行政院國家科學委員會補助專題研究計畫 ☑成果報告 □期中進度報告

英國宗教改革時期的人文主義者理察 泰芬納 (II-II)

計畫類別：■ 個別型計畫 □ 整合型計畫
計畫編號：NSC 91 - 2411 - H - 002 - 031 -
執行期間： 91 年 08 月 01 日至 92 年 10 月 31 日

計畫主持人：魏思博
共同主持人：
計畫參與人員： 翁家傑 等

成果報告類型(依經費核定清單規定繳交)：□精簡報告 ☑完整報告

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NSC report on trip to Chicago May 2003.

In May I took the opportunity of visiting the University of Chicago, the Newberry Library and Northwestern University to facilitate my NSC project research.

The University of Chicago was not only able to provide me with much needed secondary material, but also had an impressive collection of Renaissance Bibles. I was able to use the facilities of the rare books department at the University of Chicago to perform some important collation work with which to consolidate the second chapter of my book on Richard Taverner.

Whilst I was in Chicago I took the opportunity of arranging an appointment with a member of faculty, Professor Richard Strier. Professor Strier is a leading Renaissance scholar whose work I have admired for a long time, though I had never had a chance to meet him. He was very generous and gracious and we had a very productive meeting at the faculty club.

At the Newberry Library in Chicago I was able to take advantage of their collections as well as participate in their Newberry Library Seminar. I was able to make some important contacts with specialists in my field, with whom I have maintained e-mail contact. For the last few days of my stay I used the facilities of Northwestern University, and consulted their excellent resource of theological works.

Although this was a very short field trip of just over a week, it proved to be very rewarding in terms of the research that I was able to complete, and in terms of the opportunity that it presented for expanding my international network of scholars.

I am grateful to the NSC for enabling this trip.

Abstract

In the past decade much has been done to highlight the achievement of William Tyndale , and to foreground the importance of the English Bible in the development of the English Language, English Culture and a growing sense of national identity in the sixteenth century. Although Tyndale's achievement can not be denied, there were other men who had important roles in Renaissance England whose contributions have been forgotten by scholars; one such man was Richard Taverner. Taverner was employed by Thomas Cromwell, who was Henry VIII's right hand man in the 1530s, to translate the work of European Humanists into English for the Reformation cause. He was an important translator of Erasmus, Melanchthon and Sarcerius, he revised Tyndale's English Bible translation, some parts that had not been previously revised, he was entrusted with the first book of sermons and homilies and he produced a catechism. Taverner had been a Greek lecturer at Cambridge in 1530, and when he subsequently studied the Law he was noted for his penchant for reciting it in Greek, but Taverner was not only a scholar. He was an M.P. for Liverpool, and preacher. He was, unusually, favoured by all of the Tudors, except the Catholic Queen Mary. He was granted numerous lands by Henry VIII for services rendered, granted a licence to preach by Edward VI at a time when strict laws governed preaching, and became Elizabeth's High Sheriff of Oxford. Taverner's work is characterised by a colloquial style that aimed at reaching even the rudest of England's common folk, with whom he also engaged. He was not, as so many other reformers, forced to flee England to avoid persecution, and to translate in isolation at a time when no one in Europe would have known English. This means that Taverner's translations more readily reflect the state of the English Language as it was developing in England in the sixteenth century. This study sets out to demonstrate the variety and importance of Taverner's work, and it is the first study of Taverner that has ever been carried out. I hope it will not be the last. 這十年的英文聖經方面研究, 多將焦點集中在威廉・亭戴爾之行爲及著作. 雖然亭戴爾的聖經英譯影響十六世紀英語, 英國文化及英國民族意識的發展功不可沒, 但是反觀文藝復興間英國其餘文人亦居中扮演著重要的角色--理查・泰芬納即爲其一. 亨利八世的左右手, 湯姆士・克朗威爾, 任用泰芬納爲歐洲人文學者的著作翻譯, 以實現宗教改革之目的. 泰芬納在翻譯伊拉茲馬斯, 馬蘭奇嵩及撒索利斯的作品有其舉足輕重之處, 並著手修改部分亨戴爾的英文聖經. 他在 1530 年代於劍橋大學就任希臘文講師, 並且能夠輕易的使用希臘文背誦律文. 他不只是學者, 他曾任利物浦的憲兵, 亦是傳道的牧師. 除了瑪莉女王以外, 都鐸皇室對他出奇的禮遇: 亨利八世賜與他大量的土地; 愛德華四世頒與他當時極爲嚴格管制的傳教證; 伊麗莎白女王則任他爲牛津的高級司法官. 泰芬納的文筆特色在於其高度的口語化, 清晰易懂, 得以觸及當代最低俗的廣大民眾. 不同於多數當代宗教改革者, 泰芬納並未逃離英國, 進而使得他的英譯更切合十六世紀英語實際在英國的發展情形. 此研究反映出泰芬納作品的多元性及重要性, 亦開啓了專門研究泰芬納之先例, 希望能拋磚引玉, 帶起泰芬納研究之風.

Final Report on NSC project : *Richard Taverner: Reformation Humanist.* 2001-2003.

Dr. Westbrook, Assistant Professor of Renaissance Literature.

Project commenced: April 2001. Manuscript submitted: September 2003.

AIM:

The aim of the project was to profile the work of a much neglected Reformation translator, reviser and editor, Richard Taverner. The end-product of the project was envisaged as a book and the estimated time for its execution, based on my experience as a textual researcher, was three years. In the event, the project was funded for two years, and by spending my time at the end of Summer and Winter semesters in European and American libraries I was able to complete the book. Although I would have liked more time to create a more polished finished product, the submission is acceptable as a manuscript for the attention of a publisher. I have asked Dr. Richard Rex at Queen's College Cambridge to read the manuscript and advise me about a suitable publisher.

PROCESS:

In year one of this project I and my research assistants drew up a bibliography of the primary works by Richard Taverner and then a secondary bibliography of critical works pertaining to him. The T.H. Darlow and H.F. Moule. *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible 1525-1961*, revised and expanded by A.S. Herbert. London, 1968, and A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave. *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed*

in England. Scotland. & Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640 , III, London, 1991 were most useful resources for this work. Catalogues in the JRL and the BL were also used for this part of the project. The MLA, HI and Athens databases were used for gleaning secondary material. We then prioritised our list and began to order microfilm copies to be made by the BL of Taverner's Bible and his translations of Erasmus, since these are probably his most important works. As we anticipated, this process was lengthy and expensive, but we now have some invaluable primary materials which have supplied the project and proved a useful resource to my research assistant in the writing of her own M.A. research on Taverner.

In year two, the final year of the project, I revised the draft chapters 2 and 3 that I had submitted at the end of year one and substantially enlarged chapter 3 as more material became available to me. During my final trip to England I was able to visit the British Library, Cambridge University Library and the John Rylands Library, where I consulted the collections and had informative discussions with Reformation scholars such as Dr.Richard Rex and Dr. Tom Freeman. I subsequently added chapters on Taverner's Postils, his minor works, an introduction and a conclusion.

During the course of the project the research assistants received research training, as promised in the project outline. Although progress was slow, initially, the assistants learned to read and interpret primary materials that would only usually be accessible to visitors of European and American archive libraries. The assistants also gained experience of searching the on-line catalogues of the world's best libraries and interacting

with librarians over the phone. One assistant followed-up the research by making a trip to London and Manchester to see the Bibles first-hand, and to meet in person the librarians with whom she had been liaising. Unfortunately, although I did request some financial aid for such student trips in the second year of the project, I was not able to obtain it.

Much of the researching for this project had to be carried out at the end of the Summer and Winter semesters, when I was able to spend extended periods of time following up bibliographical leads and accessing multiple editions and revisions of primary texts. Most of the actual writing of the book was done in Taiwan on my scheduled research day, and in the evenings.

The biggest obstacle to the progress of the project, and the biggest problem for the research assistants, was that of trying to obtain the NSC funding from the university. For reasons attached to public accountability, I assume, the NSC funding policy is translated into a reimbursement policy. This is very inconvenient for less affluent researching faculty. Much of my own salary is spent on trying to live in Taipei. If the NSC had not introduced the Project Director's Allowance, I would have had no disposable income with which to continue the project at the beginning of the second year.

Unlike most European and American libraries, NTU library does not subsidise inter-library loans, and, consequently, they are extremely expensive for students and faculty. My assistants made enquiries about obtaining a loan from the NSC fund held by NTU, but were deterred. Although I was able to set up invoicing arrangements with the British Library, National Taiwan University Library and my travel agent, the lengthy

payment procedures resulted in the British Library, the Head Librarian at National Taiwan University and my travel agent subsequently refusing to honour the arrangement in the second year of the project.

Unfortunately, research assistants are given no formal training by administrators in how to complete forms for reimbursements, even though reimbursement applications are frequently rejected on the basis that the forms have not been completed correctly. Such rejections can result in frustrations for the assistants and the project director, and can frustrate the progress of the project itself. All of these frustrations could be avoided if new assistants were to undertake some formal administrative training as part of their assistantship. It would also be a great boost to a project director if at least some of the NSC project money could be released to the project director in the first few months of a project, for essential purchases, inter-library loans, and even deposits for research trips, which are cheaper when purchased ahead of schedule.

I am very grateful to the NSC for sponsoring this project, for keeping Renaissance studies alive in Taiwan, and for enabling Taiwanese Renaissance scholarship to be represented in the world academy.

Richard Taverner:
Reformation Humanist

Dr. Vivienne Westbrook
Assistant Professor of Renaissance Literature
National Taiwan University

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Renaissance textual research is extremely difficult research to pursue in Taiwan. That such research is even possible is due entirely to the National Science Council of Taiwan. I must begin, therefore, by thanking the NSC for funding this project from 2001-2003.

I would like to express my debt and gratitude to the librarians, archivists and reader service teams at the John Rylands Library at the University of Manchester, the British Library, Cambridge University Library, Chicago University Library, and to National Taiwan University Library for their initial help with inter-library loans. My bibliographical acknowledgements would not be complete without a special thanks to *Early English Books On-line*, a wonderful resource and life support for Renaissance scholarship.

My research assistants have facilitated the day-to-day running of the project in numerous ways. A big thank you to Jerry Weng and Helen Hao-Han Yang, and to William Yang, Yedda Wang and Rebecca Chen. Thank you all.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Richard Taverner was born in 1505 in Brisley, Norfolk.[1] According to Anthony a Wood, Taverner married first Margaret, the daughter of Walter Lambert of Cashalton County, Surrey, by whom he had four sons, namely Richard, Peter, Edmund and John, and three daughters, Jane, Margaret and Martha. It was through Taverner's second marriage to Mary in 1562, the daughter of Sir John Harcourt of Stanton-Harcourt that Anthony a Wood claimed his own descent. By Mary, Taverner had a son and a daughter, Harcourt and Penelope. Penelope was baptised at Woodeaton on 8 September 1566 and later married Robert Petty of Wivcold by whom she had

[1] Cambridge copy of Anthony a Wood, *Athena Oxoniensis*. Vol 1. (UL: Cam. U.7.6. 1691) 143, 144, 271. Taverner's mother, Alice, was the daughter and heiress of Robert Silvester of North Elmham. Taverner had three brothers, Roger, Robert and Silvester. "Taverner, Richard (1505?-1575)," *Dictionary of National Biography* edited by Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917), XIX, 394.

two sons and a daughter, Harcourt, Francis and Mary. Mary married Thomas Wood, the father of Anthony a Wood.

Taverner's Career

Most of the details of Taverner's life are derived from Anthony a Wood and John Bale. Taverner first went to Cambridge in 1520 and, according to Wood, he was in the middle of his studies in Logic at Benet (Corpus Christie) College, Cambridge, when Wolsey recruited him for his new Cardinal College at Oxford.[2] He was admitted there as a junior canon, probably in 1525, and completed his B.A. in 1527.[3] Having gained a competent knowledge of Philosophy, Greek and Divinity he returned to Cambridge, to Gonville Hall, where he was incorporated B.A. in 1529. He was granted grace for having studied for seven terms after

[2] Corpus Christie was known by its familiar name Benet College on account of St. Benet's Church situated next to it.
[3] Pollard, writing in the DNB, suggests 21 June 1527 (cit in Oxford Univ. Reg.i.147).

graduation and began his M.A. studies later that year.[4] It is most likely that the Greek lecturing he claims to have undertaken at Cambridge was at this time.[5]

What happened to Taverner next is open to some speculation; drawing on the similarities between the movements of Morrison and Taverner, Zeeveld suggests that Taverner could have been in Paris with Pole.[6] Elton rejects the notion that Taverner was with Pole, although he maintains that Pole did nourish a coterie of young writers at his home in Padua, Morrison among them, and that this formed one of two centres of writers, the other centre being London, out of which Protestant humanism materialised in England.

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[4] See Grace Book B, ii.156. Cambridge U.L.

[5] In the letter he sent to Cromwell from abroad he stated that he was an M.A. at Cambridge and that he had taught there, J.S. Brewer, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, 5 (London, 1862-1910) no. 1762,1763. The letters have an estimated date of 1532. Wood says nothing about Taverner having attended Cambridge to complete an M.A. at this time, but given the letter that we have of 1532 it seems the likeliest time for him to have completed his studies there.

[6] *Zeeveld, Foundations of Tudor Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948). 72. Wood suggests that it was necessary for students to take a foundation course in Law before they could be admitted to the Inner Temple. Camb UL: Cam.U.7.6.143.

(Elton, R&R 158).[7] If Taverner was not a student in Padua, then, as a Greek scholar, he ought to have been, since Padua was one of the key centres of Greek scholarship in Europe at the time.[8] Although many young men of reforming spirit fled to the continent, this did not put a stop to their work or to the work of Reformation in England, as Elton notes:

> Heretical writings were spreading, mostly in manuscript; old Lollard groups were gaining new confidence in contacts with the innovators; the new learning acquired fresh adherents who recognized the connection between reform in general and reform in the church; and the exiles in Antwerp and Wittenberg developed into a first generation of genuine Protestants – well equipped followers of the new theology. In England, as elsewhere, Luther's uncompromising doctrine of justification by faith alone exercised an appeal which can only be called liberating and exhilarating.[9]

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[7] Elton suggests that the main group at the London site was composed chiefly of John Rastell, Clement Armstrong and Richard Gibson. Geoffrey Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (Cambridge: CUP, 1962) 158.
[8] Jacob Burckhardt. *The Civilization of The Renaissance in Italy,* trans. S.G.C. Middlemore, ed. Irene Gordon (New York: Signet, 1960) 160.
[9] Geoffrey Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558* (London: Edward Arnold, 1977) 96.

By 1532 Taverner had returned to England from whence he wrote to Thomas Cromwell. It is in this letter that he says that he was advised by friends to become a student abroad.[10] Taverner's timing was good; Cromwell was beginning to gather around him a group of writers who would become an important part of his Reformation armoury. Taverner began by translating Erasmus's *Encomium Matrimonii*, which he dedicated to Thomas Cromwell, just as the debate about the marriage of the clergy was emerging.[11] This translation was, as G.R. Elton has suggested, typical of the works of biblical humanism that were beginning to be printed, in spite of Thomas More, at this time.[12] The work was popular and was later translated by Thomas Wilson in *The Arte of Rhetorique* (London, 1553). In writing his preface Taverner clearly had the Church in mind. He suggested that much of the trouble, or "innumerable

[10] There has been some speculation as to whether the benefactor that Taverner speaks of in his letter to Cromwell was Wolsey or not. Emden has suggested that his benefactor was Dr. Jas. Denton, Dean of Lichfield. A.B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford A.D. 1501 to 1540.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974) 557.

[11] For an interesting discussion of Erasmus's *Institution of marriage* printed at Basel in 1526 see Erika Rummel, *Erasmus on Women.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

[12] Elton, *Reform and Reformation* 129.

myscheves", as he called them, could be avoided if men and women would take time to know themselves better before choosing a religious vocation. He berates "the blynd superstition of men and women, which cease nat day by day to professe & vowe perpetuall chastyte before or they suffyciently knowe themselves & thinfirmite of theyr nature". (Aii.recto). The subtext of this, however, is a request that the clergy be allowed to marry, since Taverner expresses the desire that Jesus will provide "som spedy reformation." (Aii.recto). Although several dates have been proposed for this translation, the preface itself indicates that this is an early work in which Taverner presents himself as a servant in hope of "greater thynges in tyme comyng." (Aii.verso). In the meantime, Taverner did as many young university graduates of the day and studied Law. He went to one of the Chancery Inns in London, Strand (Stair) Inn as a preparatory for the Inner-Temple, where Wood notes that "his humour was to quote the law in Greek".

In 1536 Taverner was given the position of Clerk of the Privy Seal, which he held till 1553.[13] Cromwell's subsequent employment of Taverner as a translator of European texts for the furtherance of Reformation in England, brought him into contact with other writers for the cause, most notably Richard Morison and Thomas Starkey. These men shaped the public image of Reformation policy as it was being generated by Cranmer, Cromwell and Henry VIII himself in the years immediately following England's break with Rome.

A key foundation for much of this writing was the work of Erasmus.[14] As Spurgeon has suggested, "The reformers valued highly Erasmus's emphasis on scriptural authority, his anticlericalism, his argument that learning strengthens religion, and his general preference for simplicity and sincerity in religious matters." (Spurgeon vii)[15] It was not difficult to turn the qualities

[13] Emden argues for a date of 1537 for the appointment. 557.
[14] For a fascinating account of the reception of Erasmus in Europe see James Tracy, *Erasmus of the LowCountries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
[15] Dickie A. Spurgeon, Tudor *Translations of the Colloquies of Erasmus (1536-1584)* (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1972).

present in the work of Erasmus to the advantage of the state. Wallace Ferguson has suggested that "Erasmus himself had too little national consciousness to be interested in the history of any country for its own sake, nor would political history, with its inevitable theme of warfare and civil tumult, have attracted him in any case." (Ferguson 40). However, in the hands of Cromwell's State translators Erasmus's works became ardent endorsements of Henrician policy and English Reformation.[16]

That the 1530s was a most productive time for Cromwell's men cannot be disputed. Toward the end of this decade Taverner was even entrusted with the printing press of Richard Bankes, from whence a number of his own works were issued.[17] James McConica has argued that of all the men that Cromwell employed Taverner was probably Cromwell's principal propagandist at this time. (McConica 195).[18] Aside from *A ryght frutefull epystle* (1536)

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[16] Wallace Ferguson *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948).
[17] See John K. Yost 'German Protestant Humanism and the Early English Reformation: Richard Taverner and Official Translation,' *Bibliotheque d'humanisme et renaissance* 32 (1970): 613-625.
[18] James McConica, *English Humanistsand Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI*, rev.ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) 618.

already mentioned, Taverner, alone, translated *The Confessyon of Fayth of the Germayne* (1536); *Commonplaces of Scripture* (1538); *Prouerbes or adagies* (1539) [19]; *The garden of wysdom* (1539); *An epitome of the Psalmes* (1539); *A catechisme or institution of the christen religion* (1539) Taverner's revised edition of the Bible in English, published the same year, was a revision of the 1537 Matthew Bible that had contained the Scriptural translations of the martyred William Tyndale gathered together and edited by John Rogers, subsequently martyred in 1555.

Maria Dowling has suggested that Cromwell's aim in asking Taverner to translate the *Confessyon* was quite simply to persuade Henry VIII to accept it, since it was a pre-condition imposed by Germany for joining the Schmalkaldic League. The translation did not succeed.[20] Instead, the resulting Ten Articles was an ambiguous piece of work, as Dowling suggests "The article on the eucharist was equivocal as to the nature of Christ's presence in the sacrament

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[19] *Proverbes or adagies* were printed in five editions of 1539, 1545, 1550, 1552 and 1569.

[20] See Maria Dowling *Humanism in the Age of Henry* VIII (London: Croom Helm, 1986) 58. She argues against McConica's idea that the translation was motivated by a desire to elaborate religious policy.

and though the efficacy and desirability of prayers for the dead were asserted a definition of purgatory was carefully avoided." (Dowling, 58). This was the first of many re-definitions of the true faith throughout the Tudor reigns.

A good deal of Taverner's subsequent work was serving the appetite of the sixteenth century for potted wisdom with a variety of applications. Archer Taylor has observed, "The apt quotation of a proverb will often turn the course of an argument, just as the apt citation of a precedent may win a case at law."[21] Taverner's Erasmian translations were rhetorical set pieces that could be applied to any number of Reformation issues. If they could win a case at law, they might even change the direction of history.

In 1540 his *Figures Aliquot Sententiarum* and the *Catonis Distichi Moralia* appeared, and in this same year Taverner was entrusted with the editing of a collection of Epistles and Gospels in

[21] Taylor notes "In former days the lower courts before which the peasants appeared used proverbs freely. A German legal document of the fourteenth century declares: "wherever you can attach a proverb, do so, for the peasants like to judge according to proverbs" [ref von Kunssberg, *Jahrbuch fur historische Volkskunde,* I (1925), 72.] The act of quotation recognises the weight of human experience condensed in the proverb." See Archer Taylor, *The Proverb and an Index to the Proverb* (Hatboro, Pen.: Folklore Associates, 1962).

two parts, a Winter and a Summer part, to be used in Church as guides for the clergy. This collection constituted the first of many printed English sermons that were to be produced for uneducated clergy, or lay-men, throughout the sixteenth century.[22] That Cromwell's information program made an important contribution to the development of the London presses, even after his own fall, is undeniable. Professor Scarisbrick has noted "Between 1525 and 1547, it has been reckoned, some eight hundred separate editions of religious works were printed in English and a large proportion of these were of strongly Protestant hue – by such as Barnes, Coverdale, Richard Tracy, Becon, Taverner and Joye, as well as by the Reformers themselves, Luther, Melanchthon and Calvin." (Scarisbrick 1997, 399) To see Taverner as one worker in a huge continental operation to overthrow the powerful grip of the Roman papacy would be a mistake, since there was no such integrated or coherent plan, but Taverner did make important contributions to the realization of Cromwell's plan for England till, in 1540, Thomas

[22] See Ronald Bond *Certain Sermons or Homilies* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

Cromwell's relationship with Henry VIII sustained irreparable damage. Before the end of this year he was committed to the Tower and, in spite of attempts by Cranmer and others to persuade Henry VIII that Cromwell was a true servant, he was executed. As one of his protogees, Taverner followed him to the Tower and narrowly escaped execution by submitting a sturdy defence of himself. Pollard notes that he was taken into custody on 2 December 1541 for circulating rumours that Anne of Cleves was pregnant by Henry VIII, but that he was released and returned to his position at court. (DNB 395).[23] Cromwell's fall impacted on his group of writers, not just Taverner. With no Cromwell to support him, Morison ceased to write texts for the English Reformation and chose, instead, a diplomatic career. Taverner was admitted to his post as Clerk of the Signet where he remained for the next few

[23] Pollard writing in the *D.N.B.* cites Acts P.C. ed. Nicolas, vii.279; *State Papers*, i. 697-8, 706). Taverner had on 20 Jan. 1538-9 been granted the dissolved priory at Alvingham, Lincolnshire, with th erectories of Alvingham and Cokerington Mary (*Letters and Papers*, xiv ,i.607). In 1544-5 Henry gave Taverner the dissolved Franciscan priory at Northampton (*Rot.Pat.* 36 Henry VIII.f.24). The following year he was given 'Nun's acres,' at Stamford Priory and in 1546 he was given lands in Horningtoft, Norfolk (Bridges, Northhamptonshire, i.455, ii.480; Blomefield, Norfolk, ix. 522). *D.N.B.* 395. Apparently he had served at Boulogne for on 28 May 1550 he was paid 333*l.* 13s.4d. (Acts P.C. ed. Dasent, iii.38).

years. Having received a great deal of land from Henry VIII, in 1545 Taverner then became a parliamentary representative for Liverpool.[24]

Taverner was a lay-man but because of the scarcity of good preachers he was given a license to preach throughout the realm by Edward VI in 1552. Wood claims to have papers from Taverner's grandson to the effect that he preached at Court before Edward VI.

In spite of attempts to win patronage from Queen Mary, he was forced to take a back seat in 1553 and throughout her reign cery little is reported of him. Wood suggests that he retired to his house, Norbiton Hall, in Surrey. When Elizabeth succeeded her sister in 1558 Taverner emerged from the shadows and was, in 1569, made Elizabeth's High Sheriff of Oxford.[25] Taverner was offered a

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[24] Emden suggests that Taverner was not M.P. for Liverpool till the end of parliament of 1550-52.

[25] Wood says that he made himself known to Elizabeth with an Epistle in Latin which he presented to her upon her accession and, over longer acquaintance, being so pleased with him she offered him "the Degree of Knighthood...[and] put upon him the commission of Peace for the country of Oxon (wherein he had several mannors that had belonged to religious houses) entrusted him with a considerable share of the concerns thereof, and in the 12 Year of her reign, Dom. 1569 made him High Sherriff of the said County. In which office he appeared in St. Marie's pulpit with his sword by his side (as 'tis said) and a chain of gold

knighthood, which he refused on account of the fact that he was unable to loan the queen the expected one hundred pounds (Emden 558).

He died on 14 July 1575 in Woodeaton, Oxfordshire in the manor house that he had built in 1544. Taverner was buried in the Chancel of the local Church and close to his first wife Margaret, having been conveyed there by two officers of Arms. A monument that was hung in the North Chancel till the reign of Charles II was subsequently pulled down by the Lord of the manor Mr John Nourse to make room for his own his own family memorial.

G.R. Elton has called Taverner the most 'Erasmian' of England's Protestants, who used Erasmus's works to defend and endorse Luther's ideas, (Elton, 158), whilst A.G. Dickens has suggested that Taverner was "a convinced Lutheran". J.K. Yost has argued that Taverner was to a large extent responsible for the Protestantization of Erasmus through his translations. (Yost 267). In fact, it was Taverner's own humanistic, rather than radical

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hanging about his neck and preached to the Scholars a Sermon (there being then a great scarcity of Divines in the University)." *Athena,* 143.

reforming tendencies so true of some of his contemporaries, that made him more sympathetic to Erasmus. He was a Reformation Humanist. Taverner's affinities with Erasmus extended beyond his commissioned and his private translations of his work. In his revision of the New Testament which was translated by Tyndale and revised by Rogers, It was a characteristic of Taverner's annotational style to remove authorities embedded in the Matthew Bible notes, but he conspicuously retained all of those notes appropriated from Erasmus' *Paraphrases* on the New Testament and kept Erasmus as the embedded authority in every case. The translation of the *Paraphrases* had been commissioned as a guide for the clergy of England. Interestingly, Taverner did not receive a commission for this work, but Nicholas Udall did and in his preface to that translation he sets the tone for Tudor Royal supremacy. In Taverner's translations, Erasmus became the spokeman for moderation as the Reformation in England underwent a painful and uncertain process of fashioning, and refashioning its corporate identity.

