereford', perhaps Henry Egerton (d.1746). Extensive Cranmer ms up to p.98. Also ms in at least one other contemporary hand.

R33400

Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Evangelium Matthaei* (Antwerp, 1522)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham panels RO.19 and BIB.4 [Signed: 'A.H.'; 1503, 1509-34]. MS waste has been removed from binding but staining on the board still visible. Remains of clasps. Rebacked. A number of contemporary signatures in the front flyleaves including a 'John ?Staunt'. TP signed: '*Sum Johannis Miller* 1600'; 'Edw. ?Tennant.' Also signed: '*Sum Gilberti Reynolds* (?xvii). Contemporary and later ms.

Christie, 19 f 15

Cicero (ed. Erasmus), *Officia, de amicitia, de senectute, paradoxa* (Lyon, 1529)

Contemporary binding, probably of European origin. Front board inscribed with '+6'. Gaufered edges. TP signed: '*Hieronymi Raphaellii constat XV a[.]bus Med. IV. NO. ... MDLXXXIV.*' Various mottos in front leaves. Bookplate of Richard Copley Christie. Erasmus' name has been excised throughout.

Christie, 21 f 8

Suetonius, *XII Caesaeres* (Lyon, 1537)

Contemporary binding, probably European in origin. Inked on front cover: '*HE[.]VS: A.?*'. TP: '*Liber Matthiae [.]?*'; '*Collegi socius ?1565*'. Huge amount of contemporary ms in several hands, continental in style.

Lambeth Palace Library, London:

D65.(J3) [*]

Jerome, *Omnium operum* (9 vols in 4, Basel, 1516-25)

A compilation of volumes, probably brought together in the 19th cent. TP of tom. 1 signed: Thomas Cranmer and John, Lord Lumley (see Selwyn). Toms 4 and 5 also signed by Lumley. TP of tom. 6 signed: 'Robert Manars parson of Watton' (xvi); 'Crys[.] Munday' (xvi); 'J. M' (xix). Manars was appointed rector of Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire, in 1541 and was deprived 1560. He gives price: '6s 8d'. Appendix tp is signed '*Joannes Whyggt possidet*' (xvi) and 'Tho. Powell' (xvii/xviii). Bookplate of Charles Manners Sutton, 1805. Unclear if Cranmer owned all 9 toms or whether he only owned toms 1-5. Sutton may be responsible for the compilation of these volumes and different imprints. MS in Cranmer's hand throughout toms 1-2. Other contemporary notes in remaining volumes.

**SA 8517 2.01

(i) Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam ... Argumenta in omneis [sic] epistolas Apostolorum* (Louvain, 1518)

(ii) Erasmus, *Declamationes aliquot* (Louvain, ?)

(iii) Erasmus, *Parabolarum* (Louvain, 1515)

In a contemporary blind-tooled binding by Garrett Godfrey, using Oldham rolls DI.a(1) and AN.f(1) [1503-30]. Remains of holes for ties. Rebacked and with new papers inserted. Final leaf of (iii) signed: '*Rogerus ruffinus*' in a contemporary hand. MS notes throughout in several early hands.

SN 6418.(E7) [**]

Erasmus, *Chiliades adagiorum* (Basel, 1523)

In a contemporary blind-tooled binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham rolls AN.f(2) and FL.a(1) [1477, 1502-31]. Rebacked. Remains of clasps and an early fore-edge title. No ms.

Sion College Library, Arc.A.17.4 Ψ E.21

Erasmus, *In evangelium Lucae paraphrasis* (Basel, 1534)

In a contemporary binding by ?Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham roll FL.a(1) [1512-43]. Rebacked with remains of holes for ties. Price mark on tp: 'pr. xii ?d'. Signed on tp: 'E libris A.Browne Sti Ioh. Coll. Cant.', i.e. Abraham Browne. MS annotations throughout in Browne's hand and another. Book label in

front recording the donation of Miss Prescott to Sion College in remembrance of her brother, Peter Prescott (d.1898). Moved from Sion College to Lambeth in 1996.

Magdalen College, Oxford:

Old Library, e.12.10-13

Jerome, *Omnia opera* (9 vols in 4, Basel, 1524-7)

In a later binding with marbled paper covers. Fore-edge titles: 'Hieron. 1.2.3.', etc. Purchased by Magdalen from the library of John Jewel in 1572. At the end of vols 3, 5, 9 a number of contemporaries inscribed their names: 'Dalabernus perfecit'; 'howardus perfecit'; 'W. Seston'; 'hen. Mery'; 'Seintihon'; 'Nicholas'; 'Linche'; 'Hill'; 'Dayrell'. Also on the tp of vol. 6: 'Gulielmus Bethamus semicomminarius 1572'. Presumably all members of Magdalen in the late sixteenth century. MS throughout the volume by Jewel, including a note remarking on the existence of a manuscript in Salisbury Cathedral.

Old Library, e.11.1-4, 6, 9, 10

St Augustine, *Opera* (10 vols in 7, Basel, 1528)

All but one volume in a contemporary binding, using Oldham roll FF(1) and RC.e(1), alongside Orn.B(5) [?1524-29, 1529]. MS pastedown has been removed from vol. 1. Many of the volumes rebaced and seem to have formerly had clasps. Fore-edge title: 'Tomus primus' etc, on each volume. Also fore-edge name: 'W[j]ill[iam] Dyngley'. Several William Dingleys studied at Oxford and Cambridge in the early sixteenth century, one of whom was chaplain of St Paul's School 1531-42. Possibly the William Dingley, rector of Stow-on-the-Wold who corresponded with Robert Joseph (*Letter book*, p. 50). The name Richard is repeatedly practised on the title pages of various volumes. TP states that book was from the gift 'magistri Parkhurst Cūcestrensis', presumably John Parkhurst (d.1639), fellow of Magdalen from 1588-1603.

Old Library, c.14.7

Erasmus, *The first tome or volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus upon the New Testament* (London, 1548)

In a contemporary blind-tooled binding from Oxford, using Oldham roll RP.d(1) (Ker Roll IX) [Ker: 1542-54; Pearson c.1545-55]. Formerly had a thirteenth-century pastedown of Peter Lombard, now lifted (Ker, no. 380). Marks for clasps and perhaps a chain on back board. Also remains of a diamond-shaped plate on back cover. Signed on the tp: 'The Colledge booke wytnes R. Teyntor. W. Smallwood'. Robert Tayntor or Taynter became fellow at Magdalen from 1546. William Smallwood elected to Magdalen in 1552. Book bought and bound for the college in the reign of Edward VI. Contemporary ms, perhaps in Smallwood's hand.

Manchester Central Library: [from catalogue]

BR264.038P1, *Psalterium Hebraeum, Graecum & Latinum* (Basel, 1548)

Owned by John Bradford (d.1555).

Middle Temple, London:

L(B): a29875

(i) Pico della Mirandola, *Auree epistolae* (Paris, 1508)

(ii) Andrelini, *Epistolae* (Louvain, 1516)

(iii) Erasmus, *Epistolae aliquot eruditorum* (Antwerp, 1520)

In a modern binding repaired 1971 (Siddens). Signed on tp of (i): 'Godfrey Goldisbroughe', probably the student at Cambridge and Oxford from the 1560s and later bishop of Gloucester. From the collection of Robert Ashley who likely brought the separate items together. No contemporary ms.

L(C): a30443

Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel, 1516) [only the *Annotationes*]

Modern binding. Copy lacks tp. Signature partially erased: 'Christophorus longolius', humanist scholar (d.1522). This book likely returned to England with Reginald Pole, who inherited Longolius' library on the latter's

death. Contemporary ms in at least two hands throughout, including the neat italic of Longolius. An extract from Tertullian inscribed in a contemporary hand in the back.

L530: a16281, a16288.

(i) Erasmus, *De duplici copia* (Basel, 1517)

(ii) Erasmus, *Habes iterum morias encomium* (Basel, 1517)

Later binding. Signed in various places by several contemporary owners: 'Hic liber pertinet ad me george flowre' [partially erased]; 'Sir William clarke has thys boke...'; 'George Chaworth'; 'Thomas' several times. Other names erased or clipped by trimming. Heavy contemporary ms in several hands throughout.

