Renaissance and Reformation
Renaissance et Réforme

Robert Radcliffe's Translation of Joannes Ravisius Textor's Dialogi (1530) and the Henrician Reformation

Ágnes Juhász-Ormsby

Volume 40, Number 3, Summer 2017

Translating Dramatic Texts in Sixteenth-Century England and France
Traduire le texte dramatique au seizième siècle en Angleterre et en France

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1086131ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v40i3.28735

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)
2293-7374 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Juhász-Ormsby, Á. (2017). Robert Radcliffe's Translation of Joannes Ravisius Textor's Dialogi (1530) and the Henrician Reformation. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, *40*(3), 19–45. https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v40i3.28735

Article abstract

Joannes Ravisius Textor's Dialogi aliquot festivissimi (1530) exerted considerable influence in England in the 1530s. The English Textor movement was spurred primarily by the dialogues' effectiveness in advancing and popularizing specific religious changes promoted by the government as part of the unfolding Henrician Reformation. Around 1540, the master of Jesus College School in Cambridge, Robert Radcliffe, dedicated a collection of prose translations of Textor's three dialogues—A Governor, or of the Church (Ecclesia), The Poor Man and Fortune (Pauper et fortuna), and Death and the Goer by the Way (Mors et viator)—to Henry VIII. Radcliffe's translations, especially the politically charged A Governor, demonstrate that not only his strategically selected source texts but also his method of translation helped him position himself in influential court circles and shape his image as a humanist scholar, schoolmaster, and translator.

Robert Radcliffe's Translation of Joannes Ravisius Textor's *Dialogi* (1530) and the Henrician Reformation

ÁGNES JUHÁSZ-ORMSBY
Memorial University

Joannes Ravisius Textor's Dialogi aliquot festivissimi *(1530) exerted considerable influence in England in the 1530s. The English Textor movement was spurred primarily by the dialogues' effectiveness in advancing and popularizing specific religious changes promoted by the government as part of the unfolding Henrician Reformation. Around 1540, the master of Jesus College School in Cambridge, Robert Radcliffe, dedicated a collection of prose translations of Textor's three dialogues—*A Governor, or of the Church (Ecclesia), The Poor Man and Fortune (Pauper et fortuna)*, and* Death and the Goer by the Way (Mors et viator)*—to Henry VIII. Radcliffe's translations, especially the politically charged* A Governor*, demonstrate that not only his strategically selected source texts but also his method of translation helped him position himself in influential court circles and shape his image as a humanist scholar, schoolmaster, and translator.*[1]

Les Dialogi aliquot festivissimi *(1530) de Joannes Ravisius Textor ont exercé une influence importante en Angleterre pendant les années 1530. Le succès du mouvement anglais de Textor est principalement dû à l'efficacité avec laquelle les dialogues mettent de l'avant et popularisent des transformations religieuses spécifiques que promouvait le gouvernement dans le contexte du déploiement de la Réforme d'Henri VIII. Autour de 1540, le maître du Jesus College de Cambridge, Robert Radcliffe, a dédié une collection de traduction en prose des trois dialogues de Textor —* A Governor, or of the Church (Ecclesia)*,* The Poor Man and Fortune (Pauper et fortuna)*, et* Death and the Goer by the Way (Mors et viator) *— à Henri VIII. Les traductions de Radcliffe, en particulier celle du* A Governor *chargé politiquement, montrent qu'il a cherché à se positionner dans des cercles de cour d'influence et se construire une image de chercheur, d'écolâtre et de traducteur humaniste, non seulement à l'aide de ses choix stratégiques de textes à traduire, mais aussi à travers ses méthodes de traductions.*

The celebrated master of the Collège de Navarre in Paris, Joannes Ravisius Textor (1492–1522), enjoyed great popularity in Europe throughout the sixteenth century—mostly because of his pedagogical works that appeared in the first half of the century. Modelled on Italian *farragines* and Erasmus's educational methods, both Textor's encyclopedic *Officina*, a comprehensive

1. I would like to express my gratitude to James P. Carley, Alexandra Johnston, Sally-Beth MacLean, Iona Bulgin, and the anonymous readers of *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* for their most valuable advice and comments.

commonplace book, and his *Epitheta* (1518), a collection of epithets, provided students with a storehouse of linguistic, rhetorical, and compositional exercises in Latin language practice.[2] Similarly, his *Dialogi aliquot festivissimi*, a collection of dialogues, published posthumously in 1530, was meant to enrich students' Latin vocabulary or *copia verborum*, idiomatic expressions, and syntactical structures, while improving their *memoria* and *actio*, two fundamental prerequisites of oratorical skills.[3] At the same time, the dialogues offered sound moral lessons on a variety of topics in the form of edifying yet entertaining short dramatic pieces (usually two to three hundred lines long). The nineteen morality plays, three farces, and two sotties that constitute Textor's *Dialogi* were composed in hexameter and elegiac couplets and enact on the stage a *psychomachia* between allegorical characters who occasionally deliver highly satirical and propagandistic messages related to contemporary French court politics. Although Textor's dialogues are deeply rooted in the medieval morality tradition, they are permeated with classical references—mainly to Virgil, Lucan, and Statius—and thus represent a form of rhetorical drama much favoured by humanist schoolmasters.

As has been previously noted, Textor's dialogues exerted considerable influence in England in the 1530s, evoking, in Robert Hornback's words, "a virtual

2. See more on Textor in Nathaël Istasse, "L'humaniste Joannes Ravisius Textor: entre pédagogie et poétique," in *Nouveuax regards sur les "Apollons de collège": figures du professeur humaniste en France dans la première moitié du XVI^e siècle,* ed. Mathieu Ferrand and Nathaël Istasse, (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2014), 35–62; "Joannes Ravisius Textor: Mise au point biographique," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 69.3 (2007): 691–703, and "Les *Epitheta* et l'*Officina* de Joannes Ravisius Textor: conception auctoriale et destinée éditoriale," *Qui Écrit? Figures de l'auteur et des co-élaborateurs du XV^e–XVIII^e siècle* (2009): 111–35. See also Mathieu Ferrand, "Humanist Neo-Latin Drama in France," in *Neo-Latin Drama and Theatre in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jan Bloemendal and Howard B. Norland (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 369–75; I. D. McFarlane, "Reflections on Ravisius Textor's *Specimen Epithetorum*," in *Classical Influences on European Culture, A. D. 1500–1700: Proceedings of an International Conference Held at King's College, Cambridge, April 1974*, ed. R. R. Bolgar (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 81–90.

3. On the pedagogical function of Textor's *Dialogi*, see Mathieu Ferrand, "Le théâtre des collèges au début du XVI^e siècle: les *Dialogi* (1530) de Johannes Ravisius Textor," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 72 (2010): 337–68; Olivier Pédeflous, "Ravisius Textor's School Drama and Its Links to Pedagogical Literature in Early Modern France," in *The Early Modern Cultures of Neo-Latin Drama*, ed. Philip Ford and Andrew Taylor (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013), 19–40.

English Textor movement."[4] A fragmentary English translation of the dialogue *Iuvenis, pater et uxor*, an adaptation of the biblical story of the prodigal son, was published in London before 1534 by the printer William Rastell, followed by an English *Thersites* attributed to the humanist schoolmaster and playwright Nicholas Udall, composed around 1537.[5] Shortly after that, the master of Jesus College School in Cambridge, Robert Radcliffe, dedicated his English prose translation of Textor's three dialogues—*A Governor, or of the Church* (*Ecclesia*), *The Poor Man and Fortune* (*Pauper et fortuna*), and *Death and the Goer by the Way* (*Mors et viator*)—to Henry VIII.[6] Finally, a performance of a dialogue by Textor (most likely in Latin) was recorded at Queen's College, Cambridge, in the academic year of 1542–43.[7] It has been suggested that the Parisian master's dialogues were introduced to England by Henry VIII's antiquary and Udall's friend, John Leland, who studied under Textor's fellow educator François Dubois in Paris in the early 1520s.[8] Nevertheless, it remains unclear how and

4. Robert Hornback, "Lost Conventions of Godly Comedy in Udall's *Thersites*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 47 (2007): 281–303.

