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Mirroring the "Long Reformation": Translating Erasmus' colloquies in early modern England

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Abstract

This article examines how printed English translations of Erasmus' colloquies reflect the difference phases of the "Long Reformation" and the changing status and reputation of Erasmus within that as he shifts from being presented as proto-Reformer, to problematically orthodox, to irenic martyr. It traces how in the 1530s and 1540s, in the immediate aftermath of Henry VIII's break from the Church of Rome, networks of evangelical translators, printers, and publishers used translations of Erasmus' colloquies to advance their religious agenda, albeit – in those uncertain times – often hedging their confessionalism with anonymity or overt support for royal policy. These translations, accentuating the anti-clericalism of the Latin originals, set the tone for the Edwardian, Elizabethan, and Jacobean translations that followed. However, where Tudor translations habitually rely on paratext to shape readers' response, those in the early Stuart period adapt the Erasmian text more freely, rewriting his orthodox soteriology along Calvinist lines, and – at the same time – reflecting fissures within the English Church: the opponents in the Jacobean versions are no longer simply "papists," but also other, less-observant Protestants. After an apparent hiatus in English translations of Erasmus' colloquies during the Civil War and interregnum, the Restoration and later seventeenth century saw a renewed boom. This final phase marks a retreat from harnessing Erasmus' colloquies for sectarian purposes, as their translators variously promote Erasmus' irenicism, or emphasise the literariness and literary antecedents of his colloquies. The article further explores a recurrent focus on reforming female behaviour as a necessary step towards achieving a godly commonweal.

Keywords:

Desiderius Erasmus; colloquies; dialogue; Henrician Reformation; Puritanism; Restoration; gender; translation; adaptation; language learning; Latin; godly commonweal; England; paratext

This article uses English printed translations of the colloquies of Desiderius Erasmus (c. 1466-1536) as a lens through which to view the shifting phases of England's "Long Reformation," from the Henrician period, when a nexus of evangelically-minded authors, printers, and publishers worked to co-opt Erasmus as a Reformer; through the early Stuart period, when Erasmus' colloquies were adapted by Puritan writers, often portraying the "righteous" being derided by the ignorant and ill-informed; to a post-Restoration phase, which commemorated Erasmus as an orthodox figure and proponent of the *via media*, critiquing the Church from within. In doing so, the article moves beyond studying the English Reformation as a "succession of legislative enactments" passed between the opening of the "Reformation Parliament" (1529-1536) and the 1559 Elizabeth Settlement to consider the longer cultural ramifications of this process, not least

of which are divisions amongst English Protestants, up to and beyond the 1689 Toleration Act.[1] The article also examines the recurrent focus on reforming women's behaviour as a necessary step for achieving the "godly" commonweal: a spiritualization of the household that, whilst it came to be strongly associated with Puritanism, had its roots in Christian humanism.[2]

Erasmus is a particularly useful figure through which to track religious attitudes over this *longue durée*. As a prolific author, many of whose works were staple to school curricula across Europe, he was widely read (or at least notorious);[3] as a critic of the Church of Rome who ultimately remained loyal to it, he was intensely ambivalent, provoking mixed responses on either side of the confessional divide. Erasmus promoted a form of Christianity that emphasised individually-felt faith over ceremony and was a vocal critic of ecclesiastical abuses, but he sought reform from within, not schism. Nonetheless, his recurrent critique of ritualistic practices such as pilgrimages and fasting, and his depiction of religious orders as hotbeds of greed, hypocrisy, and lechery, made him suspect to many within the Church of Rome, as did the fact that – in breach of canon law – he had abandoned the Augustinian priory at Steyn, where he had taken religious vows in 1488, and from which he was only released by papal dispensation in 1517. Erasmus jokingly refers to his questionable reputation in the colloquy "Adolescentis and scorti" ("The young man and the harlot"): "Erasmus? he's half a heretic, they say," the prostitute Lucretia exclaims, when she hears that her client, Sophronius ("the wildest playboy of them all"), has been dissuaded from his former lifestyle by reading Erasmus' translation of the New Testament.[4]

Erasmus' colloquies were printed in Latin in expanding editions from 1518-1533, and – like those by Petrus Mosellanus (1493-1524), Marthurin Cordier (c. 1479-1564), and Evaldus Gallus (fl. 1565) – they were ostensibly written to teach schoolboys conversational Latin: to "mak[e] better Latinists and better characters," Erasmus claims in the August 1524 dedication.[5] Nonetheless, after the publication of the 1522 edition (enlarged by colloquies lambasting

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Original spelling and punctuation have been retained in titles and quotations, although i/j and u/v have been regularised and brevigraphs (e.g. y-thorn, tilde) have been silently expanded. Texts pre-1750 are printed in London unless otherwise stated. Web resources were last accessed on 18.11.2018. Research for this article was conducted during a Major Research Fellowship, funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

[1] Nicholas Tyacke, "Introduction: Re-thinking the 'English Reformation,'" in *England's Long Reformation*, ed. Tyacke (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 1-32 (1).

[2] Margo Todd, "Humanists, Puritans and the Spiritualized Household," *Church History* 49 (1980), 18-34.

[3] Mark Rankin ("Tyndale, Erasmus, and the Early English Reformation," *Erasmus Studies* 38 (2018), 135-70) highlights Erasmus' prominence in early modern England: "A search for Erasmus at the Folger Library's online catalogue of Private Libraries in Renaissance England [https://plre.folger.edu/books.php] turns up 443 hits, next to some 51 hits for Luther [...] and a mere 8 for Shakespeare – indeed, one is hard-pressed to find an author more represented" (137); Rankin's search was conducted 14.5.2018.

[4] Desiderius Erasmus, *The Colloquies*, trans. Craig R. Thompson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 156. "Ab Erasmo? Aiunt illum esse sesquihaereticum;" "nugator omnium nugacissimus," Erasmus, *Colloquia*, ed. L-E. Halkin, F. Bierlaire, R. Hoven, *Opera Omnia* 1.3 (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1972), 341.