L(ASHELY): a31145, a31147, a31150, a31154

(i) Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam* (Louvain, 1518)

(ii) Erasmus, *In epistolam Pauli apostoli ad Romanos paraphrasis* (Louvain, 1517)

(iii) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in duas epistolas Pauli ad Corinthios* (Louvain, 1519)

(iv) Latomus, *De trium linguarum, & studii Theologici ratione dialogus* (1519)

In a modern binding, with Ashley's name in gold tooling. Signed on tp of (i) 'R, Ashley'. Ashley has also erased the names of two earlier owners, who are now only partially visible: 'Thomas...'; 'Per me Eliam...'. Contemporary ms notes throughout, and late ms by Ashley.

L(A): a28619, a28612, a40063.

(i) Erasmus, *De contemptu mundi epistola* (Cologne, 1523)

(ii) Budé, *De contemptu rerum fortuitarum* (? , 1521)

(iii) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (Nuremberg, 1529)

Later binding. Correspondence between Quaritch and Middle Temple Librarian pasted on the inside. Signed on tp of (i): 'Daniel Dun', presumably 1544/5-1617 who also gave works to the Bodleian. In the collection of Robert Ashley. Some scattered contemporary ms and some later ms by Ashley.

L(A): a28622

Erasmus, *Hyperaspistes* (Froben, 1526)

In a modern binding (1977). Contemporary ms notes on sigs m1r and u3r list the names John and Richard Stannton (or Staunton). Otherwise unmarked.

L530: a16621, a36704, a16626, a16630

(i) Bucer, *Epistola apologetica* (? , 1530)

(ii) Erasmus, *Epistolae duae recens conditae et aeditae* (Cologne, 1530)

(iii) Erasmus, *Epistolae duae recens conditae et aeditae* (Antwerp, 1530)

(iv) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (Basel, 1524)

In a modern binding. From the collection of Robert Ashley. Several inscriptions in 17th hand, including 'August 1629' on tp of (ii) which may record the date of Ashley's purchase of that item. Some underlining throughout with occasional ms.

New College, Oxford:

BT1.35.6

(i) John Cassian, *De institutis cenobiorum* (Basel, 1485)

(ii) Heraclides, *Pro piorum recreatione* (Paris, 1504)

(iii) Valla, *Adnotationes* (Paris, 1505)

In a later, reversed leather binding (xvi/xvii). TP of (i) signed 'Liber collegii Beatae Maris Winton in Oxon'. Some contemporary ms in (ii) but otherwise unmarked.

BT3.143.13

John Major, *Quartus Sententiarum* (Paris 1509)

Signed by William Chedsey.

BT3.20.8

Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum* (Basel, 1516)

In a later mottled calf binding. Signed: 'Jo. Mill'; 'James Waugh'. Presumably the copy of the theologian John Mill (d.1707), given the extensive ms in Mill's hand on the different printed editions of the bible and Greek variants. Mill also gives the price: 10s. Some earlier ms have been washed out and trimmed in the margin.

BT1.74.9-13

Jerome, *Opera* (9 vols in 5, Basel, 1516)

Later reversed leather binding. Remains of chain holes. Early printed pastedowns from Giacomo Filippo Foresti, *Supplementum supplementi delle croniche* (?1552). On the tps of each of the five physical volumes is an inscription in Erasmus' hand to William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, recording his donation of these volumes, c.1516. Warham donated the volume to New College. New College bookplate (1702). Contemporary ms in several hands.

BT3.261.11

(i) Aristotle, *Ex Physiologia, libri duodetriginta* (Paris, 1518)

(ii) Aristotle, *Opus metaphysicum* (Paris, 1518)

TP inscription: 'Liber Collegij, ex dono J. Bekynsale, 1569'. Bekinsale (or Bekinsau, d.1559), the classical scholar and former fellow of the college.

BT3.21.8

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1519)

Later reversed leather binding. Remains of chain holes. New College bookplate (1702). No ms.

BT3.125.7

Erasmus, *Epistolae ad diversos* (Basel, 1521)

Later blind-tooled binding (17th cent). Rebacked with new papers inserted. TP has been repaired. Fore-edge title. Contemporary MS in two hands. References to the pope have been erased.

BT3.125.6

Erasmus, *Apologiae* (Basel, 1522)

Reversed leather binding with remains of hole for chaining. Rebacked. Textblock sprinkled red. New College book label. TP unmarked and only the occasional piece of ms in margins.

BT1.51.10

Athanasius, *Opera* (Strasbourg, 1522)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, with Oldham rolls DI.a(8) and orn. C(4), a combination not recorded by Oldham. Remains of leather clasps and chain holes. Rebacked and new papers inserted. New College bookplate from 1702. MS in several contemporary hands throughout text. Pope's name erased, though subsequently restored.

BT3.21.7

Hilary, *Lucubrationes* (2 vols in 1, Basel, 1523).

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using roll similar to Oldham TP.(1). Rebacked with remains of holes for chain. Fore-edge title. TP has sixteenth-century college inscription. Very occasional underlining.

BT3.4.5

Erasmus, *Supputationes errorum in censarum natalis Bedae* (Basel, 1527)

In a contemporary panel-stamped binding, though the panel is unidentified. Rebacked with remains of holes for ties and chain holes. MS waste used as flyleaves and spine support, one of which contains a list of two books. TP signed: 'Liber collegii Beatae Maris Winton in Oxon' (late xvi). One ms note.

BT.3.33.3-4

Ambrose, *Opera* (Basel, 1527)

Contemporary Parisian binding, using Gid rolls CH.i(4) [1489-24], TM.a(2) [1489-1562] and an unidentified RC.g roll. Also Gid tool mot.34. TP inscription: '*Liber Collegij, ex dono J. Bekynsale, 1569*'. Bekinsale (or Bekinsau, d.1559), the classical scholar and former fellow of the college, who likely purchased the book in Paris. MS throughout in Bekinsau's hand, with other contemporary ms.

BT3.13.7

Tertullian, *Opera* (Basel, 1528)

TP inscription: '*Liber Collegij, ex dono J. Bekynsale, 1569*'. Bekinsale (or Bekinsau, d.1559), the classical scholar and former fellow of the college.

BT3.27.7

Cyril, *Opera* (Basel, 1528)

TP inscription: '*Liber Collegij, ex dono J. Bekynsale, 1569*'. Bekinsale (or Bekinsau, d.1559), the classical scholar and former fellow of the college.

BT3.36.10

Platina, *De vita et moribus summorum pontificum historia* (Cologne, 1529)

TP inscription: '*Liber Collegij, ex dono J. Bekynsale, 1569*'. Bekinsale (or Bekinsau, d.1559), the classical scholar and former fellow of the college.

BT3.25.7

Basil, *Opera* (Basel, 1532)

TP inscription: '*Liber Collegij, ex dono J. Bekynsale, 1569*'. Bekinsale (or Bekinsau, d.1559), the classical scholar and former fellow of the college.

Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: [from catalogue]

EP.M.2

Galen, *Primum[-tertium] Galeni volumen* (Pavia, 1515-16)

Signed by John Toker.

B.4.14

Hilary, *Lucubrationes* (Basel, 1523)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

E.3.5, Erasmus, *Annotationes* (Basel, 1527)

Signed by John Whitwell (d.1561).

B.4.11.12, Ambrose, *Opera* (Basel, 1527)

Signed by John Whitwell (d.1561).

B.4.4, Irenaeus, *Opera* (Basel, 1534)

Signed by John Whitwell (d.1561).

SP.205

Erasmus, *Ecclesiastes* (Antwerp, 1535)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

B.2.20-24, Chrysostom, *Opera* (Basel, 1539)

Signed by John Whitwell (d.1561).

Queen's College, Cambridge:

M.9.19, Cyprian, *Opera* (Basel, 1525)

Contemporary binding with initials 'S.H.' and motto of Simon Heynes.

C.2.9, Erasmus, *Novum testamentum omne* (Basel, 1527)

Owned and annotated by Jan Laski.

Royal College of Physicians, London: [from catalogue]

D1/39-f-1, Galen, *Methodus medendi* (Paris, 1519)

Signed by John Toker.

St John's College, Cambridge:

10/W.3.19

Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel, 1516)

Given to St John's by James Wood, 1839. TP signed: 'Joes. Fischer'. No ms.