5. See an edition of the Rastell fragment in W. W. Greg, ed., *Collections. Part I* (Oxford: Malone Society, 1907), 27–30. See Darryll Grantley, *English Dramatic Interludes 1300–1580: A Reference Guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 274–75, no. 73. A modern edition of *Thersites* is found in Marie Axton, ed., *Three Tudor Classical Interludes: Thersites, Jacke Jugeler, Horestes* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer and Rowman & Littlefield, 1982), 37–63, 161–79. Similar to Hornback, Axton attributes *Thersites* to Udall in her introduction to *Three Tudor Classical Interludes*, 5–15. See A. R. Moon, "Was Nicholas Udall the Author of 'Thersites'?" *The Library, Fourth Series* 7 (1927): 184–93. However, Martin Wiggins notes that the attribution is based on "negligible evidence," in *British Drama 1533–1642: A Catalogue. Volume I: 1533–1566* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 46. In this article, the attribution suggested by Axton and Hornback is followed. Subsequent references to *Thersites* are taken from Axton's edition.

6. National Library of Wales, Brogyntyn MS II. 10. See *A Governor*, Brogyntyn MS, 3–64; *The Poor Man and Fortune,* Brogyntyn MS, 65–72; *Death and the Goer by the Way*, Brogyntyn MS, 75–89. See Wiggins, nos. 87–89. *A Governor* was edited by Hertha Schulze, *Ecclesia: A Dialogue by Ravisius Textor Translated from the* Dialogi Aliquot *by His Contemporary Radcliffe* (Rochester, NY: The Press of Good Mountain, 1980). Subsequent references to *A Governor* are taken from Schulze's edition; page references will hereafter appear in parentheses in the main text.

7. Alan H. Nelson, ed., *Cambridge, 1: The Records* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 128.

8. Pédeflous, 27. Leland's Parisian connections are discussed in James P. Carley, "John Leland in Paris: The Evidence of His Poetry," *Studies in Philology* 83 (1986): 1–50. On Dubois's pedagogical activity, see Jean Lecointe, "François Dubois et l'enseignement de la poésie au Collège de Montaigu," in Ferrand and Istasse, ed., 23–34.

for what reason Textor's *Dialogi* was translated and disseminated in England. The sudden surge in English translations in the 1530s is all the more puzzling as, according to the limited testimony of extant booklists, Textor's *Dialogi* did not become widespread in England until the second half of the sixteenth century and its first edition was not printed in London until 1581.[9] The adaptability of Textor's dialogues for conversational and compositional exercises in grammar schools was certainly an important contributing factor, but, as I will argue, the English Textor movement was spurred primarily by the dialogues' effectiveness in advancing and popularizing certain religious changes promoted by the government as part of the unfolding English Reformation. As Hornback has demonstrated, Udall's *Thersites* buttressed the official propaganda against traditional devotion, specifically against reliquaries and shrines, whereas Robert Radcliffe's *A Governor* (translated probably in the late 1530s or early 1540), through its highly critical portrayal of monastic practices, responded to the methodical suppression and dissolution of religious houses throughout England between 1536 and 1539.

While both Udall and Radcliffe turned to translation to convey their politicized message, reflecting on the religious and political changes that were brought about by the English Reformation, they did so by means of markedly different methods of translation. Udall delivered his extra-literary agenda through paraphrase and extensive amplification of his source text. His desire to domesticate Textor's dialogue prevailed over the demands of producing an accurate English version and resulted in a more inclusive rhetorical translation that accommodated embellishments and amplifications conceived, in Gordon Braden's words, "in the service of some immediate strategic purpose."[10] In Radcliffe's case, however, the same cultural recontextualization does not occur

9. See examples in E. S. Leedham-Green, *Books in Cambridge Inventories: Book-Lists from Vice-Chancellor's Court Probate Inventories in the Tudor and Stuart Periods. Volume II: Catalogue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 657–58; R. J. Fehrenbach and E. S. Leedham-Green, eds., *Private Libraries in Renaissance England: A Collection and Catalogue of Tudor and Early Stuart Book-Lists*, vol. 4 (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995), 98.3, 105.2, and vol. 5 (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998), 127.175. Axton notes that Udall's patron, Thomas Wriothesley, also owned a copy of Textor's *Epithetorum* (Paris, 1518). See Axton, *Three Tudor Classical Interludes*, 6.

10. Gordon Braden, "Translating Procedures in Theory and Practice," in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English: Volume II 1550–1660*, ed. Gordon Braden, Robert Cummings, and Stuart Gillespie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 94.

at a linguistic level. In fact, Radcliffe's stringent literalism precludes and even supresses any purposeful transformation of the original text. Radcliffe encased *A Governor* in a collection of devotional dialogues, presenting it as an occasional piece of essentially religious meditation. Nevertheless, the English rendering of Textor's *Ecclesia* acquires a pointed and actualized political meaning and topical relevance within the context of a web of contemporary historical documents and literary works propagating the dissolution of monastic orders, which it echoes. It is the strategically chosen text and its dedication to Henry VIII, the very agent of this determinative religious change, that provides the transformative force to Radcliffe's translation of Textor's dialogues and keeps it in the malleable continuum of the religious and the political.

Significantly, Udall and Radcliffe were patronized by Henry VIII's powerful secretary, Thomas Cromwell, who, on several fronts, orchestrated a campaign to propagate Royal Supremacy (authorized by Parliament in 1534) by discrediting traditional practices and undermining the authority of the pope in England. Dramatic performances in particular proved to be a potent tool, as Cromwell's secretary and publicist, Sir Richard Morison, expressed in his *A Discourse Touching the Reformation of the Lawes of England*.[11] While the political usefulness of the anonymous translator of *Iuvenis, pater et uxor* (entitled *The Prodigal Son* by its editor, W. W. Greg), which survived as an end leaf of an octavo volume printed in Paris but bound in England, is far less obvious, dramatic adaptations based on the parable of the prodigal son were eagerly embraced by reform-minded educators both on the Continent and in England.[12] Unlike Rastell's interlude, Udall's translation of Textor's dialogue

11. "Howmoche better is it that those plaies shulde be forbidden and deleted and others dyvysed to set forthe and declare lyvely before the peoples eies the abhomynation and wickedness of the bisshop of Rome, monkes, ffreers, nonnes, and suche like, and to declare and open to them thobedience that your subiectes by goddess and mans laws owe unto your magestie." Quoted in Sydney Anglo, "An Early Tudor Programme for Plays and Other Demonstrations against the Pope," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20.1 (1957): 176–79, 179. See also W. R. Streitberger, "The Royal Image and the Politics of Entertainment," *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 39 (2000): 1–16; compare with Alexandra Johnston, "William Cecil and the Drama of Persuasion," in *Shakespeare and Religious Change*, ed. Kenneth Graham and Philip Collington (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 63–87.

12. Although more dramatic in its elimination of long soliloquys than its source text, the fragmentary English version of eighty-four lines follows Textor's pattern of an admonitory tale for young students. Thus, both the Latin original and the English translation ignore the traditional interpretation of the biblical story as an allegory of divine providence and they both reinforce such conventional moral

Thersites, a parody of the second book of Homer's *Iliad*, a common school text, undoubtedly reveals the propagandistic function of the English translations. An associate of Morison and a client of Cromwell, Udall was well known by his contemporaries for his evangelical plays: the now lost iconoclastic *Ezechias* and the antipapal *Tragoedia de papatu*.[13] He most likely composed *Thersites* (according to the testimony of the epilogue) around the time of Prince Edward's birth and prior to Jane Seymour's (Henry VIII's third wife) death on 24 October 1537. Whether the play was actually presented at court, possibly by Udall's students from Eton College, is uncertain. Nevertheless, as Axton has shown, the stage directions and frequent references to Oxford and its surroundings in the text intimate that the play may have been intended for presentation in a college hall by student actors.[14] As Hornback demonstrates in his study of *Thersites*, the play was meant to promote Cromwell's iconoclastic campaign against the cult of images and relics, first codified in the *Bishops' Book* in 1537. Udall expanded the basic plot of the 267-line dialogue into a 915-line mock-heroic comedy to include a lengthy magical ritual which satirizes Catholic superstitions by invoking a burlesque catalogue of religious relics.[15] Furthermore, Hornback points out that, compared to Textor, Udall purposefully distorts the braggart Thersites's relationship with Mater, who, instead of being a caring mother, is represented as a debased, idolatrous old witch. Thus, in Udall's play Mater becomes a conflated embodiment of the Roman Church, the Catholic Mass, and the Whore of Babylon, a familiar figure from antipapal

---

lessons as not to disobey one's father, abandon one's studies, or get married too early. The continued popularity of Textor's dialogue of *Iuvenis, pater et uxor* is further attested by Thomas Ingelend's interlude *Disobedient Child* which appeared around 1569. On English prodigal son plays, see Alan R. Young, *The English Prodigal Son Plays: A Theatrical Fashion of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik Universität Salzburg, 1979), 55–87; Howard B. Norland, *Drama in Early Tudor Britain, 1485–1558* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 149–60.