[5] Petrus Mosellanus, *Paedologia* (Antwerp, 1518); Marthurin Cordier, *Colloquiorum scholasticorum libri quatuor* (Geneva, 1564); Evaldus Gallus, *Pueriles confabulatiunculae* (Köln, 1565); Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 3.

indulgences, papal bulls, clerical corruption, and the Church's role in supporting, rather than condemning, war), the satirical targets of many of these short dialogues made them subject to repeated attacks, including the censures of the Carmelite friar Nicholaas Baechem (1522) and academics at the Sorbonne (1526, 1528).[6] Erasmus consequently added an essay – "De utilitate colloquiorum" ("On the usefulness of the colloquies") – to the June 1526 edition, which he revised and expanded in 1529.[7] Erasmus' attempt to vindicate his colloquies did not silence his critics. From the 1550s, a distinct turning away from Erasmian and Lucianic models (to which Erasmus was indebted) is evident in Catholic Europe, in contrast to their sustained popularity in Protestant regions.[8] In 1558, twenty-two years after Erasmus' death, the *Consilium [...] de emendanda ecclesia* recommended that the colloquies be prohibited, and in 1559 they were included on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, an event recorded prominently in the argument to Book Twelve of Johannes Sleidanus' *Commentaries*: "Pope Paule by his deputes ordeyned a reformation, touching the abuses of the Churche, [...] and the Colloquies of Erasmus prohibited," the heading reads.[9] The colloquies were similarly censured in the 1564 *Index*, revised in accordance with rules developed at the Council of Trent (1545-1563), where they were the first in a long list of Erasmus' works.[10]

Reforming Erasmus' colloquies in sixteenth-century England

In England, Erasmus' colloquies were a staple grammar-school text, a position that – after the split with Rome in the 1530s – can only have been enhanced by their persistent anti-clerical strain.[11] That satirical element is certainly evident in the printed English colloquies.[12] It is colloquies containing obvious critiques of the rituals and corruption of the Church of Rome that not only predominate, but which are also translated more than once: "Funus" ("The funeral"), which relates how different monastic orders – greedy for bequests – vie with one another over a rich man's death-bed; "Peregrinatio religionis ergo" ("A pilgrimage for religion's sake"), which derides the money lavished on shrines while "our brothers and sisters, Christ's living temples, waste away from hunger and thirst;" "Adolescentis et scorti," with its depiction of mendicants as

[6] See "De votis temere susceptis" ("Rash vows"), "De captandis sacerdotis" ("In pursuit of benefices"), "Militaria" ("Military affairs"), Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 4-7, 8-11, 12-15.
[7] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 624; "Latiniores reddiderit et meliores," *Colloquia*, 124.
[8] David Marsh, "Dialogue and discussion in the Renaissance," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, vol. 3: The Renaissance, ed. Glyn Norton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 265-70 (267); Antoinina Bevan Zlatar, *Reformation Fictions: Polemical Dialogues in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 22-3.
[9] John Dawes (trans.), *Sleidanes Commentaries* (1560; STC^2 19848a), 2E4v.
[10] *Index librorum prohibitorum, cum regulis confectis per patres à Tridentina Synodo delectos* (Cologne, 1564), n.p.
[11] T.W. Baldwin, *William Shakspere's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1944), 2 vols, passim.
[12] See Table 1.

Lucretia's best clients; and "Naufragium" ("The shipwreck"), which mocks "absurd superstition."[13] "Proci et puellae" – another colloquy translated numerous times – can also be read through an anti-clerical lens, since its arguments favouring marriage were seen by some of Erasmus' critics as rejecting orthodox teaching, which promoted celibacy as the ideal state.[14]

Erasmus' "Funus" – which George Whetstone (1550-1587) later categorised as a dialogue exposing "the knaveries of [...] friers" – was the first colloquy printed in English.[15] Its publication in 1534 coincided with the series of parliamentary acts effecting Henry VIII's break from the Church of Rome. At this time of religious upheaval, the volume treads carefully. The only extant copy lacks its title-page, but the preface is unsigned, suggesting that the translation may have been anonymous.[16] The bulk of this preface translates Erasmus' lengthy defence of "Funus" in "De utilitate" (Erasmus' most extensive treatment of an individual dialogue). "I have attacked no order," he there insists, "unless perchance one who has uttered a warning against corrupt Christian morals impugns all Christianity."[17] "Where vice is but generally rebuked there no persone hath injury," summarises the English preface, similarly framing the work as a critique of ill living in general (A3r). The "good and godly admonicion" that follows the translation also displays doctrinal caution: there is nothing heterodox about warning "every chrysten man" to remember their God and "put not [their] hertes principally in this caytyfe worlde" (D2v). Nonetheless, the emphasis in this "admonicion" on individually-felt, rather than institutionally-practised, faith hints at a more evangelical agenda, as do the men behind the publication: Robert Copland (fl. 1505-1547) and John Byddell (fl. 1534-1543).

Whilst Copland published quantities of traditional devotional material, his willingness to lampoon grasping clerics and religious ritual is evident from his own writings: *Jyl of Breyntfords testament* (first surviving edition, c. 1563), in which the acquisitive curate is rewarded with one and half farts, and *The seven sorowes that women have when theyr husbandes be deade* (first surviving edition, c. 1565), which parodies the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin, a focus for devotion in late medieval manifestations of Marian piety.[18] Copland's mild anti-clericalism is entirely

[13] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 307, 141; "ridicula superstitio;" "interim fratres et sorores notrae vivaque Christi templa situ fameque contabescant," *Colloquia*, 327, 489.
[14] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 87.
[15] George Whetstone, *The censure of a loyall subject* (1587; STC² 25334a), D3r.
[16] Five translations exist in a single known copy of one edition: (i) Anon., [*The dyaloge called Funus*] (1534; STC² 10453.5), British Library; (ii) Anon., *Pylgremege of pure devotyon* (n.d.; STC² 10454), British Library; (iii) E.H., *Diversoria* (1566; STC² 10456), John Rylands Library; (iv) Thomas Johnson, *A very mery and pleasaunt historie* (1567; STC² 10510.5), Bodleian Library; (v) F.S., *A picture of a wanton* (1615; STC² 21491.3), Huntington Library. This raises the possibility that other translations may have existed, but have been quite literally read to pieces, thus disappearing from record, particularly before 1557 and the establishment of the *Stationers' Register* (which catches some, but not all, "lost" titles).
[17] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 632; "Nullum ordinem perstrinximus, nisi forte totum Christianismum infamat, qui quicquam monendi gratia dixerit in corruptos Christianorum mores," *Colloquia*, 748.
[18] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 258-65.