Dd.10.4

(i) Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani* (Basel, 1516)

(ii) Eucherius of Lyon, *Formularum intelligentiae spiritualis liber* (Basel, 1530)

(iii) Giovanni Nanni, *Fragmenta vetustissimorum auctorum* (Basel, 1530)

(iv) Erasmus, *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae* (Louvain, 1519)

(v) Hutten, *Febris dialogus... Phalarismus dialogus* (Antwerp, 1519)

(vi) Erasmus, *Epistolae aliquot illustrium virorum ad Erasmum* (Louvain, 1516)

(vii) *Dialogus viri cuiuspiam... quomodo Iulius. II.* (Louvain 1518)

(viii) Erasmus, *Apologia refellens suspensiones quorundam dictitantium dialogum Iacobi Latomi* (Antwerp, 1519)

(ix) Jabocus Latomus, *De trium linguarum, et studii theologici ratione dialogus* (Antwerp, 1519)

In a later binding. Given to St John's by Humphrey Gower (d.1711), who likely had these works bound together. TP of (i) signed by George Buddell (d.1630). (iv) signed: 'Edward Hodley his booke' with price: 2s. Colophon of (ix) signed: 'Iste est liber... Will[iam] Atherold'. William Atherold, Cluniac monk of Lewes (Venn). MS of Buddell throughout (i). Scattered ms in several hands in other items.

T.7.9

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1519)

From the bequest of Peter Gunning, bishop of Chichester and Ely, in 1684. College book label dated 1700. Contemporary fore-edge title: 'Erasm[us] in Nouu[m] Test.' Notes by Thomas Baker in front. Extensive 17th-cent. ms notes throughout volume, perhaps by Gunning, including reflections on Beza and Calvin.

A.2.73

Thomas More, William Lily and Erasmus, *Epigrammata* (Basel, 1520)

In a contemporary vellum binding. TP signed: 'Me jure possidet Jacobus Bictonus qui proprio me comparavit aere' (xvi); 'William Lambarde' (xvi), probably the antiquary; 'George Mounson' (xvi), likely matriculated Jesus College, 1548, and a contemporary of Lambarde. Gift of Brian Fenwick-Smith, 2007. Two poems have been inscribed in early hands, one signed by 'Thos. Wixus', the other in Lambarde's hand, signed 'Lache'.

N.11.14

(i) Erasmus, *De immensa Dei misericordia... Concio. virginis et martyris comparatio* (Antwerp, 1524)

(ii) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (Basel, 1524)

(iii) Erasmus, *Modus orandi deum* (Basel, 1524)

(iv) Erasmus, *Exomologesis* (Basel, 1524)

Contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, Cambridge, using Oldham panels HE.31 and RO.18 [1505-38]. An early owner has inscribed Nicholas Bourbon's poem in praise of Erasmus (*Nugae*, 1533). In the end leaves of (i) 'Watche and praye' with dates 1544 and 1585. Contemporary ms throughout.

T.7.7-8

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1527)

2 volumes containing, respectively, the bible text and Erasmus' *Annotations*. Both volumes are printed on vellum and were in the library by 1544 (College inventory, 23 Sept. 1544, no. 69). Bound in sixteenth-century calf, with incunabula sheets and ms waste used in the binding. Rebacked 1965. Foreedges sprinkled red, with faint remains of a title. These volumes were probably the dedicatory copies given to John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, to whom Erasmus had dedicated the 1527 edition. Very occasional ms.

Aa.6.51

Erasmus, *Institutio principis Christiani* (Cologne, 1529)

In a contemporary gilt binding bearing the arms of Elizabeth I. Green ties. The copy of Edward VI. Contains a Greek epistle in the opening leaves from John Foxe to Elizabeth I, 1589. Acquired for St John's by Thomas Baker, from 'A: Bosville'. MS in the back from Cicero attributed to Edward VI.

Gg.17.28

- (i) Erasmus, *De civilitate morum puerilium* (Antwerp, 1530)
- (ii) Maximilian of Transylvania, *De Moluccis insulis* (Cologne, 1523)
- (iii) Agrippa von Nettesheim, *Caroli Quinti... historia* (Antwerp, 1530)
- (iv) Hermann Schottenius, *Ludus Martius siue bellicus* (Cologne, 1526)
- (v) Gildas, *Liber querulus de excidio Britanniae* (Antwerp, 1525)
- (vi) *Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum ante LXX annos aeditus* (Nuremberg, 1530)
- (vii) Pius II, *De Bohemorum origine ac gestis historia* (Cologne, 1524)

In a vellum binding. Signatures on tp of (i): '*Liber martini Tindall*' (fl. 1529-39); '*Liber Roberti Aufyeld*' (fl. 1535-1539). Tyndall and Alfield both passed through Eton and King's college in the 1520s and 30s. College book label dated 1700.

Ee.13.40

- (i) John Ponet, *A shorte treatise of politike pouver* (Strasbourg, 1556)
 - (ii) Robert Parsons, *A discoverie of I. Nicols minister* (n.p., 1581)
 - (iii) Erasmus, *Bellum Erasmi* (London, 1533)
 - (iv) *An edict or ordonance of the French King* (Louvain, 1568)
- Bequeathed by Thomas Baker (d.1740). In (iii): 'Chadwel'. No ms in (iii).

St John's College, Oxford:

HB4/6.a.3.1

[Collection of 17 educational tracts, mainly printed in Paris, c.1500-c.1520]

...

- (xvi) Erasmus, *De duplici copia... De ratione studii... De puero Iesu* (Paris, c.1512-20)

...

Contemporary binding from France (?Paris), using Gid roll RC.e(4) and FL.j(5) [c.1516]. Remains of ms waste in binding and of clasps. Foreedges inscribed with title: '*?Herasmi verbo[rum] copia*' and 'Geven by M. Tho. Paynell'. From Paynell's bequest to St John's, 1564. Contemporary ms in several hands throughout the volume.

C.4.16

Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel, 1516)

Later binding with gilt tooling. Marbled papers inserted and foreedges stained red. Several early owners in the opening flyleaves and tp: 'Joannis phrysius...', perhaps a Joannes ?Frisius (xvi); 'Joannus Sylvinus' (xvi), now excised; '?Gerardi Husingii' (xvi). From the gift of Nathaniel Crynes to the college, 1745. Contemporary ms throughout in several contemporary and later hands. Phrysius has left longer inscriptions in both front and end leaves.

P.scam.1.loweshelf.25

- (i) Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1519)
- (ii) Tunstall, *In laudem matrimonii oratio* (Basel, 1519)

- (iii) *Vivat Rex Carolus* (?Frankfurt, 1519)
- (iv) ?Grapheus, *Divi Caroli Imp Caes., Opt. Max, Desyderatissimus ex Hispani in Germaniam reditus* (Antwerp, nd)
- (v) Melanchthon, *Oratio Funebris Dicta Divo Maximiliano Caes. Vuittenburgae* (Basel, 1519)
- (vi) Ulrich Zasius, *Oratio, Friburgi in funere D Maximiliani Imp Aug habita* (Basel, 1519)
- (vii) Ulrich von Hutten, *Triumphus Doc. Reuchlini* (Hagenau, 1518)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham rolls RP.a(1) and possibly DI.a(12). Oldham did not observe this combination, though RP.a(1) was used on imprints between 1523-59, and DI.a(12) on a single imprint of 1573. Remains of holes for ties. Printed waste appears to have been removed from the front cover. Fore-edge inscription: 'Geven by M. Tho. Paynell' and inscription (xvii) in opening flyleaves: '*liber collegii s. Iohn ex dono magistri Paynell?*'. TP signed: '*Sum Paynelli et amoicorum?*'. MS throughout in ?Paynell's hand, though not in (i). Later notes on contents also in opening flyleaves. In the end flyleaves a contemporary inscription in Greek: 'βαρετου βρουταννου βυβλωσ...', perhaps 'The book(s) of Barrett of Britain'.

Phi.1.34

Erasmus, *Apologiae Erasmi Roterodami omnes* (Basel, 1522)

Later binding with marbled paper pasted onto covers. From the gift of Nathaniel Crynes to the college, 1745. TP also signed '*Aegid.: Tomson?*' (xvii), (Giles Tomson), with the price: 3s. Pencil markings and ms in Tomson's hand.

HB4/1.b.2.1.15

Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Basel, 1522)

Later binding, with marbled paper pasted to covers. From the gift of Nathaniel Crynes to the college, 1745. Partly trimmed signature on tp: '*Joha[] Bl[]?*'. In the end leaves: '*Liber Williami Bonreman wellenis ecclesiae Canonic?*', i.e. the canon and later subdean of Wells (d.1572). MS by Bowerman throughout, though now trimmed.