2. TAVERNER'S NEW TESTAMENT

Reassessing Taverner's New Testament

In 1536 William Tyndale was strangled and burned at Vilvoorde in Belgium. His chief crime was that he had attempted to translate the Bible into the English Language at a time when to do so represented defiance to the Church.[1] John Rogers, his friend and colleague, undertook the dangerous work of amassing Tyndale's translations, combining them with the translated Prophetic books of Myles Coverdale's 1535 Bible and presenting the complete Bible for license as the work of Thomas Matthew. This 1537 Bible had 2200 annotations or helps for the reader that stirred a controversy among the bishops that was sufficient to make the Matthew Bible

[1] Tyndale never managed to complete his Bible translation. We do not have his translations of the poetic books of the Bible nor his apocrypha.

unmarketable as the new Bible for the English Church. All that was really needed was some slight revision, a larger format and the editing of the annotations to make it fit Cromwell and Cranmer's requirements. Myles Coverdale was asked to perform this work of revision when Richard Taverner was already revising the Matthew Bible, apparently using his own funds. Coverdale's Bible had already been brushed aside in 1535 and was never used as a foundation text by subsequent Bible revisers, primarily because he had largely translated the Vulgate instead of returning to the Hebrew and Greek texts. The emphasis on sources has been presented as a trademark of Reformers in accounts of the English Bible, but as Rice and Grafton have argued Protestant and Catholic intellectuals shared many ideas and ideals.

> Late in the fifteenth century intellectuals brought up in this northern reforming tradition came into contact with Italian humanism. Erasmus in the Low Countries, Lefevre d'Etaples and Bude in France, John Colet and Thomas More in England disagreed on many issues and sometimes quarrelled publicly. But they agreed on certain basic points. All thought that the Church of their time laid far too much stress on public and collective acts and on payments of

> money and far too little on the spiritual lives of Christians. All found the relics shown at Cathedrals and elsewhere and the illiterate clergy in the parishes to be both aesthetically repulsive and spiritually crude. And all believed that the Christian could best find out the core messages of his or her faith not by reading church windows or listening to ill-informed sermons but by going back, as good humanists, to the sources. (Rice and Grafton 156).

Not all Reformation Bible scholars had the linguistic abilities of William Tyndale, and close scrutiny of subsequent English Bible versions reveals that revisers had their reasons for making certain changes, but that, on the whole, they trusted Tyndale's translations, because few of them could argue with him on points of Hebrew and Greek. Richard Taverner's Bible was printed in 1539 prior to Coverdale's Great Bible, and although it was not endorsed as the official Bible of the English Church, it was subsequently revised by Edmund Becke and reprinted in parts by John Daye in 1550-1551.

Taverner was an excellent Greek scholar who had taught Greek at Cambridge in the early 1530s, so he was in a good position to revise a New Testament, but he had not studied Hebrew. Although Taverner had an insufficient knowledge of Hebrew with

which to correct Tyndale's Old Testament translations, he nevertheless revised the Old Testament extensively, injecting dramatic energy into old and familiar narratives in a language that was idiomatic and contextualised for an English audience. His Old Testament work may not have been a great work of scholarship, but it is in many places more readable than Tyndale's.[2] The fact is that English Bible scholarship in the sixteenth century followed Tyndale and, more specifically, Tyndale's more conservative translation procedure.

Richard Taverner's biblical translations sit rather uneasily in the paratext of histories of the English Bible. The parameters for a history of the English Bible leading to the Authorised King James Version in 1611 do not allow for a discussion of Taverner's 1539 edition; the reason being that it appeared to have no influence on the subsequent Bibles leading to that monumental effort by King James' men. In this post-colonial age, however, we have come to

[2] For a discussion of Taverner's Old Testament work see Vivienne Westbrook, *Long Travail and Great Paynes : A Politics of Reformation Revision* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001) 78-112.

appreciate that recognised marginalisation is a step toward centrality.

Bishop Westcott's marginal annotation to the Old Testament section of his substantial book had advised the reader : "Taverner's revision of the Old Testament superficial". The marginal annotation which accompanied the discussion of the New Testament read "His revision of the New Testament more important."[3] This was clearly an assumption based on the fact that Taverner was equipped with Greek, rather than the conclusion of a detailed study of Taverner's New Testament. He noted from a few examples from the first chapter of the Gospel of John and in first epistle of St John that: "Taverner aims equally at compression and vividness". Whilst acknowledging that Taverner stayed very close to Tyndale's text, Westcott complained that "Sometimes in his anxiety to keep to the Greek text he becomes even obscure or inaccurate" Ultimately Taverner gets a pat on the back from Westcott for " substantial

[3] B.F. Wescott, *A General View of the History of the English Bible*, rev. W.A. Wright (London : Macmillan, 1905) 216.

improvements into the translation by his regard for the article." And concludes :

> It would be tempting to dwell longer on this version but it appears to have exercised no influence whatever on the later revisions...[4]

He noted in a small footnote to Moulton's collation of 14 chapters of Taverner's Matthew Gospel, a selection of which appear in Westcott's General View, that some "corrections" display "idiomatic" renderings, with "more homely or simple or native words" whilst others "show a delicate feeling for the original". For a Bible that, as Westcott believed, lay outside the parameters of his own study, he actually attempted to generate interest in it, not least of all by publishing some raw material for further consideration by his reader.

Since Westcott's *General View*, the most dedicated piece of work on Taverner's New Testament has come from Hutson and

[4]B.F. Wescott. *A General View of the History of the English Bible*. Rev. W.A. Wright. London : Macmillan, 1905. 218.

Willoughby in their 1939 article "The ignored Taverner Bible of 1539".[5] Having swept aside Taverner's Old Testament, their study pursued the New in order to challenge Westcott's suggestion that Taverner's New Testament had no influence on subsequent versions of the Bible in English. Hutson and Willoughby argue that :

> If all this and only this were true of the Taverner revision, even this would not be sufficient reason for ignoring it.[6]

Hutson and Willoughby based their argument on a study of the selections from the Moulton collation which Westcott had included in his General View. Their comparative study of the Taverner sample with a Greek New Testament brought them to the conclusion that :

> In relation to the Greek of the New Testament the revision of Taverner was noteworthy and mainly commendable for

[5] Harold H. Hutson and Harold R. Willoughby 'The Ignored Taverner Bible of 1539', *Crozier Quarterly* 2 July 1939: 161-176.
[6] *Ibid.* 165.

> its greater literalness and exactness, even in comparison with the work of Tyndale.[7]

With regard to word change it was noted that occasionally Taverner's replacements were Greek derivations. Hutson and Willoughby stress that "This inclination was restrained, however, and not advanced to excess." They note Taverner's predominant use of Anglo-saxon words, against Tyndale's Latin and Greek derivations, but of the portion of Greek and Latin both scholars use, Tyndale's preference is for Latin and Taverner's for Greek. The merits of the Taverner New Testament are thus summarised "For all the reviser's mastery of classical Greek, his editing of the Tyndale-Rogers Testament put it even more definitely into the vernacular English category than it was before"[8]

The problem with this research is that the original Moulton collation was between Taverner's 1539 Bible and Tyndale's 1534 New Testament. The collation should have been between Taverner's 1539 Bible and the Matthew Bible (1537), from which Taverner

[7] *Ibid.* 171.
[8] *Ibid.* 172-3.

was working. Consequently Moulton's data is flawed. He attributes changes to Taverner that should be attributed to Rogers. For example, at Matthew 13.36, Moulton notes that where Tyndale had "to house", Taverner had "home". At Matthew 15.22 where Tyndale had "the son", Taverner had "thou son". At Matthew 15.26, where Tyndale had "whelps", Taverner had "dogs". At Matthew 27.62 where Tyndale had "followeth Good Friday", Taverner had "followed the day of preparing the Sabbath". In fact all of these examples are instances of Taverner repeating what Rogers had already "corrected" in the Matthew Bible. Unfortunately these few examples are taken from the very sample printed in Westcott's General View upon which Hutson and Willoughby base their case.

Westcott claimed that his sample was a selection of "characteristic changes" from Moulton's collation. Hutson and Willoughby claimed, even within this very small "characteristic" selection, that Taverner does not in fact adhere to the procedure they attempt to define. This seems on the one hand to undermine Westcott's selection, and on the other, to minimise any good they

may have intended by profiling Taverner's Bible. A major flaw in their case for proving Taverner's influence is that it rests ultimately upon seven quotations extended from the keywords supplied by Westcott in his selection of the Moulton collation of the fourteen chapters of Matthew's Gospel. This is not the appropriate set of data for such a study. Moulton's collation shows the differences between two, albeit mismatched, versions. Hutson and Willoughby, who deem it necessary to establish a case for Taverner's influence in order to prove his importance, make no attempt to trace Taverner's changes to any prior English source. They use Taverner's changes as a starting point to make a case for his influence on the A.V. where precendents can clearly be discerned in Bibles, such as the afore mentioned Matthew Bible (1537) and Coverdale's Bible (1535) which Taverner draws on and which, in any case would have been equally accessible to subsequent revisers.

Westcott's examples of Taverner's individuality and influence can not be endorsed either. He says, for instance, that in the first chapter from the Gospel of John at verse 14 "For Tyndale's

'verity' he [Taverner] writes 'truth'. Further investigation reveals that Taverner was merely swapping Tyndale's Latin veritatis with Coverdale's English 'truth'. Becke's 1549 Matthew Bible and the Rheims 1582 employ Tyndale's 'verity' whilst the Great Bible, Bishops' Bible, Geneva and the A.V. all return to Coverdale's 'truth'. Westcott noted that at verse 20 :

> for Tyndale's 'confessed and denied not, and said plainly' he repeats the first word as in the Greek 'confessed and denied not and confessed'[9]

Taverner could just as easily be repeating the pattern of the Coverdale 1535 Bible which follows the Vulgate and renders "And he confessed and denied not. And he confessed." This pattern is repeated with little alteration in the Taverner, Rheims and A.V. Bibles. The Great Bible, Becke's Matthew Bible and the Geneva Bible all follow Tyndale.

Westcott further complained that "sometimes in his anxiety to keep to the Greek text he becomes obscure or even inaccurate."[10]

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[9] B.F. Wescott. *A General View* 216.

One such example is given from John.1.11. 'into his own': He came into his own, and his own received him not.

Once again, however, Taverner, whose actual line is "in to his own", could easily have been following the earlier Coverdale 1535 Bible's "in to his own" for a more semantically satisfying phrase. The Rheims Bible also follows Coverdale. As to which is the accurate rendering of 'eis ta idia elthen', even twentieth century translators debate the point. The Great Bible, Becke's and the Bishops' Bible all follow Tyndale's "among his own", whilst the Geneva and the A.V. Bibles have "unto his own", all suggesting the intimacy that merely "to his own" misses.

Rather than picking out Taverner's text to illustrate "obscure" Englishings of the Greek, such changes might instead be placed in the wider context of a tradition in which translations were, beyond religio-political faction, continually reassessed during the process of re-translation, even when the final product came to be glossed with militant propaganda.

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[10] *Ibid.* 216.

Taverner shows elsewhere that he will settle for text that favours the target language, not the source language, where meaning is compromised. He would not, as Coverdale does, include all possibilities in the text so that it looks like paraphrase rather than translation. Taverner makes considered translation decisions.

Another example which Westcott advances as Taverner's Greek anxiety becoming English obscurity is this from John 1.15 : "he was first ere I was". This phrase is not adequately resolved by any of the Renaissance translators, who all attempt to fine tune someone else's translation without making much difference semantically. What is very interesting about this phrase, is that only the Geneva Bible translators pick up the possibility that "first" could be a superlative. All other versions assume a chronological statement only. The Greek reads : hoti protos mou en. Taverner's rendering is extremely good. It succeeds in alerting the Geneva translators but unfortunately they fail to achieve Taverner's fuller meaning. Loosing the necessary ambiguity they tranlsate too far into the target language with "For he was better than I". It is very

strange that Westcott should have chosen such a rendering from Taverner's Bible to hold him up for bad translation. It is this kind of rendering, I would suggest, that increases our appreciation of the nuances of the original, for which Taverner deserves credit.

Even more curious is Westcott's claim that Taverner "introduced substantial improvements into the translation by his regard for the article", especially since his first example from verse 9 'that was the true light', is from the Coverdale 1535 Bible. Another example is taken from verse 21"Art thou the Prophet?" Coverdale's 1535 Bible is the precedent here, and with a note "Deut 18c". Coverdale stresses that John 1.21 is the fulfillment of the Mosaic Prophecy:

> The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; (A.V. Deut.18.15)

Taverner and Rheims Bibles both follow Coverdale. Most other versions prefer "that" whilst Becke retains "a", which is wrong, of

course, because there is no indefinite article in Greek. Westcott's final example of Taverner's contribution to the English Bible via the definite article, is at John 1.23 "I am a voice of one crying". This is even more curious a rendering from a Greek scholar. It appears then, that Taverner can not be given the accolade for any of these innovations with regard to the article which Westcott ascribed to him.

Finally, Westcott makes a case for Taverner's drive for clear English equivalents by quoting Taverner's use of "Mercystock" and "spokesman" in the first Epistle of St John. All other versions adopt the Latin 'advocate' in 1 John II.2, for whichTaverner substitutes the Saxon 'spokesman'.[11]

The Greek paraclete is translated in most modern versions as "advocate". The repaired relationship of God to man via the sacrificed Son was actually translated in a variety of ways, and not universally as "advocate", in sixteenth-century editions. The Vulgate is clearly the source for Tyndale, Coverdale, the Matthew Bible and the Great Bible. Taverner's choice of 'Spokesman' is more

[11] B.F. Wescott. *A General View* 217.

than a replacement of Latin with Saxon, it is one of many illustrations of Taverner thinking through the Greek to arrive at a word in current English usage.[12] The root of the Greek verb, kaleo, means to call. The Greek para when used with the accusative means beside or alongside. From here we can see where Taverner derrived his "Spokesman" as one who speakes beside.

I am not trying to argue against the importance of Taverner. There remains a strong case to be made for the importance of Taverner's Bible in any account of our English Bible Heritage. With regard to his New Testament, what is clearly required is a thorough analysis of Taverner's work there, one that extends beyond Moulton's 14 chapters of Matthew and Westcott's one chapter of the Gospel, and the first epistle, of John. Here I can at least begin to extend a study of Taverner's work in the New Testament to the four Gospels. I will compare Taverner's Gospels with the Matthew Bible Gospels from which he was working. I will also take advantage of

[12] The *O.E.D.* suggests that the term 'spokesman' came into usage in the early to mid-16th century. Taverner shows that, following Tyndale's example, he sees one of his responsibilities as a translator as being that of trying to increase the range of the English vocabulary.

the recently published scholarship by Allen and Jacobs which is a record of the work-in-progress annotations of the Oxford Company assigned to the making of the King James Bible, discernable in the Trinity college Bishop's Bible of 1568. I will there assess the extent to which Taverner's own decisions in 1539 were considered, or even endorsed, and which reappeared in the 1611 National Bible.

Influential Translations?

The following is an investigation of the Hutson and Willoughby evidence advanced in their argument for Taverner's influence, Their quoted A.V. verses precede each analysis. The words in bold are from Moulton's collation which Hutson and Willoughby contextualise to suggest Taverner's influence upon the A.V. Other underlinings are my own for ease in reference.

1. it is not mete to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs. [Matt 15.26]

Tyndale had had "cast it to whelps". The Coverdale 1535 Bible is the first to introduce "dogges" in this place. The Matthew Bible (1537) edited by John Rogers, which Taverner was revising, gave "dogges" here and it is probable that this was Taverner's source. Rogers had "not good" rather than "not mete". Taverner followed the Matthew Bible making a minor alteration by omitting "to" from Rogers' phrase "and to cast it". The Great Bible (1539) had both "mete" and "dogges". Becke's Bible, 1549, repeats the 1537 Matthew Bible version, inserting "thy childrens" in place of "the childrens". The Bishops' Bible had the Great Bible's version but inserted "little " before "dogges", presumably in an attempt to find a more precise semantic correlation with children. The Oxford Company annotation shows their disapproval of the Bishops' change and the Great Bible's verse succeeds into the A.V. unlittered.

2. If any man will come after me, let him denie himself, and take up his cross and follow me [Matt 16.24]

The A.V.'s "come after me" is clearly inspired by the Rheims New Testament. Tyndale had instituted "follow me", which most sixteenth-century versions do follow, except the Bishops' Bible which had "goe after me". Where Tyndale had "forsake himself", which most of the sixteenth-century versions follow, the Rheims gave "denye himself", following the Vulgate "abneget semet ipsum".[13] Hence the Rheims New Testament, and not Taverner, is the most likely influence since it has virtually the A.V.1611 verse:

Rheims If any man will come after me, let him denie himself, take up his cross and follow me [Matt 16.24]

Arguably the Rheims represents a stylistic improvement that the A.V. stylists neglect by reintroducing the first "and" that had been effectively omitted in the Rheims. Taverner's verse shows a hybrid

[13] The advent of English Biblical texts on CD-Rom, notably Chadwick and Healey's 'The Bible in English' edited by Hammond and Adamson, has made the Wycliffe Bibles more accessible to English Bible scholars. Whilst it is tempting to see a number of the revisions made by Taverner and others as reinstatements of the earlier Wycliffe renderings, it should be noted that in most cases the apparent dependence on Wycliffe is in fact dependence on the Vulgate. In his *History of the Bible in English*, F.F. Bruce notes that the printed editions of the English Bible rendered "all the Wycliffite and other early versions obsolete". F.F. Bruce. *History of the Bible in English : From the Earliest Versions* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1978) 23.

of the Tyndale and Vulgate. The Rheims revisers may indeed have had a Taverner Bible but they would certainly have had a Vulgate :

Taverner Yf any man wyl folow me, let hym deny hym self, and take up his crosse, and folowe me.

Tyndale takes his cue from Luther's "nachfolgen" and then "folge". The Matthew Bible from which Taverner was working repeated Tyndale's 1534 New Testament line without alteration. But it is unusual for Taverner who aims for variety in his text elsewhere not to make a change here. The Vulgate had given firstly "venire" and secondly "sequatur". The Greek text had "opiso" and then "akoloutheito". What seems to be happening is that Luther, Tyndale and Taverner realise that this is a theologically problematic fragment. The Greek implies "following" in both cases, though in two subtly differentiated senses. Jesus tells his disciples that if they would follow him they should follow him in his example also. "Ei tis thelei opiso mou elthein,...akoloutheito moi." The Vulgate rendering "venire" makes the text much more ambiguous and

theologically complex, and not only because it echoes Matthew 3.11 in which the one who comes after is greater. Everything that Christ is promised at 16.21, including suffering and resurrection, is promised to those who "come after". The Greek New Testament Christ offers a way of living, a Religion. The Vulgate and the A.V. offer a reason for dying. I see no reason to suppose that Taverner was the influence for this A.V. verse.

3. They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on mens shoulders, but they themselves will not moove them with one of their fingers [matt 23.4]

The line is mostly indebted to Tyndale except for a few particulars. The most important of these being that where Tyndale had "heave at", the A.V. has "move". The Geneva Bible verse is the one that succeds into the A.V. It is worth quoting the whole line as it appears in the Jacobs and Allen annotated Bishops' Bible because it illustrates an interesting evolution from earlier Bibles to the A.V. phrase. The annotations are here included :

for [Delete]
Bishops !Yea! they bind !together! heavie burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on mens shoulders, but !they themselves! will not moove them with one of their fingers.

The Bishops' Bible begins with the Great Bible's "yee they bynde together". Tyndale had rendered the line "ye and they bynde". Coverdale's 1535 Bible had "For they bynde", which the Rheims, Geneva and A.V. revisers follow. The rest of the verse quoted here is Tyndale, apart from "move". Taverner departs from the Matthew Bible text, which repeats Tyndale unaltered, and institutes "move" in place of "heave at" and "with their fynger" in place of "with one of their fingers". The interesting point here, is that whilst Taverner returns to the Vulgate for his word replacements, he still obeys Tyndale's syntax, Taverner takes from the whole English Bible heritage in rendering a verse, and in this respect he is very much in the tradition of the English A.V. revisers.

4. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away [matt 24.35]

This is one of those occasions when Tyndale is overriden by the A.V. revisers with the Greek. In doing so they remove the variety that Tyndale had introduced into the English Bible. The Vulgate, which probably influenced Tyndale here, had : "caelum et terra transibunt/verba vero mea non praeteribunt".

The implication in the Latin text is that the sky and the earth will come to an end but Christ's words will not be forgotten, rather, fulfilled. Tyndale substituted the first "passe" with "perishe" and the second "not passe" with "shall abide". This rendering goes through to the Matthew Bible and its revision by Becke. Coverdale repeated Tyndale's "perishe" for both occurrences of "passe" in his 1535 Bible. The Greek text had "paraleusetai" and then "parelthosin" In 1539 the Great Bible had "heaven and earth shall pass but my words shall not pass." Taverner has the same text as the Great Bible here, which is closer to the Greek and which the Rheims Bible follows. The verse as it appears in the A.V. is the same as that of the Geneva Bible, 1560.

5. I was a stranger and ye took me in [matt 25.35]

This example is one that can seriously be advanced as Taverner influence on the English Bible translations. I will therefore give the lines as they appear in the following Bibles :

Tyndale 1534	I was herbourlesse and ye lodged me
Cov. 1535	I was harbourless and ye lodged me
Matt.1537	I was herbourlesse and ye lodged me
Great B.1539	I was harbourless and ye took me in
Taverner 1539	I was a straunger, and ye lodged me
Becke 1549	I was herbourlesse and ye lodged me
Geneva 1560	I was a stranger, and ye took me in unto you
Bishops 1568	I was a stranger, and ye took me in
Rheims 1582	I was a stranger, and ye took me in
A.V. 1611	I was a stranger and ye took me in

The Greek text here is "zenos emen kai sunegagete me". Tyndale's "harbourless" is clearly inspired by Luther "Ich bin ein saft gewesen, und ihr habt mich beherbeget.' - I was without a friend and you harboured me. The Greek word "zenos" is more correctly translated by Taverner into "stranger". The Vulgate also had "hospes eram" - I was a stranger. In sixteenth-century England

"stranger", "alien" or "foreigner" were the terms used to describe someone who did not belong because of his racial difference. Here Taverner's "stranger" emphasises the point of this text, which insists that people should respond to each other as members of the 'human' race. Changing words in translated texts can only be finally endorsed if they improve the possibility for understanding the text. Here, I think, Taverner shows that he could be a very good reviser, at times, the best.

6. Hereafter shall ye see the sonne of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven [matt 26.64]

This is Tyndale's line up to "and coming in the clouds of heaven" where Tyndale has "and come in the clouds of the sky". Coverdale's 1535 version, though verbose, does end with the Vulgate line that eventually goes through to the A.V., with an aditional "the" inserted before "heaven". Taverner repeated Tyndale as printed in the Matthew Bible, except that he replaced "sky" with

"heaven". The Jacobs and Allen Bishops' Bible had "the sky" which the Oxford Company annotated with "heaven". The Greek text is "ouranou" - heaven. The Vulgate had "caeli" - sky. The Rheims maintained "heaven", and the Geneva Bible endorsed Tyndale's "and come in the clouds" but again inserted "heaven" in place of "sky". The difference is that Tyndale, Taverner and the Geneva translators recognise that "kai erchomenon epi ton nephelon tou ouranou" is the aorist tense, where other revisers read it as a present indicative.

7. ye have a watch, goe your way, make it as sure as you can [matt. 27.65]

The Great Bible is one precedent for this line. The only alteration made to the verse is to the article. The Great Bible had "the watche". Taverner had "a watche", suggesting that he was following Vulgate here rather than the Greek, which does have an article. The Geneva Bible follows Taverner with "a watch", but replaces "can"

with "know". Tyndale has "can", which Coverdale 1535, the Matthew Bible, Taverner and the Great Bible follow. The Geneva, Bishops' and Rheims have "know". Both are possible translations from the Greek root "eido". The Vulgate had "sicut scitis"- as you are able. Tyndale's choice is semantically superior, and the A.V. endorses it.

Taverner as Precedent

More recently, Naseeb Shaheen has made a case for Taverner's importance to the English Biblical tradition. He argues "The fact that the Taverner Bible of 1539 was the first sixteenth-century Bible to translate Matthew 10.29 "fall on the grounde", to be followed by Jugge and the Geneva Bible, is significant in the history of the English Bible." (Shaheen 26).[14] It is a small point, but it shifts the emphasis away from 'lack of influence' as a reason to ignore Taverner. Once this kind of investigation is pursued, small points

[14] Naseeb Shaheen, 'The Taverner Bible, Jugge's Edition of Tyndale, and Shakespeare', English Language Notes 38.2 (2000) 24-29.

begin to add up to something more significant. Taverner is responsible for some syntax order changes that are unprecedented in an English Bible and which succeed into the A.V. At Luke 3.12 Taverner changed the Tyndale Matthew Bible rendering : "Then came there publicans" to " Then came also publicans". In the Jacobs and Allen annotated Bishops' Bible, both Tyndale's and Taverner's versions are suggested by the annotators. Taverner is chosen for the A.V."Then came also publicans".

Tyndale	there Publicanes
Taverner	also Publicanes
Bishops	Then came !publicans also! to bee baptized

Interestingly, amongst sixteenth-century versions, only Taverner and the A.V. agree on this point of translation here.

Taverner may be credited with instituting "handmaid" in Mary's response to the angel at Luke 1.38: "And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord". This is endorsed by the Rheims and the A.V. Other versions of the period have "hand mayden", excepting

the Geneva Bible which has "servant". Modern versions such as the NIV, NRSV and NEB endorse the Geneva Bible.

At Luke 2.34 Taverner displays a characteristic evident in his Old Testament work in removing the ecclesiastical language from the narrative. The Matthew Bible had :

Matt 1537 This chyld shalbe the fall and resurreccion of many in Israel

Taverner, however, removed "resurreccion" and instituted "fall and rysynge":

Tav 1539 This chyld shal be the fall and rysynge of many in Israel

The Jacobs and Allen Bishops' Bible shows that they were here following Coverdale's Bibles and rendered a line that could not be endorsed in a national Bible because of its implications of rebellion:

"fall and uprising". Here is that line with the Oxford Company's annotation followed by the verse as it appeared in 1611 :

		for		rising
Bishops	this childe is set !to be! the fall and !uprising! againe of many in Israel			
A.V. 1611	This child is set for the fall and rising again			

This "uprising" was employed by Cheke as an alternative to "Resurrection" in his 1549 translation of the Gospel of Matthew. Whether the A.V. revisers had a copy of Taverner's Bible available is difficult to ascertain, but it can at least be said that a number of Taverner's early sixteenth-century decisions in the New Testament were judged to be the best for the seventeenth century national Bible.