compatible with religious orthodoxy; Byddell's aligns more clearly with anti-papalism. The other publications with which Byddell was associated in 1534 include *A supplication* by the reformer Robert Barnes (c. 1495-1540), which lambasts clerical abuses; *The dialoge betwene Julius the seconde, genius, and saynt Peter* – sometimes attributed to Erasmus[19] – (also printed by Copland) in which the dead pope (d. 1513) attempts unsuccessfully to gain admittance to heaven; *A mustre of schismatic bishops of Rome* by the evangelical preacher Thomas Swynnerton (d. 1554); and Joachim de Witt's *Of the olde God & the newe*, translated by the controversialist William Turner (1509/10-1568), in which the Church of Rome is portrayed as a purveyor of doctrinal innovation and idolatry. These patently anti-papist texts sit alongside Bydell's evident commitment around this time to vernacularising texts of Erasmus which were amenable to reformist readings. Besides *Funus*, he printed Erasmus' *Paraphrase [...] upon the epistle of Saint Paule unto [...] Titus* (1534), translated by Leonard Cox (c. 1495-c. 1549), the preface of which celebrates the royal supremacy,[20] and he was the publisher behind Wynkyn de Worde's 1533 and 1534 editions of an English translation of Erasmus' *Enchiridion militis christiani*. This work appealed to Reformers, such as William Tyndale (c. 1494-1536), because of its emphasis on the importance of faith over ceremony.[21] Byddell's religious affiliations are also glimpsed when (as "Bedell") he is found named alongside Richard Grafton (c. 1511-1573), Richard Kele (fl. 1540-1552), Richard Lant (fl. 1537-1561), John Mayler (fl. 1536-1545), William Middleton (d. 1547), Thomas Petit (c.1494-1565/6), and Edward Whitchurch (d. 1562) after their arrest for printing heretical books in April 1543.[22]

Members of this group are also connected to at least one of the two other Henrician translations of the colloquies: namely, Philip Gerrard's *Epicure* (1545), printed by Grafton. The origins of the remaining Henrician translation, the anonymous *Pylgremage of pure devotyon*, remain a puzzle. The work lacks both date and colophon, but the ornaments, type, and certain habits of *mise-en-page* match those found in *A sermond [sic] spoken before the kynge*, delivered in 1536 by John Longland (1473-1547), Bishop of Lincoln.[23] However, since the *Sermond* also omits a colophon, this brings us no closer to identifying the printer, despite their distinctive printing

[19] S. Seidel Menchi's survey of this debate champions Erasmus' authorship, *Opera Omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami* 1.8 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 10-34.
[20] For Cox's reformism, including his assisting Frith, see S.F. Ryle, "Cox, Leonard," www.oxforddnb.com.
[21] For Erasmus' wider influence on Tyndale, see Rankin, "Tyndale, Erasmus, and the Early English Reformation."
[22] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J. Gairdner and R. H. Brodie, vol. 18, part 1 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1901), 224 (8 April 1543).
[23] Longland was a correspondent of Erasmus and the dedicatee of Erasmus' commentaries on Psalm 4 (1525), Psalm 85 (1528), and his translation of some of Athanasius' works (Dominic Baker-Smith, ed., *Expositions of the Psalms*, *Collected Works of Erasmus* 64 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 2). Erasmus also defended his colloquies in a letter to Longland in 1526 (Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 623-4). Longland was renowned for his "fervent zeal" for both reforming clerical "misbehaviours" and hunting out Lollard and Lutheran heresies. See Margaret Bowker, "Longland, John," www.oxforddnb.com.

style.[24] The personnel surrounding the *Pylgremage* might be elusive; its religious affiliations are clear. Where the 1534 *Funus* shields its evangelism by giving pre-eminence to Erasmus' own defence of the colloquy, the *Pylgremage* forcibly appropriates Erasmus to the Reformers' side. In "De utilitate," Erasmus denies attacking pilgrimages and shrines *per se*. His target, he claims, is "those who exhibit doubtful relics for authentic ones, who attribute to them more than is proper, and basely make money by them," and he insists that the colloquy actually castigates iconoclasts: "those who with much ado have thrown all images out of the churches."[25] In contrast, the *Pylgremage* announces its commitment to "the reformacyon of all pernicious abuses & chiefly of detestably ydolatrye," enrolling Erasmus to the cause: "for whiche intent and purpose [he...] made this dialoge in Laten" (✠6r-v). It also transforms the recently deceased Erasmus (d. 1536) into a proto-Protestant martyr, placing him amongst those who have "evyn to the deathe, resisted thes dampnable bolsterers of ydolatry, gyv[ing] theyr selves to the crosse in example of reformacyon to theyr bretherne" (✠3v). The reformist convictions of the preface are further indicated by the substitution of the vernacular "So be it" for "Amen" at its conclusion (✠7r).

The attack on idolatry, whilst unbridled, was not out-of-line with Henry's religious policy, as outlined in the Ten Articles (1536), which decreed that images should be "representers of vertue" and "stirrers of mens myndes," not objects of worship.[26] The pilgrimages the volume denounces are not merely devotional ones, however. The English Short-Title Catalogue (ESTC) tentatively dates the *Pylgremage* to 1540; references to an on-going insurrection – "this arrogant conspyracy" that "is nowe moved and begonne" (✠5v) – make winter 1536-7 more likely, when the Pilgrimage of Grace or its offshoot, the Bigod Rebellion, were still in progress.[27] The religious pilgrimage Erasmus satirised transmutes into a condemnation of the uprising which its leader Robert Aske (c. 1500-1537) had, in October 1536, proclaimed a "pylgrymage," undertaken "for the preservacyon of Crystes churche".[28] The preface thus situates Erasmus' colloquy within an obedience tract, aligning resistance to religious reform with treason, and denouncing those who "rebelle and make insurrectyones contrary to the ordynaunce of gode, agaynst theyr kynge" (✠4v). When the dialogue ends with the words "God save the kynge" (E10r), this final utterance could be read, not as paratext, but as part of the interlocutor Menenius' closing speech.

[24] English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) notes that the type is the same as that used, from 1539, by Mayler; this is disputed by Peter Blaney, *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London, 1501-1557*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1.421.
[25] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 631; "qui reliquias incertas pro certis ostendunt, qui his plus tribuunt quam oportet, qui quaestu ex his sordide faciunt;" "taxo istos qui per tumultum ejecerunt omnes imagines e templis," *Colloquia*, 747.
[26] Church of England, *Articles devised by the kynges highnes majestie* (1536; STC[2] 10033.2), C4v.
[27] Blaney also "tentatively" reassigns the work to 1537, *Stationers' Company*, 1.421.
[28] Cited in Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 6th edn (London: Routledge, 2015), 31.