M.scam.2.uppershef.14

(i) Erasmus, *Hyperaspistes* (Basel, 1526)

(ii) Erasmus, *Adversus epistolam non sobriam M. Lutheri* (Basel, 1534)

(iii) Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum, commentarii duo* (Lyon, 1550)

Later binding. From the gift of Nathaniel Crynes to the college, 1745. Inscriptions in (iii): '*Henricus Clark hunc librum vendicat apte nomen de clarat?*'; 'Peter Barker owneth this booke/ I witness Harry clarke'. No ms.

Trinity College, Cambridge:

Grylls 11.381

Erasmus, *Adagia* (Venice, 1508)

William Grylls' bequest 1863. Contemporary ms in italic hand, running to roughly half the book.

III.4.104

Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Strasbourg, 1514)

Modern binding. New papers inserted. From the library of Francis Jenkinson, Fellow and University Librarian, d.1923. Extensive contemporary ms in a contemporary hand throughout text. Almost entire text is given interlinear commentary. Also loose sheets with further notes bound between sigs e6 and e7.

Grylls 11.35

Lucian, *Opuscula Erasmo Roterodamo interprete* (Venice, 1516).

William Grylls bequest 1863. Erasmus' name excised throughout. A few scattered ms.

Adv.a.1.12

Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum* (Basel, 1516)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham roll AN.e(1) and orn. E.(1) ['W.G./I.G.?'; 1506-1525]. On tp date: 'Jan 1643'. The same hand has heavily annotated parts of Matthew. Trinity College booklabel.

A.10.16

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum omne* (Basel, 1519)

TP missing. Contemporary names inscribed: 'Thomas John William'. Elsewhere: 'Elizabeth Rose Hains pen, June 29 1821'. Given to college in 1914 by William Aldis Wright. Contemporary ms in two hands.

A.10.86

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum omne* (Basel, 1519)

?Contemporary binding, perhaps of the later xvi, with blind fillet frame and corner fleurons. Later hand supplies information on Henry Standish. MS notes appear to have been washed out.

VI.1.20

Erasmus, *Antibarborum liber unus* (Basel, 1520)

Contemporary binding, probably by Jan Ryckaert of Ghent (c.1511-46). See Foot, Davies Bequest, no.291. Remains of clasps. From the bequest of Daniel Pettiward, 1833. Single piece of underlining. Otherwise no ms.

III.2.38

Erasmus, *Epistolae ad diversos* (Basel, 1521)

TP signed: 'Thomas Harryson' (possibly a student at Cambridge in 1560s); 'W. [?] 1623'; 'Francis Meres Trin. Collegii', matr. at Trinity 1625. Given to Wakefield School Library by Thomas Neville MDCCLVIII. No ms.

I.16.48

(i) Erasmus, *Paraphrases in epistolas canonicas* (Basel, 1521)

(ii) Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam. Paraclesis.* (Basel, 1521)

Contemporary binding, probably European in origin. Rebacked. Early fore-edge title. Painted coat of arms in front with date 1521. Signed in front leaves: 'Christopher Buscher Constantiensis'; Joh. Mich. Miller'. Presented by William Aldis Wright in 1911. Contemporary ms throughout in several hands, continental in style.

Trinity Hall, Cambridge:

Old Library, G*.1.1-5

Chrysostom, *Opera* (Basel, 1530)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

Ushaw College, Durham:

XVIII.C.7.6

Arnobius (ed. Erasmus), *In omneis psalmos commentarii... In psalmum: Quare fremuerunt gentes... commentarius Erasmi* (Cologne, 1522)

Contemporary binding using Oldham panels HE.3 and HE.4 [1508-9, 1513-33]. Rebacked and repaired preserving original covers. New papers inserted. Remains of clasps. Very faint fore-edge title. Later ms on tp. Contemporary ms in an italic hand throughout, sometimes supplying running topic headings in Erasmus' psalm commentary. Arnobius' commentary also has a set of liturgical headings for morning and evening. Some pages badly ripped.

XVIII.C.7.13

(i) Erasmus, *In evangelium Marci paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)

(ii) Erasmus, *In acta apostolorum paraphrasis* (Basel, 1524)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll DI.h(3) [1521-37]. MS waste in binding. Remains of holes for ties. TP of (i) signed: 'Richard Harrison liber' (?xvi); 'Cuthbert Tonstall' (in a later hand and clearly not the bishop). Price mark, possibly associated with Harrison: 'xviii d'. Some contemporary ms, including a long set of notes on Matt 18 in opening flyleaves. Some contemporary ms in a different hand in (ii).

XVIII.F.5.1

Chrysostom, *Opera* (Basel, 1530)

Later binding, though badly damaged. Fore-edge title. Missing tp. Contemporary ms throughout in a neat italic, often conservative in approach (i.e. p.75: '*Sola fides non sufficit ad salutem*'). Some pencil markings.

XVIII.C.9.2

(i) Erasmus, *De sarcienda ecclesiae concordia* (Antwerp, 1533)

(ii) Erasmus, *De contemptu mundi* (Cologne, 1537)

(iii) Erasmus, *Exomologesis... cum aliis* (? , ?)

(iv) Erasmus, *De praeparatione ad mortem... Epistolae aliquot* (Antwerp, 1534)

(v) Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio* (?Basel, ?1524)

(vi) Erasmus, *Epi. duae recens* (Antwerp, 1530)

(vii) Erasmus, *Bellum* (? , ?)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham roll CH.c(4) [1535-45] with fleuron tool. Remains of green ties. MS waste in binding. On tps are the initials 'E.S' and 'R.S', sometimes with the surname 'Smyth' and the date '1573'. On permanent loan from parish of Dodding Green. Contemporary MS throughout in two hands. Long note at the end of (i) mentions Archbishop Whitgift. An earlier hand also makes an extract from Chrysostom at the end of (i).

XVIII.A.8.10

Suetonius, *XII Caesares* (Lyon, 1534)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham roll FL.f(1). This tool is associated with a number of others in Oxford in the period 1530-45 and is sometimes attributed to the bookseller John Dorne (Pearson). Remains of leather clasps. 'R' and 'H' written on the top textblock. MS waste used in the binding. Several ownership inscriptions: '*Robertus White*[?]'; 'Thomas Symes 1614'; 'Henry Flemmynge his Booke Anno Domini 1680, *pretium* 18*d*'. Earlier price mark: 16*d*. On permanent loan at Ushaw from the parish of St Mary, Yealand Conyers (1951). In the opening flyleaves is a contemporary booklist, with imprints dating to the 1550s or 60s. Contemporary MS in text in two hands.

XVIII.A.8.11-12

Erasmus, *Tomus primus[-secundus] Paraphraseon in Novum Testamentum* (2 vols, Basel, 1534)

Now a two-volume set, though likely brought together at a later date. Both volumes on permanent loan from St Mary Yealand Conyers (1951). Both volumes are in contemporary bindings. Vol. 1 bound with Oldham panels HM.3 and 4 [1533-35]. Remains of clasps. MS waste in binding. Fore-edge title: '*Tomus Erasmi paraphrasis...*'. Price mark: 1*s*. Underlining throughout and some contemporary ms. Also a longer note on sophists written onto pastedown of front board. Vol. 2 using Oldham roll FL.b(5) [1536]. Remains of clasps. Fore-edge title: 'Erasmus'. MS waste in binding. In the opening flyleaves: 'to Dean Nicholas Marley...', i.e. former monk of Durham Cathedral. TP signed: Sir Thomas Tempest Baronet. Marley left the Cathedral in 1560 and stayed with the Tempest family (see also XVII.E.5.6). Scattered contemporary ms and a note in end leaves.

XVII.E.5.6

(i) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Evangelium secundum Ioannem* (Basel, 1534)

(ii) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in acta apostolorum* (Basel, 1534)

Contemporary binding, using an unidentified FL roll. Heavily repaired due to damage and worming (1970). Rebacked. MS and printed waste in binding. Printed waste from Richard Whitford's *A werke for householders* (c.1530). TP: 'to Dean Nicholas Marley...', i.e. former monk of Durham Cathedral; 'Sir Thomas Tempest Baronet'. Marley left the Cathedral in 1560 and stayed with the Tempest family (see also XVIII.A.8.12). A single, contemporary ms note in (i). No ms in (ii).