13. *Tragoedia de papatu* is mentioned by John Bale in *Illustrium maioris Britanniae scriptorum* (Basel, 1548), 233r–v, and *Scriptorium illustrium maioris Brytanniae quam nunc Angliam et Scotiam uocant: Catalogus* (Basle, 1557), 717. On *Ezechias*, see William L. Edgerton, *Nicholas Udall* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1965), 82–83.

14. Axton, *Three Tudor Classical Interludes*, 12–14. Notwithstanding the circumstances of its performance, the topic of *Thersites* also figures in an extended note in Udall's *Apophthegmes* (146v–147r), an annotated English translation of Erasmus's collection of sayings, printed in 1541, that Udall most likely compiled from his teaching notes at Eton.

15. Hornback, 289–92.

satires of the 1530s. Her character and the mock exorcism that concludes the English version—like a satirical anti-mass—reaffirm the popular evangelical association of Catholicism with witchcraft.[16]

While Udall's court connections, particularly with his friend Leland and his patron Cromwell, are fairly well documented, the identity of the translator of Textor's three dialogues has been subject to much debate.[17] Although the autograph presentation manuscript of the dialogues is clearly signed by Robert Radcliffe, master of Jesus College School in Cambridge, he had been commonly identified by scholars with his contemporary Ralph Radcliffe, who, according to John Bale's catalogue, as headmaster established a theatre and staged a number of antipapal plays in his school in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, in the late 1530s.[18] Alternatively, he was mistaken for Ralph's cousin Robert Radcliffe, the First Earl of Sussex, who was a recognized patron of the theatre and whose troupe, the Earl of Sussex's Players, was known to have performed in Guildhall in Cambridge in 1538–39.[19] However, as Margaret Rogerson has shown, Robert Radcliffe was indeed a schoolmaster in Cambridge, who requested support from Cromwell for further studies at the university in a letter composed from the Carmelites' college in 1533.[20] He was most likely granted the position of

16. Hornback, 292–98.

17. The standard biographical sources on Udall are Edgerton, 13–67; G. Scheurweghs, *Nicholas Udall's Roister Doister* (Louvain, Belgium: Librairie Universitaire, 1939), xi–l; Marie Axton, "Nicholas Udall," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography: Elizabethan Dramatists*, ed. Fredson Bowers (Detroit, MI: Gale Research, 1987), 354–59; and Matthew Steggle, "Nicholas Udall (1504–1556)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). All references to the *ODBN* in this article are to the edition cited here.

18. See, for example, Margaret Healy, "Radcliffe, Ralph (1518/19–1559)," in *ODNB*. The misattribution of Robert Radcliffe's translation to Ralph Radcliffe originates from Reginald L. Hine, "Ralph Radcliffe (1519–1559)," in *Hitchin Worthies: Four Centuries of English Life* (Old Woking, Surrey: The Gresham Press, 1974), 33–49. For Bale's comments on Ralph Radcliffe's theatre in Hitchin, see R. L. Poole and M. Bateson, eds. (intro. Caroline Brett and James P. Carley), *Index Britanniae Scriptorum: John Bale's Index of British and Other Writers* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1990), 332–33.

19. See *Patrons and Performances Web Site* of *Records of Early English Drama*, https://reed.library.utoronto.ca. For Radcliffe's biography, see David Grummitt, "Radcliffe, Robert, First Earl of Sussex (1482/3–1542)," in *ODNB*.

20. Margaret Rogerson, "Robert/Ralph Radcliffe: A Case of Mistaken Identity," *Notes and Queries* 47.1 (2000): 23–26. See *Letter and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, in the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. 6 (London, 1882), 674, no. 1676.

master in the grammar school attached to Jesus College due to his teacher, the Augustinian friar George Browne's intercession with Cromwell, recorded in another letter and tentatively dated the same year.[21]

Despite the fact that, apart from these two letters, at present nothing else can be ascertained about Radcliffe's activities, his personal associations are highly revealing about his possible political and religious orientation.[22] According to his autograph Latin letter composed in a Ciceronian style of commendation, Radcliffe sought Cromwell's sponsorship of his studies in law and medicine, extolling his prospective patron's untiring work for the commonwealth in the closing lines. It is unclear whether Radcliffe eventually received the desired monetary support from Cromwell; nevertheless, he secured a position at Jesus College through Browne, who acted as a dedicated agent of the Henrician Reformation and as Cromwell's "pulpit propagandist" in 1533–35.[23] Not only did Browne praise Radcliffe's qualities and knowledge of Greek and Latin in his letter to Cromwell but he also claimed that Radcliffe "made works against owr schowlemen in Cambrige which yf ye rede them youe shall thynck them well don."[24] Rogerson has suggested that Browne may have alluded here to the famous controversy between Radcliffe and the humanist scholar and royal tutor Sir John Cheke over Greek pronunciation in Cambridge, thus dating the letter as late as 1539–40.[25] However, as Richard Rex has argued, Radcliffe's attack on Cheke's new pronunciation of Greek was in fact an attempt to gain the favour of the chancellor of the university, Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, in the late 1530s, "just as his previous attack

21. *Letters and Papers*, Addenda, I pt. 2 (London, 1932), 624, no. 5.

22. It may have been Robert Radcliffe who received a grant of forty shillings made to "one Maister Ratclif a scolar from Cambrige by the kings com*m*ande" on 21 June 1532 and recorded among the Privy Purse expenses in BL Additional MS 20030, f. 116r. Although a third letter requesting Cromwell's support for studies signed by "Radcliffus Cantabrigiensis," composed around 1540, has also been associated with Robert Radcliffe, its author's handwriting (which is markedly different from Robert Radcliffe's letter) as well as its Latin style strongly suggest that it was written by someone other than Robert (possibly Ralph Radcliffe). See *Letters and Papers,* vol. 16 (London, 1898), 204, no. 400.

23. See Browne's biography, James Murray, "Browne, George (d. in or after 1556)," in *ODNB*.

24. At the end of his letter to Cromwell, Radcliffe also inserted a brief, carefully pointed Hebrew quotation from the Book of Proverbs (13:12), perhaps with an intention to demonstrate his knowledge of Hebrew to his prospective patron.

25. Rogerson, 25–26.

on the schoolmen had been a bid for Cromwell's."[26] It is more likely therefore that Browne, who signed his letter as "bedman frier george browne," composed his recommendation to Cromwell sometime between his appointment as prior of the Austin Friars in London in 1532 and his elevation to the see of Dublin in 1536. Browne dutifully participated in his neighbour Cromwell's concerted efforts to harness the support of the mendicant orders for the religious changes. (Cromwell's London house was located in the precinct of the Austin Friars.) Browne was instrumental in the suppression of the Observant Franciscans in 1533–34 and was appointed (along with John Hilsey, provincial of the Dominican friars) royal commissioner to carry out the general visitations and the administration of the first oath of succession among the mendicant orders, including the White Friars of Cambridge, in 1534.[27] Thus, well aware of the Crown's plans regarding the reform and eventual dissolution of the monastic orders, Browne may have tried to secure a position for his student, a resident of the Carmelites' college at a time when the fate of the Carmelites in Cambridge had been already sealed. By 1535, the Carmelites' house was breaking up and its sale to the adjacent Queen's College, which was arranged by the prior and two friars two years later, was completed in 1538.[28] Not only was Browne a crucial benefactor to Radcliffe in a precarious time but he probably also knew Textor's other English translator, Udall, who, prior to his appointment as headmaster of Eton College in 1534, resided at the Austin Friars in London and possibly enjoyed his hospitality.[29] Browne most likely requested Radcliffe's promotion (through Cromwell's mediation) to the mastership at Jesus College School

26. Richard Rex, "The Role of English Humanists in the Reformation up to 1559," in *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*, ed. N. Scott Amos, Andrew Pettegree, and Henk Van Nierop (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 19–40.