The first two printed English translations are hedged by cautious anonymity, even as they harness Erasmus' colloquies in service of Henry VIII's emergent religious policy. In contrast, *Epicure* is openly aligned with Prince Edward's evangelical household. Translated by Gerrard, "groume of [Edward's] Chambre," and printed by Grafton, "Printer too the Princes grace," it is dedicated to Edward; his coat-of-arms is emblazoned on the title-page, whilst the feathered badge of the Prince of Wales appears on the verso of the colophon.[29] Erasmus' "Epicureus" teaches how classical, pagan learning needs to be refracted through Christian wisdom; the English *Epicure* transforms it into a colloquy about the "true" religion, starting with the quotation on the reverse of the title-page, attributed (misleadingly) to St Paul: "You that have professed Christ, suffre not your selves to be deceyved with false doctrine, nor vaine and noughtie talkyng, but herken unto all Godly thynges, and especially too the doctryne of the Gospell" (A1v). The long dedicatory epistle (at nineteen pages, almost a quarter of the work) sets the translation within a national project of religious reform, encouraging its Bible-reading prince to "bee the most cruel foo and enemy agaynst ypocrisie, supersticion, and phantastical phantasiees" (A4v). "Now truely the godlyest thynge for any christian realme, is to have emongist them one maner and fourme of doctryne," Gerrard affirms (A6r-v), whilst translating the colloquy is presented as a way of ensuring that – by taking "all oportunitie too drawe mens heartes too the holy testament of God" – Gerrard will qualify amongst those who "have walked justely in the sight of the Lorde" (B2v). Even Grafton's customary colophon – "imprinted [...] within the precinct of the late dissolved house of the gray Friers" – situates the work within the changing landscape of Reformation England. Within the dialogue, Erasmus' exemplar of the contented man – the Franciscan who, though "poorly and cheaply dressed, worn by fasting, vigils, and labors, without a penny in the world, lives [...] delightfully – provided only that he has a good conscience" – is stripped of any association with religious institutions.[30] Gerrard recasts him as a "poore man" (D7r), his fasting and vigils the consequence of poverty, not ritual, as Erasmus' ecumenical colloquy is conscripted to the reformist cause and reshaped to suit the ideology of post-Dissolution England.

The evangelical networks which produced the Henrician translations are also evident in the only extant examples from Edward VI's reign: versions of "Cyclops" and "De rebus ac vocabulis" ("Things and names") by Edmund Becke (fl. 1549-1551), printed c. 1550 by John Mychell (d. 1556). The two dialogues explore the potential disparity between being and seeming, a theme with obvious religious resonance, but – unlike the English *Epicure* – Becke's paratext does not push a strident confessional message. His preface focuses on defending his decision to translate "the sence & the very meaning of the author," rather than literally, "worde for worde," as some

[29] Philip Gerrard, *Epicure* (1545; STC[2] 10460), B3r, F6r, A1r, F6v.
[30] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 545; "tenuiter ac viliter amictu, jejuniis, vigilis ac laboribus attenuatum, qui terunciam non habet in orbe, modo absit bona mens, deliciosius vivere," *Colloquia*, 728.

are "so relygyouslie [strictly] addicte to."[31] Nevertheless, Jose Cree has argued that "addict" and related terms are part of an "evangelical lexicon" in the 1530s and '40s.[32] Such a lexicon certainly fits Becke's profile as a "staunch protestant," known for publishing affordable, accessible English Bibles, printed in octavo in multiple volumes, allowing "individuals to spread the purchase of the volumes over several years," and which included supporting material designed to enable "the better understanding of many hard places."[33] Mychell, meanwhile, was charged in 1536 for printing works "clerely agense the fayth of true Cristen men," possibly *A disputacion of purgatorye* and *An other boke against Rastel*, both by the evangelical theologian and martyr John Frith (1503-1533).[34]

Where, with varying degrees of explicitness, the earliest English translations of the colloquies evince reformist leanings, the only exemplar printed during Mary's reign, *A mery dialogue, declaringe the propertyes of shrowde shrewes, and honest wyves*, is determinedly, and suggestively, neutral. This English version of "Conjugium" ("Marriage"), sometimes ascribed to John Rastell (c. 1475-1536), was printed twice, by two different printers, in 1557.[35] Gregory Dodds dismisses the translation – along with Nicholas Leigh's *Modest meane to mariage* (discussed below) – as "not particularly noteworthy."[36] The lack of paratext is, however, striking: this is the only English translation before 1700 which contains no prefatory material situating the work.[37] This minimalistic presentation may owe something to the bad odour in which Erasmus' colloquies were regarded by the Church of Rome by the later 1550s: a year later, the *Consilium* recommended their prohibition. The *Mery dialogue* also epitomises a preoccupation with using the colloquies to police female behaviour. This trend is evident in those colloquies which, alongside the propensity for anti-clerical colloquies, were recurrently selected for translation: "Conjugium," "Adolescentis et sortis," and "Proci et puellae" are among those colloquies which (like "Peregrinatio religionis ergo" and "Naufragium") appeared in multiple translations before 1640.[38]

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[31] Edmund Becke, *Two dyaloges* (Canterbury, 1545; STC[2] 10459), A3r.
[32] Jose Murgatroyd Cree, "Protestant evangelicals and addiction in early modern English," *Renaissance Studies* 32 (2017), 446-62.
[33] John N. King, "Becke, Edmund," www.oxforddnb.com.
[34] Janet Ing Freeman, "Mitchell [Mychell], John," www.oxforddnb.com.
[35] This is the Rastell who contended in print with Frith about the existence of Purgatory and who, as a result, was converted to the "new" faith. Cecil H. Clough, "Rastell, John," www.oxforddnb.com.
[36] Gregory D. Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus: The Erasmian Legacy and Religious Change in Early Modern England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 74. Dodds' discussion of the *Colloquies* focuses on the Jacobean and Restoration periods; this article widens the chronological scope and departs from Dodds in several local readings.
[37] Johnson's 1567 translation of "Exorcismus" exists in fragment only, but the fact that A4r contains the opening of Anthonie's story indicates that there must have been prefatory material earlier in the gathering (A2-A3 are missing).
[38] See Table 1.