III.B.3.11-12

Origen (ed. Erasmus), *Opera* (2 vols, Basel, 1536)

Later plain leather binding. Remains of fore-edge title. TP signed: 'Griffithe Briskin' (xvi) (twice); 'Thomas Wydo[]' (deleted); '*Johannis Bosse liber*' (xvii). Briskin matriculated at Trinity, Cambridge, in 1563. Bosse may be the John Bose admitted at Peterhouse in 1657. MS throughout, perhaps in a contemporary hand.

XVIII.A.8.14

(i) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Lyon, 1538)

(ii) Erasmus, *De recta latini graecique dialogus. Dialogus Ciceronianus* (Basel, 1558)

Later binding (plate xvii). TP of (i): two contemporary ownership inscriptions delted; 'Ex donis Amicissimi J. Nanne 12 Julii 1670'. Elsewhere signatures: 'Hen. Rutter'; 'N. Ellison'. Also later price: '18 pence'. On permanent loan from St Mary, Yealand Conyers (1951). Some later ms throughout.

XVIII.B.9.1

Erasmus, *Ecclesiasae siue de ratione concionandi libri quatuor* (Antwerp, 1539)

Contemporary binding, using unidentified FP roll and a centrepiece ornament, though covers now badly rubbed. MS waste used in binding. Remains of ties. TP signed: 'Tho Tailor 1573'; 'Will. Barker'. Also bookplate: 'Ex libris bibliothecae Collegi Sancti Cuthberti'. Contemporary ms in opening pages, some of which resemble Tailor's signature.

III.F.8.15-16

Cyprian, *Opera* (2 vols, Antwerp, 1541-2)

Later binding (xviii). Now in 2 volumes, though originally a single volume as can be seen in the foredge titles which are now divided between the two volumes. New papers inserted. Signed: 'William James' (erased); 'Tho. Powel'; 'Joannes'; 'E libris Roberti Tate 1824'. On the tp a longer inscription has also been washed out and there are two further contemporary inscriptions which have been excised. Some contemporary and later ms.

XVIII.A.8.16

Erasmus, *Epistolae familiares* (Basel, 1546)

Contemporary binding from Oxford, using Oldham roll RC.b(1) [1546-65; Pearson c.1555-67], with the initials 'W.B.' stamped on front and back covers. Remains of ties. MS waste used in binding. Signed: 'David Lufkin' and 'Zacharia Lufkin'; 'Hen. Rutter'; 'Ex lib. J. ?Knar[?]r'. Zacchary Lufkin matriculated at Cambridge University in 1588. On permanent loan from St Mary, Yealand Conyers (1951). Underlining and ms, though much of it may be later. In end leaves are a longer set of notes (late xvi).

XVII.G.4.4

The first tome or volume of the Paraphrases of Erasmus (London, 1548)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham roll HE.a(1) [1521-59]. Remains of clasps. Foreedge title. Printed waste as flyleaves from an English text of liturgical readings. Rebacked and repaired. On loan from Minster Cleres library (1951). TP: 'Sir Thomas Tempest Baronet'. No ms.

XVIII.A.7.12

Hilary, *Lucubrationes* (Basel, 1550)

Contemporary binding from Oxford, using Oldham rolls RC.c(1) and MW.b(1) [Pearson c.1537-1551, 1565-75, though the tools may have been in use throughout the 1550s]. Remains of clasps. Foreedge title. New papers inserted. Rebacked. Signed: 'Hen. Johnson' and motto (xvi/xvii); 'ex libris Vic. Ap. Sep. Distric.'. Contemporary or later ms in at two hands.

Westminster Abbey:

CH.2.1

Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel 1516)

Modern binding. New papers inserted. Several signatures in the opening leaves, many of which point to a European provenance for the book: 'Felici Christiani Sp[?]rius 1638 [and also: 1646]'; 'Henrici Schmid[?]t 1762'; 'Carolo G. ?Rovend... Jan 1855'; 'Herbert Thompson 1914'. Extraordinary amount of contemporary ms annotation, some of which have been trimmed by rebinding. The hand is more in keeping with continental models.

O.2.29

Erasmus, *Adagia* (Basel 1518)

Contemporary binding by Nicholas Spierinck, using Oldham rolls AN.f(2) and DI.a(2) [1493, 1502-28]. Remains of leather clasps and holes for chain. Foreedges stained red, though foreedge title ('*Adagia*') still visible. MS waste in binding. The provenance of this volume is particularly complex. There are a number

of contemporary signatures throughout: 'Sum Johannis Hals'; 'Mary Hals'; possibly also 'W. Hals'; 'A[nn]o 1528 Orate pro georgii stywardi presbiteri'; 'my lady waldon'; 'Dns Georgius Stuard'; 'Augustinus Stuard', perhaps Augustine Steward of Norwich (1491-1571); 'Jhon Christopherson. Clark. Hals' and 'Sum Joannis Christoforson et Amicorum', i.e. the master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and dean of Norwich (d.1558). It is possible that the book circulated in Cambridge among acquaintances of Christopherson. Christopherson was a fellow of Pembroke College in 1541 and he may have had contact with the younger, John Hallys (matr. 1545) and William Clark (matr. 1548), though he spent much of the reign of Edward on the continent. Christopherson was also heavily involved with the diocese of Norwich during the reign of Mary and it may be that this was how the Stuarts acquired the volume. There is contemporary ms throughout the volume, some in an ornate italic hand, not dissimilar to Christopherson's and another small secretary hand. Some of the ms notes are rubricated.

CE.4

William Lily and Erasmus, *Libellus de octo partium orationis constructione* (Cambridge 1521)

In a modern marbled binding by Wilson of Cambridge. This fragment is the only known section of this work and was extracted from the binding of an edition of Josse Clichtoveus' *De vita et moribus sacerdotum* (Paris, 1519) (see STC 15601.5). It was first noticed by Gordon Duff in the late nineteenth century, who has left a note with the volume.

CD.61, Arnobius (ed. Erasmus), *In omneis psalmos commentarii... In psalmum: Quare fremuerunt gentes... commentarius Erasmi* (Cologne 1522)

Contemporary binding using Oldham roll AN.b(1) and possibly orn. A(1) (as a half ornament) [1479, 1495, 1503-42]. AN.b(1) has sometimes been associated with the bindery of John Reynes. Covers extensively repaired to preserve original binding. Foreedges stained red. New papers inserted. No ms.

I.7.19

(i) Erasmus, *Ratio seu methodus* (Strasbourg, 1523)

(ii) *Evangelia et epistolae quae diebus festis in templis leguntur, ex tralatione D. Erasmi* (Cologne, 1534)

Later binding. Front cover loose. Foreedges stained red. Some worming. TP of (ii) signed: 'Gulielmus Wickham' and 'Post tenebras spero lucem', i.e. William Wickham, prebend of Westminster 1570-1 and later bishop of Winchester (d.1595). Both (i) and (ii) presumed to be Wickham's as there are contemporary ms throughout (i) in his hand, some of which have been trimmed.

CD.25

Erasmus, *Moriae encomium* (Cologne, 1526)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham panels QUAD.4 and HE.34 (with nail marks) [1526-35]. Book extensively repaired to preserve original covers. Foreedges stained red. New papers inserted. Lacks a tp. Contemporary ms in Latin and English, in two or three hands, much of it trimmed. Also pen trails. In the endleaves is a badly damaged and faded set of italic ms.

H.6.10

Erasmus, *Christiani matrimonii institutio* (Basel 1526)

Modern binding. Foreedges stained red. New papers inserted. Westminster bookplate and stamp. No ms.

Gal.g.7.75

Chrysostom (ed. Erasmus), *In epistolam ad Philippenses homiliae duae* (Basel, 1526)

Modern binding. New papers inserted. One piece of underlining but otherwise unmarked.