27. G. W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 153. On the role of friars, see more in Richard Rex, "The Friars in the English Reformation," in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, ed. Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 38–59.

28. Damian Riehl Leader, *A History of the University of Cambridge, Vol. 1: The University to 1546* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 340; L. F. Salzman, ed., *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Cambridge and the Isle of Ely,* vol. 2 (London: Institute of Historical Research, 1967), 285–86.

29. According to the prefatory letter of *Floures for Latine Spekynge*, Udall completed his Latin-English phrasebook in the monastery of the Austin Friars in London in 1534.

following the consecration of Thomas Goodrich in early 1534, who, as bishop of Ely, was responsible for the nomination of the schoolmaster at his former college.

At Jesus College, Radcliffe certainly found an environment congenial to the reforms promoted by his patrons.[30] Like Browne and Cromwell, Goodrich was a dedicated evangelical reformer who actively preached Royal Supremacy in his diocese, which included all the Cambridge parishes and colleges.[31] Moreover, Goodrich was a close friend to the reformed archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, who himself was an alumnus of Jesus College along with Cromwell's zealous evangelical polemicist John Bale.[32] As a playwright, director of his theatrical company, and actor, Bale was actively involved in the propaganda campaign to popularize the Royal Supremacy and to discredit papal authority in England primarily through a series of antipapal and biblical plays. According to the Records of Early English Drama, the troupe of players under Bale's leadership (called "Bale and his felowes"), identified in the records as Lord Cromwell's Players or Lord Privy Seal's Men, performed in Cambridge annually between 1537 and 1540, staging plays in King's College and Guildhall respectively. They also put on a performance in New College, Oxford, and staged *King Johan* from Bale's repertoire of iconoclastic and antipapal plays at Cranmer's Canterbury residence in 1539.[33] As a former Carmelite himself, Bale may have been personally acquainted with Radcliffe, a

30. See more on the beginnings of Protestantism at Cambridge in Richard Rex, "The Early Impact of Reformation Theology at Cambridge University, 1521–1547," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 1 (1999): 38–71.

31. Felicity Heal, "Goodrich [Goodryck], Thomas (1494–1554)," in *ODNB*. On the history of Jesus College in the period, see Leader, 270–81.

32. On Cranmer's Cambridge years, 1503–29, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 16–37. As a Carmelite friar, Bale was trained in Cambridge, entering probably Jesus College in 1514. He composed works on Carmelite authors and history before he was admitted to the Bachelor of Divinity in 1529. He came under Cromwell's influence after he left his appointment as prior of the Carmelite House in Ipswich for the same position in Doncaster and enjoyed the Lord Privy Seal's direct patronage from 1537 to 1540. For Bale's biography, see John N. King, "Bale, John (1495–1563)," in *ODNB*. For an overview of Bale's life and dramatic activity, see Peter Happé's introduction to *The Complete Plays of John Bale*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985), 1–25.

33. Paul Whitfield White discusses the dramatic activity of Bale's company in *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 12–41.

resident of the Carmelites' college in the early 1530s. Nevertheless, as we will see, both Radcliffe's translation of *A Governor* and Bale's strongly propagandistic plays, particularly *Three Laws, of Nature, Moses, and Christ, Corrupted by the Sodomytes, Pharysiees, and Papystes*, share common subject matters and a pronounced focus on friars and mendicant orders, echoing the official church policy supported by not only Cromwell and Browne but also such prominent alumni of Jesus College as Cranmer and Goodrich.

Radcliffe offered his translation of Textor's three dialogues "unto oure moste Christian kynge supreme head of the Church of Englande." That the small octavo presentation copy indeed reached the king is attested by the gold-tooled binding of the extant manuscript, one of the last examples of the work of King Henry's Binder that bears the royal arms and Henry VIII's monogram (HR) stamped on the front and back covers.[34] According to the colophon, Radcliffe had solidified his position at Jesus College as professor of arts and schoolmaster by the time he completed his manuscript. Since the school had close ties to the college, Radcliffe was likely involved in the instruction both of the older *pueri* and the four *juvenes* who, following four years of grammar study, had been promoted to the faculty of arts and fulfilled such duties as organist, sacrist, bible clerk, and gatekeeper.[35] Despite the obvious appeal of Textor's dialogues as a school text, it remains a question whether they had actually been performed by Radcliffe's students at Jesus College School before they were offered to the English king, the intended audience of the manuscript collection. Although plays responding directly to the political and religious changes brought about by the English Reformation started to appear in the accounts of playing troupes associated with schools by 1536, no such record has been hitherto located in regards to Radcliffe's dialogues.[36]

34. See James P. Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives* (London: The British Library, 2004), 61.

35. On the history of the grammar school attached to Jesus College, see Leader, 272–74; J. P. C. Roach, *Victoria County History: A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 421–22; Arthur Gray, *A History of Jesus College Cambridge*, rev. ed. (London: Heinemann, 1979), 25–36.

36. The first record suggesting that antipapal plays were staged under Cromwell's patronage at schools is from a letter by Thomas Wylley, the vicar of Yoxford, Suffolk, and early reformist master of the local song school. Wylley's now lost anti-clerical play *Against the Pope's Counsellors* was composed prior to the first parliamentary acts for the dissolution of the monasteries, whereas his *A Rude Comynawlte* may have

Radcliffe's collection of translations comprising *A Governor* and two short moralizing dialogues on death and Fortune forms a group of devotional texts with manifest political overtones. *A Governor*, the most satirical of Textor's dialogues about the abuses of the Catholic Church, suited well the ongoing criticism of monastic establishments in England which, following the Act of Suppression in 1536, led to wide-scale dissolution, first of the smaller and later of the larger monasteries and convents under Cromwell's direction.[37] Following the Lincolnshire Rising and the Pilgrimage of Grace in which the fate of monasteries was of paramount concern, Henry VIII himself developed serious doubts and reservations about the political loyalties of monks and friars and the spiritual benefits of monasticism.[38] In Morison's *A Lamentation in Vvische Is Shevved What Ruyne and Destruction Cometh of Seditious Rebellion*, published in late 1536 as the Henrician government's response to the northern rebellions, monks were accused of sedition and being "the ryngeleaders of these traitorous rebelles," who "comme nowe harneist into the feld, ayenst god, their king, and bothe their lawes."[39] Morison asks if monks and friars are so shameless as to question publicly Henry's supremacy: "Is it not verye lyke, that they liued vertuously in their cloisters, where they myght do' al misschiefe, and no man see them?" (Biir). While reiterating the anti-monastic and anti-clerical sentiments of the King's Council and Parliament, expressed in the *Supplications of the Commons*, the bill ratifying the dissolution of smaller monasteries in 1536, Morison also summons the support of his general audience in his

---

been an attack on the Pilgrimage of Grace. In his letter, Wylley also alluded to another play identified as *A Reverent Receiving of the Sacrament* that treated the debated doctrinal issue of the sacrament of the Eucharist. White has proposed that Wylley may have been the "Master Hopton's priest" whose boy actors performed before Cromwell the following year. See more on schoolmasters and Reformation drama in White, 101–6.

37. On the state of the religious order at the time of the Reformation, see A. G. Dickens, *Late Monasticism and the Reformation* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1992) and James G. Clark, ed., *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002).

38. Bernard explores Henry VIII's changing relationship with the monasteries in *The King's Reformation,* 243–76.

39. Richard Morison, *A Lamentation in Vviche Is Shevved What Ruyne and Destruction Cometh of Seditious Rebellyon* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1536), Biir. Page references will appear hereafter in parentheses in the main text. On Morison's *A Lamentation*, see Tracey A. Sowerby, *Renaissance and Reform in Tudor England: The Careers of Sir Richard Morison c. 1513–1556* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 42–48.

vindictive call for the punishment of "these spirituall traytours": "Howe longe have you cried, monkes, preiestes have to moch? Howe long have we al praied, god sende the kynge such counsaile, that he maye see goodes that were yvell spente, tourned into a better use?" (Biiir). In Morison's view, the English king certainly fulfilled the duty of a Christian prince by suppressing the rebellious religious, since "nothygne to apperteyne more to a kynges office, then to redress thynges of religion, to putte downe hypocrisye, and to restore honestie to her place agayne" (Ciir).