Leigh's *Modest meane to mariage* (1568) – comprising "Proci et puellae" and "Adolescentis et sortis" – is part of this story. Despite the title's emphasis on marital affairs, Leigh's dedicatory epistle to Francis Rodgers, "one of the Gentlemen pensioners unto the Queenes Majestie," positions the production and dedication of the volume within a homosocial milieu, gifted to Rodgers in memory of their university days: "our yong and tender yeares, [...] in those famous places of studie," where they consorted "with a number of vertuous, and well disposed, and a sort of learned, civill, friendly and faithfull companions."[39] Leigh's translation has an avowedly public purpose: written that "thousandes" lacking Latin "may draw out some sweete sap of these [...] pleasant and fruitfull doings," it is expressly aimed at the moral reformation of Leigh's less educated compatriots, "whose increase in vertue [he] greatlye desire[s]."[40] Yet, despite the homosociability invoked by Leigh's dedication, his choice of dialogues ensures that these reformist energies are focused on the behaviour of women. The narrative trajectory of "Adolescentis et sortis," in which a prostitute is persuaded to "honest and chaste conversation" through the "godly and vertuous reasons" of a reformed customer, means that scrutiny falls on female morals in both Erasmus' and Leigh's versions; the wording and italics in Leigh's heading ("Of the yong man and the *evill disposed woman*") then lend added censure (A4v, C5r). Leigh's account of Maria's character in "Proci et puellae" is, however, at odds with Erasmus' original, despite the fidelity of his translation. The preface presents the colloquy as depicting a "godlye kinde of woeing [...] to the good behaviour and honest inducement and furtherance of such as are yet to take that matter or enterprise in hand" (A4r). For Leigh, this lesson is imparted despite the "naturall overthwartnesse of the womanishe minde, [which] doth now and then burst out as out of the frayler and weaker vessell." This reading ignores the fact that it is Maria who wittily and virtuously punctures her wooer's histrionics, who resists his attempts to trick her into exchanging vows ("*sum tuus*, say you againe, *Sum tua*," B6v) without their parents' permission, and who chastely withholds her kisses, let alone the more physical "good night" he desires (C3v).

A modest meane is part of a cluster of Elizabethan translations of the colloquies: its publication follows close on the heels of E.H.'s *Diversoria* (1566), and Thomas Johnson's *Very mery and pleasaunt historie* (1567), a translation of "Exorcismus" surviving in fragment only. ESTC speculates that E.H. is Edward Hake (the puritan lawyer, fl. 1564-1604), but Hake – a student at Barnard's Inn from 1564-7[41] – would be unlikely to describe himself as "unlearned," as E.H. does (A1v). The subject-matter of this dialogue – inns – was a frequent topic of language-learning

[39] Neither Leigh nor Rodgers appear in John Venn and J.A. Venn, eds, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, Part 1, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924) or Joseph Foster, ed., *Alumni Oxoniensis, 1500-1714*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1891).
[40] Nicholas Leigh, *A modest meane to mariage* (1568; STC^2 10499), A5r-v.
[41] Louis A. Knafla, "Hake, Edward," www.oxforddnb.com.

dialogues,[42] and its treatment by both Erasmus and E.H. has no particular confessional resonance. In contrast, "Exorcismus" is studiedly anti-clerical: the butt of the satire is Faunus, the avaricious and easily-duped parish priest. After the late 1560s, there is then a notable dip in translations of the colloquies, aside from a version of Erasmus' "Alcumista," which appears in *The discoverie of witchcraft* (1584) by Reginald Scot (1538?-1599). In Erasmus' original, the alchemical enthusiast Balbinus is a layman. Scot reframes him as a Catholic priest (like the "cousening priest" who tricks him). In doing so, Scot ridicules the credulity of both adherents to the Church of Rome and those who believe in alchemy, whilst simultaneously deploring the mendacity of those who exploit both beliefs.[43]

Redefining godliness: Adapting Erasmus' colloquies in early Stuart England

Dodds suggests that one reason for the dearth of translations of the colloquies in later Elizabethan England was that "Erasmus' theology, especially his soteriology, was incongruous with English Calvinism."[44] Certainly, early-seventeenth-century translations of Erasmus' colloquies consistently avoid drawing attention to his authorship on their title-pages, in contrast to its prominence there in earlier translations, which suggests a shift in attitude to Erasmus as an authority and/or potential selling-point. *Utile-dulce* (1606), translated by William Burton (c. 1545-1616), epitomises this Jacobean trend to remove titular references to Erasmus. It also exemplifies a Jacobean tendency to amplify the anti-papist energies of the colloquies. *Utile-dulce* – the title of which ("profit and pleasure") is taken from Horace's *Ars Poetica* – presents its "wittie-wise Dialogues" as being pitched against "Roomes idolatrie."[45] The other version of Burton's translation, issued the same year as *Seven dialogues*, uses its title-page to give brief synopses of the "pithie and profitable" dialogues it contains, emphasising their denunciation of "Popish" rituals.[46]

Dodds reads Burton's selection of colloquies as supporting "a royal agenda that stressed religious unity and an episcopal structure of the English church." As evidence, he cites a section of "Ixthouphagia" ("A fish diet") where Burton deviates from his source:

> But[cher]: Doe the bishops lawes and constitutions bind all that are in the Church to observe them?

[42] John Gallagher, "Vernacular language learning in early modern England" (unpub. PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2014).
[43] Reginald Scot, *The discoverie of witchcraft* (1584; STC² 21864), 2E5r-2E8v (2E5r).
[44] Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus*, 64.
[45] Horace, *The Art of Poetry*, ed./trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 343; William Burton, *Utile-Dulce* (1606; STC² 10458), A1r.
[46] William Burton, *Seven dialogues* (1606: STC² 10457), A1r.