"Influence" in the internal history of the English Bible need not be synonymous with "importance". An individual Bible ought to be allowed to earn attention for its individual merits. It would be difficult, for instance, to prove that modern translators consult Taverner's translations, though they endorse some of his decisions

by replicating them. One more example from Luke's Gospel will suffice here. At Luke 1.4 Mary receives an unexpected visit from an angel with a request. She wonders what this, in Tyndale, "salutacion" might be. Her bewilderment is consistently reported at this "salutation" in all of the sixteenth-century versions except in Taverner's Bible. Taverner introduces "gretynge" as being more in keeping with the simple maid's response, which many modern versions have endorsed :

Taverner	What manner of gretynge that should be [1539]
NIV	what manner of greeting.. [1994]
NRSV	what sort of greeting [1995]
REB	what this greeting could mean [1989]

The English Biblical Tradition

Taverner will employ all of the resources at his disposal in rendering a line that he considers to be both semantically and stylistically superior to the Matthew Bible text. Whilst it has often been noticed how Taverner uses the Vulgate, or the Greek, in his

translations, less credit has been given to the ways in which existing translations are employed by him. In fact after Tyndale's translations no Bible translator could really claim to be working alone. What sets Taverner so firmly within our English Bible tradition is his utilisation of the English translations available to him in 1539, those of Tyndale, Coverdale and Rogers, to which he contributes his Latin, Greek and his sense of English style. In the Gospel of Mark.4.29 Taverner begins with Tyndale and ends with Coverdale :

Tyn. 1534	And as soon as the fruite is brought foorth, anon he thrusteth in the sickle,
Cov. 1535	But whan she hath brought forth the frute, he putteth to the sickle
Tav. 1539	And as soon as the fruite is brought foorth, anon he putteth to the sickle,

Taverner manages to achieve the immediacy of Tyndale's "as soon as", suggesting optimum ripeness, without the threat of the "thrust" of the sickle, and Coverdale's sense of earth giving up its bounty

into the hand of the harvester, without Coverdale's rather laissez faire attitude to his crop.

Mark 4.13 is often read as a reproach to the disciples for their lack of understanding. But this sits ill with "Unto you it is given to know the mystery" (Mark.4.11.A.V.) . In Taverner's version, as with the Great Bible version, "unto you it is given" is reversed to read "unto you is it given". This is a minor alteration but it is an effective illustration of the consideration that Taverner gives to stylistic details. In the A.V. this verse is followed by : "know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?" (A.V.4.13).

Here, the angry Christ turns on the very followers that he has just promised knowledge to. This really makes no sense at all. His disciples are not, afterall, hand-picked scholars but simple men. In Taverner's version, then, Jesus does not reproach his disciples, instead he offers to teach them, as promised at verse 11. "unto you is it given". I will give Tyndale and Coverdale for the purpose of comparison with Taverner:

Tyn 1534	Perceive ye not this similitude? how then should ye understand all other similitudes?
Cov.1535	Understand ye not this parable? How wyl ye then understand all other parables?
Great B. 1539	Knowe ye not this parable? and how then wyll ye knowe all other parables?
Taverner 1539	Perceive yee not this parable? And howe yee shall understand all other parables
Greek	Ouk oidate ten parabolen tauten, kai pos pasas tas parabolas gnosesthe;

Taverner correctly reads "gnoesethe" as the middle voice form "you shall understand". Tyndale renders "parabolen" into English as "similitude". Taverner clearly decides that by 1539 people understand the word "parable". In fact The Matthew Bible and Taverner's Bible employ both "parable" and "similitude" almost alternately and the Matthew Bible had included in its 2,200 annotations three explanations of 'parable.' One can see that Taverner is anxious to retain as much of Tyndale as possible, keeping his "perceive" and "understand" in the drive for variety in the target language. The Coverdale and Great Bibles are either unaware of the fact that the Greek has "oidate" and "gnosesesthe",

which is registered by the Vulgate in "nescitis" and "cognoscetis", or they choose the repetition for rhythmic balance. Apart from being right, Taverner also achieves the best style. He lends emphasis to the verse with his alliterative 'P's. He achieves variety with "perceive" and "understand" and he retains the balance with his repetition of "parable". The interesting thing about Taverner's choice of rendering here is that it maintains the tone of Tyndale's earlier 1526 version that Tyndale himself later rejected though George Joye had maintained it verbatim in 1534 and 1535:

Tyn 1526 perceive ye not this similitude? and how ye shall know all similitudes

Given these few examples it ought be possible to argue for Taverner's importance without relying solely upon influence to establish that importance. The extent to which he demonstrates his consideration of available scholarship in his New Testament translation is alone sufficient to establish Taverner firmly within the

English Bible tradition.[15]

[15] George Joye, who, in correcting Tyndale's New Testament, incurred Tyndale's wrath, subsequently wrote an 'Apology'. In Joye's *An Apologye* he attacked Tyndale's Greek on this basis : " I mervel that aftir T[indale]. in his first translacion our ladie was maryed unto Joseph/ and that now in his new correccion she is but betrothed to him". The early Wycliffe (A) had given "spousid" in Matthew 1.18. The Greek is from *mnesteuo* which implies betrothal rather than marriage. In 1534 Tyndale's New Testament had at Matthew 1.18 "betrothed", indicating a higher level of accuracy in the revision. The question is whether or not this constitutes a claim that Tyndale was initially dependant upon Wycliffe's Gospels in 1526. The Vulgate had "desponsata' - betrothed. So even if Tyndale's Greek was thin, the Vulgate ought to have guided him. Tyndale may have been guided by Luther, who had "Als Maria, seine mutter, dem Joseph vertrauet war," - which suggests only that Mary and Joseph were not 'intimate'. This ambiguity may be one reason for Tyndale's semantic extrapolation and translation "married". See *An Apologye to satisfye (if it may be) W. Tindale* (London, 1535), *S.T.C*:14820.

3.1. ADAGIA

Veritas Simplex Oratio

Between the first edition of Adagiorum Collectanea (Paris, 1500), with its 818 entries, and the final Adagiorum Chiliades of 1536, we see his sustained enthusiasm at work. Has Erasmus often been called modest? At least, the count of his aphorisms, of which he had finally 4,151, is a prodigal underestimate, for most of the entries include variants and analogues of the main quotation. After the thousands of this harvest, Taverner's hundreds in Proverbs seem a scanty gleaning.[1]

The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added*

[1] Charles Read Baskerville, 'Taverner's "Garden of Wisdom" an dthe "Apophthegmata" of Erasmus', *Studies in Philology* 29 (1932): 930.

Mimi Publiani, was published in 1539 and subsequently printed in five more editions till 1569.[2]

What has generally been considered to be a quintessentially Renaissance practice has in fact been observed by Janet E. Heseltine in Medieval and even Anglo-Saxon teaching and learning practices.[3] At the end of Aelfric's tenth-century grammar "there are Latin colloquies, with the Anglo-Saxon written between the lines, describing the daily tasks of life in a monastery".[4] More recently Susan E Deskis has reappraised the use of proverbs in Anglo-Saxon literature, observing that "Unfortunately, we have no authoritative definition of the proverb to guide us."[5]

That Proverbs were enormously important to the development of English literary style as well as being a fundamental component of pedagogical methodology in the

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[2] Charles Baskerville has argued for an earlier date for the *Adagies*. *Ibid.* 149-159.

[3] She argues that Proverbs were of great use to the Medieval clerks who had to teach Latin and argues "what could be better than making them familiar with the sayings of everyday life?" Janet E. Heseltine, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1935) ix.

[4] *Ibid.* ix.

[5] Susan E. Deskis, *Boewulf and the Medieval Proverb Tradition*. (Tempe, Arizona : Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1996) 3.

sixteenth-century is a fact often asserted but rarely discussed. The first recorded published collection of English Proverbs was an edition by John Heywood, in 1546.[6] However, Taverner's late 1545 edition of Erasmus's translated *Adagies* also contained 51 Proverbs taken from English folk and wisdom traditions, making Taverner's the first collection. Taverner invested his translations of Classical wisdom Proverbs with a distinctive English identity that both widened their range and increased their appeal for an English readership.[7]

The end of Proverbs was to teach as well as to delight, and what we might call the pervasiveness of the Proverbial method, the practice of absorbing and re-presenting primarily Classical and Biblical wisdom in mnemonic formats, is in evidence in a wide-range of Renaissance text, from biblical paratext to commonplace books.

An important constituent of Latin learning in schools at this time consisted of copying and remembering the pithy sayings of

[6] See Rudolph Habernight, ed., *John Heywood's A Dialogue of Proverbs* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963).
[7] See BL C123.a.22.

Roman Generals, Philosophers and Emperors. At the beginning of English Printed Bibles, such as Becke's 1549 Bible, readers were encouraged to be like good bees and to gather the sweet flowers of Scripture into one's own garden of wisdom, the garden of the soul, and there to cultivate a desire and a will toward Reformation.

Although, as we have noted, the Proverbial medium was hardly a Renaissance invention, it is fair to say that it reached its zenith in the sixteenth century. Archer Taylor has suggested that Erasmus's first edition, printed in 1500, was the fire that ignited the explosion of Proverbial wisdom throughout the sixteenth century. "In the flood tide after the Middle Ages, with the renaissance and the publication in 1500 of Erasmus' *Veterum maximequie Insignium Paroemiarum, id est Adagiorum Collectanea*, although it was only a thin book of 152 pages, the translation of proverbs from one language into another becomes rampant and everywhere enriches the national stocks of proverbs." (Taylor 47).[8]

[8] Archer Taylor, *The Proverb and an Index to the Proverb.* (Hatboro, Pen.: Folklore Associates, 1962).

In the process of gathering and recording nuggets of wisdom, the individual reader was encouraged to embody precepts and thereby reform. Proverbs, adagies, and commonplaces had an educative and a medicinal role to play in sixteenth century England before they became absorbed into text that was written purely to delight.

Erasmus was already a highly respected scholar in Europe when he began publishing editions of the *Agadies* in 1500. One might go so far as to suggest that he was the great teacher of Europe since, as Heseltine has argued, in publishing his 1500 edition of *Adagia*, which Margaret Phillips has called "one of the world's biggest bedside books" (Phillips vii), Erasmus made readily available the wisdom of the great figures of Classical antiquity to European minds.[9]

Thomas Cromwell was quick to seize on scholars such as Richard Taverner as translators for Reformation purposes, though

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[9] Janet E. Heseltine. *The Oxford Dictionary* xiii. See Adrian Ward. 'The Cultural and Social Significance of Proverbial Material in Mid-Sixteenth-Century English Verse', Ph.D. University of Manchester, 1999, in which he draws our attention to the fact that Polydore Vergil published a collection of Proverbs *Proverbiorum Libellus* in 1498 which Erasmus denied knowledge of. 26. See also Margaret Mann Phillips. *Erasmus on His Times.* (Cambridge: CUP, 1967).

there is no evidence that he asked Taverner to translate the *Adagies*. It is thought that Taverner himself undertook this translation from Erasmus's Latin work, a work which Olive B. White has called "one of Erasmus's central scholarly achievements", for the edification of the English people during the establishing years of the English Church (930).[10] Taverner's translations, as McConica points out, constituted "one of the greatest repositories of Erasmian Adagies and classical wisdom made available to the sixteenth-century reader".[11] For David Weil Baker Taverner's *Adagies*, or more precisely, his authorial interventions in the *Adagies*, offer an interesting window onto attempts by English Reformers to rewrite the more radical elements in Erasmus's works. In his translation of the *Amicorum communia sunt omnia*, for instance, Taverner steers the reader away from interpreting the reference to sharing as an endorsement of Anabaptism.

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[10]Olive B. White, 'Richard Taverner's Interpretation of Erasmus in Proverbs or Adagies', *PMLA* 59 (1944): 928-943.
[11]James K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) 184.

> Certyes, this communion of those Heathen Pythagorians resembled much better that communion used in the primitive church among the Apostles, then doth either our monkery at this day, or the wicked Anabaptistical sect, which will have no rulers, no order, but which goeth about to disturb th ewhole world with horrible confusion.

As Baker notes "Although Taverner links Pythagorean and early Christian communism, he denies the possibility of any contemporary equivalent to these ancient communities arising." (Baker 13).[12]

Erasmus's first edition of the *Adagia* had been printed in Latin, the scholarly, universal language of Europe, in Paris in 1500, but his collective instinct for scholarly nuggets continued till in 1536 he printed the version of the *Adagia* that Taverner was to translate into English.

By comparison with its original, Taverner's collection from the *Adagies* was highly selective, though this drastic slimming exercise made his edition something that could not be claimed for Erasmus's own volumes, pocketable and affordable. It was a book

[12] David Weil Baker, 'Topical Utopias: Radicalizing Humanism in Sixteenth-Century England', *SEL* 36 (1996): 1-30.

that individuals could carry about with them to read at convenient and leisure times, and this, no doubt contributed to its popularity throughout the sixteenth century. Taverner's adaptation for an English readership involved not a little erasure of Erasmus. In what might be seen as somewhat typical of English Renaissance iconoclasm, involving the simultaneous absorption and rejection of the Classical and the reconstituting and re-mapping of an English Culture through translation, Taverner absorbed the Classical wisdom, mapped the Church's Reformation agenda onto it and transferred it to the secular arena.

Taverner does not merely translate, he paraphrases, infusing idiomatic English into Classical rhetoric, and replacing the Classical past with his contemporary English political contexts. By so doing, Taverner ensured that wisdom literature came to be both popular and influential among those who had little Latin and less Greek. The Scriptures, in whole and in parts, were being advertised at this time as more healthful and enjoyable rivals to Chronicles and Canterbury Tales, and as replacements for "carding", "dysing" and

such pastimes as were the general indicators of "dissolute lyvyng".[13] So too, in his "the prologe of the authour" of his 1539 edition of the *Proverbes or Adagies* Richard Taverner advertised his work as "no les pleasaunte then profitable".[14] They were described as "nette and handsome Proverbs". He argues that it is beyond his capacity to render Erasmus fully into English, but goes on to say that just because he cannot render them all he has no excuse not to render those he can. Of course, as with many of the prefatory epistles of the period, the author begs the patience of the reader and hopes that this work will be taken in the right spirit "If ye shall lyke my studie and industrie taken in thys behalfe, I wolbe glad : If not, yet my honeste harte is not to be blamed".

Taverner does much more than translate the Adagies and Proverbs of Erasmus, he explains them in an English that is accessible and well contextualised. The first of the Adagies is "Nemo bene imperat, nisiqui parverit imperio". Taverner translates

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[13] Edmund Becke. Rev. English Bible JRL: 4566. S.T.C: 2077. D.M: 74.
[14] Richard Taverner. 'The prologe of the authour'. The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539).

" No man can be a good ruler, onles he hath bene fyrste ruled".[15] He then goes on to explain the importance of obedience at every level of society, before adding his own moral lesson that obedience starts at the level of the individual and the subjugation of his lusts:

> No man can be a good ruler, onles he hath bene furste ruled Certes, nothyng is truer, than this Proverbe, both bycause no prince, no ruler, no mayster can well do hys office : oneles he fyrste were a subjecte and under the correction eyther of hys parentes, tutours, governours, or teachers. And also bycause that a man must fyrst rule hys owmne lustes, and be hym selfe obedient to ryght reason, ere he can well governe other.[16]

Though this is an extensive explanation, Taverner does not take the same pains for all of the Proverbs that he translates. There are a

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[15] *Ibid.* A.ii recto. There are considerable spelling differences between the versions of the *Adagies*, even when the wording is otherwise exact.

[16] Richard Taverner. The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani*. London : 1539. Aii recto. c.f. the spelling of the BL: C123.a.22, 1552 version of this Proverb, "No man can be a good ruler, onles he hath bene first ruled. Certes, nothing is truer, than this proverbe, bothe because no prince, no ruler, no maiester can wel do his office : onles he fyrst wer a subiect and under the correction eyther of hys parentes, tutours, governours, or techers. And also because that a man muste fyrst rule his own lustes, and be him self obedient to right reason, ere he can wel governe other." Aii recto.

number of translations that add no more than one short sentence, for instance "Factum stultus cognoscit" or "Malo accecpto, stultus sapit".[17] Taverner chooses the Proverbs that he translates, so the fact that he leaves some virtually as they are, with hardly any expository commentary, whilst expanding others far beyond the length of the Latin original requires some explanation. The Proverbs that Taverner chooses fall into one of four categories, those dealing with Politics, those dealing with the Law, those for Personal Reformation and those that contain General Observations.

Political Proverbs

Taverner adds contextual detail where he can, for instance, when he warns us with the Proverb that "Bos lassus fortius figit pedem" that men past their prime can deal severe blows to those whose brilliance and energy they envy, he cites the example of Jerome who in writing to St. Augustine used this very Proverb to warn him

[17] Richard Taverner. The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani*. London : 1539. Aiii recto.

against provoking his elders. When he translates "Multae regum aures, atque oculi" Taverner takes the opportunity to raise a panoptic model of society, in which we are all seen unseen:

> Kynges have many eares and manye eyes, as who shulde saye, no thynge can be spoken, nothynge doon so secretly agaynst kynges and Rulers, but by one meanes or other at length it wol come to their knowlege. They have eares that lysten an hundreth myles from them, they have eyes that espye out more thynges, then men wolde thynke. Wherfore it is wysdome for subjectes, not onlye to kepe theyr princes lawes and ordinaunces in the face of the worlde, buit also prevely : namely syth Paule wold have rulers obeyed even for conscience sake.[18]

In 1539 this was an optimistic vision of the King's omniscience and omnipotence throughout England. Even in Elizabeth's reign and with the help of the spymaster Walsingham this would have been a vain boast. Of course this did not stop Elizabeth herself from proclaiming such omniscience. In the Ditcheley portrait an important part of the establishment of her authority in the picture was the gown of 1000 eyes that confronted the onlooker. Claims to such omniscience either in Renaissance text or portraiture were

[18] *Ibid.* Aiiii recto.

clearly intended to frighten potential rebels out of their plots. In this next Proverb "Longae regum manus", which Taverner translated as "Kynges have longe handes They can brynge in men, they can pluck in thinges, though they be a great were of", he was making the clear statement that rebels can not hope to escape the long arm of the Law. This message was reiterated in anti-rebel tracts and homilies throughout the Tudor reigns. In the 1570 Book of Homilies, which Elizabeth invested a great deal of faith in, the Homily against Disobedience and Wilfull Rebellion used the example of Absolom to make the same point. In the Homily God is seen to animate the tree so that it stretches forth its "arm" to hang the rebellious Absolom by his goodly hair. The message of this short illustration is that rebels can never escape punishment, however much they are loved by Kings and People, God is always the final arbiter and punisher of rebels. Of course this is also the argument that Henry Vth asserts in Shakespeare's *Henry V*.4.1 "Now, if these men have defeated the Law and outrun native

punishment, though they can outstrip men, they have no wings to fly from God". (155-157).

An important element of Taverner's agenda in the translation of the *Adagies and Poverbes* seems to have been that which underpinned the Postils that he was later to edit, as a contribution to the plethora of anti-rebel tracts, poetic and dramatic texts that circulated in the sixteenth century as a means of social instruction toward social control. Indeed it was precisely for this purpose that Taverner was employed by Thomas Cromwell, as we learn in his preface to another of his translations, *The Commonplaces of Scripture.*[19]

Perhaps not surprising is the fact that "Malum consilium consultori pessimum" which Taverner translates as "Evyll counsayle is worst to the counsaylour" receives one of the longest expository treatments. Admonishments to evil counsellors and warnings to Kings about the dangers of bad counsellors pervades cross-generic, prefatorial and even annotational matter during this

[19] Rychard Taverner. 'To the Most Hyghe and Most excellent prynce'. *Commonplaces of Scripture* (London, 1538) BL:3128.a.33.

period. The Geneva Bible 1560 annotations to the Revelation were obsessed with power, its rightful place and its appropriations., most especially the appropriation of Monarchical power by the Pope. At Revelation 16.14, for instance, the Geneva Bible gave this note "o For in all kings courtes the Pope hathe had his ambassadours to hinder the kingdome of Christ". In his preface to the *Commonplaces of Scripture*, Taverner assured Henry that his name would be forever linked with the glorious history of the Reformation of the Church in England, but he was careful to include a number of references to the worthy and good counsellor Thomas Cromwell, and his part in the story, "the memory of certain his counsellours, namely of the lorde Crumwell, soe worthye a counseloure to so worthye a prynce", Cromwell was Taverner's own patron and, of course, his surety.

In the *Adagies*, Taverner situated "Malum consilium consultori pessimum" clearly in an ecclesiastical context.

> Counsayle is a certayn holy thinge. And as it ought gladly to be taken, whan occasion requyreth : so it ought advysedly,

> purely, and wythout fraude to be gyven when one nedeth it. Otherwyse wythout doubt Godes hande woll appere to take punyshmente of hym that wyth falshod and gyle hathe foyled a thynge bothe holy and divine. To this agreeth Ecclesiasticus. Who so ever (sayeth he) gyveth a leude counsayle : it shall turne upon hym selfe, and he shall not knowe from whens it cometh.[20]

The evil counsellor is threatened with the wrath of God Himself. The ability of Popes to manipulate the courts of Europe was well known and, of course, detested by Reformers.[21] English Chronicles had documented struggles between English Monarchs and Rome as early as King John's reign. That King John, after a brief period of excommunication, once more subjugated himself and England to the power of Rome was a historical detail that tended to be reconfigured as another example of the oppressive and usurping power of Rome against a helpless Monarch. During the first wave of English Reformation King John was appropriated as a proto –

[20] Richard Taverner. The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) Bv recto.

[21] see BL:C123.a.22. *Malum consilium consultori pessimum* Avrecto, which begins with "Evyll counsayl is worst to the counsaylour", the translation of the latin preceding the English explanation, which is as given here but for the spelling differences already noted.

Protestant, not least of all in John Bale's *King John*, and as the antitype of which King Henry VIII was to become the supreme type of great Renaissance Reforming princes. That King Henry had been able to effect this reformation only with the help of Thomas Cromwell is a fact that Taverner was not going to let Henry forget. In spite of these efforts, only one year after these *Adagies* were published, Thomas Cromwell was executed for treason. In his letter to King Henry, Thomas Cranmer suggested that if Henry could be persuaded by malicious counsellors that Thomas Cromwell was capable of treason, then no one could be thought innocent. In fact the letter is in the same tenor of Henry Vth speech to Cambridge Scope and Grey in Shakespeare's *Henry V*.1.2. In that play, too, we see the Church counsel at work to send Henry and his English army to France in order to protect their investments at home. Suffice it to say, that warnings against evil counsellors abounded in every kind of text of the period. All of the age-old anxieties about the dangers of having a child on the throne of course resurfaced in 1547 when Henry VIII died leaving young Prince Edward to rule. In tracts of

this period writers seeking preferment praised the great counsellor and protector of the realm Lord Somerset for keeping the Pope out of England and so ferociously guarding the English Church and its rightful head immediately under Christ, Edward.

Taverner did not limit himself to Scriptural authority in the *Adagies* to explain the devastation that bad counsellors might cause, he cites, as he says in the marginal annotation, "A pleasant fable of the Lion".[22] Aesop's fables had been printed in England since 1483 and had been very popular in the late fifteenth century. Taverner is therefore using a point of reference that would probably have been as familiar as the Bible stories themselves. What is most striking about the use of Aesop is the way that Taverner turns it into a parable or fable to warn those who had by this time accused Thomas Cromwell of treason. Taverner thereby threatens the return of Cromwell and the ultimate overthrow of his would-be assailants.

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[22] Richard Taverner. The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) B.v recto.

The Lion for weakenes of age beynge sycke and kepynge hym selfe in hys denne, all the other beastes accordynge to theyr duetye and alleageaunch coem to loke howe theyr kynge dothe. Only the foxe absenteth her selfe. Wherfore the wolfe now espyeng a good occasion, accuseth the Foxe of treason unto the Lions majesty, as one that dyspyseth the kynge and governour of all beastes and whych of frowardnes and traytorous harte woll not wuth other beastes vysite hys majestye, as theyr allegiaunce requyred,

Whyle the wolfe was thus accusynge the Foxe, the Foxe prevelye cummenth in and heareth the ende of the wolfes complaynte. Nowe whan the Lion loked up and espyed the Foxe, forthwith he gnassheth with hys teeth agaynst her. But she, after she hadde obteyned a space to pourge her selfe, thus begynneth to make her defence. I besech you syr kynge, saith she, what one beaste of all that be be here assembled to visite your majestye, is so carefull, and busye to do you good, and to helpe you, as I am, whyche have runne aboute ever sythens ye sykened, to seke counsayle for your maladye, and nowe at last I have serched out a soveraynge medicyne of the phisiciens. The Lion hearynge thys, streyght charged her to tell the medicine. Truly, saith[23] the Foxe, if ye woll slee the wolfe and wrap your slefe in hys skynne, ye shall fynde (saye they) ease of your payne. The Lion lyght of credite, forthwith ranne upon the wolfe and slewe hym, who thus kylled, the crafty Foxe laughed that the sklaunderous and evyll counsayle of the wolfe lyghted upon hys owne pate. Let all counsaylours beare thys exemple wel in mynde, if they be nothing moved wyth fables : Let them at lest be admonyshed wyth the history of Aman in the boke of Hester, whych is in the Byble.[24]

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[23] BL:C123.a.22 has "quod". Avi. verso.

[24] Richard Taverner. The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) Bvrecto –Bvi. recto.

The fable is made all the more poignant when we take into consideration the continual references throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the 'wolf' as the corrupting influence of the unlearned clergy with which, evangelicals claimed, the Roman Church abounded.

In his *Commonplaces of Scripture,* too, Taverner had warned Henry that where there are great counsellors and great deedes done by them, there are also those who envy them and their deeds that will report them as evil. It becomes apparent from Aiv recto that Taverner is trying to protect Cromwell, his patron. "Doubteles (mooste myghtye and redoubted prince) it can not be dyssenled, but as certeyne of your graces counseyl be highly praysed, extolled, and magnifyed of many : So agayne on the contrary part, they be envyed, malygned, and hated of others, namelye of suche as either have envye as theyr vocation, or be yet styll roted in theyr popyshhe superstycion. Or these some perchaunce in theyr furyous rage, wolde desyre theyr deth." (Aiv recto).

Taverner goes on to say that no doubt when they reflect, these envious or malicious men will repent. "I meane the byssgio of Romes privy adherents, who withoute questyon do hate all thinges that tend to the advauncement of gods honour, and detection of theyr cloked hypocresye" (Aiv recto)

Taverner expresses the wish that just as God has protected Henry through "the mooste ungodlye and pestilent conspiracyes", so too God will "poure out his grace upon the rest of your graces lovynge subjects" (Aivrecto). Henry is depicted as the head of a unified England and the "Mighty Shepeherde" The purpose of Henry's strong leadership and God's grace is to purge England of Papism once and for all. This is configured in terms of bodily health so typical of this period.[25] Here God will "utterly vomyt out of us all papisticall venym" (Aiv recto).