As Cromwell's propagandist, Morison reiterates the language of the enquiries conducted during the visitations of monasteries by royal commissioners (among them Browne) across England in 1535–36 that aimed at imposing oaths of allegiance to Henry VIII, which was to replace the legal allegiance of monks, friars, and nuns to superiors outside England. Besides addressing the crucial issue of Royal Supremacy, these visitations, orchestrated by Cromwell after his appointment as vicegerent in spirituals and visitor general of monasteries in 1535, entailed a comprehensive survey of monastic wealth and an investigation of the adherence to rules by religious communities.[40] The final reports of the visitors reflected fundamental hostility toward and a general scepticism about monastic establishments, recalling the language of contemporary satires.[41]

In this political climate, Radcliffe's *A Governor*, which contained an unforgiving portrayal of friars, was highly adaptable to the current official church policy and must have proved to be a timely gift for Henry VIII. In fact, the main themes of *A Governor* closely correspond with the injunctions resulting from the monastic visitations and the visitors' reports on the condition of monasteries and convents at the time. In the reforming spirit of late medieval French sotties, *A Governor* conjured a caricatured vision of the state of the church, whose allegorical personification opens the play with a long list of grievances concerning the ignorance and corruption of the clergy (an opinion

40. On Cromwell's agency, see more in F. Donald Logan, "Thomas Cromwell and the Vicegerency in Spirituals: A Revisitation," *The English Historical Review* 103 (1988): 658–67.

41. See more on the visitations of 1535–36 in David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 3:268–90; G. W. O. Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London: Blandford Press, 1966), 30–41; J. Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1971), 37–41. See also F. Donald Logan, "Departure from the Religious Life during the Royal Visitation of the Monasteries, 1535–1536," in Clark, ed., 213–26.

also shared by evangelical reformers in England). In a tone characteristic of humanist masters, the personified Chyrche objects to the barbaric Latin used by priests, which she equates with their moral debasement:

> Furste of al, the moste parte of priestes, which shuld excell other in worde & in dede, are to be tawght there letters, as we have nowe saide. Manye can not yoyne there syllables to gither. And lesse the herers shuld knowe that fylthynesse, they leve of manye words with lepyng them ouer, lesse they shuyld seme to fynde a doubte. And when al they have promysyd the truthe, very fewe are founde which wyle not playe the harlottes more gladly then the mulletores of the courte. (39–46)

As well as the objectionable habits of clothing themselves in silk ("that they shuld seme more clener then gyrles that daunse"), priests, Chyrche complains, neglect their spiritual and pastoral duties:

> As tochyng the charge of there flocke & of there soolys, they care no lesse then they do for frogges in the fen. It is ynough so that they have sheryd ther wolle, & have shaven them evyn to the skynne. Other be dronken, and lyke madde women they walowe in there pleasures daye & nyght. To speke al at once, nothyng you shall fynde of euery parte that al is corrupt and marde. (54–61)

To amend the dismal situation, the two Bysshopps, to whom Chyrche's lamentation is directed, appoint unknowingly three Dyssemblars or Hypocrites, personified by friars, who convincingly present themselves as holy men and worthy representatives of the clergy. They are to refute Chyrche's damning charges and to defend the ecclesiastical establishment. Their deception and hypocrisy are, however, repeatedly revealed by the Foole, a stock character of late medieval satire, who reminds his audience in periodic asides, quoting from the gospel of Matthew, "Beware, bysshops, beware. They be craftie. Take hede of false prophetes, which come to you in the clothes of shepe, & within they ravenyng wolfes" (223–25). To test the friars' apparent piety and "maruelose holynes," the bishops invite a Harlotte, a Dronkearde, and a Ryche Man, but the friars seemingly manage to withstand the temptations posed by the personified vices of worldly pleasure, drunkenness, and avarice, eventually obtaining

the cherished reward of multiple "fatte beneficys." Nonetheless, the bishops soon learn that the friars' holiness, or, as the Foole keeps reminding them, the "wepynges, and fayned criynges out of hypocrites" (166), is nothing but a profitable performance, and the play ends with Chyrche even more desperately reiterating her complaints and the bishops finally realizing the Foole's lesson not to rely on outward appearances.

The *psychomachia* that structurally takes a central place in Textor's moral dialogue through the feigned temptation of the friars by the vices of pleasure, drunkenness, and avarice is framed by Chyrche's desperate appeal for help and the Foole's concerted efforts to convince the bishops about the friars' duplicity. In due course, however, the bishops come to a moment of self-realization and, having finally heeded the Foole's admonition, conclude the play by admitting their own mistakes: "Nowe I parceyve a man may not byleve the forhed. I marvaile no more if the chyrche be il intreatid, for the folysshe shephardes can not teche the people, and the lerned men wyl not" (582–84). Textor applied the tripartite structure of moral cognition, fall, and recognition typical of medieval morality plays to his dialogue, depicting the degradation of the ideal state of the Chyrche and her custodians' concomitant alienation from God which can be reversed only through the intervention of the bishops, who first have to absorb the moral lesson communicated to them by the Foole. The central section of the dialogue, where the vice characters of the Harlotte, the Dronkearde, and the Ryche Man are to take control over the friars in a comic low style, however, turns into a deceptive game in which the protagonists through dissembling tricks triumph over both their tempters and the actual victims of the dramatic action: Chyrche and the two Bysshops. The traditional roles of the misled protagonist are thus taken over by the leaders of the church themselves, while the virtuous Chyrche and the wise Foole are allied against the friars who are identified with the vices. By doubling the temptation scenes, Textor significantly altered the familiar morality structure to enhance his satire of the corrupt clergy, represented by the hypocritical friars, who are threatening not only Chyrche but also the ecclesiastical authorities in charge of her protection.

Significantly, the parade of vices of worldly pleasure, drunkenness, and avarice in *A Governor* resonated with the conclusions of the visitors' reports which highlighted the lack of observance of the vows of poverty, enclosure, and chastity in monastic communities and criticized excesses in liturgy, laxity

in dress, and, above all, a perceived proliferation of sexual misconduct both in male and female orders. These accusations were also quoted in Morison's *Lamentation*, which, similar to the enquiries, asserts that not only did monks and friars maintain lechery, buggery, and hypocrisy in their cloisters, but they, just like the dissembling friars in *A Governor*, openly admitted these crimes to the visitors:

> If they be spirituall, that consume the day eyther in ydelnes, or in an other thynge worse then that, sowynge sede in other mens forowes, whom shall we call carnall? It were not honest to vtter al that the vysitours in their inquysitions brynge home, that these holy hooded religious haue theym selfe confessed, and confirmed with the subscription of theyr owne handes. (Biiiv)

In *A Governor*, the dramatic tension is further enhanced by the protracted exchange between the three friars and the Harlotte, the Dronkearde, and the Ryche Man which was meant to elaborate the friars' cynical dissembling and hypocrisy, thus confirming the Foole's interspersed indictment: "O the crafte of the hypocrites. They condemne openly that thynge that they desyer inwardlye, nother for anye other cause then that they wolde seme dyspysors of pleasure. And by ther craftye hypocrisye they wolde hunt some thynge" (375–78). The charge of hypocrisy in relation to friars had medieval precedence.[42] The identification of the Catholic priesthood and particularly friars and monks with gainful dissembling was also appropriated in evangelical polemical writings in the 1530s; it appears in Udall's *Thersites* and Cranmer's theological works, as well as the anonymous popular ballad *The Image of Ypocresye*, composed at the height of the debates over Royal Supremacy around 1534.[43] Moreover, accusations of hypocrisy and dissimulation were repeatedly brought up against monks and friars alike in contemporary documents propagating the

42. For a portrayal of religious orders in medieval literature, see Jill Mann, *Chaucer and the Medieval Estates Satires: The Literature of the Social Classes and the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 189–201; Penn R. Szittya, *The Anti-Fraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986). On the Carmelites specifically, see Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars: The Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 63–64.