Fish[monger]: They do, if they be good, and confirmed by the authoritie of the Prince.[47]

The Fishmonger's endorsement of royal authority is, however, undercut by the riposte of the Butcher (whose role for much of the dialogue is to correct the Fishmonger's muddled thinking). "If the constitutions of the Church be of such force, why doth God in *Deut[eronomy]* so straightly charge, that no man shall adde any thing to his lawes, or take any thing from the same?" the Butcher asks, returning to the Erasmian source (D2v). It is the authority of Scripture, not human structures, that the colloquy endorses. This attitude fits the biographical circumstances recalled in Burton's dedicatory epistle to the civic dignitaries of Norwich, where he was a minister in the 1580s until "inforced" to leave the city (A3r) after preaching what Patrick Collinson calls "an intemperate sermon" on 21 December 1589.[48] On that occasion, Burton publicly criticised the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift (1530/31?-1604), for depriving three non-conformist colleagues of their offices, before launching into an anti-ceremonial diatribe against surplices and "make[ing] a leg at the name of Jesus."[49] Burton's sermon further argued that Scripture ("the word of God") gave ministers the "authoritie [...] to reproove Princes," an opinion for which he was subsequently "accounted an enemy to *Caesar*" (i.e. royal authority).[50]

The godly commonweal that Burton celebrates in the dedication to his translation of Erasmus' colloquies similarly depends, not on respecting hierarchical structures, but on giving "godlie Preachers" a civic role, as allegedly happened in mid-Elizabethan Norwich. "The magistrates and the Ministers imbrac[ed] and second[ed] one an other," Burton reminisces, "and the common people afford[ed] due reverence, & obedience to them both. No matters of weight were usually concluded in your common assemblies for the good of your Citie, before you had first consulted with your grave and godlie Preachers."[51] Calling ministers "Preachers" tellingly emphasises their duty to expound Scripture: it is that which earns them the authority they enjoyed in Norwich, not their place in church hierarchy or participation in its rituals.

Burton's vision of the godly commonweal is further elucidated by the preface "To the Christian Reader," which appears in the version published as *Seven dialogues*, the only time within either edition that Erasmus is named as author. This preface contains an extensive discussion of just one colloquy: the translation of Erasmus' "Purpurea" (here entitled "A woman in Childe-bed"), in

[47] Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus*, 128-9; Burton, *Utile-dulce*, D2r-v. In Erasmus' "Ixthouphagia" ("A fish diet") this initiates an exchange – omitted by Burton – about papal and episcopal authority.
[48] Patrick Collinson, *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), 445.
[49] Matthew Reynolds, *Godly Reformers and their Opponents in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2012), 78-80; William Burton, *A sermon preached in the Cathedrall Church in Norwich, the xxi. day of December, 1589* (1590; STC^2 4178), C4v.
[50] Burton, *Sermon*, B4r, A2r.
[51] Burton, *Utile-dulce*, A2r-v.

which – after some witty banter about the supremacy of men versus women – the young mother is persuaded by her older, male interlocutor to breast-feed her child. Burton makes this seemingly domestic issue one of national and spiritual significance: building the godly commonweal begins with tending infants in the home. According to Burton, "many sweete babies, which might have lived, and done good service both to God and their Prince, to the Church & Common-wealth are now [...] cast away by an untimely death, hasted by the unnatural dealing of Mothers, and Nurses" ([2]A1r). When the sub-title of *Utile-dulce* draws attention to the colloquies it contains as being "seasonable for all ages", it is "till Roomes idolatrie, *and* womens delicacie, be reformed" (emphasis added).

Burton's translation thus typifies the early Stuart approach to the colloquies in its focus on the governance of the household as the foundation for the godly commonweal; its muting of Erasmus' authorship of the colloquies; and its redefinition of "godliness" not – as understood by Leigh in the 1560s – as adherence to moral norms, but as indicating a form of Protestantism which sought to minimise church ceremony (what we might call Puritanism). The targets of satire are thus as much other, less strict Protestants as "papists". Burton's translation further exemplifies early Stuart responses to Erasmus in its willingness to diverge from its source (as seen in the translation of "Ixthouphagia," discussed above). Where sixteenth-century translations attempt to corral Erasmus to the reformist cause through their paratextual frames and, on occasion, by a few localised semantic changes (as seen in Gerrard's substitution of a "poore man" for Erasmus' contented Franciscan), in their Jacobean treatments, Erasmus' colloquies are, in Dodds' words, "heavily reworked to make them fit theologically with early Stuart Calvinism."[52]

Robert Snawsel's *Looking glasse for maried folkes* (1610) embodies this approach. It is a whole-scale adaptation of Erasmus' "Conjugium," although – as with Burton's translation – Erasmus' authorship is not acknowledged on the title-page. Snawsel's dialogue features additional characters – the original pair, Eululia (now Eulalie) and Xanthippe (now Xantip), are joined by the "proud malapert" Margerie, Abigail ("the fathers joy"), and Xantip's husband Ben-ezer – and it stages the conversation with Ben-ezer promised, but not performed, in Erasmus' original.[53] It also places greater emphasis on the Bible as a didactic source: where Erasmus' Eulalia draws analogies between "tam[ing]" husbands and training animals, for example, Snawsel inserts a preceding section in which we see Eulalie founding her advice on "sentences of Scripture."[54] Adding Abigail's character, meanwhile, highlights tensions within the English church. It is Abigail who is the morally authoritative speaker, not Eulalie (as in Erasmus). Erasmus' opening exchange – in which Xanthippe compliments Eulalia on her new dress – acts as a springboard for Xanthippe's

[52] Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus*, 75.
[53] Robert Snawsel, *A looking glasse for maried folkes* (1610; STC[2] 22886), A7r.
[54] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 119; Snawsel, *Looking glasse*, C4v.

complaints about her husband; in Snawsel's version, it becomes a sign of Eulalie's attachment to worldly things, which needs correcting by Abigail. Before Eulalie can counsel Xantip, that is, she herself needs reforming, and to realise that although, as a dutiful church-goer, she is "an honest civill woman, and a Christian in name", she is "not in nature and in deed", because hitherto her mind has been "more set upon [her] gowne, then upon [...] heavenly matters" (B5v, B6v).

Like Burton and Leigh, Snawsel invests domestic issues, and female behaviour, with national and spiritual significance. The book endeavours to teach readers not only how to "reforme" their "wicked and unquiet living" (A3r) but also to spur those that "shalt reape profite from thence" to "give [...] counsel to [their] neighbours" for the advancement, and expansion, of the godly commonweal:

> By this meanes thou shalt be an instrument of a publicke, and continuall good not onely in making good parents, but they by thy meanes also shall make good children, and good servants: and this by Gods blessing shal successively go on from age to age, even to the end of the world: and so by this meanes good parents which are scarce, shall bee multipled to the increase of Gods Church, and the flourishing estate of the common-wealth. (A5r-v)

Snawsel's preface is torn between this desire to provoke readers to action and a Calvinistic aversion to the doctrine of free will. Initially, it promotes readers' ability to "save both [them] selfe & many others" if they "practise [the] good counsell herein contained" (A4r-v). However, once Snawsel refers specifically to the original colloquy (here – away from the publicity of the title-page – acknowledging its authorship by "the reverend learned man *Erasmus*"), he retreats from this assertion of the individual's capacity to save themselves (and others), as can be seen when he explains his decision to embellish – rather than faithfully translate – his source: "considering [...] that they [readers] might attaine to all that which hee counselleth there, and yet be damned; I have added thereunto the substance of faith and repentance" (A4v). Erasmus' soteriology needs amending, and an Erasmian belief in free will is consequently replaced by explicit expressions of Calvinistic predeterminism. "I rejoice greatly that God hath made me an instrument to doe you any good," Snawsel's Eulalie states, once Xantip has proved open to reform (C5v-C6r), a stance which recalls Abigail's earlier reminder that "nothing comes to passe without Gods providence" (B3v).