In his *Adagies*, Taverner even manages to turn "Frons occipitio prior", "The forehed is afore the hynder parte of the heed", a fairly innocuous statement, one might think, into an opportunity for polemical warfare against the Pope. After rendering a brief

[25] See Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Castel of Health*. London, 1541. JRL: R128506.

translation and then its most literal meaning "As who shulde saye, the thynge a man seeth done afore hys face and in hys owne presence is for most part better done, than that is done behynde his backe".[26] This would suffice as an explanation, but Taverner goes on to paraphrase Aristotle and then Gellius. The first tale is of a man who asked what is the best food for his horse, to which came the response the master's eye. The second from Gellius concerns a fat man who had a thin horse. When asked why this was the case the man replies that he feeds himself but his servant feeds the horse. This second tale enables Taverner to draw out a moral as a preamble to his more focussed attack. "These thynges tende all to thys ende, that every man shulde as muche as may be, execute hys busynes, hys callynge, hys office by hym selfe and not by vycares or deputies, as nowe we se done, well nere of all degrees of men". At the mention of "vycares" we are allerted to the fact that Taverner is going to make more capital out of this Proverb. Indeed he goes on to say :

[26] This proverb was missing from the BL:C.123.1.22 version.

> There be Kynges, there be Cardinalles, there be Bishops, Prelates and sondry other officers and magistrates in Christendome, whych do all by vycares and deputies, but them selves lyve in most ydelnes and in all kyndes of pleasure lyke the popes. Wold god these wold take exemple of our most vigilant prince and soveraynge lord kinge henry the eyght, who not only setteth vigilant deputies and ministers under hym, but also loketh hym selfe ryght busely opon hys charge committed unto him of god.

Aside from his more sly dig at the Pope via an attack on those who live like the Pope, Taverner manages to use the Proverb to proclaim Henry VIII as the supreme antithesis to the Pope and his idleness and a more fitting example for England to follow. As J.K. Yost has noted, by such shifts, Taverner makes Erasmus serve Henrician reform. To this section of the explanation, Taverner included a pointing hand. Another Proverb is allied to this one in intention, "Pecuniae obediunt omnia" which Taverner translates as "Unto money be all thynges obedient". Taverner takes the opportunity to upbraid the ostentation and greed of the Clergy. "Thys Proverbe was never better verified than at thys daye amonges Christen men,

whych nevertheles by their profession, ought to despyse worldly goodes".

In his translation of "Non omnes qui habent Citharam, sunt citharcoedi", "All that have harpes be no harpers", Taverner once more turns the *Adagie* into an attack on the false Church, "Outwarde sygnes many tymes deceyve men. A;; [?] that have the gospel hangynge at theyr gyrdels be no gospellers. Nor agayn all that disprayse the leude fascions of the Papistes be not forthwyth Heritiques. We ought not to juge accordynge to the outwarde apperaunce of thynges".[27] In making his polemical point, Taverner actually takes us closer to the two-fold meaning of this Proverb, which is not merely about not trusting the eyes, all those who have harps may not be harpists, but about motive, not all those who for their own purposes pretend to be harpists have a vocation as harpists for the kingdom of heaven. Of course in the middle of this explanation there lies a plea for those labelled as heretics, which Taverner uses as an opportunity to make yet another point about not

[27] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) C.v recto.

judging harshly, and resisting polarity that the Roman Church and Reformed Church are perpetuating. Taverner follows this *Adagie* with yet another which lends itself to his polemical purposes "Simia simia est, etiamsi aurea gestet insignia", "An ape is an ape although she weare badges of golde". In one of his lengthier explanations, Taverner retells a story of Lucian, 'The Mask of Apes' in which apes are taught to dance like people and thereby credited with human-like qualities, which quality earns them luxurious clothes and a role in the court entertainments. When a guest at court suddenly throws some nuts onto the floor the apes immediately forget their dancing and scramble together for the nuts, to the amusement of all there present. Taverner concludes "It is to be feared lest at thys daye there be in Christendome many apes (that is to saye counterfayters whych by a Greke worde we commonlye call hypocrites) decked in purple badges and cognisaunces, that is to wyte, whyche beare outwarde sygnes and badges of greate holynes as though they were lambes, but inwardly they be revenous wolves".[28]

[28] *Ibid.* CiJ recto.

Taverner appropriates Erasmus's adagie to apply the idea of a golden mean even to Reformation of the Church. In "Ne quid nimis", which Taverner translates as "Nothynge to muche", He appropriates Horace's idea of measure to say "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 cleane take away al honest ceremonies, tradicions, and lawes or els in the mayntenynge of that is honeste, they woll wythout choyse styffely defede yea and kepe styll in their churches al customes, ceremonies, and traditions be they never so detestably abused and gone from the fyrst institucion So harde it is to kepe the golden mediocritie whych the sayd Poete Horace full wyttely describeth". What is interesting about this Proverb is the way in which Taverner reveals himself to be an Erasmian sympathiser, rather than the radical member of the Cambridge White Horse group of Lutherans that Anthony a Wood and John Bale have depicted.

On the subject of holy days Taverner spends a good deal of time. Holy days were those days traditionally kept free for the

worship of saints and for the celebration of particular events in the Church calendar. An important part of establishing an English Church that was freed from the abuses of the Roman Church was the removing of the role of saints as intercessors. The Reformation Church asserted the role of Christ as the sole intercessor and abolished many of the holy days. First of all Taverner translates "Ignavis semper seirae sunt" as "Whyth sluggers or unhardy persons, it is alwayes holydaye. He then continues for three and a half pages in translating the words of Erasmus on this subject, before he adds his own exposition pertaining to England.

> Hytherto have I translated the wordes of that renowned clerke Erasmus. But now in Englande thanked be god through the hygh benefyte of oure incomparable prince Henry the viiJ, dyverse superfluous holydayes be already abrogate. Neyther do we tary the byshop of Romes redresse in maters of religion, which as it semeth forceth nomore of Christes church (over whych nevertheles he pretendeth to have the charge) then the hyrelynge passeth upon the flocke of shepe, as Christ hymselfe declareth"[29]

[29] *Ibid.* Fii. recto.

In the margin it is surprising to find not a reference to Matthew 7.15 but one to Job.10. Taverner thereby appropriates a fairly benign Proverb about sluggards to assert his support for the Reformation of the Church, its break with Rome and his admiration for King Henry for achieving such a task.

To the Proverb "Quot homines, tot sentenciae" which Taverner translated as "So many men, so many wyttes", Taverner added a reprimand to the Church leaders. If only they would follow the apostle Paul's advice to let everyman have his private opinion without making it a matter of public contention to bring the side down. He argues, "whose counsayle yf oure divines in Christendome wolde followe, there shulde not be at thys day so great dissension in the church in maters of smal weyght. For there be many thynges which without daunger of the christen relygyon maye be unknowen wel ynough". Taverner was not alone in making this case. In 1535 Myles Coverdale had made the same appeal to those who translated and read the Scriptures. In his preface to the 1535 Bible he made a plea for unity, arguing that no man and

therefore no man's translation was perfect, but by the efforts of many striving for the same truth they might eventually arrive at an acceptable translation, if only they could stop fighting over every word between themselves. In "Veritas simplex oratio", Taverner makes his own preference for a plain English style a point of honour and a mark of honesty. "Trouthes take is simple, he that meaneth good fayth, goeth not aboute to glose hys communicacion wyth painted wordes. Plaine and homely men call a fygge, a fygge, and a spade a spade. Rhetorike and colorynge of spech proveth many tymes a mans mater to be naught."[30]

Proverbs for Personal Reformation

What makes Taverner's Proverbs readable is the fact that they do not serve unremittingly as Reformation polemic. Whilst many of the Proverbs that can read as straightforward morality lessons are

[30] See John Olde's discussion of the appropriateness, or otherwise, of rhetoric in translating Scripture in preface to his translations in 1549 of Erasmus New Testament paraphrases. He argues that rhetoric is not inappropriate to Scripture, but that it is inconveniently difficult for the simple, unlearned, target readership.

left as they are with little or no exposition, as in the case of "Ad consilium ne accesseris ante, quo voceris", or "Nunq ex malo patre bonus filius", there are some lengthy expostulations on Proverbs that promote self-reformation without touching on the controversies between Henry VIII and the Pope. One such Proverb is "Ex aspectu nascitur amor" which Taverner translates as "Of syght is love gendred". This Proverb receives a very full treatment, though such warnings about the ambiguous nature of the senses through which one could both worship God and be assailed by Satan abounded in Medieval literature. This fact did not prevent Taverner from saying it one more time. "The eyes be lures and baytes of love. Wherfore yf thou woll not love the thynge that is unlawfull fo rthe to love, absteyne from beholdynge". He makes reference to Christ's own assertion in Matthew 9 that a man who has only imagined lust with a woman has already committed adultery. From Matthew he moves to Democritus as one of the number of philosophers who plucked out their eyes "bycause athey were the occasioners and provokers of all evyll affections and lustes". Taverner adds to this

that Christ did not mean us to literally pluck out our eyes and thereby deform our faces, but rather that men of Christ should not look where it is not lawful for them to look. He ends in the tenor of Matthew's gospel that is better to loose one part of the body so that the remainder might be saved, than by retaining that one part and loosing all to eternal damnation, "For better it were to lacke the operacion of the eye, then by the same to be in danger of damnacion".[31]

Just as Taverner earlier attacked the Clergy in his explanation of "Pecuniae obediunt omnia", so here in "Nequicquam sapit qui sibi non sapit" he attacks a wider audience in a similar tenor.

> He is in vayne wyse that is not wyse for hym selfe. This Proverbe how true it is, I woll not dispute, but sure I am, that men of our tyme kepe this saynge so lompe, that he is not counted worthy to be called a man whiche by anye meanes can not seke his owne avantage. [32]

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[31] Richard Taverner. The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) Biii recto.
[32] *Ibid.* Cii recto.

One of the most popular Proverbs, for which we are indebted to Taverner, to have survived into the twenty-first century is "Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaq labra", which Taverner translates as "Many thynges fall betwene the cuppe and the mouth". Taverner then took slightly more than two pages to explain the initial context for the Proverb. I will give it in full here because it enables us to grasp something of Taverner's propensity for plain style that is nontheless energetic.

> Ther was a certayne person called Anceus, which was sonne to Neptune. This Anceus in sowyng tyme of vynes, called sore upon his servauntes for to apply theyr worke, with which importune callyng on, one of his servantes beyng even for werines of the laboure moved agaynst his maister : well mayster, saith he, as hasatelye as ye nowe call upon us, it shall not be your chaunce ever to tast wine of this vine. After, when the vine tre dyd springe up happely, and the grapes were nowe rype, the maister triumphynge and moch rejoysyng, calleth for the servaunt and commaundeth him to presse wyne into his cuppe. Now when he had the cuppe ful of wyne in his hande redy to set it to hys mouth, he putteth hys sayde servaunt in mynde of hys wordes, upbraydynge hym of hys false prophecienge. The servaunt than bryngeth forth thys sentence to hys mayster. Betwene the cuppe and the lyppes maye come many casualties. Whyle the servaunt was thus speakynge, and even as the mayster was lyftynge up the cuppe to hys mouth, beholde the chaunce, sodeynly

> commeth runnynge in, an other servaunt and telleth how a great wilde bore is destroyenge the vyneyarde. Whych tydynges as sone as Anceus heareth, forthwyth he setteth downe hys cuppe and runneth upon the wylde bore, of whome (whyle he was chasyng of hym) he was grevously wounded and so dyed. Lette thys example teache men not to truste on the slyppernesse of fortune. For it comonly commeth to passe, that when men thynke themselves moste sure, they be soneste deceyved.[33]

Although Taverner's edition is a mere sample of Erasmus' *Adagies*, we are able at least to gauge something of the character of

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[33] *Ibid.* Cii recto-Ciii verso. c.f. Erasmus's version BL:720.M.14.1528. Erasmus, after a brief introduction, begins the proverb proper. Taverner is clearly following Erasmus quite closely. Inserted at three points throughout the explanation is the Greek which Erasmus then translates into Latin. Taverner does not give the Greek account in his own version. "Sulpitius Apollinaris grammaticus apud Aulum Gessium in noctibus Atticis libro decimotertio, capite decimoseptimo, duo quaeda adagia notat, alteru Graecum, alterum Latinum : quorum amborum eadem sit sententia. Graecus est versiculus, inquit, hexameter []id est, Multa cadunt inter calicem, supremaq labra. Quo monemur, nihil tam certu sperari, neq quicquam tam esse vicinum, quod non repentinus aliquis casus queat intervertere. Adeoq non esse tutum venturis fidere, ut vix etiam illa sint certa, quae manibus tenemus. Originem adagii quidam ad huiusmodi fabulam referunt. Ancaeus Neptuni and Astypaleae Phoenicis filius, cum vitem ferent, graviter cq ministris instaret, urgeretcq : quidam operis taedio commotus in herum, negavit futurum, ut ex ea vite herus unquam vinum gustaret. Post uni vitis provenisset feliciter, atcq uuae maturuisent, hreus exultans, ac gestiens, seruum eundem accersit : atcq ut sibi vinum infundat, iubet. deinde iam calilcem admoturus ori, servo quae dixisset, redegit in memoria, quasi vanam exprobrans divinationem. At ille sententiam hanc hero respondit : inter calicem ac summa labia, multa posse intervenire. Servili sententiae savit eventus. Nam inter loquendum prius quam ille vinum havriret, alter quidam minister ingressus, nunciat vinetum ab apro quopiam immani vastari : Quibus auditis Ancaeus deposito poculo, protinus in aprum fertur, a quo inter vendandum percussus interiit. Usurpavit hoc adagii Lycophron in iambicis, [] id est, Miser ast ego meo dicta cognoscens amlo, etc...." [o recto].

Erasmus's larger work and perhaps something of his own agenda. In Taverner's edition we have a mixture of Classical and Biblical Proverbs, maxims, or Adagies that speak to the Renaissance style of blending the sacred with the profane, of alluding to Classical and Biblical types within the same sentences, let alone the same texts, to achieve new perspectives on old precedents. This appropriation and reconfiguration of the Classical past for English Reformation purposes is boldly stated in "Nosce Teipsum", "knowe thy selfe" which Taverner goes on to explain "Plato ascribeth thys divine sentence unto Apollo. But whose sayeng so ever it was, certes it is both true and godly, and worthy of christen men to be continually borne in mynde".[34] Here is an obvious example of the way in which Taverner clips the Erasmus text to make his point and then

[34] *Ibid.* Ciiii recto. See Erasmus's 1528 'Nosce teipsum' "Ad eandem sententiam pertinent tria illa, inter omnia sapientum apophthegmata, vel maxime celebrata, adeo ut quemadmodum in Charmide testatur Plato, pro foribus templi Delphici ad Amphictyonibus ubscripta, veluti digna deo viserentur. Quorum primunest gnothi seam Nosce teipsum. In quo modestiae, mediocritatis cq commendatio est, ne nobis vel maiora, vel etiam indigna sequamur. Nam hinc omnis vitae pestis oritur, quod sibi quiscq blanditur, and quantum aliis praeter aequum detrahit, tantum sibi philautiae vitio, praeter meritum tribuit. M. Tullius ad Qu. frat[re]m libro tertio. Et illud gnozi seau?m [check] noli putare ad arrogantiam minuendem solum esse dictum, verumetiam ut bona nostra norimaus. Fertur hic quoque senarius inter sententials proverbiales : to gnothi saum pantaxousi chsimou id est : ubiscq confert, ut teipsum noveris. etc..."

move on. Erasmus' text takes up 37 lines of folio text compared with Taverner's two lines of a duodecimal.

Taverner occasionally makes the connection between Classical and Biblical sources explicit, for instance in "Occultae musices nullus respectus" translated as "Of musyke hyd is no regarde", he gives a brief explanation and then adds "A lyke thyng is rad in Ecclesiastico. Of wysdome hydd, and of treasure caste in a corner, commeth no profite". The marginal note supplies the detail "Cap. 20" of Ecclesiasticus. Taverner does not make the expected foray into the New Testament gospel of Matthew and Christ's own injunctions to let one's light shine before men (Mat.5.16). Taverner seems less interested in expanding on Proverbs that he cannot turn to some polemical purpose. Another example of this trend is "Una hirundo non facit ver", "It is not one swalowe that bryngeth in somer". Taverner explains the analogy that one good quality does not make a man good just as one swallow does not signify the coming of summer, ending with "So of al other thynges".[35]

[35] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi*

To "Alter manu fert lapidem, panem ostentat altera", after the translation "He beareth a stone in the one hande, and breade in the other", Taverner simply adds "Suche persons be in England not a fewe".[36] If this Proverb suggests a somewhat cynical view of England and the English in the 1530s, there are better examples yet. "Nemini fidas, nisi cum quo prius modium salis absumpseris" is translated as "Trust noman, onles thou has fyrst eaten a bushel of

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Publiani (London, 1539) D.J recto. c.f. Erasmus's 1528 BL:720.M.14. Just as Taverner gives the Latin and then translates the English, so Erasmus gives his Greek source and then translates into Latin. "id est, Unica hirundo non efficit ver, hoc est, unus dies non fat est ad parandam virtutem, aut eruditionem. Aut non unum aliquod benefactum, benedictumure sufficit ad hoc, ut viri boni, aut boni oratoris cognomen promerearis : plurimis enim virtutibus ea res constat. Aut ut certum aliquid cognoscas, non satis est unica consieri potest, ut una quaepiam hirundo casu maturius appareat. Sumptum ab hirundinis natura, quae veris est nuncia, nam hyeme devolat." 261.

[36] see Erasmus 1528 "Qui coram blandiuntur, clam obtrectantes, palam amicos agunt, clanculum nocent: aut qui hic profunt, illic laedunt, falsam benefcicii spem ostentant, ut nacti occasionem funditus perdant, ii dicuntur altera manu portare lapidem, altera panem ostentare. Translacio Plautinus in Aulularia : Nunc petit cum pollicetur, aurum inhiat ut decoret. Altera manu fert lapidem, panem ostentat altera. Divus Hieronymus ad Rufinum : Haec apud te amice potius expostulare volvi, quam alcessitus publice desaevire, ut animadvertas me reconciliatas amicitias pure colere ad non iuxta Plautinam sententiam altera manu lapidem tenere, panem offerre altera. Eodem eleganter alliusit, scribens ad eundem Ruginum : An tibi ideo panem non damus, quia haereticorum cerebro lapidem illidimus? Simile quiddam habet Greforius Theologus in epistola ad Eusebium episcopum Caefariensem [] id est, Perinde quasi quis eiusdem viri altera manyu seabat caput, altera malam seriat." 279.

salte wyth hym". Taverner adds "Wythout fayle it is harde at thys daye to mete with one whom thou mayst trust in all thynges".[37]

Even these small biographical additions do help to recontextualise the *Adagies* as pertaining to England and English men and women. In the process of Anglicising the *Adagies* Taverner turns the most ancient authors into mouthpieces for personal, religious and political English Reformations. Taverner even manages to qualify Christ's suggestion that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19) in such a way as to offer hope even to the very rich. The *Adagie* is "Dives aut iniquus est, aut iniqui haeres". Taverner adds to his explanation of the saying "Yet I woll not gaynsay but a man may be rych and not put hys confidence in his ryches, as David, Job, Abraham and many other Patriarches were".[38] Taverner thereby qualifies one of Christ's own

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[37] *Ibid.* Dvi. recto.

[38] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539). DiiJ. See Erasmus' 1528 "Dives aut iniquus est, aut iniqui haeres. Divuus Hieronymus ad Hedibiam scribit in hunc modum : Unde and illa vulgata sententia mihi videtur esse verissima. Dives aut ininquus, aut iniqui haeres. Quod verum est illud Hesiodium, non omnino temere esse,

perceived truths with Old Testament examples of men who were rich and chosen in order to offer hope to potential patrons. This accommodation of the rich in the gospel message is an interesting shift and one not wholly accommodated in the Protestant mind-set. Taverner's argument is that being rich does not automatically exclude one from the gospel promise, as long as one does not make the mistake that the rich man made in Matthew's account in valuing those earthly treasures above the treasures of Heaven. By appropriating the Old Testament Patriarchs, however, Taverner suggests that God chose rich men as the leaders of Israel, instead of the most obvious reading that they were first chosen of God and were then blessed with earthly riches. A reading that is picked up in the New Testament and which is epitomised in Matthew 6. 33, "But

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quicquid vuulgo dicunt mortales, proverbium hoc haud oscitanter expendendum est iis, qui suis opibus stulte se iactant. Necq enim fere paranturingentes opes fine fraude. Et aut ipse possessor eas per fas, nefascq congessit, aut certe succcessit ei, qui has ea paravit via. Plato lib.de legibus 5. hoste o logos emin oros os oouk eisimoi pamolglosioi agathoi, [] id est, Ita verum est, quod vulgo dicimus, admodum divites non esse bonos. Circumfertur apud Graecos and hic versiculus ex Menandri comoediis : oudeis eolgtise tachaeos d'ichai om id est, Nuncq vir aequus, dives evasist cito. Huc respexit ille, qui Syllae iactanti sese, dixisse legit. Quomodo vir bonus esse potes, qui tantas possideas opes, quum a patre nihil tibi fit relictum? Refert Plutarchus in illius vita."567.

seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness : and all these things shall be added unto you".

Where Taverner includes an *Adagie* that he then does not want to spend time and space expounding he refers the reader to his source. In "Festina lente", the shortest of the Proverbs, Taverner translates it "Make slowe hast, or hast the slowly", and then adds

> Thys is as muche to saye as temper thy hast wyth slouth. If ye lyste to knowe more of thys Proverbe moste worthy continnuallye to be borne in mynde, reade the Chiliades of Erasmus, who handleth this mater at large.[39]

Erasmus does indeed deal with this at large. Most of the Proverbs are dealt with in less than half a page, or 26 lines, each page consisting of 53 lines with approximately 12 words to each line. The "Festina lente" proverb is explained in no fewer than 424 lines, making Taverner's cut to 4 lines the greatest concision of the *Adagies*.[40] The reader of "Festina lente" would, therefore, be forced to temper his/her "hast wyth slouth". In his translation of "Dulce

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[39] *Ibid.* Dv. verso.

[40] See Erasmus 1528 BL:720.M.14. version of 'Festina lente" 548-556.fol. In the 1508 version 'Festina Lente' has only 253 lines. 112-114. fol. BL:634.1.2.

bellum inexpertis" as "Batell is a swete thynge to them that never assayed it", Taverner again suggests that "He that lysteth to knower more of thys Proverbe, let him go to Erasmus which handleth in hys Chiliades this Proverbe both ryght copiously and also eloquently"[41] Another example of Taverner's evasion tactics occurs in his translation of "Ingens telum necessitas", as "Necessitie is a sore weapon". To this he adds "This Proverbe is diverse wayes to be verefyed".[42]

Proverbs Pertaining to the Law

Because of the official break with Roman Church authority in 1534 and the establishment of the Church of England, a number of old Laws were abolished and new ones set up in their place. This process continued through to Elizabeth's reign, in which we see all of her Catholic half-sister's repeals of Reformation Laws suddenly

[41] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539). Gi.verso.
[42] *Ibid.* Eii. verso.

reinstigated. A great deal of concern about the making and breaking of Laws pervaded prefatory epistles as early as the 1530s. The Matthew Bible preface of 1537 cautioned Henry VIII to found his Laws in the Scriptures, advice which was offered again in Edmund Becke's prefatory epistle to the 1549 revision of the Matthew Bible, this time to the boy King Edward VIth and his powerful Protector Sommerset. Here Deuteronomy was pressed into action to assert the importance of making Laws that could not so easily be repealed and that would endure if only because of their firm foundation in Scripture.

As his contribution to this controversy, Taverner included a number of *Adagies* that reflect on the Law and its implementation. The first of these is "Summum ius, summa iniutia", which he translates as "Exteme lawe is extreme wronge". Taverner suggested that sticking to the letter of the Law was a form of superstition that did not take into account the spirit of the Law, "not regardyng thintent of the makers". He does not elaborate except to say that Mark Tully gave many illustrations of such superstitious lawyers in

his own writings.[43] A second "Law Proverb" follows closely with "Bonae leges ex malis moribys procreantur", "Good lawes be gendred of evyll maners".[44] Taverner explains this Proverb by reference to Paul's epistle to Timothy.1.9-10, in which Paul suggests that the Law is made for the unrighteous. In the epistle this is framed in the following way : "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man , but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers. For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for

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[43] See Erasmus 1528: "Summum ius, summa iniuria. Summum ius, summa iniuria, hoc est, Tum maxime disceditur ab aequitate, cum maxime superstitiose haeretur lefum literis. id enim summum ius appellant, cum de verbis iuris contenditur, neque spectatur, quid senserit is qui scripsit. Nam voces ac literae, quasi lefum summa cutis est. Eam ineptiam quorundam superstitiosorum iuris interpretum, copiose simul and eleganter illudit. M.Tullius in actione pro Murena. Terentius, Verum illud Chreme dicunt, ius summum ius, summa iniuria, factum est iam tritum sermone proverbium. Columella primo rei rusticae libro, Nec sane est vindicandum nobis, quicquid licet. Nam summum ius antiqui, summam putabant crucem. Citatur and Celsus adolescens libro [327 E2recto] libro Pandect quadragessimo quinto, titulo de verborum obligatione, Cap. Si seruum stichum : qui scripferit quaestionem esse de bono and aequo, in quo genere plerunque sub autoritate iuris scientiae periculose erratur. Itidem Paulus libro quinquagesimo, titulo de regulis iuris. In omnibus quidem maxime tamen in iure aequitas spectanda est. Simili figura Seneca libro de ira primo dixit summo animo. Si intelligis non ex alto venire nequitiam, sed summo, quod aiunt, animo inhaerere." 328.

[44] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) Ciiii. recto.

menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine". Taverner's is a less exhaustive list, "horemongers, aduouterers, theves, traytours, mansleers and such other".[45] The fact that Taverner makes concupiscence the first two sins that demand the rule of the Law, even before murder, may seem surprising, though the consequences of birthing bastards were far reaching in the sixteenth century. Traitors do not appear in Paul's epistle, but again Taverner includes it as a contemporary vice that needs to be addressed even before murder, perhaps because he thinks that these vices can be prevented by the individual who is reminded to apply a little more thought and restraint, as in "conscientia mille testes", whilst murder is beyond restraint. In any case, this is an odd departure from the Scriptural text to which his marginal annotation refers his reader.

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[45] See Erasmus's 1528: "Bonae leges ex malis moribus procreantur. "Macrobius Saturnalium libro tertio, Vetus verbum est, inquit, Leges bonae ex mori [p336] moribus procreantur. Nam sicuti medicorum pharmacis nihil opus foret, nisi morbis alboraretur, ita legibus ferundis nihil opus esser, nissi perperam viveretur. Unde apud Aeginitas olim pecuniaria poena mulctabatur is, qui legis instituendae dedisset occasionem. Autor Aristoteles libro rhetoricicorum secundo. Huc pertinet quod Solon ezotheis, dia ti paroxton[?] nomou ouk ethke. Dia to aeloisai eioem,id est, Rogarus, quam ob causam, non tulisset legem in parricidas, respondit, quod non sperasset futurum parricidam." 337.

When Shakespeare's Isabella addresses Angelo the Lawgiver in *Measure for Measure* as "man, proud man,/ Dressed in a little brief authority", (*MfM* 2.2.121-122) she is reiterating not Erasmus's *Adagie* "Magistratus virum indicat", "Authority declareth a man", but Taverner's explanation of it.