43. See Hornback, 296.

suppression of religious houses.[44] They were recurring motifs of the so-called voluntary declarations made by various monastic communities to the royal commissioners. These declarations, which seemed to have been modelled on an officially endorsed template, often contained a self-critical denunciation of past crimes by the abbots, monks, and friars. Among the common charges of idleness, sodomy, voluptuousness, greed, and idolatry, "hypocrisy cloaked with feigned sanctity" featured prominently. The Foole's satirical comments in *A Governor*, as Hertha Schulze has noted, conspicuously resemble the Cambridge Grey Friars' confession in 1538:

> The perfeccion of Christian liuyng dothe not conciste in dome ceremonies, weryng of a grey coote, disgeasing our selffe aftyr straunge fassions, dokynge, nodyngs and bekynge, and other like Papisticall ceremonies […] but the very tru waye to please God, and to lieu a tru Christian man, wythe oute all ypocrasie and fayned dissimulacion is sincerely declaryd vnto vs by oure Master Christe, his Euangelists and Apostles.[45]

In their declaration, the Reading Grey Friars stressed the widespread dissatisfaction with their false pretenses of religion: "as well the high estate of this realm as the common people do note in wise and daily doth lay unto our charge the detestable crimes of hypocrisy, dissimulation and superstition and therefore withdraweth their benevolence and supportation."[46] In the hope of escaping from punishment and receiving pensions, surrendering monks and friars would make a solemn promise, as in the case of the convent of St. Andrew's in Northampton, that people would no longer be "abused with such feigned devotion and devilish persuasions under the pretext or habit of religion by us."[47]

Similar to Textor's dialogue, the parallel between hypocritical clergy and medieval Vice characters and the analogy between player and priest were also fully exploited in Bale's religious comedies, especially in *Three Laws*, one of his

44. An overview of the declarations made by monks and nuns can be found in Bernard, 455–62.

45. Schulze, vii. See John Moorman, *The Grey Friars in Cambridge 1225–1538* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 132.

46. Quoted in Bernard, 460.

47. Quoted in Bernard, 460.

most fervently antipapal plays, along with *King Johan*.[48] Bale's extant plays are primarily concerned not with religious instruction but with the exposure of erroneous beliefs of the Catholic Church. Accordingly, *Three Laws*, composed in the middle of the systematic dissolution of the larger monasteries in 1538, "deployed a morality scheme to dramatize the reformed struggle against Catholic corruption and oppression."[49] Furthermore, Tamara Atkin asserts that Bale's play suggests "that Catholicism and drama share an epistemology of deceit."[50] In Bale's view, Catholic ritual is nothing more than an elaborate stagecraft in which the joking, jesting, and dissembling Vices are personified by the Catholic clergy. Thus like *A Governor, Three Laws* includes a "dramatic inversion of the Old Virtues as New Vices," which, according to Paul Whitfield White, is fundamental to the dramaturgy of reformer playwrights, signalled in Bale's play by the doubling scheme and costuming.[51] According to Bale's explicit instructions, the apparel of the six Vices, or the fruits of Infidelity, should further expose their problematic spiritual associations: Idolatria is to be dressed like an old witch, Ambitio a bishop, Avaracia a Pharisee or spiritual lawyer, Pseudoctrina a popish doctor, and Hypocrisis a Grey Friar. In this context, friars and monks take on dominant roles: Infidelity's son Sodomy is personified by a monk, occasionally referred to as Brother Snip-snap, and Infidelity's kinsman, Hypocrisy, the pope's vicar, is represented by a Franciscan friar, who is also addressed as Friar Flip-flap or Friar Socage. They are denounced by Bale as "wretches and pestilent Antichristes / Mynysters of Dagon, and most deceytfull papystes" (4.1702–03).[52] Deriving his attack on the inherent theatricality of Catholicism from William Tyndale's

48. For a modern edition, see Happé, *The Complete Plays*, 2:65–121. Subsequent references to *Three Laws* are taken from Happé's edition.

49. Tamara Atkin, *The Drama of Reform: Theology and Theatricality, 1461–1553* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 76.

50. Atkin, 87. Atkin also provides a detailed analysis of the poetics of propaganda in *Three Laws*, 65–99. See also David Scott Kastan, "'Holy Wurdes' and 'Slypper Wit': John Bale's *King Johan* and the Poetics of Propaganda," in *Rethinking the Henrician Era: Essays on Early Tudor Texts and Contexts*, ed. Peter C. Herman (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 267–82; David M. Bevington, *Tudor Drama and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 96–113; Greg Walker, *Plays of Persuasion: Drama and Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 169–221.

51. White, 35. On the doubling scheme, see Atkin, 96–98.

52. Bale painstakingly tries to distinguish the impious performance of Catholic Vices from the pious stagecraft of his own godly play. The problematic nature of this distinction is demonstrated in *Three*

polemical writings, Bale employs the commonplace metaphor of evangelical polemic that compared Catholic sacramental practices to deceptive acting in order to reveal that the moral faults of Catholic Vices are in fact disguising even more grievous theological errors. Bale's Vices bluntly disclose not only their sexual corruption (a central tenet of satire in *Three Laws*) and their duplicitous behaviour by acknowledging that they are simply playing a part but also their conscious use of theological deception. They themselves satirize such doctrinal issues as the Eucharist, confession, the cult of saints, and the veneration of relics, thus emphasizing the hollow nature of these Catholic rituals.[53] They are portrayed as allegorical manifestations of a spiritual evil, dangerously susceptible to change and shape-shifting, whose deceptive game-playing attempts to corrupt the eternal divine laws (*Moseh lex, Naturae lex, Christi lex*), recently reinstituted by the Reformation Parliament in England.

Although, like *A Governor*, Bale's ecclesiological satire is derived from the pre-Reformation popular theatre, particularly morality plays, it lacks any redemptive element in its critique of the church and condemnation of the systematic institutional hypocrisy. In *Three Laws*, "Identity," as James Simpson has noted, "is not an ethical, but an institutional identity."[54] Unlike *A Governor, Three Laws* offers no possibility of mercy and reform when it comes to Catholic Vices. Instead likening them to the Pharisees, who are allied with Antichrist, Bale pronounces a final verdict on them through the Word of God, personified by Evangelium, in the fourth act:

> Wo, Pharysees, wo! Ye make cleane outwardlye,
> But inwards ye are full of covetousnesse and baudrye.
> Paynted tumbes are ye, [aperynge] right bewtyfull;
> But within ye stynke, and have thoughtes very shamefull.
> Ye slewe the prophetes, your doynges yet beare wytnesse:
> How thynke ye to avoyde that poynt of unryghteousnesse?
> Oh ragynge serpentes, and vyperouse generacyon,
> How can ye escape the daunger of dampnacyon? (4.1707–15)

Laws, where Bale the director and actor simultaneously enacts the roles of the virtuous Baleus Prolocutor and Christian Faith, as well as Infidelity.

53. See examples in Atkin, 78–79.

54. James Simpson, "John Bale, *Three Laws*," in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Drama*, ed. Thomas Betteridge and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 109–22, 117.

Along with the rest of the Catholic clergy, monks and friars are irrevocably banished and uncompromisingly extirpated by a vengeful God, Vindicta Dei, who terminates their hypocritical dissimulation at the end of the play. Consequently, Bale's Vindicta Dei intends not only to cleanse but also to replace an entire institutional structure. The strongly antipapal stance of Bale's ecclesiological *psychomachia* places any redemptive option outside the realm of the Catholic Church:

> Ye Christen rulers, se yow for thys a waye:
> Be not illuded by false hypocresy (2.773–74)
>
> Regarde not the Pope, nor yet hys whorysh kyngedom
> For he is the master of Gomor and of Sodome (2.778–79)

Three Laws hence does not offer any moral lesson for future reform, but instead, through the characters of Evangelium (or Christi lex) and Fides Christiana, conjures an image of the true Church, intrinsically different from the debased representatives of the Catholic Church.