Snawsel's translation of Erasmus' colloquy does not just rework its soteriology; it also responds to the suspicion and hostility with which the "godly" – represented by Abigail – were seemingly regarded by less committed compatriots. This endeavour seeks both to persuade readers that the "godly" view is correct and to cultivate a sense of persecuted righteousness amongst believers. "What shall wee have of you? a Puritane?" mocks Margery, responding to

Abigail's insistence that we "regard this outward decking lesse, & the inward adorning of our selves more" (A8v).

This same vilification of Puritans to signify disreputable characters is evident in F.S.'s version of Erasmus' "Adolescentis et scorti," published as *A picture of a wanton* (1615), where Sophronius, the former frequenter of prostitutes, is recurrently ridiculed by his unreformed interlocutors as a "Puritane" (A4v, B3v), or "precise Foole" (C3v; cf. B1r).[55] Like Snawsel, F.S. "inlarge[s]" Erasmus' text, "both with the addition of more persons, and larger matter," as he states in his preface (A3r), the only point at which (as in the two earlier Stuart translations) Erasmus' authorship is acknowledged. These "inlarge[ments]" change the confessional slant of Erasmus' dialogue, imbuing it with Scripturalism (a marker of religious "preciseness"), Calvinist soteriology, and anti-papalism. F.S. bolsters his text with citations from Scripture, not just in the preface, which is crammed with Biblical quotations – distinguished by their display in a different font (roman rather than italic) and referenced in a thicket of marginalia – but also within the main body of the work. "Why doe you speake so much Scripture unto me?" F.S.'s Thais complains before her conversion (B1v-B2r): her Erasmian counterpart has no call to make such a protest. Like Snawsel, F.S. stresses the fact that redemption lies, not in an individual's power, but with God. "GOD in mercie [has] made *Sophronius* an instrument to reclayme me," declares the reformed Thais (C3r). In contrast, the bawd Doria (a character added by F.S.) mistakenly believes that she can "reforme her life at her pleasure; as if shee could repent when she listed; whereas it is the gift of God" (C4r). F.S's dialogue ends, not with Lucretia trusting herself "entirely" to Sophronius, as in Erasmus' version, but with both of the reformed sinners committing themselves to God's grace.[56] "Amen, Amen" come Sophronius' final words, endorsing Thais' plea that "God Almightie graunt us his grace to continue in that good course whereinto wee are entered and guide us with his holy Spirit, that the rest of our life may be wholly consecrated unto him" (C4r-v).

As in Burton's and Snawsel's earlier publications, it is also female behaviour that is placed under particular scrutiny, as the means – or impediment – to achieving a godly commonweal. F.S.'s preface announces that the work endeavours "to warne both young Men, and young Women; yea, and all of what age or condition soever, to take heed of this foule vice, and abhominable sinne [fornication], which will exclude them out of Heaven, if they repent not" (A3r). Nonetheless, thanks to the sub-title of the work ("her leawdnesse discovered"), the woodcut of a well-dressed woman on the title-page, and the internal title ("The picture of a leawd huswife", A4r), it is women who are put in the spotlight. The "leawdness discovered" also extends to an allegorical female: the "Strumpet" Rome, "who exalteth her selfe as a Queene" (C1r). F.S. depicts the unreformed

[55] For the association between "precise" and Puritanism, see *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd edn, www.oed.com, sense 3b.
[56] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 158; "totam," *Colloquia*, 343.

Thais as being as deluded in her good opinion of the Church of Rome as she is misguided in her lifestyle: "O my *Sophronius*, you forget your selfe, *Rome* is accounted a holy place," she protests without irony (B4r). Erasmus, in Dodds' words, is thus transformed into the "zealous, Protestant" author that readers, like F.S., wanted him to be.[57] The "honest chap" who sets Erasmus' Sophronius on the path to reform is recast as a "*Protistant* Minister," and the section where Erasmus' Sophronius "poured out the whole Augean stable of [his] sins into the bosom of a confessor" is replaced by the anti-papist tirade of this "Minister," who – in typical Protestant polemic – labels Rome "Babilon," the Pope "*Antichrist*," and "Popish *Catholiques*" "the Sinagogue of *Sathan.*"[58] Erasmus' own role in reforming Sophronius is also negated: there is no mention of Erasmus' translation of the New Testament which the original Sophronius was encouraged to carry; F.S.'s penitent gallant merely describes himself as "studious in the Scriptures" in general.[59]

The final pre-Civil War translations of Erasmus' colloquies are versifications of "Naufragium" and "Proci et puellae" by Thomas Heywood (c. 1573-1641). Both have anti-clerical possibilities (although neither are discussed explicitly in Erasmus' "De utilitate"), but Heywood's volume, *Pleasant dialogues and dramma's* (1637), dials down any confessional resonances. They are instead presented – alongside works by Lucian (125-180 CE), Ovid (43 BCE-17/18 CE), Jacob Cats (1577-1660), "&c" – as examples of "choice and selected Dialogues borrowed from sundry authors."[60] This shift towards an interest in Erasmus' colloquies for their literary and canonical value, rather than their polemical potential, pre-empts the final phase of their early modern reception.