> The meanynge of this Proverbe is this that in a private lyfe, where no rule is borne, a mans disposition and manners be not espyed. But lette him ones be put in office and authoritie, so that in maner he maye do what hym lusteth : anone he sheweth himselfe what he is.[46]

Taverner goes on to say that if a man's nature is revealed in office, so too is the nature of an office revealed by the man that occupies it. He cites the example of Epaminodas to illustrate his point:

> Epaminondas properlye turned the Proverbe the contrary waye For when the Thebanes even of spyt had put hym to a very vyle office in the cytie, he despysed it not, but with suche diligence executed the rowme, that where before, it was counted an office skace honest, nowe it was had in hygh reputacion. And to suche as mervayled why he wolde take

[46] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539). Dv. recto.

> so vyle and disworshypfull an office upon hym, he answered in thys wyse. Not only a rowme or office declareth the man, but a man declareth the office.[47]

By this Proverb Taverner means to suggest that no work or office is too mean for a great man. If this is meant to serve as an exhortation to his readers to make the most of the work they have, then first part of the explanation serves as a warning to those who desire the imagined freedoms of great office. He entirely erases Erasmus' references to Sophocles, including an excerpt from Antigone and his own latin translation of it, "di est, Fieri haud potest, cuiuspiam ut pernoveris/ Animum atqc mentem sive sensum, ni prius/Imperia nactus gesserit civilia."[48]

Proverbs of General Observation

Whilst most of the Proverbs that Taverner expounds do fall within three simple categories of polemic, exhortation and the law, there are some anomalies. One example of a Proverb that is more

[47] *Ibid.* Dv. recto.
[48] Erasmus 1528. 341.

concerned with observing a vice than correcting it is "Mendacem memorem esse oportet", which Taverner translates as "A lyer ought not to be forgetfull". Taverner adds to this "It is very harde for hym that lyeth, alwayes to agree in one tale, onles he hath a ryght good memorie, for as muche as the remembraunce of thynges feined, is farre more hard than the memorie of true thynges By reason whereof for the moost parte the devysours and forgers of lyes are by thys meanes taken, whyle forgettynge what they spake afore, they speake thynges contrary and repugnaunte to theyr former tale".[49] Presumably the only way to catch out such a deceiver is for the non-deceiver to have an even better memory of the tale than the teller of it in its second telling. The fact that auditors are being given clues to catch such deceivers, and in such commonplace books, might undermine confidence, but it is hardly an exhortation not to deceive.

Another kind of general observation Proverb is that which is recast in terms of English history. One such Proverb is "Ne puero gladium", which is translated as "commytte not a swearde to a

[49] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) Eiii. verso –Eiiii. recto.

chylde", and which Taverner comments on at great length, though to little effect:

> Who so ever putteth a chylde , or a foolyshe and ignoraunt person (whych in ded differeth no thynge from a chyld) in authoritie and office, commytteth a swerde to a chylde. All be it I studye in these Proverbes to be shorte, yet it becometh not me an Englysh man and the Kynges servaunt to passe over wyth sylence the thynge, that Erasmus beynge a straunger unto us vouchsaved here to recorde of the moost prudent and excellent prince kinge Henry the. vii. father to our moost drad soveraygne lorde that now is. Thys excellent kynge (sayeth Erasmus) beynge a prynce of a very sharpe judgement, and also one that had a wonderfull grace in gyvynge of wyttye and quycke answeres, whan on a tyme he had herde a certayne doctoure of divinitie preache which was one of the secte of those that were called mendicant fryers, and the fryer had spente hys hole sermon in ragynge oute wyth open mouthe lyke a madde man agaynste the lyfe of princes (for there be some that by thys waye seke to get them a name) and was asked how he liked the fryers preachynge : Truely, quoth the kynge, me thought that a naked sworde was comytted to the handes of a madde man.[50]

In the margin was the annotation "The sayeng of the moost excellent prince kyng Henry the seventh". After such a build-up,

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[50] Richard Taverner The *Proverbes or Adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Richard Taverner. Hereunto be also added Mimi Publiani* (London, 1539) Evi. recto –Evii. recto.

the actual saying comes as something of an anti-climax. Taverner clearly included it to appeal to Henry VIII in a piece of blatant sycophancy. There are many illustrious precedents that a writer might draw on to make the case that a child ruler was a dangerous thing, but Taverner chooses instead to give the Proverb some personal appeal to Henry VIII.

A series of "Enygmata or Symboles" by Pythagoras pertaining to friendship are included in the selection, of which this is one. "Coenici ne insides", "Syt not upon the measure". Taverner then paraphrases Erasmus's argument for his reader, rather than translating it at length. "Erasmus thynketh that by thys darke sentence is meant we shuld not lyve upon the measure or dyete gyven us at another mens handes but that every man by hys owne industrie and labour ought to seke hym goodes where by he amye leade a cleane and honest lyfe, and not by slouthfulnes to haunte ydelnes and other mens meate. For it is the fascion of a flatterer and parasyte to lyve of an other mans trencher, and to have no honeste facultie where by thou mayest lyve of thyne owne". The effect of

this exposition of the Proverb, is not exhort everyone to work so much as it is to foreground the parasitical nature of flatterers, who are the staple of attacks on King's courts in Renaissance literature.[51] Among the more unexpected Symbols of Pythagorus included by Erasmus and translated by Taverner is this one "A fabis abstineto", "Absteyne from beanes". This is explained in the following manner "There be sondry interpretacions of thys symbole. But Plutarche and Cicero thynke beanes to be forbydden of Pythagoras, bycause they be wyndye and do engeder impure humours and for that cause provoke bodely lust". That such a Proverb should engage so many great minds of history is not a little alarming, but if the end of the Proverb is to avoid bodily temptations then this would put beans on the same level as drink and meat, so often renounced for that same reason. Immediately following this translation is "Cibum in matellam ne immittas" which Taverner translates as "Put not meate into a pyspot". Here the meat is "good sentencies" rather than

[51] This is a common theme in Renaissance polemic, but see Shakespeare's *Richard II* and Marlowe's *Edward II* for examples of flatterers who are blamed for the ruin of the realm.

flesh, and the Proverb is equated with "cast not perles afore swyne' (Matt.7).

If the Pythagorean symbols seem preoccupied with friendship and food, then Erasmus and Taverner manage to apply at least some of them to more pertinent Christian issues. The Proverbs in this 1539 edition end with "Panem ne frangito" which Taverner translates as "Breake not bread" before extending Erasmus's short note to three and a half pages. He begins by citing Erasmus perception that food and friendship were traditionally culturally linked, before extending the context to the Last Supper. Though Christ broke bread as a sign of friendship, Pythagoras cautioned his disciples not to break the bonds created in the sharing of bread. However, it seems that we are indeed breakers of such covenants with Christ "inwardly very Judases yea and outwardly to, we lyft up our heles, we kyck, we spurne, agenste Christe. Wherfore to returne to my purpose we be breakers and not eaters or (to speake more truly) we be unworthy eters of this mystical breade not discernynge the lordes bodye. And for thys cause I meane for the prophanacion

of thys sacrament no doubt the terrible thretenynges that Paule speaketh of, be come upon us. Many of us be weake and many slepe". In the margin was "1.Cor.11".

In his *Proverbs and Adagies,* Taverner absorbed Erasmus's vast collection of Classical wisdom and reconfigured it as an endorsement of Henrician Reformation. It is precisely because the government commissioned Taverner to translate Erasmus's works, and those of other humanistic reformers, that we have to acknowledge the close relationship between Henrician policy and Protestant humanism in the 1530s and 1540s. (Yost 1970, 271). Given the moralistic nature of the material, and the authoritative presentation of it, it is inevitable that Erasmus's Proverbs and Adagies would find their way into the service of Reformation politics in England, but Taverner's collection was also the inspiration, or the source, for English writers as they appropriated *Proverbs and Adagies* for their own agendas throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[52] That readers were just as

[52] See De Witt T Starnes vii "Richard Taverner was not alone in sensing their popular appeal, although between 1538 and 1550 he selected and published in his

likely to read the *Proverbs* for delight and then turn them into even more delightful poems can be witnessed on the verso of the Title page to a 1552 16m edition in the British Library (BL: C123.a.22) where the reader had inscribed the following poem:

> He that climbs where nothing hangs
> And grips where nothing grows
> And loves the love that
> Loves not him
> Against the Stream sure rows.[53]

English version about 230 of the Proverbs or Adagies. As early as 1538, Sir Thomas Elyot included in his *Dictionary* a considerable number of these Proverbs, in Latin and English; and by 1559, Elyot's text as revised by Thomas Cooper contained 303; in 1580 , John Baret's *Alvearie, or Quadruple Dictionarie,* edited by Abraham Fleming, presented 264; from 1584 to 1616, the editors of John Withals' English Latin Dictionarie introduced into teh text approximately 5oo of the Proverbs. Shorter collections of Proverbs, depending in part, upon Erasmus, are in Claudius Holyband's *The French Littleton (1576);* in John Florio's *First Fruites* (1578), which borrows freely from Holybrand's book; and in *Wits Commonwealth* (1598), dependent, likewise, for a score or more of its Proverbs upon Holyband. Such scholars as Tilley, McKerrow, and Schoell have demonstrated the varied and extensive literary use of Adagies and Proverbs, including those found in Erasmus and Heywood, by Pettie, Lyly, Nashe, Chapman, and Shakespeare. Other writers of the period , such as Thomas Lodge and Ben Johnson, also made extensive use of Proverbs, many of them from Erasmus. In his plays, Jonson employs literally hundreds of them."vii. For another intersting discussion of the applications of the *Adagia* see M.Mann Phillips. 'Comment S'est-on Servi Des Adages?' *Actes du Colloque International Erasme* (Tours, 1986) Droz : Geneva, 1990. 325-350.

[53] "Imprinted at London by Rycharde Kele, dwellynge in Lombarde strete nere unto the stockes market at the sygne of the Egle. [cross] [fist] Anno.MDLII.(1552)" BL: C123.a.22.

3.2. MIMI PUBLIANI

In 1539 Taverner's *Proverbes or Adagies* were printed with *Mimi Publiani, that is to saye, quicke and sentenciouse verses or meters of Publius. With the interpretacion and brief scholyes of Richarde Taverner.* This work was organized alphabetically, listing the latin verses of the Roman playwright Terence, Publius Terentia, from A to U, and beneath each pithy verse Taverner added his own interpretations.

Publius had been noted in his own day for his elegant, but colloquial Latin, and in the Middle Ages had been used in schools to promote good style. The Renaissance humanist Erasmus thought Publius unrivalled among Roman writers for his terseness, by which he meant the plain sharp language with which he communicated his ideas. In his prologue to the *Self Tormenter* Publius had praised the

play for its 'purity of speech'.[1] This characteristic is clearly one reason for the success of his plays. One can see why Publius would have appealed to Taverner, himself an advocate of the use of energetic colloquial language.

In 1534 Nicholas Udall had published an edition of *Flowers for Latin Speaking Selected and Gathered out of Terence*, that was reprinted in 1537 and 1544. Terence was already stock humanistic reading when Taverner translated Erasmus's *Mimi Publiani*.

In the process of translating and interpreting, Taverner Christianized some of these Roman adagies. To "Quotidie damnatur, qui semper timet" he gave the translation "He is dayly condemned, whiche alwayes feareth" and then adds an explication which catapults the adagie out of its context into a focused Protestant exhortation "There is no grevouser damnacion, then the dome of thyne owne conscience." Again, to 'Ab alio expectes, alteri qd seceris', for instance, Taverner gave "Loke to have the same at an other mans hande that thou thy selfe hast done to other. With

[1] See Robin Sowerby, *The Classical Legacy in Renaissance Poetry* (London : Longman, 1994) 110.

what measure (sayeth Christ) ye measure, with the same shall other measure unto you agayne." Taverner thereby juxtaposes his adagie with one of Christs, superseding the Roman authority to become the new author of a Christian message to the reader. In this example, the Roman adagie merely serves as a hook on which to hang Christian morality. Not all of the verses are interpreted in this vein, as Taverner no doubt understood that to do so would render the work intolerably didactic. The work is of its time and has its share of misogynism. To 'Aut amat aut odit mulier, nihil est tertium.' Taverner adds "A woman eyther loveth or hateth, there is no thyrde. Woman kynde for most parte is in extremes and to vehement upon eyther parte. She hath no meane. For (as Erasmus sayeth) she is animal affectibus obnoxium, that is to wete, without moderacion or stey of her appetite, all full of affections, and in maner voyde of reason." Here Taverner has allowed the qualification "for most parte", which at least allows for the possibility that some women are reasonable, well tempered creatures. It is again interesting to note that in the process of interpreting one adagie Taverner

introduces another, here it is that of the great collector of adagies himself, Erasmus. Again, when Taverner has to deal with a similarly offensive condemnation of women, he resorts to Erasmus and qualifies this as a condemnation of men also. He translates "Aperte cum est mala mulier, tum demum est bona" As "When a woman is openly evyll then is she good. As who shuld say, if there be aby goodnes in a woman, it is then, when she openly uttereth her malice. Counterfeyted holynes (they say) is double wickednes. A woman for moste parte (sayeth my authour Erasmus) is a croked and disceitfull beaste, and therefore she is leaste hurtefull, when she is openly naught. This is not so spoken of women, but it agreeth upon some men also." At "Cui plus licet q' par est, plus vult q' licet" Taverner again appends Erasmus to the verse, thereby at least distancing, if not releasing, himself from the blame of misogyny. He first translates, "The person that hath more authoritie then he ought to have, wyll also do more then he hathe authoritie to do", and then adds "This sentence is very praty , and it agreeth (sayeth Erasmus) upon tyrauntes and wemen."

Some of the adagies have a bi-part and others a tri-part structure. At "Citius venit periclum, cum contemnitur", for instance, Taverner simply gives a translation "Daunger commeth the soner, when it is not past on" and at "Ingenuitas non recipit contumeliam" he gives "A gentle nature can abyde no reproche." More typically, Taverner gives the Latin verse, followed by his own translation of that verse, culminating in his elaboration of the meaning. This elaboration may be a simpler re-writing of the translation to make the meaning plain, or may be a more complex use of the verse for a larger purpose. For instance, 'Aliena, homini ingenui, acerba est servitus.' is rendered "Bytter bondage is to a gentle man, straunge." Taverner then reworks the syntax to give a plainer English meaning, "Nothyng is dearer to a gentle harte then is libertie." At "In calamitoso risus etiam iniuria est" Taverner has to translate and then explain the translation, "In a deiecte and infortunate person even laughing is an iniury, that is to say, he thynketh himselfe touched and mocked, if he seeth one but laughe." At 'Aspicere oportet, quod possis deperdere' Taverner translates "Thou muste loke upon the thyng

that thou mayste lose", and then re-translates it to remove any ambiguity, finally replacing the conservative translation "eye" with dynamic translation "presence", "The beste keper of a thyng is the owners eye, that is to say, his presence." When he translates "In vindicando criminosa est celeritas" as "In revengyng, quickenes is full of blame" he suggests an alternative reading "Some rede in iudicando in judgyng" but then ends by accommodating both in a final moral "Doubtles to be heady eyther in judgyng or in revengyng is not commendable." Taverner has particular difficulty rendering with "Iratus etiam facinus consilium putat" which he begins by translating then proceeds to explaining before finally offering an alternative translation with an entirely different reading. "The angry man counteth myschief counsayle. When a body is angry he iudgeth a leude dede to be wel and wysely done. Or ye may interprete it also this wayes. The angry man counteth counsayle myschief, that is to say, when he is well counsailed of his frende he thynketh him selfe harmed." Taverner occasionally gives a translation and then re-translates it without further exposition, as

in the case of "Malignos fieri maxime ingrati docent" which he renders as "Unthankful persons teache men moste of all to be unkynde hard and unlyberall." The problem with this rendering is that the emphasis falls on the corruption of men, rather than the ingratitude of men that is the cause of such corruption, so Taverner offers a second rendering, "Churlyshe natures and ingrate, make liberal and kynd persons to be the harder." In this rendering he changes the negatives into positives, since they pertain to the good men, "liberal and kynd", and clarifies the subject of adagie by moving it to the beginning of the sentence, "Churlyshe natures and ingrate." By changing the emphasis Taverner has created the meaning and point of the adagie.

The adagies present a challenge to an interpreter, since they exist in a highly eliptical form as 'wisdoms' separated from their original cultural, historical and linguistic contexts. The difficulties that Taverner encounters suggest that he did not have access to the Comedies of Terence from which these adagies were taken, and that he was translating from Erasmus' collection divested of information

that the original context would have provided for a translator. An apparently simple adagie such as "Ad calamitate q libet rumor valet' aptly conveys the message that rumour is a bad thing, but it doesn't explain why? This is left to Taverner to unpack, which he does, beginning with a literal translation, "Every rumour serveth unto calamitie, that is to say, sad and hevy tydynges be easly blowed abroade be they never so vaine and false and they be also sone beleved. But suche thynges as be good, ryght, and honest, are hardly beleved." The sum of Taverner's explanation becomes almost syllogistic, evil rumours do only evil, good rumours are never believed so can do no good, therefore all rumours are evil. On a number of occasions Taverner is in some doubt about how to interpret the verses and he turns to Erasmus. At "Conjunctio animi maxima est cognatio" Taverner explained "The knyttyng togyther of mind is the greatest aliaunce or kyndred that can be. Erasmus readeth it also this wyse."

In the process of making the verses of Publius more accessible to his English readers, Taverner draws on contemporary

contexts. At "Grave crimen etiam cum dictum est leviter, nocet", for instance, Taverner explained "A grevouse and heynouse cryme (as for example to be called a traytour or heretique) thoughe it be but lyghtly spoken, yet it hurteth and is daungerouse to him that is so called, even bycause of the odyousnes of the cryme." In drawing on the names of traitor and heretic, the accusations of which brought the most painful deaths that Tudor England could offer Taverner is emphasising for his English reader the danger of idly slandering a man's name. Again in translating "Heu dolor q' miser est, qui in tormento vocem non habet", Taverner adds contemporary detail and thereby politicises the verse so that it becomes no less than the cry of English Reformation martyrs:

> Oh howe miserable is the sorowe, which in turment, dare not utter his voyce. Men, whiche, whyle they are racked, beaten, and tourmented, dare not, or can not be suffred to speake the trouthe, are in moste miserable state.

3.3. GARDENS OF WISDOM

The garden of wysdom wherin ye maye gather moste pleasaunt flowres, that is to say, proper wytty and quycke sayenges of princes, philosophers, and dyvers other sortes of men. Drawen forth of good authours, as well Grekes as Latyns, by Richard Taverner. 1539. Solde in Lomberd strete at the signe of the Lamb by John Harvye[1]

To his *Garden of Wysdom* Taverner added a preface in which he advised the reader that his work would be both profitable to their souls and pleasurable to their appetites for entertainment. [2]

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[1] Title page, S.T.C.:23711a.

[2] Whilst there is no doubt that Erasmus's *Apothegmata* is the source for most of the *Garden of Wisedome*, a debate has emerged concerning Taverner's Cambyses narrative. Farnham has attributed much more credit to Taverner and has even made a case for him as the source of Preston's 1569 *A Lamentable Tragedy mixed full of Mirth containing the Life of Cambises, King of Persia.* (Willard Farnham, *The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1936) 264.) Starnes has argued that, in fact, much of the colloquial language and phrasing attributed to Taverner is already present in the Latin version of Carion's Chronicles, so no originality can be claimed for Taverner's Cambyses narrative.

Ye have here (good readers) a gardeyn or a paradyse rather of nette, propre, quicke, and grave sayenges of renowmed persons, in which to recreate your selfes, it shalbe as I judge no les profytable, then pleasaunt unto you. I had purposed to have made the boke moche longer, but beynge otherwyse letted, I was compelled to cloose up my worke. Howe be it, yf I shall hereafter perceyve, that ye have any delyte and pleasure in this kynde of studyes, I woll not stycke, when I shall have oportunitie, to enlarge my garden, and adde hereunto the second boke, If not, at lest ye have a token and signification of my good zele holly bent to do you such pleasur and profyte, as in my lyttell powre lyeth. Fare you well. At London the thyrde day of Apryll. Anno. 1539. Aiverso.[3]

See DeWitt T. Starnes, *The Garden of Wisdom,* Carion's *Chronicles*, and the Cambyses Legend." *University of Texas Studies in English* 35 (1956) 30.

[3] Richarde Taverner to the gentle readers. The edition was printed with the second part. (STC:23713) At the back of this edition there were two tables. The first was "The Table of the fyrst boke of the gardeyn of wisedome." This first book includes wisdom from Agasicles, Ageselaus, Agis, Lycurgus, Socrates, Aristippus, Philip kynge of Macedonia, Alexander the greate, Antigonus, Augustus Cesar, Phocion, Demonesthenes, Dionysius, Agathocles, Archelaus, Thermistocles, Aristides, Diogenes, Aristotle, Thales, Solon, Pittacus, Antisthenes, Anacharsis, Seno, Cleanthes, Isocrates and Philoxenus. The table of the second book consists of Achilles, Alphonsus kyng of Aragone, Athanasius, Sigismund Emperour, Plotinus, Cyrus the elder, Artoxerxes, Orontes, Duke Memnon, The Egypptians, Cambyses, DariusKynge of the persians, Semiramis, Serxes, Artoxerxes with the loong hand, Cyrus the younger, Cresus, Amyntas and Alexander hys son, Scilurus, Gelo, Hieron, Demetrius the son of Antigone, Demosthenes, Cato.

As promised, the collection, although significantly shorter than Erasmus's *Apothagmata,* was wide in scope. In its two volume state it began with Agasicles and ended with Cato. Taverner did not simply follow Erasmus word-for-word in his translation. As Farnham has noted, Taverner "had a bent for moralizing the material which he compiled" (Farnham 263). In the first of the 'wisdoms', that of Agasicles, Taverner translated within a contemporary context in the following way:

> Agasicles kynge of Lacedemon beyng demaunded by what meanes a prynce or ruler, maye saufly rule withoute any garde of men, to defende his bodye, Answered: If the prynce so ruleth his subjectes, as a father his children. What thynge coulde be spoken of a panym more chrystianly? Certes this sayenge to be true lyveth thexperience at this day of the most excellent prince our soveraigne lord kyng Henrie the eyght. Lord god with what inward joy, with what hartie love and reverence do al his [Aii recto] his liege subjettes imbrace the maiestie of his gracis person, and not only his liege subjettes, but also even the very ranke traytours, whiche intended nothyng elles but sedicion, yet the incomparable maiestie of his owne person they coulde not, but have in wonderous reverence? Wherof shuld this come, but by reason that his grace beareth hym so benignely, so gentilly, so lovyngly to all his subjettes, that he may very well be called pater patriae, the father of the countrye, or (to use the terme of the prophete Esaye) the noursynge father.

> Do ye not thynke, that this so excellent a prince, so entierly beloved of his subjettes, yf it were not rather for feare of foreyn enmies, then of his owne subjettes, myghte ryde and go, where so ever his hyghnes wolde, without any garde?

Agasicles, then, was remarkable in having instilled the love and obedience of his people so successfully as not to need a personal guard. In trying to make a clever comparison between Agasicles and Henry as loving fathers of their people, Taverner found that he had to explain why Agasicles was not exactly like Henry, and clumsily drew attention to the fact that Herny did actually need guards. To counter this problem, Taverner explained that the guards that accompanied Henry were not employed to protect him from his English subjectes, who were duly obedient, but rather from his foreign enemies. This was not one of Taverner's more successful attempts to flatter Henry.[4]

[4] A more successful job of this kind of flattery can be found in Henry Parker's *Life of Agesilaus*, in which he compared the great ruler to Henry VIII. Phillips MS.I,313. See McConica 154.

The wisdom of Agis is appropriated by Taverner as an exhortation to English soldiers to perform their duty to the king with the fierceness of Agis.

> Agis kynge of the Lacedemonians was wont to saye, that the Lacedemonians oughte not to aske, how many the ennemies be, but where they be. Signifieng, that the victorie hangeth not upon the nombre of sowldiours, but uppon theyr hardynesse, courage, readynes and celeritie in setynge uppon theyr ennemies. I truste in lyke wise that Englyshemen, when so ever the defence of our countrey shall call us to warre against our enemies, woll not cowardely aske, howe many they be, but lyke fyerse and hardy champyons, where be they that dare maynteyne any false quarell agaynste oure moste drad soveraigne lorde, and his people? in full a readines at a becke to runne, whether so ever his maiestie shall commaunde.

If it is the job of the soldiers to be courageous and act for their King, the argument implies that it is also the job of the King to act for his people:

> When a certayne rhetoricien praysed his science of rhetoryke with hygh wordes, sayeng, that nothyng is more excellent, then an eloquent oration. Then, quoth Agis, when thou holdest thy peace, thou arte nothynge worthe. Meanyng

> that it is moche more excellent and gloriouse for a man to do worthy thynges, then to have a tonge ready and swyfte to talke of worthy thynges. (Aivrecto-Av verso)

The fact that these sayings are being issued in 1539, at precisely the time that Cromwell is putting pressure on Henry to order English Bibles to be set up in Churches and to speed up the process of Reformation in England makes this volume a daring enterprise. Again, in the lengthy treatment of Lycurgus, which is essentially a treatise on the subject of marriage, Taverner manages to work contemporary relevance in to the penultimate paragraph of the Lycurgus section:

> Demaunded why he ordeyned that the Lacedemonians shuld make their sacryfyce and oblation with small and chepe thinges. Bicause, quoth he, we shuld never want wherwith to honour god. Who wolde not saye, but that in solemne worshyppynges of god, all royaltie and sumptuouse magnyficence is lyttell ynough? But this prudente panym understode that god delyteth rather in frugalytie, then in fatte sacryfices, lest under pretence of religion (as in our dayes it was come to passe) all abomination shulde be maynteyned. (Aviii verso.)

The small sacrifices of the Lacedemonians is thereby turned into an oblique criticism of the Roman Church's wealth and its emphasis on material, rather than spiritual, forms of worship.

In the account of Philip kynge of Macedonie, we find Taverner's favourite proverb in the mouth of Philip himself:

> There were some of his foreyn subgiettes whom he hadde founde not very trustie, which complayned and toke the matier hevely, that his servauntes called them traytours. To whom Philip made this answere. Truly my countrye men the Macedonians be very homly men and rudely brought uppe, whiche can call a mattok nothyng els but a mattoke, and a spade a spade.[Ciiii recto] Meanyng that in very dede they were traytours. Uplandyshe and homely persons can not qualifie, but call every thyng by the proper name.

Taverner was a fierce advocate of plain language. In his translations from Erasmus, Sarcerius, Capito, and even in the Bible itself, Taverner aimed at a style that was accessible to the common men and women of England with whom he engaged. Elaborate, rhetorical language was, of course, the vehicle of persuasion, the cloak of deceit, and in Reformation Prefaces the common reader

was frequently exhorted to treat such language with suspicion accordingly so as not to fall into Papistical traps.

The sayings of Dionysius provided Taverner with yet another opportunity of making a connection with Herny VIII and England's Commonwealth, but once more the qualification of the saying is precisely what draws attention to Henry's deficiency in spite of appearing to flatter him.