S.4.37-38

Chrysostom, *Opera* (4 vols in 2), as follows:

(i) Chrysostom and Athanasius (ed. Erasmus), *Lucubrationes aliquot* (Basel, 1527)

(ii) Chrysostom (ed. Oecolampadius), *Homiliae sexagintasex in totum Geneseos librum* (Basel, 1523)

(iii) Chrysostom, *Tomus tertius[-quartus] operum* (2 vols in 1, Basel, 1525)

A composite volume of various imprints to create a selection of Chrysostom's works. Both volumes in contemporary binding by Garrett Godfrey, using AN.f(1) and DI.a(1) [1503-34]. Remains of clasps. Vol. 2 has holes, possible from chain staple. On each volume's tp: 'Gulielmus Latymer nuper unus Prebendar. huius Ecclesiae hunc librum dono dedit Bibliothecae huius Collegi Wesmon.', i.e. the former chaplain of Anne Boleyn and

later prebend of Westminster, William Latymer (d.1583). Scattered contemporary and later ms, the former probably by Latymer.

N.1.95

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Paris, 1529)

Later binding (?xvii). TP has two partially erased signature: 'Thomas Sely[?]d' (xvi) 'Fovey []' (?xvii). In the endleaves a later note: 'For my very louing sonne Thomas Norgate' (?xviii). Underlining and elaborate marginalia in ink and pencil throughout. Later ms index compiled in endleaves.

CD.26

(i) Erasmus, *Apologia adversus articulos aliquot* (Basel, 1529)

(ii) *Apologia monasticae religionis diluens nugas Erasmi, a Lodovico Carvaialo Minorita aeditus* (n.p., 1529)

(iii) Erasmus, *Adversus febricitantis cuiusdam libellum responsio* (Antwerp, 1529)

(iv) Valla, *Elegantiae vocabulorum* (Cologne, 1524)

(v) Agapetus, *Opusculum... ad Justinianum Boni Principis complectens officia* (n.p., 1527)

Contemporary binding using BIB.15 and BIB.7 (second state) [1516-35]. Remains of clasps. MS waste in binding. New papers inserted at front, though original ms remains in back. No ms.

CD.53

(i) Erasmus, *Apologia adversus articulos aliquot per monachos* (Basel, 1529)

(ii) Erasmus, *Apologia adversus rhapsodias calumniosarum querimoniarum Alberti Pii* (Basel, 1531)

Contemporary binding, using an unidentified HM roll with initials 'I.W.', perhaps European in origin. Letters tooled into the front and back covers: 'B', 'R' and 'T.F.'. Some pencil marks and later ms in (i) and (ii).

H.7.18

(i) Erasmus, *Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis* (Basel, 1530)

(ii) Parthenius of Nicaea, *De amatoriis affectionibus liber, Iano Cornario interprete* (Basel, 1531)

Modern binding. Foreedges stained red. New papers inserted. Contemporary signature on tps of (i) and (ii): 'Joachim[us] Roela[?]nt]s'. On tp (ii) Roelants appears to have left a note about the author. Otherwise no ms. From the gift of John Williams, dean of Westminster (c.1623).

CD.47

(i) Erasmus, *Enarratio pia iuxta ac docta in psalmum xxxiii* (Basel, 1531)

(ii) Erasmus, *Enarratio psalmi trigesimi octavi multum ab enarratione veterum differens...* (Basel, 1532)

Contemporary binding using Oldham panels ST.7 and MISC.1 [1527-34], though binding now quite rubbed and extensively repaired to preserve covers. Foreedges stained red and faint fore-edge title. Underlining and other marginal marks in a bright red ink throughout. A single piece of black-ink, contemporary ms, accompanied with similar markings, possibly by the same annotator.

N.2.110

Erasmus, *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas* (Antwerp, 1532)

Contemporary vellum binding. MS waste in binding. TP signature: 'Gulielmus Latymer nuper unus Prebendar. huius Ecclesiae hunc librum dono dedit Bibliothecae huius Collegi Wesmon.', i.e. the former chaplain of Anne Boleyn and later prebend of Westminster, William Latymer (d.1583). Very occasional ms notes, probably in Latymer's hand.

D.2.2

(i) Erasmus, *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas* (Basel, 1532)

(ii) Erasmus, *Dilutio eorum quae Iodocus Clithoueus. Epistola eiusdem de delectu ciborum. In elenchum alberti Pii breuissima scholia* (Basel, 1532)

Later binding, with blind-tooled border. Rebacked, though spine now damaged. TP signed: 'Henricus Tripp'. From the gift of John Williams, dean of Westminster (c.1623). No ms.

G.2.23, Jerome (ed. Erasmus), *Omnia opera* (Paris, 1533)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham rolls RC.b(3) ['R.W.'] and CH.a(1) [1523-39]. This edition contains only toms 4-6, bound in a single volume. Large clasps and possible holes for chaining. Previously had ms waste in binding as seen by rubbing of ink onto wooden boards. Back board loose. From the gift of John Williams, dean of Westminster (c.1623). No ms, except for a small contemporary inscription in endleaves: '*Jesus cristus dei virtus*'.

CD.17

(i) Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium secundum Ioannem* (Basel, 1534)

(ii) Erasmus, *In acta apostolorum paraphrasis Erasmi Roterodami* (Basel, 1534)

Contemporary binding using Oldham panels HM.27 and HM.28 [Oldham: 1516, 1525-44; Pearson: c.1530-45]. Remains of clasps. Rebacked. TP of (i) signed: '*Gulielmus Wickham. Post tenebras spero lucem*', i.e. William Wickham, prebend of Westminster 1570-1 and later bishop of Winchester (d.1595). From the gift of John Williams, dean of Westminster (c.1623). Small amount of contemporary ms, perhaps in Wickham's hand.

D.2.5

Algerius (ed. Erasmus), *De veritate corporis et sanguinis dominici in Eucharistia* (Cologne, 1535)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham roll HM.h(25) [1535-56]. Rebacked. Remains of holes for ties. Likely had ms waste in original binding as blue capital letter has rubbed onto opening flyleaf. Two contemporary hands in the flyleaves, leaving a recipe and an extract from Origen. From the gift of John Williams, dean of Westminster (c.1623). TP: '*Liber Bibliothecae S.P. Westmonast[ri]*' (xvi/xvii). On tp.v, the same Westminster Library hand extracts biographical information from Bellarmine about Algerius. Scattered ?later ms but a great deal of underlining.

A.1.61

(i) Cicero, *Libri tres de officiis* (Lyon, 1540)

(ii) Erasmus, *Enchiridion... De praepratione ad mortem* (Basel, 1540)

Contemporary pigskin binding, probably European in origin, using an HM roll and various floral stamps. Remains of clasps. On the verso of the front board: 'Lockier', i.e. Francis Lockier, dean of Peterborough (d.1740). From the gift of Zachary Pearce (d.1774). Pearce acquired a number of Lockier's books. Some underlining and contemporary ms in opening pages of (i). No ms in (ii).

E.2.64

Erasmus, *Novum Testamentum, Graece et Latine* (Paris, 1543)

Later blind-tooled binding. Extensively repaired, preserving original covers. Remains of ties. Faint fore-edge title and remains of former staining to the text block. New papers inserted. Some underlining in Matthew, otherwise no ms.

Winchester College Fellows' Library:

A19 Bk269

Erasmus, *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel, 1516)

In a later binding ('new bound 1784'), with marbled papers. Fore-edge signed: 'R. Pace'. The copy of Richard Pace (d.1536). Some Greek ms, probably in Pace's hand. Two other Latin ms, perhaps by other readers. At Winchester College by 1565.

C20 Bk802

Athanasius, *Opera* (Paris, 1519)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham roll FL.a(4) with orn. B(5) [1492, 1494, 1508-27]. Printed pastedowns from an unidentified Aldine edition of Aristotle's *De animalibus*, translated by Theodore of Gaza (start of Bk iii and sig. G2r.). Contemporary fore-edge title. Remains of clasps and holes for chain. TP signed: 'Stokley' (and later '*Liber Ro. Stokley*') and '*Ex dono Georgii Greswoldi clerici*'. Roger Stockley and Greswold both fellows of All Souls, Oxford in early sixteenth century. Part of Greswold's bequest to the college in 1558 (Willoughby). A handful of contemporary ms.

A19 Bk3527

Erasmus, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1522)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, perhaps of Oxford origin, using Oldham orn. B(5) (Pearson 18/18b) and Oldham tools 184 and ?168. In use in the early sixteenth century. TP signed: 'Henricus Clifford' (erased), i.e. second earl of Cumberland (d.1570); 'Liber Petri Desforges pret. 10s'. On p.629 signed: 'Johannes Warde' (16th) with price mark '6s'. Several candidates for Ward. Also a note from Cuthbert Hamilton Turner that the book was bought in London from Thomas Baker and donated to Winchester College in 1919. Contemporary ms in red ink. Also later ms.