As opposed to Bale's vindictive satire, in *A Governor* both the victimized Chyrche and the two Bysshops are positive characters. Although their directness, which is devoid of the histrionic ability of the Vices played by the three friars, resembles the reformed Virtues in *Three Laws*, they found their redemption within the established ecclesiastical order. In fact, Chyrche's unceasing hope is placed in the authority of the bishops for whom she delivers her message of renewal and reform:

> Get in authorite good shepardes to your shepe, that wyle looke diligently to ther sooles, which wyle nothyng set by lucre, which wyl teache wyth worde & worke, which knowe lepre from lepre, which wyl heale rottyn sores, which wyle abyde with there flocke, & wyl take hede from al the dysseytes of wolfes. (99–104)

As long as the bishops recognize the dissembling Vices and the dangers of the corrupting clergy and resume their protective duty, moral restoration can be achieved and the ailing Chyrche be healed. In *A Governor,* the implementation of reform is transferred to the bishops who are ultimately responsible for

rectifying the abuses of the church. In this sense, Textor's satire of the abuses of the church was wholly orthodox and rather conventional in humanist academic circles in the early sixteenth century. It corresponded with Erasmus's criticism of the corruption of the church popularized in his dialogue *Peregrinatio religionis ergo,* printed in 1526 and first translated into English under the title *The Pylgremage of Pure Devotyon*, on Cromwell's advice, around 1536.[55] The propagandistic use of the English translation of Erasmus's dialogue is well illustrated by the fact that many of the questions formulated in the *Articles of Inquiry* used by the royal commissioners during their visitation to the monastery of Walshingham, as Henry de Vocht has demonstrated, were directly borrowed from *The Pylgremage* and were also incorporated into the officially sanctioned *Declaration of the Faith* in 1539.[56]

Similar to that in *A Governor*, the theme of obedience is central to the English translation of Erasmus's *The Pylgremage*.[57] In the preface, the anonymous translator of the dialogue connects idolatrous practices to more dangerously subversive acts against royal authority, committed on the instigation of the chief guardians of these pilgrimage sites, primarily monks and friars, who "rebelle and make insurrectyones contrary to the ordynaunce of gode, agaynst theyr kynge and liege lorde, prouokynge and allurynge the symple comunaltye

55. Memorializing Erasmus's famous visits to two of the major pilgrimage sites in England, Walshingham and Canterbury, between 1512 and 1514, the colloquy derides the abuses associated with the *cultus divorum*, the widespread false veneration of saints and the idolatrous devotion to images, which were officially condemned by the Injunctions of 1536, and then altogether suppressed in England in 1538. Its full title reads as *A Dialoge or Communication of Two Persons Deuysyd and Set Forthe in the Late[n] Tonge, by the Noble and Famose Clarke. Desiderius Erasmus Intituled [the] Pylgremage of Pure Deuotyon* (London: n.p., ca. 1536). It was edited by Henry de Vocht, *The Earliest English Translations of Erasmus' Colloquia 1536–1566* (Louvain: Librairie Universitaire, 1928), 101–95. See E. J. Devereux, *Renaissance English Translations of Erasmus: A Bibliography to 1700* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 4.12. See also James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 189–90.

56. De Vocht, xlvi–l. Yet, the anonymous translator of *The Pylgremage* advocated a carefully controlled attack on images. Through Erasmus's satirical text, he advanced "the reformacyon of all pernicious abuses and chiefly of detestable ydolatrye, whiche is so much prohibited in holy scripture and most displeasant to god" (+ vi), at the same time rebuking the arrogancy of "the pryuate iudgment of certayne that of theyr owne brayne wolde cast out ymages of the temple, with out a comen consent and authoryte" (+ iiiir).

57. See more on this topic in Richard Rex, "The Crisis of Obedience: God's Word and Henry's Reformation," *The Historical Journal* 39 (1996): 863–94.

to theyre dampnable ypocrysye and conspyracy" (+ iiiv). Thus, the necessity of obedience to the king's authority and the established ecclesiastical order, considered the very foundation of any kind of effective reform, is a recurrent motif not only in radical polemical works but also in more moderate and measured propagandistic writings in England in the late 1530s. It also appears in *Thersites*, where readers and spectators alike are warned in the epilogue to avoid any perfidious behaviour:

> To youre rulers and parentes be you obediente,
> Never transgressinge their lawefull commaundemente.
> By ye merye and joyfull at borde and at bedde.
> Imagin no traitourye againste your prince and heade. (904–07)

It was this fundamentally Erasmian criticism of the Church, devoid of any precarious theological issues, that made Textor's dialogues, especially *A Governor*, easily applicable to Henrician religious politics in the period following the rebellions of 1536 and preceding Cromwell's fall in 1540. They appealed directly to Henry VIII's doctrinally uncommitted Protestantism that characterized the more cautious mainstream of English Reformation politics in the period. In fact, the pedagogical utility of Textor's dialogues, to a large extent, rested on this balanced approach and on their kinship with the Dutch humanist's methods, which, as Cromwell's unfailing patronage of Erasmian schoolmasters such as Radcliffe, Udall, Leonard Cox, and John Palsgrave attests, were an integral part of contemporary evangelical culture.

Despite its immediate political appeal, Radcliffe did not turn Textor's satirical dialogue into a mere propaganda piece. Instead, he appended two short dialogues, conceived in the *memento mori* tradition, to *A Governor*, thereby shifting the context of his own composition from the purely political to the devotional. The moral concerns of the *Dialogue on Fortune*, which details a poor man's encounter with Fortune, focus on the transitory nature of the worldly desires of virtue, youth, heaven, and wealth. Similarly, in the *Dialogue on Death*, a variation on the Everyman theme, a young traveller, surprised by Death, has to realize through desperate argumentation that neither his young age, nor holiness, nor money and force can protect him from Death, who kills him at the end of the dialogue. The pre-Reformation images of death conjured in the two dialogues also pervade *A Governor* and are at the heart of the three

hypocrites' dissembling game. In their first attempt to convince the bishops of their holiness, they sing a hymn-like song, arranged in rhyming stanzas, about the inevitability of Death:

> No man doth consydre his ende
> And yet we all dye.
> Oure deth comes faste apon.
> By litil and litil we all fall to dethe. (167–70)

Their hymn is followed by a list of synonyms on dying, rehearsed by the three hypocrites in alternating lines: "We dye. / We seke to our ende. / Deth doth tarye for vs. / We shal go in to asshes. / We shal go in to darknes" (187–89, 203–04). However, their dialogue, a rhetorical exercise on the theme of death, is repeatedly deflated by the Foole's interjections in prose that keep reminding the audience of their subtle dissimulation. Radcliffe, perhaps with the quiet resignation of a former Carmelite, alters the satirical *A Governor* into a more elevated moral lesson by framing it with the solemn tone and grim warnings of the subsequent two dialogues, thereby cautiously placing his collection beyond the domain of contemporary religious politics.

As in the two dialogues on Fortune and Death that accompany *A Governor*, Radcliffe's chosen translation method quelled any potentially controversial aspects of Textor's satire on the abuses of the church in the precarious political climate around the fall of Cromwell in 1540. Significantly, the translation technique employed by Radcliffe is markedly different from the paraphrastic method used in Udall's *Thersites* and the fragmentary English translation of Textor's *Iuvenis, pater et uxor*. In fact, both *Thersites* and *Iuvenis, pater et uxor* exemplify a method of translation closest to the concept of *imitatio* as it was understood by sixteenth-century educators and theorists.[58] In his dramatized

58. On translation theory in sixteenth-century England, see Massimiliano Morini, *Tudor Translation in Theory and Practice* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 3–34; Neil Rhodes's introduction to *English Renaissance Translation Theory* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2013), 1–70; Fred Schurink, ed., *Tudor Translation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 1–25; Brenda M. Hosington, "Thomas More's Views on Language and Translation and Their Place in the Classical and Humanist Tradition," *Moreana* 40 (2003): 69–98. For a more general overview, see Braden, 89–100, and Warren Boutcher, "The Renaissance," in *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*, ed. Peter France (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 45–49.