> Demanded of a certayne persone whether he were ydle. God forbyd, qoth he, that this thynge shuld ever chaunce unto me: Meanynge that it was a ryght fowle thynge for heddes and ministers of common weales, not to execute diligently theyr office. But assuredly herin our moste drad soverayghn lorde kynge Henry the eyght, maye be a myrrour and spectacle to all prynces and other inferiour officers. For who ever eyther more prudently, or more vigilauntly hath governed a common weale?" [Dvii recto]

The fact that Taverner could choose which sayings to include and which to leave out means that we have to be alert to these sayings that appear to criticize aspects of government even whilst they are

deflecting such criticism from Henry. Though Henry is depicted as a mirror, these sayings are also mirrors for magistrates.

In his preface to the second book of the *Garden of Wysedome*, Taverner explained that he was so busy with other occupations that he was unable to spend the time that he would have liked to spend on the rendering of the sayings. He apologises to the reader for the clumsiness of the renderings and the disorder of the collection:

> Wherfore I muste desyre you, not only to pardon myn incondite and grosse phrase, on whych [Aii recto] ye shal happen to stomble, but also to wynke at the confuse order herin. For ordre in thys boke, I protest, I kepe none, but accordynge to the proverbe that fyrst commeth to the hande that I write. And thus fare you well, and se ye favour myne honest endevours. [Aii verso]

The reference to the arbitrary fashion in which Taverner was choosing and translating is interesting. If Taverner had been working from an unbound copy of Erasmus, then it is feasible that he was literally translating the pages as they lay scattered and came

to hand, but it is quite unlikely that he would have been working from an unbound copy when bound copies were readily available. He could have been flipping pages and literally translating whichever saying his hand happened to stop at, but this negates the role of choosing that is clearly in evidence in his translations. It seems odd, too, that he should go to the lengths of explaining that there is no order, when it would have been a perfectly simple process to put the authors in alphabetical order, at least in the index. This prefatorial negation of order leaves the reader with an impression of a scattering of sayings, or flowers as they were called, rapidly gathered to be ordered, in an act of creative collaboration, in the mind of the reader.

There is no doubt that Taverner's inclusion of the sayings of Plotinus are meant to foreground the ongoing issue between Roman Catholics and Protestants concerning the role of images in worship. What begins as a dialogue about the body and the mind becomes an exhortation to teach the significance of the Saints rather than

encouraging blind adoration of them or else erasing them from worship altogether.

> Thys panym philospher judged with Pithagoras, that mans bodye is but a sheathe or case as it were of the mynde, whych after a maner it expresseth and resembleth , and that he seeth the least part of man whych seeth and marketh nothynge els but the bodye. Assuredlye though pyctures, as wel of the lyvynge as of the deade do offentymes sturre and move [Biii recto] move the dulle mynde of man, yet it can not be denyed, but that pyctures or ymages of the bodye wythout recordes and monumentes of the mynd to put men in remembraunce of the noble vertues of suche as be represented by the ymages, be much more hurtfull, then profytable. Images of sayntes be lay mens bokes I graunt, so that laye men be taught and instructed, what great fayth in Christe, what exemple of good lyvyng, what patience what bearing of Christes crosse, they had, that be resembled by those ymages, whyle they were conversaunte here in earth'. [Biii verso].

By including this saying, Taverner is acknowledes that there is a clear role for Saints in worship, as long as the life of the Saint, rather than the material image, is made the focus.

In his discussion of "Artoxerxes kynge of Persia surnamed the mindful", Taverner again brings up the subject of offerings, but here it is to demonstrate that a great king rewards the intention of

the offerer irrespective of the size of the offering. Of course there numerous biblical sub-texts for this narrative, that of the widow's mite at Luke 21.2-4 is one. There are several instances of the King's generosity to the poorest of his subjects, but this one is particularly interesting because of the way in which Taverner again, rather clumsily, attempts to make contemporary relevance by incorporating a reference to Henry VIII.

> At an other tyme a certayne other uplandyshe man perceyving that diverse men brought diverse presentes unto the kyng, and havynge none other thyng to present hym wyth, he toke out of the next ryver bothe his handes full of water and with a cherefull countenaunce offeret it unto the Kynge.The kyng herwith being delyted, comaunded a potte of gold to be gyven hym and rewarded hym furthermore with a greate summe of money. Let other nacions wonder at this Artoxexes. English men which have kyng Henry theght to theyr Soveraigne Lord thynke thys but a tryfle to his incomparable humanitie. [Bv.verso]

The reference to Henry comes in the middle of the narrative, not at the end where it would have formed a more natural conclusion to the chapter. Presumably this rather crass comparison is included so

early in the narrative so that in reading the subsequent anecdotes about the value which Artoxerxes placed on small things the English reader will automatically make the equivalence with Henry VIII and him/herself as the poor, but valued, subject who may yet do Henry VIII some small service for which s/he will be richly rewarded.

In his telling of the story of Demosthenes and the Ass, Taverner made the most of his opportunity to complain bitterly about the way in which the Roman Catholic Church had responded to the release of vernacular scriptures to the common people.

> Demosthenes "Truly I wold wysshe that Christen men myghte not be lykened to these [Evii recto] Athenians. The tales of Robyn hode, of Beves of Hampton, of syre Guy of warwyke wyth suche other fables are gredily redde and red agayne.
> But the holy Byble of God, Whyche treateth of ernest maters, that is to wyt, of our belief in Chryste, of true repentaunce, of the worthy frutes of the same, of the difference betwene Gods lawe, and mans tradition, and of suche other thynges touchyng our gostly helth and salvacion, we set lytle by, yea we discourage men and wemen from readinge of it. If we begynne a lytle to talke of scripture, anone we be heretiques. But so long as we comon

> De asini umbra, of Robin good felowe, or of the Fayrye we be good Chrystians. "[Evii.verso]

That the Scriptures should be freely available for people to read for themselves the truth of Christ's doctrine, free from the distracting trappings of Roman Church traditions, was, of course, a fundamental tenet of English Reformation. The Roman Church had never probihited reading of the Scriptures in the vernacular, as the preface to the 1582 Rheims New Testament later asserted, but to fail to control that readership by some means or other was perceived to be nothing less than irresponsible. Coverdale's 1535, 1537 and 1539 Bibles carried their own cautionary prefaces to the reader until Archbishop Cranmer inserted his own sermon on the reader at the front of the Great Bibles that were to be set up and read in Churches throughout England. The paratext that accompanied these English Bibles served as a ballast to the intrepid, unbridled reader as s/he trod the interpretive path between inspired reading and salvation and fleshly reading and damnation. 'Demosthenes' serves the

argument that there are many texts available for people to read that do them no good about which no one complains, so how absurd to brand readers of The Good Book as heretics. Taverner's argument thereby becomes not only a defence of the right of the people to read the Bible, but an attack on censorship. Yost has argued that although it is clear that Taverner translates Erasmus in such a way as to promote Protestant doctrine, he understood the value of rhetoric (Yost 1970, 274). Indeed, Taverner was no Bale, but nor was he the subtlest of evangelicals, and whilst he may employ persuasive rather than bullying tactics in his writing, he was undoubtedly an advocate of plain truth against embroidered lies.

Whilst a number of the narratives that Taverner picks out obliquely remind Henry of his duties to the Commonwealth and remind the Commonwealth of its duty and obedience due to Henry VIII, the most extraordinarily overt attack on the people occurs in a digression inserted in the middle of the final narrative of the collection, that of "Cato the Sage" who worked hard for the State, but the harder he worked the less grateful the Romans were:

> Cato "Assuredlye thys is the nature of that beast of manye heddes I meane of the people, for so the Poete Horace calleth them not without cause. England hathe at thys daye a Prynce incomparable Henry the eyght, she hath upon his maiestye Counsailours attendant not a fewe even the moste [Fvverso] prudent and grave parsonagies that could be pyked out of the realme to gyve holsom counsaile, she hathe bysshops, she hathe teachers a greate manye, both lerned and godly, yet her ingrate chyldern have not refrayned from treasons, from sedicions, from both previe and aperte grudges and furies, from sklaunderouse reapportes, from blowyng abrode and brutynge of moste shamefull and detestable lesynges and thynges never doon, spoken, nor yet ones thought upon, as they were ymagened to have been. O ingrate England. O croked and parverse generacyon. But I retourne to my purpose.
> This Cato very wyttyly also said that fooles bryng more utilitie and profette unto wyse men, than wyse men to fooles. [Fvi recto]

Although J.K. Yost has attempted to make a division in the agendas underlying the translations of Melanchthon, Capito and Sarcerius and those of Erasmus, arguing that the former translations brought English Reformation closer to German Protestant humanism, whilst the latter translations were intended to promote religious and moral education that was Protestant, such divisions are rather arbitrary. (Yost 624). Taverner applied humanistic wisdom to Reformation

politics and Reformation politics to humanistic wisdom. In translating from the volumes of Erasmus, Taverner chose material that had universal applications made it serve as commentary on various aspects of English Reformation, its politics and its problems, in the 1530s and 1540s. The only work in which it is harder to discern Taverner's agenda is his revision of the Bible in 1539, though, even there, Erasmus speaks from the margins.

3.4. COMMONPLACES

Introduction to Commonplaces[1]

The tenor of this work is is very different from that of the *Proverbs or Adagies* that we have looked at. The title page advertises the 'Commonplaces of scripture ordrely and after a compendious forme of teaching, set forth with no litle labour, to the gret profit and help of all such studentes in gods worde as have not had longe exercyse in the same, by the ryghte excellent clerke Erasmus Sarcerius. Translated in to Englysh by Rychard Taverner' (BL3128.a.33). Not to be confused with Desiderus Erasmus, Sarcerius was a student of Peter Schade in Fribourg and of Melanchthon's party (McConica,

[1] Sister Joan Marie Lechner, *Renaissance Concepts of the Commonplace* (New York: Pageant Press, 1962).

180). Although many proverbs and adagies found their way into Commonplace books, they were not in themselves commonplaces. Sister Mary Lechner explains that "Traditionally, beginning with Aristotle, a *topos* is a heading, or, literally, a "place" where one finds an argument. There are two kinds of topics, the "common" or general which could be applied to any oration and to any case and which included the commonplaces of possible and impossible, greater or less, past fact and future fact, and magnification and minimization, and the "specific" topic which referred only to particular subjects." (Lechner 8). It was a contemporary of Aristotle, Aphthonius who developed the Commonplace as the mode moral amplification which was to become so popular in the sixteenth century. Taverner's Commonplaces emerged from this tradition. Very different in tone from the *Adagies and Proverbs* which had been advertised as a delight as well as an edification to its reader, the volume of *Commonplaces* was advertised as an introduction to profit students in the early stages of Scriptural learning. The first printed English Bibles had encouraged the

reader, through a metaphor gleaned from the annals of Seneca and Pliny, to become the industrious bee gathering the sweet flowers of Scripture in a creative act of learning. Renaissance students would have been taught the commonplace method of ammassing knowledge as a creative act of assembling places. "Invention of the places became a "hunt" and the assembling of them a "storing of treasures." (Lechner 130). When the material to be hunted out was the Scripture, the hunt was predicated on a search for God's truth and the treasure no less than salvation.

If, as J.K. Yost has suggested, Taverner's translation of the *Loci Communes* by Erasmus Sarcerius demonstrate "the government's use of Protestant humanism to provide constructive religious change in the late 1530s." (Yost 1970, 268), then Taverner's *Commonplaces* presented a Protestant humanistic doctrine that steered clear of Religious extremism.

The titlepage of the *Commonplaces* has a figure of Justice 'Justicia' at the head of the page holding a sword in her right hand. To her right stands 'Charitas', beneath which stand 'Prudencia' and

then 'Obedientia'. To her left stands 'Fidea', beneath which stand 'Spes' and then 'Patientia' who supports the emblem of John Byddell at the bottom of the page. The *Commonplaces* were prefaced with an epistle to Henry VIII from Richard Taverner (Aiirecto). "To the most hyghe and most excellent prynce Henry the VIII. by the grace of god kyng of Englande and of Fraunce, defendor of the fayth : Lorde of Irlande, and in erth supreme heed immediatlye under Christ of the churche of Englande, his most humble subject and servaunte Rycharde Taverner wissheth all felicite and helthe". Although Taverner generally did not write extensive prefaces, his Bible preface being no more than a page, his preface to this work extended across ten columns and therefore warrants some preliminary discussion before the *Commonplaces*.

Taverner's Epistle

Tavener began by arguing that due to weakness or ignorance of Christ men have diversely sought fame "laboured to seke them

immortal name and memory" (Aiiirecto). Because they could not attain fame by good means they sought it through bad. The slaying of Philip of Macedonia is the first example given. This would be rather alarming to Henry VIII who had already been compared to Philip of Macedonia in the 1537 Matthew Bible preface. There, Philip of Macedonia was to Alexandra as Henry would be to the heir as yet unborn – which they all hoped would be a male. The perpetrator of this crime had next purposed to destroy the temple of Diana in Ephesus if he had not been stopped. This reference to Philip and the Temple therefore became a warning to Henry VIII to circulate this book of commonplaces of scriptures to prevent an assault both on himself and on the Church by ignorant rebels.

Taverner then gave a list of men who have sought fame through valiant soldiering or statesmanship, but, he says, "Socrates (although he knew not Christ, yet for his great sanctimony and purenes of life a man more worthy to be reputed a saynt then many of our Romysh sayntes) being demaunded by what wayes a man might wyn an honest name, answered : if thou shalt apply thy selfe

to be such one in dede as thou desirest to be counted, as who sholde saye : wylt thou be counted a furtherer of justyce, a good prince, a good counceller : Then endeeavour thy self to be such in dede, for undoubtedly like as the shadowe foloweth the body, as a compaignion inseparable, even so doth glory, renowme, and fame accompany excellent dedes, worthy geftes, and noble qualityes, and that so moche then rather, if the same be unloked for." (Aii verso).

Taverner went on to say that whether in "prophane hystoryes" or "holye scryptures" there are numerous examples of those exemplary men and women. He chose Mary Magdalene as his illustration "yet this one acte of a woman and that a famous synner shall at this tyme suffyce". (Aiii recto). As an evangelical, working for Cromwell, translating Erasmus for the Reformation cause, this emphasis on works may seem to be something of a digression from his brief, but demonstrates Taverner's attempts to find a middle way through the multiplicity of interpretations and misinterpretations on the key issue of works and faith. He continued:

> [A]t a souper in whiche Christe was present, whyle her syster minystred at the table before all the gestes, of an excedinge zele and love she bare to Chryste annoyted with a ryght precyous oyntement his feete, and with the very heare of her heed dryed them agayne. Here I dare boldly saye this Magdaleyne loked for no fame by this acte, yet what answered Christ to suche as murmured against her and said this oyntment might have ben solde for moche money and given to the poore." To this Christ answers " I saye unto you, where so ever this gospell shal be preached throughout all the world,this also that she hath done shal be told for a remembraunce of her." (Aiii recto)

Taverner then compared to Henry VIIIs act of "abolyshment of the byshop of Romes usurped power" (Aiii recto). Taverner thereby succeeded in comparing the woman most famed for her sinfulness with Henry VIII in the moment when he wished to praise him for a comparable act of love toward Christ. Just as Mary's act toward Christ was commanded by him to be recorded wherever the story of their supper was recounted, so too, Taverner assured Henry, that in the chronicling of the abolition of the Church of Rome Henry's glorious act would also be chronicled. This fame was promised both to Henry and, of course, Taverner's own patron, Thomas Cromwell, who he specially named and commended, "the memory of certain

his counsellours, namely of the lorde Crumwell, soe worthye a counseloure to so worthye a prynce". (Aiii verso).

Taverner then warned that where there are great counsellors and great deeds done by them, there are also those who envy them and who will report them as evil. That Taverner felt Cromwell to be in some danger and in need of an advocate is made increasingly apparent in this preface.

> Doubteles (mooste myghtye and redoubted prince) it can not be dyssenled, but as certeyne of your graces counseyl be highly praysed, extolled, and magnifyed of many : So agayne on the contrary part, they be envyed, malygned, and hated of others, namelye of suche as either have envye as theyr vocation, or be yet styll roted in theyr popyshhe superstycion. Or these some perchaunce in theyr furyous rage, wolde desyre theyr deth." (Aiv recto).

Taverner adds that no doubt when they reflect, these envious or malicious men will repent. "I meane the byssop of Romes privy adherents, who withoute questyon do hate all thinges that tend to

the advauncement of gods honour, and detection of theyr cloked hypocresye" (Aiv recto)

Taverner expresses the wish that just as God has protected Henry through "the mooste ungodlye and pestilent conspiracyes", so too God will "poure out his grace upon the rest of your graces lovynge subjects" (Aivrecto). Henry is antitypically depicted as the "Mighty Shepeherde" and the true head of a unified England. God's purpose in bestowing his Grace and Henry's strong leadership was defined as England's purging of Papism once and for all. This purging was configured in a politicised language of bodily sickness returning to bodily health, a language that was founded in the Psalms and appropriated in similar ways by countless Renaissance writers. In a rarer, more volatile expression, Taverner promised that God would "utterly vomyt out of us all papisticall venym" (Aiv recto).

Although Cromwell had done almost everything necessary to enable such a purging of poison from England's body in the pursuit of common w/health, there was yet one most necessary

thing remaining to be done, that necessary thing was to endorse and promote Erasmus' *Commonplaces*, "a trasure inestimable unto Chrysten men" (Aiv verso), especially in this translation by Richard Taverner, which he hoped would "the more plausibly and gredlyly be devoured of the people" (AVI recto).

That the *Commonplaces* had been commissioned by Cromwell, who had already commended him "unto your graces service in the office of the signet" (1537), is evident from the preface in which Taverner says that he would not even have attempted to translate such a text into the vulgar tongue had he not been asked by "my said old master my lord privy seale". Taverner made the usual deferential rhetorical suggestion that he was inadequate for the great task and warned that his translation would fall short of readerly expectations. Taverner had a choice of the work of Erasmus Sarcerius or that of Philip Melanchthon who had dedicated his own *Loci Communes* to Henry VIII in 1535, for which he had received 200 crowns.[2] In his preface, Taverner commended

[2] See John Joseph Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (New Haven: Yale University Press. 1997) 399.

Menlanchton's preface but he dismissed his *Loci Commune,* on the grounds that it was a work aimed at scholars rather than students of Scripture. Because his aim was to reach a more general readership, Taverner chose to translate the more accessible *Commonplaces* of Erasmus Sarcerius, as he explained in the following passage.

> A daungerous pece of worke doubteles, and full of diffycultie it is, so to handle these maters as shall in all poyntes satisfie the expectation of the readers, as declareth eloquently wrytinge to your most redoubted majestie, the excellente clerke Philip Melanchthon in his epystle before his common places, whose judgement this Sarcerius foloweth welnere in all thinges. Onely in this they differ, that Melanchthon dyrecteth his style to the understandyng onely of the lerned persons well exercysed in scriptures. This tempereth his penne also to the capacitie of yonge students of scripture and suche as have not had moche exercise in the same. (Aivverso)

Taverner offered a proverb – one truth many witts – and suggested that although there were many learned men trying to attain the truth of Scripture, though they disagreed on issues, they "synge all one note." Beneath the umbrella of Reformation, however, there were

ferocious disagreements on matters of more import than the style in which Reformation was served up to the public.

Taverner rather clumsily cited Augustine by way of introducing the problem of human error, which he feared his own work was not devoid of. He explained that the Fall of Man was both an effect of, and precipitated, error and blindness so that he could make the point that it was impossible for one man to write everything, and everything truthfully. In a wonderful Reformation humanistic shift he employed Horace to endorse Augustine with the citation, "In a longe worke a man maye other whyles lawfully slombre". Taverner then checked his diatribe about human error in order to clear Erasmus and himself, argued instead that in this kind of writing it is very hard to please everybody, "to satisfue all mens myndes". (AVverso).

He meditated on the mutability of men and illustrated it with the recent alteration in thinking about free will, and in doing so he revealed his own position on the subject. As far as Taverner was concerned, Luther had the answer. Man must wish his reformation

and salvation, but he would never achieve it without God's participation.

> Some have put frewyll in nothynges, some on the contrary parte have gone aboute to meyntayne frewyll in all thynges. Agayne other goynge in the meane between both these extremes, as Melanchthon and this Sarcerius, with many other excellent clerkes, have denyed frewyl onely in spiritual mocyons and that also in such persons as be not yet regenerate and renued by the holy ghost, and yet in the mean season they take it not so awaye, but they level them also in spirituall mocions a certeyn indeavour or willing, which indevour neverthelesse can fynishe nothingge, onles it be holpen by the holy ghost. This (after my pore judgement) is the ryghtest and truest waye. (AVverso)

Taverner ended by noting that although there were many opinions and ideas about such issues, the only true touchstone and rule by which idle speculations could be translated into the knowledge of God was the text of Scripture. If anyone had a better way of knowing God, Taverner, ironically, suggested, he should share it with the rest of us.

Taverner's Commonplaces

Taverner's *Commonplaces* were printed throughout the sixteenth century at the presses of John Byddell, Nycolas Hyll, Rychard Bankes, and Thomas East. Except for a few alterations to the organization of the books, they underwent no revision. Different printers had their own uncials and emblems and title pages, and the amount of lines to each page varied between 30 and 34, with very little contraction of vowels, hence the variations evident in the overall length of the editions. The indexes were in some editions printed at the front of the work, immediately after the prefatorial epistle to Henry VIII, (STC:21752.5), others were printed at the end of the work (STC:21755a.5; 21753; 21755a; 21755).[3] The table consisted of 63 or 64 items throughout the editions, depending on whether they included the reference to the 'epistle' or began with the first of the commonplaces, 'Of God', but they all ended with 'Of wedlocke'. The index was not arranged alphabetically, nor were

[3] S.T.C.: 21756 has no index at all, although it is certain that if it ever had one it would have appeared at the end of the work.

the commonplaces arranged so in the main body of the work, but were, rather, topographically ordered, as commonplaces should be, with all the commonplaces concerning the law, for instance, gathered together before those concerning love, sacraments and confession. Not surprisingly, the Commonplaces reinforced the Henrician Articles and Injunctions, but it interesting to compare the different approaches to some of the more important theological issues as they were configured and reconfigured throughout the 1530s.

The work began with a chapter entitled 'Of God'. This chapter asserted that, "God is one certein divine being or essencie, consistyng of thre persons : that is to wete, god the father, the son, and the holy ghost", and the marginal annotation, one of many that offered helpful cues throughout the book, read "what god is". There then followed a catalogue of heretical conceptions of God. A marginal note emphasised "God the father is one only person, not the father, sonne and holy ghost togither, as certaine heretickes have taught". Thomas Cranmer's Thirteen Articles of 1538 had opened

with a similar statement concerning "De unitate Dei et trinitate personarum." These articles of faith were basically a revision of the *Augsberg Confession* (1530) that Taverner had translated in 1536.

On the highly controversial matter of justification, not surprisingly, Paul's Epistle to the Romans was the key text of the *Commonplace*. In the Ten Articles of 1536 Justification was explained with an emphasis on the remission of sins and reconciliation with God, but in the *Commonplace,* the emphasis was on Faith. Cross references to Romans 3 and 4 endorsed the explanation that "Faith is the meane wherby to purchase justifycacyon or forgyvenes of synnes bycause fayth agreeth to the promyses of Chryst accordyng to Paul sayng, we judge therfore that a man is justifyed by fayth." (L.viii.verso). The remission of sins was judged to be an effect of justification, not justification itself. Although the Thirteen Articles of 1538 reiterated the need for penitence whilst stressing the impotency of penitence to justify, there was in the Thirteen Articles a greater stress on the need for a lively faith than had existed in either the Augsberg Confession or

the earlier Articles in asserting the true premise of Justification. The Thirteen Articles was, therefore, more closely alligned with the *Commonplaces* at this point. Following the discussion of Justification there was a list of antithetical statements; the suggestions from Schoolmen, philosophers and heretical sects were gathered together, as in a sin bin at the end of the chapter, without further argument.

On the subject of Resurrection the Thirteen Articles explained that there would be a general raising of the dead on Judgement day, at which time just and unjust men would be separated to spend eternity either in bliss or in torment accordingly. This was also the message of the *Commonplace*, but for the stress which the Article placed on the raising of the body:

> Et quod in eodem adventu, summa celeritate, in momento temporis, ictu oculi, divina potentia sua suscitabit mortuos, sistetque in eisdem in quibus vixerunt corporibus ac carne coram tribunali suo cunctos homines qui unquam ab exordio mundi fuerunt, aut postea unquam usque in illam diem futuri sunt.[4]

[4] Article 13 of 'The Thirteen Articles' 1538. Gerald Bray, *Documents of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: James Clarke,1994) 207.

The *Commonplace* avoided the problematic and controversial issues associated with the Resurrection of the body altogether. One characteristic of the *Commonplaces* was that Sarcerius tended to discuss key theological issues in terms of causes and effects, so it is not surpising to learn that the Resurrection was explained in terms of two effects:

> Forasmoche as two sortes of men shal ryse agayn a godly and ungodly therfore ther be ii. sorts of final effects to be made of the resurrection. The godly shall have these effects folowing them. To rise up unto everlasting lyge. To be with the lord alwaies according to Paules saying. And so shal we ever be with th elorde. The ungodly shal folow these effectes. To ryse again to everlasting punyshmentes. To be for evermore with the devyl and his aungelles. (C.c.iv.verso)

This chapter also ended with a set of antithetical positions concerning Resurrection, and it was here that heresies concerning the role of the body were listed, including this one, "To holde that the hole man shal not rise againe but onely eyther the flesshe eyther the soule eyther the spirite against which errour disputeth

copyousely Tertulian in his boke de resurrectione carnis." (C.c.iv.verso).

The subject of Christ's own bodily presence at, and in, the Last Supper was another highly controversial issue, but one which neither the Ten Articles nor the Henrician Injunctions of 1536 wanted to deal with. The ambiguous language in which this key issue of faith was discussed made it possible for Catholics and Protestants to interpret it to their own satisfaction. The *Commonplace* glossed over this difficulty, leaving it to the "Contraryes" section at the end of the discussion to assert that it was error "To dispute supersticyously (as of certayn scolemen heretofore it hathe ben disputed of the presence of the body and bloode of Chryst or howe and after what fassyon the body and blode of Chryst is there present or howe great and howe lytle it is." (S.vi.recto-verso). Instead of entering into the dispute, the *Commonplace* discussed the effects of the Supper. "This supper forasmoch as it is a sacrament of th enew testament, therfore remyssion of sinnes is the propre effecte therof, whiche is

purchased by faith or credite given to these wordes of Christ the promise. Gyven for you, and shed for the remyssyon of sinnes." (S.v.recto). To this one good effect Sarcerius then added many good effects ensuing from the celebration of Christ's sacrifice. What is most interesting about this *Commonplace* is the way in which Sarcerius takes issue with the decision to withold the wine and to give only bread at the Supper on the grounds that wine may spill. This, he argues, is a theft and contrary to the ordinance of Christ. In the margin he added three pointing hands as a note bene to his argument.