A20 Bk22

Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium Matthaei. Paraphrases in omneis epistolas apostolicas* (Basel, 1522)
Later binding. TP: 'ex dono georgii Greswoldi clerici?'; 'liber collegi?'. Part of Greswold's bequest to the college in 1558 (Willoughby). No ms.

A31 Bk91

Erasmus, *Exomologesis* (Basel, 1524)
Modern parchment binding. Signed by printer's device: 'Richardus Rudde' (xvi). MS throughout in xvi/xvii hands. Bookplate of C.H. Turner (1930).

N23 Bk 3528, N23 Bk13041

(i) *Eutropii insigne volumne quo Romana historia universa describitur, ex diversorum authoru monumentis collecta ...Pauli diaconi Aquileiensis de gestis Langobardorum Libri VI* (Basel, Froben, 1532)

(ii) Erasmus, *Apophthegmatum opus* (Basel, 1532)

Later binding. Rebacked with new papers added. Foreedges stained red. Vellum tags to indicate the sections of the book. TP: 'Liber Collegij S[an]cta Maria prope Winton ex dono ?Route Comensalis ad mensa puerorum?'. No ms.

A20 Bk3525

Erasmus, *Ecclesiastae* (Basel, 1535)

Later binding with new papers inserted. Foreedge title: 'Erasmus de conciona[ndi]'. TP: 'Legavit Joannes Crooke huius collegi socius 1645'. The letter R also repeatedly inscribed on tp. In the back is the name 'nicolas brett' and a booklist of evangelical authors in the same hand. Brett may have been a canon of Canterbury Cathedral in 1560 (CCEd) and the booklist presumably dates from a similar time, containing works with imprints up to 1553. MS in a contemporary hand throughout, though not Brett's.

A19 Bk3523

Erasmus, *Adagiorum chiliades iuxta locos communes digestae* (Basel, ?1536)

Modern binding. TP extensively repaired. No ms.

N27 Bk3116, N27 Bk3529, N27 Bk2854

(i) Gilbertus Ducherius, *Epigrammaton duo libri* (Lyon, 1538)

(ii) Erasmus, *Erasmi ad Gulielmum Copum Basiliensem de senectutis incommodis, heroico carmine* (Paris, 1536)

(iii) Joannes Darcus Venusini, *Canes* (Paris, 1543)

Modern binding. Foreedges stained red. Bookplate of Alexander Thistlethwayte (?1718-1771). On the last page (iii) there is a long note in a contemporary hand.

York Minster:

XXXV.D.15

Erasmus, *Responsio ad annotationes Eduardi Lei. Apologia de In principio erat sermo. Eduardi Lei annotationes in Novum Testamentum Erasmi. Epistolae aliquot illustrium virorum* (Basel 1520)

Currently in a modern repair binding, though note states: 'Bind old covers in position'. Old covers assumed to be lost. This copy lacks a number of its pages, which have been supplied by a photocopy of the BL edition. Long note on first surviving leaf (?17th). Contemporary red ink ms in italic hand.

Stainton 13

Erasmus, *Paraphrasim in evangelium Matthaei... In universas epistolas apostolorum paraphrasis* (Basel 1522)
 In a plain later binding with 'Stainton Vicarage' tooled on front cover. Foreedges lightly marbled. TP signed: 'Rich. Lumley' (17th). Bequeathed to Stainton, Yorkshire in 1694 by Richard Lumley. At York minster since 1911. Also contemporary signature on p.176: 'Thomas Damson [or: Davison]'. MS and underlining in several contemporary hands.

Stainton 21

Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (?Strasbourg, 1522)

In a plain later binding with 'Stainton Vicarage' tooled on front cover. Foreedges lightly marbled. TP signed: 'John Baynes [or: Raynes]' (16th); 'K. Lumley' (17th). William Lawson (?late-16th) signature on p.15. Bequeathed to Stainton, Yorkshire in 1694 by Richard Lumley. At York Minster since 1911. Extensive ms in several hands throughout, some perhaps in Baynes' and Lawson's hands. Note in the back remarks on Thomas Pope's founding of Trinity and William Wainfleet's founding of Magdalen.

XXXVIII.E.13

Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in Evangelium Matthaei* (Basel, 1522)

Contemporary binding, using Oldham blind panels VS.5 (with small segment of DI roll) and AC.10 [1508?-25]. Printed pastedowns from an early sixteenth-century edition of the *Doctrinale* of Alexander de Villa Dei. Both front and endleaves of this volume covered in extensive pen trails, names and other ms. Contemporary names include: 'Daniell Robynsenne', 'John Dytchfield', 'ffrancis john humfray', 'Robertus wr[?]cke' (on tp); 'James Lawton', 'James Plunton', 'John Denson his booke Amen ?1633' (and another in Greek later), 'William Denson his booke 1679'. Occasional contemporary ms on the text itself, some perhaps by Plunton. On the final leaf are a set of rather damaged contemporary notes.

III.L.26

(i) *In hoc libello pontifici oratoris continetur legatio, in conventu Noremburgensi* (?Nuremberg, 1523)

(ii) *Determinatio facultatis theologiae in scola Parisiensi super quamplurimis assertionibus D. Erasmi* (Antwerp, 1531)

In a modern binding, with new papers. TP signed: 'Tobias Dunelm[sis]', i.e. Tobie Matthew, who used this signature while bishop of Durham (1595-1606). Matthew's signature over the top of a former owner's. A contemporary reader in (i) has indicated the English, Scottish and Irish houses mentioned. No ms in (ii).

Stainton 276

Erasmus, *Lingua* (? , 1525)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham roll CH.c(9) [1541, 1584]. Printed waste used as flyleaves. Remains of holes for ties and red ties preserved in back. MS waste used to support spine. Printed waste used as flyleaves. Front: Thomas Linacre's edition [STC 11535] of Galen's *De symptomatum differentiis* (London, Pynson, 1524), sigs g4r-v. Back: an unidentified Dutch or German text. TP signed: 'G. Lawson' with motto; 'Rich Lumley'. Also: 'Lincolnshire' (16th). In endleaves: '*per me Gulielmum Hylton*' (16th). Several candidates for Hilton.

Stainton 22

(i) Chrysostom (ed. Erasmus), *Commentarius in epistolam ad Galatas* (Basel 1527)

(ii) John Chrysostom, *In Epistolam ad Philippenses homilae duae. Libellus elegans Graecus, in quo confert verum monachum* (Basel, 1526)

In a plain later binding with 'Stainton Vicarage' tooled on front cover. Foreedges lightly marbled. TP signed: 'Rich. Lumley' (17th); also the remains of William Lawson's signature (?late-16th), see Stainton 21 and 217. Bequeathed to Stainton, Yorkshire in 1694 by Richard Lumley. At York Minster since 1911. Some contemporary ms in (i), perhaps in Lawson's hand.

VI.B.9.

Aristotle, *Opera* (Basel 1531)

Later marbled binding. Foreedge title in Greek. TP signed by Nicholas Udall, in Greek in 1533, stating that the book was a gift from the printer, Bebel (see Lazarus, 'Speaking Books'). From the bequest of Tobie Matthew to York Minster. Small ms marks and numbers in margins.

XVI.F.25.

Erasmus, *Purgatio adversum epistolam... Lutheri* (Basel 1534)

Modern binding with large number of papers added and pages bound in wrong order in places. On tp: 'D. Martino Buc[er]?' and was once thought to be an autograph of Erasmus to Bucer. Bears no relation to Erasmus' or Bucer's hand and probably a later addition. Also a note from library staff querying the attribution. No ms.

XVI.N.19

(i) Michael Vehe, *Assertio sacrorum quorundam axiomaticum* (Leipzig, 1535)

(ii) Edward Lee, *Sunt in hoc volumine apologia Eduardi Leei* (Paris, 1520)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, using Oldham roll CH.a(1) [1521-37]. Gilt tooled York Minster Library added at a later date. Remains of holes for ties. Contemporary foredge title: 'M. Vehe / Leeus'. Two bookplates from YML, including one dated 1751. Some contemporary corrections in (i) and (ii), though not in the same hand. Some underlining and a red pencil inscription in endleaves: 'plynib[?] pystel[?] / an ynglyb[?]', perhaps, with a price mark.