English rendering, Udall significantly expanded Textor's dialogue (from 267 to 915 lines) by reinventing, in a free spirit, Thersites's opening monologue (1–21), and inserting two episodes not found in the original text: Ulysses's letter and Telemachus's worm cure (595–764). It is in the additions, particularly the worm cure scene, that Udall introduced his criticism of the hotly debated religious customs of the veneration of relics and the practice of pilgrimages in a farcical tone recalling the language of popular theatre.[59] Udall's liberal approach to his source text resembles the methods of medieval translators more than those of humanist masters.[60] This approach was still commonly shared by schoolmasters in the early part of the sixteenth century, as attested by Alexander Barclay, who, bypassing the requirement of fidelity (*fidus interpres*), translated Sebastian Brant's *The Shyp of Folys of the Worlde* (1509) with much liberty, "some tyme addynge, somtyme detractinge and takinge away such thinges as semeth me necessary and superflue" (biiiiv). Similar to Barclay, instead of the philological literalism, advocated in such influential humanist theoretical treatises on translation as Leonardo Bruni's *De interpretatio recta* (ca. 1426), Udall turned his translation into a paraphrase modifying the elocution, including diction, metre, and rhetorical figures, of Textor's dialogue. In many ways, this method corresponded more closely to the pedagogical program of Textor's *Dialogi* than the strictly rhetorical translations promoted by humanist theorists. The precepts of copiousness (*copia verborum*), including variation and amplification, in Textor's original Latin dialogues serve the transmission of a comprehensive linguistic and cultural knowledge of antiquity, whereas in the English translation they are directed more specifically to the enrichment of the vocabulary and diction of the target language. Udall, however, while preserving the sense (*sensus*) of his source text, moved beyond mere paraphrase to *imitatio*.[61] Udall's

59. See *Thersites*, 709–20. For a discussion of similar Erasmian criticism of relics in contemporary texts, such as John Heywood's play *The Foure PP* (ca. 1544) and Thomas More's *Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (1529), see Hornback, 289–90.

60. On medieval translation, see Nicholas Watson, "Theories of Translation," in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English: Volume I: To 1550*, ed. Roger Ellis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 71–91.

61. Udall applied the same paraphrastic interpretation in his school texts, *Floures of Latin Spekynge* (1534), a Latin-English parallel translation of Terentian phrases, as well as in his translation of Erasmus's *Apophthegmes* (1541), both of which relied heavily on teaching notes that he compiled as a schoolmaster prior to and during his tenure at Eton College. In *Floures* and *Apophthegmes*, Udall further expanded the

changing the invention and disposition of Textor's dialogue with purposeful additions and deletions resulted in a conscious domestication of his source text. This domestication, as Massimiliano Morini explored, required the translators to bring their own sensibilities to the vocabulary, prosody, and metaphors of the vernacular, adjusting the source texts to the potentials of the target language.[62] The trend that promoted the integrity of the vernacular and consequently raised the status of English as a literary language is also noticeable in the fragmentary *Iuvenis, pater et uxor*. Both *Thersites* and the anonymous English translation of *Iuvenis, pater et uxor* display an apparent confidence in the capabilities of the vernacular and lack the apologetic overtone about the submissive role of English in relation to Latin, a commonplace of prefaces and dedicatory epistles appended to literary translations in the period. In *Thersites*, this assurance is further manifested in the way Textor's intricate mythological allusions are repeatedly omitted or replaced with a range of local references, including the lore of Arthurian romances.[63] This transposition of classical cultural referents, a key to *translatio studii* (transfer of learning) in Textor's Latin dialogues, made his academic dialogue more immediately relatable and accessible to a native audience, while transferring the Latin text onto the popular stage.

In contrast to the paraphrastic English translations of *Thersites* and *Iuvenis, pater et uxor*, Radcliffe produced a faithful rendering of Textor's dialogues without any purposeful additions or deletions and with only occasional misreading. His prose translation obliterates the subtlety and metrical variety of Textor's dialogues and stringently follows Bruni's prescriptions for rhetorical translation by replicating the source text word for word, even repeating the grammatical constructions and syntax of the original.[64] Radcliffe's philological literalism, which strictly adheres to his source text, results in a careful *ad verbum* translation without any apparent attempt at the imitative inventiveness that characterizes the *ad sensum* translation of *Thersites* and *Iuvenis, pater et uxor.* While Radcliffe meticulously reproduced the variety of linguistic expression of Textor's dialogues, he carefully circumvented any dilation or

notion of rhetorical translation to include a kind of exegesis or *ennaratio* of the source text in the form of explanations or clarifications embedded in extensive footnotes and marginal glosses.

62. Morini, 26–29.

63. See for example *Thersites*, 50–55, 120–38.

64. See Glyn F. Norton, "Humanist Foundations of Translation Theory (1400–1450): A Study in the Dynamics of Word," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 8 (1981): 173–203.

extension of his source text, any verbal liberties, multiple synonyms, doublets or triplets, in the vernacular, commonly used in paraphrastic translations.[65] Radcliffe's avoidance of deliberate domestication is most conspicuous in his literal treatment of the many proverbs and proverbial sayings borrowed from Erasmus's *Adagia* in Textor's dialogues.[66] His approach diverges from the practice of other contemporary pedagogical translations, especially Udall's *Floures* and *Apophthegmes*, in which proverbial sayings are the main vehicle of vernacularization.[67] With his philological literalism, Radcliffe personified the ideal of humanist translator as envisioned by Bruni and endorsed by Erasmus.[68] Although in his earlier works Erasmus upheld Cicero's rule of "weighing the meaning instead of counting the words" (*verba appendere* versus *verba annumerare*), in his Latin rendering of Euripides's tragedies (particularly that of *Hecuba*), which he dedicated to William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, he limited the freedom of the translator, implied in Cicero's instruction, and declared that on his part he attempted to reproduce the Greek original as accurately as possible.[69] It is this ideal that Radcliffe embraced in his translations of Textor's dialogues. For lack of evidence, however, it cannot be securely established whether Radcliffe also disseminated this Erasmian ideal at Jesus College; nevertheless, his conscious application of the humanist model

65. It was this paraphrastic method that John Palsgrave adapted for his own English translation of Gnapheus's popular neo-Latin comedy *Acolastus*, which he defined as an ecphrasis of the original text. Significantly, Palsgrave, under Cromwell's patronage, offered his ecphrastic rendering of a neo-Latin play, which he claimed followed common classroom practices, as a model translation for English grammar schools during the Henrician educational reforms in the late 1530s. See more in Ágnes Juhász-Ormsby, "Dramatic Texts in the Tudor Curriculum: John Palsgrave and the Henrician Educational Reforms," *Renaissance Studies* 30 (2016): 526–41.

66. For example, lines 75, 106, 279, 310, 381, 543.

67. For comparison, see Udall's treatment of *Adagia* in *Apophthegmes*, ff. 48v–49r, 60v, 75v, 91v, 106r, 135v, 257r, and *Floures*, 5r, 11r, 21r, 28r, 32r–v, 33r, 48r, 50v, 59v, 62v, 93v, 99r, 100r, 104v, 111v, 143r, 151r, 153r, 170r, 177r, 187r.

68. See Theo Hermans, "Renaissance Translation between Literalism and Imitation," in *Geschichte, System, Literarische Übersetzung. Histories, Systems, Literary Translations*, ed. Harald Kittel (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1992), 95–116; Glyn P. Norton, "*Fidus interpres*: A Philological Contribution to the Philosophy of Translation in Renaissance France," in *Neo-Latin and the Vernacular in Renaissance France*, ed. Grahame Castor and Terence Cave (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 227–51.

69. Morini, 14, 17. See Erika Rummel, *Erasmus as a Translator of the Classics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

suggests that both the paraphrastic method, represented by *Thersites* and *Iuvenis, pater et uxor*, and Radcliffe's rhetorical method were freely practised by schoolmasters and were most likely incorporated in classroom exercises within the period. These early English translations illustrate that there was a considerable overlap between literal translation, paraphrase, and imitation in English translations produced within an educational context in the first part of the sixteenth century.

Furthermore, Radcliffe's translation of Textor's dialogues highlights that not only the strategically selected source text but also the method of translation could shape significantly a translator's image. Through his choice of the critical but orthodox Parisian master, Radcliffe (possibly a former Carmelite) presented himself to Henry VIII as a humanist translator and scholar, acutely aware of the challenges posed by the political turmoil resulting from the dissolution of the monasteries. At the same time, the philological literalism that he applied to his translation allied him with the Erasmian schoolmasters who could rely on Cromwell's protection and patronage and secure their position often through carefully chosen translations in the dangerously unstable political climate of the late 1530s.