The *Commonplace* that dealt with Predestination was an interesting inclusion on a matter that had not been dealt with by any of the Henrician articles or injunctions. The tenor of this *Commonplace* was, however, similar to that of the treatment of Predestination in the Forty Two Articles issued in 1553. Wishing to save the ignorant from despair, the *Commonplace* cautioned that Predestination must be spoken of wisely and carefully.[5] "If that we

[5] 'The Forty Two Articles' cautioned "ita hominibus vehementer accendit: ita hominibus curiosis, carnalibus, et Spiritu Christi destitutis , ob oculos perpetuo

receive the word, we shal be the children of god, whom god hath chosen, to make us his children by adopcion, as S. Paul writing to the Ephesians declareth. And this condicion is proved by the universal promyse of the gospel. Now if some of us be damned, this is bicause we byleve not the gospel." (Cii.verso). At least the *Commonplace* offered hope to those who believed the Gospel that they might indeed be adopted by God. It reassured the reader that God's will was that all men should be saved. It is "an exteme madnes", it argued, for men to worry about whether or not they are predestined to salvation or damnation, rather, it exhorted readers, the time would be better spent comforting themselves with the general promise of grace. (C.iii.recto). It goes on to argue that if Paul was no terrorist, and that had he imagined that men would be made anxious by predestination, rather than comforted by it, he wouldn't have mentioned it so often. (C.iii.verso). Having assured the reader that there was no need to be concerned about Predestination, Sarcerius had then offered a second definition that

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versari praedestinationis Dei sententiam, perniciosissimum est praecipitium, unde illos Diabolus protrudit, vel in desperationem, vel in aeque perniciosam impurissime vitae securitatem." *Ibid.* 295.

no doubt unnerved the recently comforted reader. Augustine was martialled to explain that there were two kinds of predestination, "The one is called predestination of alligacion, and the other predestination of condicion." (C.v.recto). The first kind of predestination rested on God's choice, the second on man's conduct. Sarcerius continued "I dare boldly saye, if predestinacion be with her effectes wel considered and dryven in to the herte, there is nothyng stronger then it to plucke up a mans conscience." (C.vi.verso). The marginal annotation read "Predestination well considered is a great solace and comforte to good men." The *Commonplaces* were not simply an objective summary of the Protestant line on key issues of theology, they were consolations, attempts to assuage some of the panic that Church Reformation had generated.

4. EPISTLES AND GOSPELS

In his *Athena Oxonienesis*, Anthony a Wood recalls that Taverner was a regular preacher at St. Mary's in Oxfordshire, where he was also the High Sheriff. Wood renders a vivid description of Taverner preaching in his cloak, chains and sword, the garments of a High Sheriff, at St. Mary's Oxford, where he was granted a special licence to preach by Edward VI in 1552, and later by Elizabeth I.[1]

The role of preaching was immensely important to the new English Church as it attempted to substitute the old faith with new doctrine that had older, Scriptural precedence. There were several

[1] From 1548 anyone who wished to preach needed to obtain a special license. Alan Fager Herr explains that there were three types of license, the license to preach, the license to preach and to license others and the license to preach, license and prohibit others. Usually only Clergy were licensed to preach, and to obtain it they had to subscribe to the supremacy of the Monarch, the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Ordinal* and the thirty nine *Articles of Religion*. See Alan Fager Herr, *The Elizabethan Sermon: A Survey and Bibliography* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969) 13.

important spaces in which the Government message could be promulgated. As Millar Maclure has argued, "The Pulpit in Paul's churchyard was the most important vehicle of persuasion used by the government during the period 1534-1554. What we now call the "official line" in matters ecclesiastical was promulgated at the Cross." (Maclure 20).[2] Local Churches throughout the realm occupied a third important preaching space, and it was for this space that Cromwell commissioned the *Epistles and Gospelles* from Taverner.[3] It is well known that Elizabeth put great trust in the *Book of Homilies* as means of dispensing her own brand of propaganda, especially since the shortfall of clergy meant that laypeople, called readers, who were employed to read the pre-selected Homily, were in no position to argue with the text, but the edition commissioned by Cromwell was its conceptual and even

[2] Millar Maclure, *The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958).
[3] The *Epistles and Gospelles* went into five editions in 1540.

textual predecessor, since a number of the sermons were incorporated in the Elizabethan edition.[4]

In this chapter I will be considering Taverner's editions of *The Epistles and Gospels* that were first printed by Rycharde Bankes in 1540 and subsequently at that press till 1547, at which time the licence enabling Bankes to be the sole printer of the work expired.[5]

Taverner was responsible for putting the edition together from collected contributions from eminent theologians and Reformers of the day, to which Taverner added some epistles of his own. Only Taverner's name and that of the Bankes press were printed, all other contributions appearing anonymously.

Trying to discern individual authorship in the *Epistles and Gospels* is a highly speculative venture that is digressive and transgressive, although several scholars have engaged in this

[4] Maclure notes that in Mary's reign Paul's cross was used otherwise. " The truth is that Mary did not "tune her pulpits", did not use the forum at Paul's Cross with her father's cleverness or the intemperance of her brother's Council. The Paul's Cross pulpit was used, as before, for proclamations, spectacles, and instruction in officially inspired doctrines, but the important sermons of the reign (when there were any) were preached at Oxford and Smithfield, where the rituals of disputation and burning could support the preacher's arguments."49.

[5] See the extended privilege granted by Henry VIII on the verso of the Title page.

pursuit. Cardwell speculates that Cromwell, Latimer and Cranmer were among the contributors.[6] In any case, it is the consumation of collaborative practice that Taverner himself advocated for the translation of the Bible into English in his 1539 preface to that volume. Guy Bedouelle has made some interesting comparisons with the *Epistles and Gospels* of the circle of Meaux that were condemned by the Sorbonne in 1525 for their suggestions of Lutheran heresy.(Bedouelle, 733).[7] Holmes has ventured to suggest that "thys brief postil", to which the Title alludes, that set off the whole enterprise was the work of Henry Parker, Lord Morley, whose daughter married Lord Rochford, Anne Boleyn's brother. He supports his argument with a genealogical table that links Parker to Anne Boleyn, and then gives a list of Morley's works. The first of these is indeed an edition of Postils dedicated to Anne Boleyn, the rest constitutes a stock of rather typical Renaissance humanistic

[6] Cardwell 18th-century edition. Introduction.
[7] See Guy Bedouelle "Une Adaptation anglaise des Epistres et Evangiles de Lef re d'Etaples et ses disciples. *Bibliotheque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 48.3 (1986): 723-34.

works.[8] Interesting though this may be, it does not get us any closer to an appreciation of the work.[9] What is certainly true is that Taverner was entrusted with the compilation of the Epistles and Gospels which were, as he says in his preface, largely the work of other men.

The *Epistles* are divided into two parts. Eamon Duffy has argued that the impact of Cromwell's fall from Henry's favour can be felt in the difference between the first and second parts of the *Epistles.* Whereas the tone of the first part is confident in its attack on the abuses of the Church and traditional ceremony, and, Duffy thinks, must therefore have been printed before Cromwell's fall, the second part, printed after Cromwell's fall is defensive.[10]

A.G. Dickens has noted, Taverner's works were all printed "in English for the people, not in Latin for the rulers and scholars of Europe", and this endeavour to reach the common men of England

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[8] See BL: Harls 6561 and 1197. Holmes in the British Magazine 1846. 361.
[9] For a study of the rich tradition of the Postil see Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952).
[10] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) 426.

is conveyed in his prefatorial epistles as well.[11] Taverner's Preface to the first part of the *Epistles*, the Winter part, is not on this occasion directed at the lay person, but at his own co-workers, "prestes and curates", in the business of reforming England's ignorant and rebellious flock into obedient Christian subjects. Taverner suggests that the people would be more willing to learn if there were plenty of teachers that were "sobre modeste and sincere." Since the King and his councillors have provided the materials for the job, he argues, any priest that fails to use those materials for the intended purpose and to God's profit would be no better than the wicked servant of Matthew 26 and can look for the same fate at His hands. The margin emphasises these gospel warnings with cross-references to "Luk.xix/Mat.26."

> But yf on the contrary parte, after the exemple of the unprofitable servaunte spoken of in the Gospell, ye woll not fynde in your hartes charitably and prudently to occupie this talent that here is frankly delyvered unto you, but wyll eyther wrappe it up in a fayre napkin, or els unreverently handle it to the destruction and not to the edificacion of others : be ye then sure, that not only no mo such benefites

[11] A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London: Batsford, 1968) 170.

> shalbe bestowed upon you, but also all that whiche ye have already, shalbe taken from you and that not unworthely. Yea and finally, according to our lordes owne sentence, ye shalbe caste as servauntes unprofytable into utter darkenes, where shalbe wepyng and gnashyng of teeth.[12]

Having struck the fear of God into the clergy with this powerfully threatening language taken directly from the gospel, Taverner then negates it by suggesting that there will be no such consequence because "there is good hope that ye woll otherwise demeane your selves." He reinforces his message of hope with a reminder that Henry VIII is now the head of the Church to whom all obedience is due, adding, "whom I dout not, but ye wyll gladly obey." In the process of selling the *Epistles* to the Clergy as the means with which to reform England, Taverner is actually suggesting that it is the Clergy who must first reform themselves, not least of all by replacing their "rash, erronyouse, hereticall or fabulouse sermons" with "sobre, discret, catholike, and godly instructions such as be here described unto you or better if better ye can devise." Taverner

[12] 'Rycharde Taverner clerke of teh Signet to our soveraigne Lorde the kynge wyssheth to the Christian reader all grace from God above and increase of knowledge in his worde'. The preface A2.recto and verso.

ends this first preface by suggesting that if the Clergy do all these things then they can be clear in their consciences that they are fulfilling the ministry to which they were called. Although the epistles are recommended, there is no sign of their being enforced or of the Clergy being restricted from devising their own sermons. They are, rather, a guide to the content-type that is now expected in any sermons that they issue from the pulpits.

The preface to the second part of the *Epistles*, the Summer part, begins in the same way as the Winter part, so that a brief glimpse at it might lead the reader think that it is the same preface repeated, but it is a very different piece of writing in all other respects. Duffy has called the second preface "panic-stricken", in which case it might be said to share that tone of panic with many other Reformation prefaces, including those written during Edward VI's reign when there ought to be less evidence of it. The overall tone of the preface is, rather, angry and assertive as it propels a Reformation agenda with each sentence. The chief source of anger comes from malicious misreading on the part of those who "do

wonderfully wreste all that they reade into the worste sense in mayntenaunce of theyr carnal libertie and dissolute kynde of livinge." Taverner goes on to explain that the *Epistles* must be read in a particular way, not extracted from their true contexts in order to serve evil. His preface has much in common with Coverdale's 1535 prefaces to his Bible, in fact, in which Coverdale made the same exhortations to obedience whilst explaining the necessity of reading in the correct way or, as Cranmer was to put it in his preface to the 1540 Great Bible preface, to read with Reformation in mind. Taverner insists "Here is taught no lawles libertie to do what you luste, but obedience to God and to hys commaundementes, obedience to the kynges majestie and to his lawes, obedience to the holsome tradicions of the churche." Exhortations to obedience were not new, as Kinney has pointed out, "Along with proclamations, homiles were a fundamental method for promoting state propaganda; and the Elizabethan churchgoer was constantly enjoined to civil obedience with no thought that his parish priest's message was unusual or inappropriate."[13] Citing Jerome, Ambrose

[13] Kinney, *Elizabethan Backgrounds* (Hamden: Archon, 1975) 45.

and Augustine as examples, Taverner acknowledges that even the best and wisest of men err and that he is no exception, "This I dare say with saynt Austine. Erre in my wrytynges I may, but an heretique I can be none." At least, he insists, if he is made aware of his error he will reform, which is more than can be said of Anabaptists and Sacramentaries. This serves not so much as a defence of himself, but as an exhortation to others to do likewise, repent of their error and reform themselves into obedient Christian subjects.

Neither of the prefaces are particularly offensive, not in the least Balean in tone. Although the prefaces remain the same in all of the editions of the *Epistles*, the table do not. In an edition printed in 1542 at Rycharde Bankes' press, there were fifty-nine items in the table for the Winter part, beginning with 'The Epistle on the fyrst sondaye in Advent' and ending with 'The Gospell on the thyrde day of Ester'. (STC:2967.3). When the Epistles were again printed in 1545 at Rycharde Bankes' press the table contained sixty-four items including 'A sermon of the Resurrection of our saviour Christe', an

epistles and a gospel for the Wednesday in Easter week and 'The Crede of saynt Athanasius.' (STC: 2967.7). Aside from the sermon on the resurrection, which was inserted between 'An exhortacion before the communion' and 'The Epistle on Easter daye', the three other items were oddly attached to the 1542 version. Whether or not these extra sermons were Taverner's is difficult to ascertain, but the sermon on the Resurrection is certainly an interesting omission in the early, Henrican, version and a more interesting inclusion in the later version.[14] The work was organized according to the Church calendar, with a section of a New Testament Epistle and a section of a Gospel given for each notable day.

Although the prefaces were moderate in tone, not all of the *Epistles* were. 'The Epistle on the thyrde Sunday in Advente', for instance, was far from conciliatory.[15] As with all of the Epistles in the volume, a short argument, in this case paraphrased from 1

[14] The 1542 version was annotated and all of the marginal cross-references were given in Roman numerals. The 1545 version was more sparsely annotated, although what annotations there were had been taken from the earlier version, and the cross-references were given in a mixture of Roman and Arabic numerals, with the occasional capitalisation of first consonants.

[15] The edition of 1542 (S.T.C.: 2967.3) will be used for citation unless otherwise specified.

Cor.4.1., was given first : "Paule here sheweth that all apostles and preachers be Christes ministers and the stewardes of his mysteries".[16] 1 Corinthians 4:1-5 was then given, after which began the discussion. This began tamely enough :

> My deare frendes which ought by true charitie to be brethren and systers in Jesu Christ, and knowledge all one God for our father by the benefyte and gyfte of fayth and of the regeneracion or new burth which we have in our Lorde Jesu Christ and by Jesu Christ: assuredly in hym and in the father of heaven (which are but one God) ought to be all our fayth and trust, and in no creature lyvynge, lyke as saynt paule sheweth us in this presente epistle...(Biiii.verso)

It quickly departed from its text to launch an attack on the Pope. The first hit came from the margins. To the text: "For assuredly an Apostleshippe is not a tyranny or worldly power, but rather a service and ministerie, yea and as it were a certayne stewarshyp or amnershyp of other mens goodes, that is to wyt of the gospell of Christ" Taverner added the marginal note: "Agaynst the tiranni of the Bysshop of rome". (C.i.recto). This annotation was a warning

[16] 'The Epistle on the thyrde sondaye in Advente'. C2.recto. 11.

sign of the approaching attack in the text itself. One sentence more and the meaning was becoming plain:

> And this place of saint Paul maketh not a lytle agaynst the foule usurpacion and tyranny of the byshop of Rome and of his adherentes, whiche they practise and exercyse in Christes churche. (C.i.recto)

St. Bernard's 'Sermon de conversione Pauli' was textually, and paratextually, marshalled to lend authority to this interpretation of these "lordly prelates" as "playne Antichristes". The translation of St. Bernard began "Alak alak Lord God, for they be nowe chief in thy persecucion whiche seme to love the hygheste place in thy churche" This was reinforced with St Augustine's definition of 'Antichrist' as one who "in all his procedinges and doynges is contrary to Christ and to his gospell." (C.i.verso).

> Nowe I praye you, who is more contrary to Christ, then the See of Rome these many yeares, whose studye is nothynge elles, but to stoppe the free passage of Christes gospell, lest theyr hypocrisie and jugglynge shulde be uttered, espyed, and come to lyghte, and then fare well theyr gaynes and

> hyghe prelacie, wherin they nowe reygne more lyker goddes then men. Wherfore to return to my matter (C.i.verso).

What is odd about this digression is the way in which it advertises itself as a digression from what is supposed to be an exposition of 1 Corinthians 4.1-5. It advertises itself as precisely not doing the job it is supposed to do on the third Sunday in Advent. The main theme to which the author announces he will return, is not actually a return at all, but a continuation of the propaganda:

> Wherfore to return to my matter, if any person what so ever he be (good brethern) preacheth and sheweth you any other thynge save onelye this worde of Jesu Christ, he is doubtles no faythfull stewarde, no syncere preacher, distributer and shewer of the secretes and misteries of God, but is an infidele, a fals hypocrite, and a deceyver, and an Antichriste. Wherfore gyve no credence unto hym : beleve hym not, truste not his sugred and paynted wordes.(C.i.verso)

From here the exposition moves on to the idea of resisting such false authority, along with Paul who "cared nothynge" for the accusations levelled at the true followers and preachers of the gospel. More surprising, following as it does a diatribe against the

Pope, is the recollection that Paul "doth forbyd us sore for to judge eyther of the justice or injustice of them that be lyvynge and of them also that be deade. For it is a thyng that belongeth not to us but only unto god" (C.ii.recto). The author can hardly make claims to having suspended judgement on his fellow men, but the final twenty lines continue in this more benevolent tone, exhorting the reader to love, trust and hope in God more than in his creatures. Within this one short *Epistle* there is an extraordinary dynamic, combining the aggressively anti-papal polemic of Bale with the conciliatory style of Coverdale or Cranmer, a simple elucidation of 1 Corinthians 4 seems all but tangential to the agenda here. The *Gospel* on the third Sunday in Advent that followed this *Epistle* was entirely different in approach and tone, offering a simple elucidation of Matthew.11.1-10.

The 'Epistle on Saynt Stevens daye' drew on Acts 6 and 7 and was introduced with an argument which read "How the Jewes stoned Saynt Steven unto death'. Steven was celebrated in the Church calendar as the first of Christ's martyrs. The aim of the

author of this *Epistle* was to make the distinction between honouring the holiness within a man and honouring the man. In the first few lines of the exposition he argued that "we honoure upon thys day our Lorde for the grace & strength that he gave on such a daye unto hym that representeth thys daye, I meane unto saynt Steven hys servaunt the fyrst martyr amonges hys knyghtes and martyrs." (E.iii.recto) Since the 10 Articles of 1536 the worshipping of Saints had been forbidden in the Churches on the grounds that God was the bestower of all and was, therefore, the only One to whom worship was due. This exposition fully endorsed that position. Having outlined the wonderful works of Steven, the terrible envy and persecution which these provoked and the remarkable forgiveness that Steven showed to his persecutors, the author pointed up the folly of Saint worship. "But as concernynge the honourynge of sayntes whome in dede ye rather dishonour than honoure: I knowe not how to preach unto you better wordes than the wordes of the auncient & holy doctour Jhon Chrysostome in a sermon whych he made unto the people in hys tyme agaynst theyr

supersticiouse honourynge of sayntes. Thus he speaketh. How shall ye escape the judgement of hell fyer? By buyldynge the sepulchres of sayntes, or rather by purgynge your hartes from malyce?" (E.iii.verso). Chrysostome's sermon continues for 32 lines that are then neatly summed up with an exhortation to "folowe the workes of sayntes" and especially on this day, those of Saint Steven, who worshipped only Christ. (E.iiii.verso).

On Easter day everyone was exhorted to receive the sacrament of the altar, so before the *Epistle* and *Gospel* on Easter day, Taverner included 'An exhortation before the communion or receyvyng of the sacrament of the altar.1.Cor.xi.' The exhortation began with a recitation of the last supper in 1.Corinthians 11.24-26. Although there was nothing new here in admonishing sinners and exhorting them to reform themselves before partaking of the sacrament, there was a shift of emphasis to faith and remembrance that was not in keeping with the Act of the Six Articles, which had decreed that after July 12 1539 anyone holding the opinion that there was no transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body

and blood of Christ during communion would automatically became a heretic. The language of this exhortation on the sacrament looks forward to the Edwardian Sacrament Act of 1547 in which the communion as a remembrance, rather than as a miraculous transubstantiation, is clarified. This exhortation is an ambiguous text in which Christ is described in terms of the form of bread and wine but within a context of signification and remembrance.

> In the forme of breade and wyne it pleased Christ to minister hys body and bloude, to signifie unto us that as oure bodyes be strengthed & made lyvely by material bread so is oure soule strengthed and nourished wyth hys precyous body, and lyke as the materiall wyne doth comforte our body, refresh it and make us cherefull, even so be we refreshed and our soules made glad & mery in thys holy sacrament, in remembraunce how hys body was delyvered and hys bloud shed for our synnes. (J.j.iii.recto)

Although the word 'altar' appears in the index to the volume, and whenever the author is citing biblical passages, it is interesting to note that when the author exhorts individuals to prepare themselves by clearing any quarrels they may have with each other he warns that it is damnable to "presume to come to Christes table" with an

ill will. This shift from altar to table, the uneasiness with which the actual communion is dealt with, and the fact that most of the exhortation is given over to the need for repentance speaks of its own time and of this difficult transitional stage of English Reformation.

I should now like to turn to one of the supplements in the 1545 volume (STC : 2967.7), 'A Sermon of the Resurrection of our saviour Jesu Christe.' The subject of Resurrection was quite literally one of the burning issues at various stages of Reformation throughout the sixteenth century, and as Taverner's sermon announced "the grounde and foundacion of our hole religion". A change which would seem of little significance to a twenty-first-century reader, from 'resurrection' to 'the next life' had become the subject of great consequence between Tyndale and Joye, two of England's most important biblical translators in the 1520's, and the argument expanded into a controversy from which no one was spared. It is important to discover what was special about Taverner's sermon on the Resurrection that it became the founding

text on the interpretation of this difficult issue in Elizabeth's reign, imported as it was, into the Book of Homilies to be read aloud in Churches throughout England.

The thema was given first in Latin and then in English as "Chryst was delyvered for our synnes, and rose agayne for the justifienge or ryghtuousmakynge of us. Roma.iiii." (Kk.i.verso). Following the thema was the exhortation, containing the main body of the sermon, which rather surprisingly began with the word 'YF'. The first seven lines of the sermon were of little substance and clearly intended to get the attention of the audience before anything important was said. Acts 1.3 introduced Christ as the teacher conveying the truth and foundation of his doctrine to his disciples over a period of 40 days. Having asserted the truth of the resurrection, the author then paraphrases 1.Corinthians 15.14-20. to describes the miserable consequences for mankind if the doctrine of the resurrection is not true, which he sums up with a demonstration of how the structure of the Church depends upon the foundation of resurrection. "Yea, if it were not true, that Chryste is rysen agayne:

then were it neyther true, that he is ascended, up to heaven, nor that he sente downe from heaven unto us the holye gooste, nor that he sytteth on the ryght hande of his heavenly father, havynge the rule of heaven and earthe, reygnynge as the prophete sayethe from see to see, nor that he shulde after this worlde be the judge aswell of the lyvynge as of the deade: to gyve rewarde to the good, and judgemente to the evell." (K.k.ii.verso). In the margin was the cross reference "Psa.lxxi.". Next came the proof from Scripture taken from Matthew xxviii, rather than the more negative accounts of Mark and Luke, the description of the angels at the tomb and Christ's subsequent appearance to the women. There is a surprising emphasis placed on the primacy of female witnesses in this sermon:

> Fyrste he sente hys angels to the sepulchre, whyche dyd shewe unto certayne women, that the stone of the grave was removed from the intraunce therof: and shewed them the emptye grave savynge that the buriall lynnen remayned therin, and by these sygnes were these women fully instructed, that he was rysen agayne, and so dyd they testifye it openlye. After thys Jesus hymselfe appeared to Mary Magdalene, and after that to other certayne women, and strayghte afterwarde he appeared to Peter, then to the two disciples whyche were goynge to Emaus.(K.k.iii.recto).

The appearance to Peter and the other disciples is rushed without any exposition. It is the women in this sermon account that are "fully instructed" and authorised to testify to the resurrection of Christ. The Sermon continues to list the citings of the risen Christ as they occur in Scripture. A further list of proofs is given, that of Christ's movements in his resurrected state, from allowing some to touch him so that they would not think him a ghost, to eating and speaking with his disciples about the Kingdom of heaven. "Thus at sondrye tymes shewed hymselfe after he was rysen agayne, to confyrme and stablysh thys article." The importance of this article of faith is demonstrated, the author argues, by the amount of "reasons & tokens by so longe tyme and space" that Christ gave to asserting it. The odd "Yf" with which the sermon had begun becomes a chief characteristic of this early section of the sermon. After each assertion of the truth of resurrection endorsed by a string of Scriptural citations, there is a series of "Yf" "then" clauses that demonstrate the truth of resurrection. At Kk.iii.verso, the author

suggests "Yf any man doubt of thys victorye: let Christes glorious resurrection declare hym that thing. Yf death could not kepe Christ under hys dominion & powre but that he arose again it is manifest that hys powre was overcome. Yf death be conquered, then must it folowe, that syn wherfore death was appoynted as the wages: muyst be also destroyed. Yf death and synne be vanyshed away then is the devels tyranny resysted which had the power of death and was the author and brewer of synne and the ruler of hell." The "Yf"s to which the author returns again and again only contribute to the monotonous and tedious nature of the sermon. However, in the final four pages this fifteen page sermon becomes rather more interesting. The theme of Ressurection is broadened to include matters not only pertaining to the next life, but to this life as well, for which purpose the word "resurrection" is abruptly substituted with "raysed", "ryse" and "rysen".

> And as Christ was raysed up from death by the glory of the father: so let us ryse to a newe lyfe and walke contynually therin, that we may lykewyse as natural chyldren lyve a conversacion to move men to glorifie our father whych is in

> heaven. Yf we then be rysen with Christe by oure faythe to the hope of everlastynge lyfe: lette us ryse also wyth Christe after hys exemple to a new lyfe, & leave our olde, We shal then be tryly rysen, yf we seke for thinges that be heavenly, if we have oure affection upon thinges that be above and not on thynges that be on earth. (Ll.iii.recto)

At Colossians 3.4.1-3 Paul had admonished his readers for having had their minds and spirits raised with Christ from the material things of this world, and yet continuing to pursue the things of this world. Paul does not confuse the idea of resurrection with that of being uplifted or raised by Christ's doctrine and example. It is very clear that the resurrection is a future promise for those who are truly raised by Christ. In this sermon, although the word "Resurrection" is specifically avoided, the author treads a fine line between orthodoxy and heresy in making the opening analogy with Christ's resurrection and the rising "to a newe lyfe" that is the subject of the exhortation This amounts to the author's appropriation of "resurrection" to promote "reformation" in a rather unethical way. In the closing lines of the whole sermon, "ryse" becomes the word for the promised resurrection, "Thus shal we declare that chrystes

giftes and graces have theyr effect in us, and that we have the ryght beleve and knowledge of his holy resurrection: where truly yf we applye oure fayth to the vertue therof, and in our lyfe conforme us to the exemple and signification ment therby, we shalbe sure to ryse herafter to ever lastynge glorye by the goodnes and mercye of our Lorde Jesu Christ." (Ll.iiii.verso-Mm.i.recto). This licence with highly sensitive language is strange enough in a resurrection sermon, but perhaps just strange is the author's citing of Jewish traditions as reasons for maintaining Christian ones. "As the Jues dyd eate theyr Easter lambe and kept theyr fest in remembrance of theyr deliveraunce out of egypt even so let us kepe our Easter feast in the thankfull remembraunce of chrystes benefites whiche he hath so plentyfully wrought for us by his resurrection and passynge to his father, wherby we be delivered from the captivitye and thraldome of oure enemyes." (Ll.iiii.verso). Though the language of Reformation text is saturated with Old Testament typologies, the usual antitype of the escape of the Jews from Egypt was given as the severing of the true Church from the captivity of the Church of

Rome; but in making the antitype Christ's resurrection, the author of this sermon catapults the typological signification into a new semantic orbit. Erasmus Sarcerius's *Commonplaces of Scripture* that Taverner had already translated in 1536 rejected precisely this kind of interpretation as Thomist and heretical.[17] The allusion to the Jewish passover as a means of introducing the idea of Christ "passynge" to his father is crude enough, but this is soon followed up with an even more alarming pun on passover, as he exhorts his readers "Let us in lyke maner passe over the affections of oure old conversacion, that we may be delyvered from the bondage therof and ryse with chryst." (Ll.iiii.verso). Just as the Jews abstained from levened bread for seven days, he continues, "Let us chrysten folke kepe oure holy daye in spirituall maner, that is, in absteynynge not from materiall levened breade/ but from the olde leven of syn; the leven of malyciousnes, and wyckednesse", which statement assumes a Christan monopoly on spiritual signification. All in all this sermon is a tedious and gauche late inclusion in

[17] See *The Commonplaces of Scripture* 1536 (Sv.verso). See chapter 3.4 of this book.