Stainton 217

Erasmus, *Ecclesiastes* (Antwerp 1535)

In a plain later binding with 'Stainton Vicarage' tooled on front cover. Foreedges lightly marbled. TP signed: 'G Lawson' (twice); 'Rich. Lumley'. Another signature has been erased. Bequeathed to Stainton, Yorkshire in 1694 by Richard Lumley. At York Minster since 1911. Heavy contemporary ms throughout, possibly in Lawson's hand.

XV.M.11.

(i) Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Basel, 1535)

(ii) Erasmus, *De praeparatione ad mortem* (Basel, 1535)

Contemporary blind-tooled binding, produced in Oxford with Pearson centrepiece v [mid-1580s-1605]. TP signed: 'Gulielmi Chedsey', i.e. William Chedsey, former president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford and Marian cleric (d.1577). Elsewhere signed: 'Charles Greenwood'; 'Radcliffe'; 'ex dono Henrici Tilson decanus templi Christi?'. Both Greenwood and Tilson were fellows at University College, Oxford, in the 1590s. Several Radcliffes passed through the college in these years as well, the likeliest candidate being Sir George Radcliffe, gentleman of Thornhill, Yorkshire, where Greenwood was rector from 1613. Book presumably bequeathed to York Minster by Henry Tilson. A single piece of ms in (ii), trimmed, and perhaps similar to Chedsey's hand. Drawing of faces in endleaves by Greenwood/Radcliffe.

Unknown:

Sotheby's, 2-4 December 2015, Lot 965

Erasmus, *Paraphrasis in evangelium Matthaei* (Basel, 1521)

Contemporary binding by John Reynes.

Manuscripts

Alnwick Castle, Northumberland:

MS Percy 465, *The Ecclesiaste*, c.1530-3.

Basel, Universitätsbibliothek:

AN VI 1, Plutarch, *Quo pacto quis efficiat ut inimicis capiat utilitatem*, c.1514.

MS K.I.4, John Claymond, *Commentary on Pliny* (16 vols), c.1530-6.

Cambridge, University Library:

MS Add. 6858, Plutarch, *De discrimine adulatorio et amici*, 1513.

MS Dd.vii.3, *Evangelia Matthaei et Marci*, 1509-c.1530.

Durham, University Library:

Cosin MS V.ii.6, Symeon of Durham, *Historia Ecclesiae Dunelm.*, s. xii.

Hatfield House, Hertfordshire:

Cecil Papers MS. 324, *New Testament*, c.1530.

MS 277/1, Bernard André, *Poem*, c.1520.

Leicester, Leicestershire Record Office:

Cod. 6 D 32/1, *Codex Leicestrensis*, s. xv.

London, British Library

Add MS 5663, *Locutiones seu phrasae in novo testamento, quae videntur secundum proprietates linguae Hebraeae*, 1544.

Add. MS 15673, William Sellyng, *Sermo Sancti Chrysostomi ad populum consolatorius*, s. xvi.

Add MS 16173, *Theological Commonplace Book*, s. xvi.

Add. MS 19553, Isocrates, *Ad Nicolem de regno*; Lucian, *De calumnia* c.1505

Add. MS 47675, William Sellyng, *Sermo Sancti Chrysostomi ad populum consolatorius*, s. xvi.

Add MS 89149, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, c.1523.

Cotton MS, *Various letters and papers*, s.xvi.

Egerton MS 1651, *Poems by Erasmus*, c.1499

Harley MS 336, Giovanni Gigli, *Epigrams*, c.1487

Harley MS 6561, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, *Epistres et Evangiles des cinquante et deux semaines de l'an*, c.1533.

Harley MS 6989, *Letters and state warrants*, 1377-1557.

Royal MS 1 E V (2 vols), *New Testament*, 1506-c.1530.

Royal MS 7 B XI-XII, *Cranmer's Commonplace books*, c.1535-50.

Royal MS 12 B XVI, *Practica Alexandri*, s. xiii.

Royal MS 16 E XIV, Gervasius Amoenus (trans.), *Translations of Erasmus and Pico*, c.1508-9.

Royal MSS 16 E XXIV and XXV, *Lexposicion du xv e pseaulme* and *Douze reigles en partie excitantes et en partie adressantes l'homme en la bataille espirituelle*, 1485-1509.

Royal MS 17A XLVI, Henry Parker, Lord Morley (trans.), *The laude or prayse to be saide vnto the Virgyn Mary, mother of Chryste Jesu*, c.1537-47.

Royal MS 17 A XLIX, Henry Fitzalan, *A certaine treatise cauled the institution of a christen prince or ruler*, 1550.

Royal MS 17B XXXIX, *Certeine notes touching the disputacions of the bisshoppes in this late parliament assembled of the Lordes Supper*, c.1548.

MS Royal 19 C VI, Xenophon, *Anabasis*, c.1508.

London, The National Archives:

State Papers, s. xvi.

London, Westminster Abbey:

MS 9, *Psalter*. xv cent.

CD.38, Erasmus, *Manuscript prayers*, c.1553.

Oxford, Balliol College:

MS 353, John Prise, *Miscellany of Welsh Verse and Other Materials*, c.1535-50.

Oxford, Bodleian Library:

MS Bodley 685, *Tabula septem custodiarum*, 1349-s. xvi.

Oxford, Brasenose College:

MS 31, *Alexander Nowell Accounts*, s. xvi.

Oxford, Corpus Christi College:

MSS 13-14, *New Testament* (2 vols), c.1520.

MS 23, Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew*, s. xv.

MSS 178-81, John Claymond, *Commentary on Pliny*, c.1530-6.

Winchester, Winchester College Fellows' Library:

MS 33.(7), Erasmus, *De ratione conscribendi epistolas*, s. xvi.

Printed Primary

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- - -, *Lucubrationculae quaedam non inuenuste* (Paris, 1513).
- Anon. (trans.), *An epystell unto the reverende father & excellent prince, Christofer bysshop of Basyle, concernyng the forbedyng of eatyng of flesshe, and lyke constitutyons of men* (London, 1533).
- Aretaeus, *Medici lib. VIII* (Paris, 1554).
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- Ba., Ro., *The Lyfe of Syr Thomas More*, ed. E. Hitchcock and P. Hallett (London, 1950).
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- - -, *The true historie of the Christen departyng of the reuerende man D. Martyne Luther* (Wesel, 1546).
- - -, *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae* (Basel, 1557).
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- Bullock, Henry, *Lepidissimum Luciani opusculum* (Cambridge, 1520).
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- - -, *The Works of John Caius, M.D.*, ed. Ernest Roberts (Cambridge, 1912).
- Calepinus, Ambrosius, *Lexicon* (Paris, 1538)
- Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers, Relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain: Preserved in the Archives at Simancas and Elsewhere*, ed. G. Bergenroth, et al. (13 vols in 20, London, 1862-1954).

- Campanus, Joannes, *Epistole familiares Joannis Antonij Campani clarissimi oratoris* (Cologne, 1516).
- Carion, Johann, *The thre bokes of cronicles* (London, 1550).
- Chaloner, Thomas, *The praise of folie* (London, 1549).
- Chrysostom, *Opera, quatenus in hunc diem latio donata noscuntur* (5 vols, Paris, 1546).
- Cochlaeus, Joannes, *Acta et decreti concilii Triburiensis* (Mainz, 1525).
- Colet, John, *John Colet's Commentary on First Corinthians*, ed. Bernard O'Kelley and Catherine Jarrott (Binghampton, 1985).
- Cochlaeus, Johannes, *Antiqua et insignis epistola Nicolai Papa I* (Leipzig, 1536).
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- Cox, Leonard, *Paraphrase on Titus* (London, c.1534).
- Cranmer, Thomas, *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer Relative to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* (Cambridge, 1844).
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- Erasmus, Desiderius, *Lucubrationculae aliquot perquam utiles adolescentibus* (Antwerp, 1503).
- - -, *Novum Instrumentum* (Basel, 1516).
- - -, *Auctarium selectarum aliquot epistolarum Erasmi ad eruditos* (Basel, 1518).
- - -, *Contenta in hoc libello, Erasmi Roterodami epistola* (Leipzig, 1519).
- - -, *Farrago nova epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami ad alios* (Basel, 1519).
- - -, *Erasmi Roterodami duo epistolia de causa Lutherana* (Leipzig, 1521).
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