Taverner's *Epistles and Gospels* that hardly inspires excitement at the greatest event in the Christian calendar. It is out of keeping with the shorter, more compact and much more effective items in the volume. Nevertheless, it was absorbed into the second *Book of Homilies* issued during Elizabeth's reign and as such it formed an important part of Elizabeth's armoury. As Kinney has argued, "Along with proclamations, homiles were a fundamental method for promoting state propaganda; and the Elizabethan churchgoer was constantly enjoined to civil obedience with no thought that his parish priest's message was unusual or inappropriate." (Kinney 45). It seems that far from resenting such sermons, the Elizabethans actually enjoyed them. As Alan Fager Herr has pointed out, the rather steep increase in printed Sermons from 9 volumes between 1560 and 1570 to 140 between 1590 and 1600 suggests that the Elizabethan's had a real appetite for them, an appetite that had been nurtured in the State authorised collections of printed Epistles and

Gospels by men such as Richard Taverner in the 1540s.[18]

[18] Alan Fager Herr, *The Elizabethan Sermon.* See also Susan Wabuda. 'Bishops and the Provision of Homilies, 1520 to 1547', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 25.3 (1994):551-566.

5. MINOR WORKS

The popularity of Psalm translations in the sixteenth century can hardly be overestimated. They were translated and revised for English Bible volumes, they were sold in more pocketable volumes in complete or edited versions sometimes appearing with prayers, they were set to music, versified, paraphrased and epitomized. English poets, beginning with Surrey and Wyatt found them to be useful vehicles for their own political, ideological and emotional agendas, and even showpieces for their own learning, and created a model for poets that has continued to the present day.

Throughout the sixteenth century there was a huge appetite for metrical Psalms, as versified versions were called. The transposition of the Psalms into English verse popularised them as reading material that was not only profitable for the soul, containing

as it did the treasure of the whole Bible, but also pleasurable. In 1539 Richard Taverner translated a volume by Wolfgang Capito called the *Epitome of the Psalms*. Paraphrases of Psalms can extend far beyond the word count of the actual Psalms, but the objective of an epitome is to cut the length and to represent in miniature the essence of a thing, or, as Taverner's edition explained, "an abbrigement or brief meditacion." The Psalms are already very compact and complex, so it is something of a task to make them shorter. From a glance at Taverner's *Epitome* it is clear that this volume has generically more in common with paraphrases than epitomes of Psalms. One can quite understand why writers should wish to turn some of the more prosaic biblical psalters into verse, but less easy to understand is why writers should wish to extend the psalms, already rendered prosaic in English language Bibles, into further masses of indigestible prose. Certainly prose was much more flexible than poetry, with which Protestants had a complex relationship, and as a medium for conveying Protestant propaganda and was probably deemed more accessible, though at the cost of

memorable, to a common reader. Speaking of the Paraphrases of Erasmus that were issued from the presses during Edward VI's reign, Ian Green suggests

> Genuine scholars would have had no need of a paraphrase for their own studies, but a version of the scripture which made the meaning clearer by rephrasing the whole or part of the text in question was accepted as an acceptable tool for non-specialists to use: hence the insistence of the early reformers that an English translation of Erasmus's paraphrase of the New Testament be placed in every Parish church.[1]

Butterworth notes that there had been an earlier version of the *Epitome* printed without the prayers, called the *Summe or pith,* now lodged with Lambeth palace library, and to this work Taverner included this prologue:

> This very fruitefull boke of prayers, lately set forth by the right excellent clerke Capito, a boke doubtles never to be layde out of your handes, but contynually to be redde, revolved, and devoured gredily every daye, yea, every houre, as well in chambers and closettes privilye, as in churches and assemblyes openly, and not onelye to be

[1] Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 122.

> devoured outwardly with the lyppes, but inwardly to be chawed, eaten downe and digested in the harte...(fol.a.2).

The British Library edition of Taverner's *Epitome* exists in a little red-leather binding incorporating 150 Psalms and 10 prayers, including one by Erasmus.[2] The Psalms were represented as prayers for a variety of occasions. For instance, Psalm 6 was introduced as a prayer "In adversitie for the comforte of the holy ghoste. *Psalm.6.*" Whilst some of the Psalms were lengthy expositions, others were merely prosaic versions that were hardly longer or more elucidatory than the psalms themselves.

The prayers were taken from the Scriptures in the version revised by John Rogers, rather than from Taverner's own Bible. (Butterworth 197). The title page announced "An Epitome of the Psalmes or briefe meditacions upon the same with diverse other moste christian prayers, translated by Richard Taverner." Beneath cum priv ad imp solum, someone had added "Author Wolfgang Capito", after which was printed "1539".

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[2] BL:C.58.i.25.

The work began with "a generall confession of synnes unto God dayly to be sayd of every christian person." This was followed by the the Epitomes, "Lordes prayer called the Pater noster" then the "Ave Maria", the latter prayer having been blacked out both on the page and in the index of this edition.[3] The "Crede", and the "tenne commauu[n]dements" followed. "The principall prayers" formed a substantial part of the edition and ran from A.i.recto to E.iiii.verso, suggesting that this section could have been printed to supplement a variety of other pocketable works. It included thirteen prayers offered for the sins of the people, followed by thirteen prayers to be said in time of adversity, which Cromwell little knew were for him, then thirteen prayers of thanksgiving. Six prayers for succour,

[3] Rice and Grafton have made the interesting point that in the midst of, and perhaps because of, Protestant marginalisation of the Virgin Mary, she increased in value to Roman Catholic worship. "Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the new Catholic piety was its stress on just those elements in the traditional inheritance of Christian devotion which were rejected or minimized by Protestants. Protestants minimized the religious significance of the Virgin Mary and the saints. In late sixteenth-century Catholicism, on the other hand, devotion to the Virgin gained a popularity it had enjoyed at no time since the thirteenth century. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, vigorously attacked by late medieval and Renaissance Dominican theologians as a popular superstition, was now officially defended in Rome." Eugine Rice and Anthony Grafton, *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460-1559.* (New York: WW Norton, 1994) 176.

wisdom and natural gifts ended this section, and the prayer for the church by Erasmus followed. Four short prayers, one before and one after meals, one "for spiritual joye" and a final one "A prayer for the kepynge and defence of a good name and fame" completed the edition. Of "The principall prayers", Butterworth has noted that, "The selections themselves recall Redman's *Prayers of the Byble,* often comprising the same excerpts and occurring in the same sequence. The prayers are divided into four groups which correspond to the first four of Redman's headings." (Butterworth 96). To this edition of the *Epitome of the Psalms* Taverner had included a lengthy preface to Henry VIII. Butterworth makes extraordinaty claims for Taverner's writing style based on his analysis of this preface alone:

> Taverner could adopt one tone of speech toward his "Christen readers" and another more learned style toward his sovereign King. For in the *Epitome* his preface addressed to the King is full of lavish compliment and written in his best latinical manner, sometimes skillful enough in its command of rolling English rythms to resemble the later achievements of Milton and Sir Thomas Browne.[4]

[4] Charles C. Butterworth, *The English Primers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953) 96.

To claim Taverner as a precursor to, or influence on, Milton may be going too far, it is certainly the grandest claim for Taverner to have been made by any of his advocates of influence for establishing his importance; but it is a sobering thought that Taverner, and men like him, who were employed by Cromwell spent almost all of their talent on translations, instead of generating original work for which they would have won fame.

In the preface to the work Taverner reveals that in 1536 he was recommended to Henry VIII by Thomas Cromwell "more then thre yeares passed, my verye good lorde and olde mayster my lord Privie seale for such qualities as he thought to have espyed in me (which I my selfe nevertheles acknowledge not) preferred and delyverered me up unto your graces service." Since that time he has, he says, been working on translations for the realm, of which this is one work. In apologising for the crudity of his translation he employs the proverb "pro aureis ferea" and begs forgiveness "lest of good latine I have made evil English, lest I have turned wyne

into water." This was a proverb that he may have been looking at in Erasmus's editions, but he rejected it when he was compiling his own gardens of wisdom. Taverner then suggested that however miserable the offered work may be, that Henry would receive it gratefully:

> If Hethen kinges have have very thankfully receyved of thier subiectes handes, Pomegranates, hand fuls of water, and such other tryflyng thynges, estemyng rather the prompt and ready wyl of the gyvers, than the pryce of the thynges gyven, yf also Christ hymselfe our myghty sheperde (whose vicare for the church and realme of Englande youre maiestie is recognised) not onely accepted but also preferred the two mites of the poore wydowe afore the precious oblacions of the rych personages, I doubt not, but your maiestie beyng a christian kynge and such a kynge, woll not ingratelye receyve at youre humble servauntes hande, these hys symple lucubracions whych tende to the hygh benefyte, edificacion, and comoditie of youre graces people.

The analogy of his work with Pomegranates and hand fulls of water was an indirect reference to his *Garden of Wisedome*, where "Artoxerxes kynge of Persia surnamed the mindful" had been overjoyed with these small gifts on account of the cheerfullness of the giver and the timeliness of the gift. In the story of Artoxerxes,

the widow's mite narrative taken from Luke 21.1-5 was employed as an unreferenced subtext for the whole discussion of gift-giving in the Church and State, but here in his preface to the *Epitome of the Psalms* Taverner made the connection explicit, appropriately foregrounding the biblical narrative and leaving the pagan reference oblique. Though both works were published in 1539, there is no doubt that Taverner was working on *The Garden of Wisdome* prior to this edition of the *Epitome.* Following this initial deference to Henry VIII Taverner seamlessly attaches his own prayer to the preface, in which he makes what was to become a stock typological/antitypological reference to the biblical Reformation king, Hezekiah, as a testament to, and an encouragement of, religious iconoclasm "The God of peace and of consolacion graunte, that lyke as your hyghnes most lyke unto the godlye kynge Ezechias ernestly go about the perfecte instauracion of the true religion and thavauncement of gods glorie, all false religion destroyed." God's gift to Henry VIII for a successful reformation

was again couched in a proverb, but this time it was in the proverbial language of Solomon, Israel's wisest king[5]:

> so he woll vouchsave, to sende you the thynge that the most wyse kynge Salomon estemed for the swetest and beste porcion of mans lyfe, and for a trasure inestimable, that is to wyte, a prudent and wyse lady to your maiesties wyfe and to our youre moost addicte subiectes Queene, whyche accordynge to the voyce of the prophete, maye be as a frutfull vyne in your maiesties house, furnyshed wyth chyldren lyke olyve braunches rounde abolut your graces table. For lo thus shall the man be blessed (sayeth he) whyche feareth the Lorde.[6]

This preface offers a window of hope to Henry following the death of Jane Seymour. Henry had already endured the three marriages from which he was to have children. Taverner wrote this preface unaware that his circumstances were about to undergo some drastic alteration. He wrote as the ill-fated match with Anne of Cleves was being finalised by Thomas Cromwell, a match that played no small role in Cromwell's own Fall and caused concomitant damage to his

[5] Proverbs 31.10. Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies.
[6] The reference to fruitfulness is taken from Psalm 128.3. "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table."

circle of State writers. It is chilling to read Taverner's optimistic preface with the hindsight of history:

> What shall we saye? God hath alredy herde our moost ardent vowes and peticions. Thys lady moost excellent lente is prepared of thalmyghtye for your maiestye, she is in iorney readye to be transported into your graces realme. The God of spirites mought so tempre and breath the weather and so graciously conducte her in her iorney, as she maye moost happely arrive at the tyme desyred into your graces presens, to the full contentacion of your hartes desyre, to the plausible expectacion of your graces subiectes, and fynally to the true honoure and glorie of almyghty God. For the accomplishmente wherof, we all wyth one accorde mought poure out these prayres folowing and semblable to the Lorde of all. Amen. Domine saluum fac Regem.

Yes, indeed, this volume of prayers and Psalms had been commisssioned by Cromwell as a thanksgiving to God for the new Queen, and printed in time for the arrival of Anne of Cleves. Erasmus's own *Institution of Marriage* had been dedicated to Catherine of Aragon, shortly before Henry VIII divorced her. But for the happy fact that prefaces can always be replaced, such volumes would have enjoyed a very short window of opportunity on the book market. At about the same time Taverner produced

his *Catechisme or institution of the Christen Religion* (1539), the *Catonis Disticha Moralia* (1540) and *The Principal lawes customes and estatues of England* (1540). Although D.B. Knox has argued that this work was based on Calvin's *An Instruction in Faith* (1537), Yost has argued that although Taverner acceeded that the work was based on that of European scholars there is no reason for linking Taverner's edition with Calvin's, especially since, as even Knox concedes, the theology which emerges from it is not Calvinistic.[7] His *Catechisme* was composed of a set of short chapters on the ten commandments and on points of faith. To this work Taverner added a preface "to the Christen Readers". He argued that although children had two natural parents and two godparents, it was apparent that neither set knew how to catechise their children, hence the need for such a reference book as this. He insisted that such a Catechism ought to be set up in Churches where it could be consulted by both children and adults alike. In his most emphatic endorsement of Henry VIII and uncharacteristically vitriolic attack

[7] For an interesting discussion of this point see J.K. Yost, 'German Protestant Humanism and the Early English Reformation: Richard Taverner and Official Translation'. *Bibliotheque d'humanisme et renaissance* 32 (1970): 614-625.

on the Roman Church, Taverner once more established Henry VIII as the antitype of Hezekiah for the chosen English nation and exhorted his readers to turn away from the blind traditions of the arch-enemy.

> Nowe therfore, lyke as the kynges most excellent maiesty moste worthy to be compared unto the godly kynge Ezechias, whiche destroyed the moste detestable ydolatrie of the brasen serpent, by the hygh providence of God traveileth dayly of a wonderfull zeale he beareth to the avaucement of godes true religion, to banysh all poprie and Romyshe marchaundyse within this his graces realme, to the unspeakable healthe of his people the church of Englande, to the supremacie wherof he is by the said providence of god nowe at last in spyte of all his enemies restored.(Aiiii.recto)

This preface turned the catechism into a work of State propaganda. Before the reader reached the first pages they were exhorted to first erase the memory of the old faith, not only as good Christians, but as true subjects to God's chosen instrument for suppressing it, Henry VIII. Taverner continued:

> So semblably it shalbe your parte to embrace suche pure, true and sincere doctrine of Christe as setteth forth the same,

> and so utterly to renounce nat only the Romisshe byshop our archenemie and the most pestilent overthrower of al godlynes, but also his develyshe lawes, constitutions and supersticious thynges whiche have hertofore intangled our consciences contrary to the Evangelicall libertie and trouthe of gods worde. (A.iiii.recto-verso).

If this was Taverner's idea of a work for children and their parents, then when he came to produce his work intended solely for children, he adopted a much more moderate tone. To his "Catonis Disticha Moralia" Taverner addressed his preface to "the tendre youth of Englande". This was an edition of Cato's precepts which Taverner deemed to be efficacious to the education of young children. Having perceived that Cato was borne by most children more in the hand than in the mind, he supposed the reason to be that metre was too difficult for young minds. In this translation he determined to render Cato in prose paraphrases that enabled him to comment and elaborate on difficult passages as he translated them. He was in this, he said, following Erasmus who had done a similar thing in Latin. Adapting his wits to such an endeavour he termed playing "as it were the chylde agayne" (a.i.verso). He advised his

"gentle chyldren" that they should not use his work as a crib for translating Cato themselves at school, since he had not translated word-for-word, "for than I shulde take away the office of your schole maister and also occasion you to be the more negligent and slacke in your study upon trust of the translation therof." (a.i.verso). Clearly Taverner's aim was to help his young readers to enjoy something that he valued which they did not appear to, and that they should henceforth bear in mind what hitherto they had borne only in their little hands. This short work was frequently published with other short works taken from the larger garden of Erasmus, such as the "Aliquot Sententiarum" and "Mimi Publiani".

In the midst of these endeavours, Taverner produced an edition of the laws affecting common people. He began his work with a prologue in which he quoted the "auntike sayenges of wise men", Demosthenes and Chrysippus, on the function of the law. Let it not be said of English men what was once said of Athenians, he argued "that we make very goodly and profytable lawes, but we use them not." (Aii recto). The laws that Taverner included were mostly

concerned with land inheritance and tennency, with service and with will-making and were clearly meant to be a ready guide for the common man. Taverner exhorted the reader to read the law and fulfill it, ending "Thus doing, we shal please god, we shal be obedient subjectes to oure prince, and finally we shall seke our own weale and savetye." (A.ii.verso). Even in his rendering of the laws, however, Taverner stayed close to the sources he knew best, those that he had come to know so well through his translations of Erasmus.

6. CONCLUSION

> *"There is , therefore, a profound sense in which the English Reformation was a revolution of the book, a replacement of books in Latin by books in the vernacular. For the Vulgate, the reformers substituted the Great Bible. For medieval preaching guides, they supplied the official Book of Homilies. For guides to interpretation, they substituted Erasmus' Paraphrases of the Gospels and Acts. In place of books of private devotion, they supplied the official Primers."*[1]

A good deal of this study has dealt with Taverner's use of Erasmus for the Reformation cause in England. There is no evidence to suggest that Erasmus and Taverner ever met, or that Erasmus approved of Taverner's appropriations of his work for Reformation. During his stay in England in 1499, Erasmus had taken the

[1] John Wall Jr. 'The Reformation in England and the Typographical Revolution: "By this printing...the doctrine of the Gospel soundeth to all nations"', in Gerald P. Tyson and Sylvia S. Wagonheim, *Print and Culture in the Renaissance: Essays on the Advent of Printing in Europe* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986): 208-221. 211.

opportunity of learning Greek so that he could read the Greek Fathers.[2] Although a clear aim of Erasmus's *Adagia* was to bring Classical wisdom and Christianity together to create a Christian humanism, Erasmus, on more than one occasion, made it clear that he did not have the stomach for martyrdom, and did not wish to get involved with the politics of European Reformation.[3] As Lisa Jardine has pointed out, "Notoriously, Erasmus was a life-long pacifist, with a deep personal aversion to the kinds of alarming local partisan conflicts in which he found himself repeatedly on the verge of being caught up, as he criss-crossed Europe as a peripatetic author in search of a stable base from which to conduct and disseminate his scholarship."[4] As such he might seem to be an odd choice for Cromwell, but it was precisely Erasmus's humanism that provided a much needed counter-weight to the offensive anti-papal attacks that were coming from outside of Cromwell's circle. As

[2] See R.J. Schoeck, *Erasmus of Europe: The Making of a Humanist.* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990).
[3] See Margaret Mann Phillips, *Erasmus on his Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).
[4] See Lisa Jardine, Ed., *Erasmus: Education of a Christian Prince.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Viii.

Yost has successfully argued, "under Cromwell's supervision from 1532 to 1540, Taverner stressed the importance of moderation and worked for the establishment of the middle way."[5] (Yost 191).

As far as Taverner's Bible is concerned, his Old Testament revision demonstrated an energetic, dramatic narrative style in which Characters and events were brought to life in the earthy language of the sixteenth-century reader. He may have had little Hebrew, but he had more Greek. His New Testament, to which he was able to contribute his own Greek expertise, sharpened Tyndale's translation and, if we cannot say that he directly influenced the King James revisers, then he certainly shared some revision choices with them. Ian Green has recently taken issue with Christopher Hill's presentation of the role of the Bible in late Renaissance England, by arguing that he places too much emphasis on the Old Testament and virtually ignores the role of the New Testament. (Green, 163). Green argues that the New Testament was the real source of wisdom about salvation through Christ and would

[5] J.K. Yost, 'Protestant reformers and the humanist via media in the early English Reformation' Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies (1975) 5:187-202; 191.

therefore have been the section of the Bible to which most readers would have turned. Whilst this is not an easy matter to prove, one can certainly say that at the moment that England was forging its identity, in the words of John Bale, as "God's chosen English Israelites" (Bale *De Vera Obedientia* 1553), Erasmus's *Paraphrases on the New Testament* were occupying a shared space with the Bible in every Church in England. Not until the Geneva 1560 Bibles began to be produced in carryable sizes was it even possible to buy a pocketable edition. Editions of the Psalms taken from Scripture, which were available in print from 1530, would have been the pocketable microcosm of the contents of the Scriptures. Taverner's *Epitome of the Psalmes* was a contribution, and a testament, to this popular reading habit. John Daye, of course, had produced Taverner's Bible in sections between 1549 and 1551, which would have made his the most accessible and transportable Scriptural read of its day. Editions of Tyndale's New Testament and its subsequent revisions had, however, been on sale in England since 1526, and John Foxe carves out a special place in English

Bible reading culture for this little book in his popular 1563 English version of his *Acts and Monuments.* In fact, Green picks a fight with Hill that he can not win. The English Bible cross-reference annotations that lined the margins of every English Bible, even those that were denied other forms of annotation, demonstrate an integrated approach to the reading of the Old and New Testaments. Although, as Lawrence Stone argues, the unity of Christendom was irreparably shattered by the Reformation, in England there was an attempt to rebuild unity through the engendering of a national identity that was anti-typologically configured as Chosen from among the nations, an identity that was powerfully endorsed by the Tudor propaganda machinery. (Stone 216)[6]

Whether scholars look to the humanistic paraphrasing, epitomising and commonplacing of Classical wisdom, which Mary Lechner has suggested "became so integral a part of sixteenth and seventeenth-century thinking that knowledge itself came to be conceived of more and more in terms of areas or containers with

[6] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England: 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977).

objects which somehow could be located in space and moved about from one "locality" to another." (Lechner, 153), or editions, or parts, of the Bible or sermons as the defining texts of English reformation propaganda and the instruments of social change, there was one man who could wield all of those powerful instruments, and that man was Richard Taverner.

INDEX OF TAVERNER'S WORKS

1. *A ryght frutefull epystle, deuysed by the moste excellent clerke Erasmns [sic], in laude and prayse of matrymony, translated in to Englyshe, by Rychard Tauernour, which translation he hathe dedicate to the ryght honorable Mayster Thomas Cromwel most worthy counseloure to our soueravne lorde kyng Henry the eyght. Cum priuilegio regali* by Erasmus, Desiderius, d. 1536. [Imprynted at London : In Flestrete [sic] at the sygne of the George by me Robert Redman, 1536 STC: 10492

2. *The confessyon of the fayth of the Germaynes* by Melanchthon, Philipp, 1497-1560. [Imprynted at London : In fletestrete, by me Robert Redman, dwellynge at the sygne of the George nexte to saynt Dunstones Churche, 1536. STC : 908

3. *Com[m]on places of scripture* by Sarcerius, Erasmus, 1501-1559. [London] : John Bydell, 1538
STC : 21753

4. *The most sacred Bible;* by Taverner, Richard, 1505?-1575. Prynted at London : In Fletestrete at the sygne of the sonne by Iohn Byddell, for Thomas Barthlet. Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum, 1539. STC : 2067

5. *Prouerbes or adagies* by Erasmus, Desiderius, d. 1536. Imprinted at Lo[n]don : In Fletstrete at the sygne of the whyte Harte [by Richard Bankes] Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum, 1539. STC: 10437

6. *The garden of wysdom* by Taverner, Richard, 1505?-1575. [London] : 1539 [[Printed by Richard Bankes] in aedibus Richardi Tauerneri,] solde in Lomberdstrete at the signe of the Lamb by Iohn Haruye, 1539. STC : 23711a

7. *The second booke of the Garden of wysedome* by Taverner, Richard, 1505?-1575. [Prynted at London : By [E. Whitchurch for] Richard Bankes, 1539. STC : 23713.

8. *An epitome of the Psalmes, or briefe meditacions vpon the same, with diuerse other moste christian prayers, translated by Richard Tauerner* by Capito, Wolfgang, 1478-1541. [Imprinted at London : [By R. Bankes? for A. Clerke?] in Fletestrete at the signe of the whyte hart, 1539. STC: 2748

9. *A catechisme or institution of the christen religion. Newely set forthe by Richard Tauerner* by Taverner, Richard, 1505?-1575. [London : R. Bankes], 1539. STC : 23709

10. *The principal lawes customes and estatutes of England which be at this present day in vre [sic]* by Taverner, Richard, 1505?-1575. Londini, 1540. STC: 9290.5

11. *Flores aliquot sententiarum ex variis collecti scriptoribus. = The flovvers of sencies gathered out of sundry wryters by Erasmus in Latine, and Englished by Richard Tauerner. Huic libello non male co[n]nuenient mimi illi publiani nuper ab eodem Richardi uersi* by Erasmus, Desiderius, d. 1536. Londini : Ex aedibus Richardi Tauerner [by Richard Bankes], 1540. STC : 10445

12. *The Epistles and Gospelles with a brief postyll vpon the same from Trinitie Sonday tyll Aduent... the Somer parte* by Taverner, Richard, 1505?-1575. [Imprinted at London : By Richarde Bankes, and solde in Fletestrete at the sygne of the Whyte Harte by Anthony Clerke], 1540. STC : 2969

13. *The Epistles and Gospelles... the Wynter parte* by Taverner, Richard, 1505?-1575. [Imprinted at London : By Rycharde Bankes, and are to be solde in Fletestrete at the sygne of the whyte Harte], 1540. STC: 2967.3

14. *Catonis disticha moralia ex castigatione D. Erasmi Roterdami una cum annotationib[us] & scholijs Richardi Tauerneri anglico idiomate conscriptis in usum Anglicae iuuentutis.* by Erasmus, Desiderius, d. 1536. Londini : Ex aedibus Richardi Tauerner, 1540. STC : 4843

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