Erasmus' colloquies after the Restoration

During the Civil War and Interregnum no English translations of Erasmus' colloquies were published, although those decades saw eight Latin editions printed in England (testimony to their continued place in the grammar school curriculum).[61] This pedagogical intent motivates the first complete translation of Erasmus' colloquies, by "H.M. Gent" – possibly the Cambridge scholar Henry More (1614-1687) or schoolmaster Henry Munday (1623-1682) – printed for Henry Brome (d. 1681) and others in 1671, which is sold on its title-page as a "A Work of very great Use to such as desire to attain a exact knowledge of the Latin Tongue."[62] As in all the post-Restoration translations (in contrast to their early Stuart counterparts), Erasmus' authorship is celebrated

[57] Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus*, 125.
[58] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 156-7; "probo viro;" "in poenitentiarii sinum totum Augiae stabulum effudi," 341-2; F.S., *Picture*, B4v-C1r.
[59] Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 156; F.S., *Picture*, C1r.
[60] Thomas Heywood, *Pleasant dialogues and dramma's* (1637; STC^2 13358), A4r.
[61] See Figure 1.
[62] H.M., *The colloquies* (1671; Wing E3190), A1r.

prominently on the title-page, which is here accompanied by a frontispiece engraving based on Erasmus' portrait (c. 1532) by Hans Holbein the Younger (c. 1497-1543).[63]

Brome was also behind the subsequent publication of *Twenty select colloquies* (1680), translated by Brome's long-time associate, the pamphleteer and press censor Roger L'Estrange (1616-1704). L'Estrange's version – to which L'Estrange added another two colloquies in 1689 – is the last of the early modern English translations to use Erasmus' colloquies for confessional purposes. The majority of the colloquies that L'Estrange translated have anti-papist potential.[64] Nonetheless, even as the title-page draws attention to Erasmus' exposure of "Several Superstitious Levities that were crept into the Church of Rome In His Days," L'Estrange's diction modulates the critique: the problematic practices that Erasmus portrays are described as trifles ("Levities"); they are "several", not many; and they are relegated to the historical past – "In His Days" – not, as they were for the likes of Burton, "seasonable for all ages, till Roomes idolatrie [...] be reformed."[65] L'Estrange invokes Erasmus, not to appropriate him to the side of Protestant reform, but – an example of both "Candour and Moderation" – as someone who criticised the established church from a position of loyalty to it (A3r). "You will find in These *Colloquies* that the Church of Rome stood in great need of *Reforming*; even in the Judgment of *Erasmus*, who was an Eminent Member of *That Communion*," L'Estrange's preface explains. Erasmus, attacked in his lifetime from both sides of the religious divide, becomes a model for (and vindication of) L'Estrange's own beleaguered position. "With *Erasmus himself*, he is crush'd betwixt the Two Extremes," his preface complains, referring to himself in the third person (A3v). What L'Estrange means by this is clearer in the lightly revised preface to the 1689 edition, which removes the previously topical allusions to the Popish Plot (1678-1681) and substitutes the explanation that "Some will have him [L'Estrange] to be *Papist in Masquerade*, for going *so far*; *Others* again will have him too much a *Protestant*, because he will go *no further.*"[66]

L'Estrange is the last translator to seek to co-opt Erasmus to their religious cause (in L'Estrange's case, his advocacy of an Erasmian *via media*). The "Life of Erasmus" included in *Seven new colloquies* (1699), by the satirical author Thomas Brown (1663-1704), is primarily interested

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[63] Similar engravings also appear in Roger L'Estrange's translations: *Twenty select colloquies* (1680; Wing E3210), A1v; *Twenty select colloquies* (1689; Wing E3213), A1v.

[64] "Naufragium," "Peregrinatio religionis ergo," "De votis temere suscepti," "Militaria," "Convivium religiosum" ("The godly feast"), "Virgo misogamos" ("The girl with no interest in marriage"), "Virgo poenitens" ("The repentant girl"), "Ptoxoplousioi" ("The well-to-do beggars"), "De incomparabili [...] Reuchlino" ("About the incomparable worthy [...], Reuchlin"), "Funus," "Exorcismus," "Alcumista," "Abbatis et eruditae" ("The abbot and the learned lady"), "Ptoxologia" ("Beggar talk"), "Exequiae seraphicae" ("The Seraphic funeral"). The exceptions are "Diversoria," "Militis et Cartusiani" ("The Soldier and the Carthusian"), which draws a favourable picture of the monk, "Hippoplanus" ("The cheating horse-dealer"), "Cyclops," and "Ementita nobilitas" ("Faked nobility").

[65] L'Estrange, *Twenty select colloquies*, A2r; Burton, *Utile-dulce*, A1r.

[66] L'Estrange, *Twenty two select colloquies*, A3v. The two additional colloquies are "Charon" and "Gerontologia" ("The old men's chat").

in Erasmus as a stylist and dialogist: it begins by remembering Erasmus as "deservedly famous for his admirable *Writings*, the vast extent of his *Learning*, his great Candor and Moderation, and for being one of the chief *Restorers* of the Purity of the *Latin* Tongue on this side the *Alpes*," and includes an extensive section on "the Dialogue way of Writing" and the influence of Lucian.[67] None of the colloquies Brown chose to translate are especially anti-papist, and nor are they presented as such.[68] And, whilst Brown echoes L'Estrange by describing Erasmus as a man of "Candor and Moderation" (A2r, B4r) who suffered "the common fate of all Peace-makers, [in that ...], he was most undeservedly Worried and Persecuted by both" (B4v), this is done without L'Estrange's personal animus. Nor, when Brown freely adapts one of Erasmus' colloquies, is it to arrogate his writings for confessional purposes (as did Jacobean reworkings by Snawsel, *et al.*): rather, it is to flaunt Brown's connections with the fashionably learned circles of late-seventeenth-century London. "The latter part of this Colloquy is wholly the Translator's, who took the hint from a Learned Voyage to *Paris* by one of the *Royal Society*," states the heading to "The Modish Traveller" ([2]A3r).

Conclusion

Brown's and L'Estrange's volumes mark the end of both religio-political and literary traditions of translating Erasmus' colloquies. They were published together in 1711, but within less than a decade, translations of Erasmus' colloquies had become primarily aimed at teaching schoolboys Latin. This market was dominated by the parallel English-Latin text composed by the Yorkshire schoolmaster John Clarke (1687-1734), whose translation was "as literal as possible, designed for the use of beginners in the Latin Tongue."[69] The one new translation, *All the familiar colloquies* (1725) by the schoolmaster Nathan Bailey (1691-1742), was similarly aimed at a school audience; it was reissued in 1733 with the Latin in parallel (presumably in a bid to rival Clarke's best-seller), but there were no further editions. The sheer success of Clarke's volume, which went through at least fifteen editions 1720-1770, seems to have suppressed the need for other translations. For almost two centuries, the fundamental ambivalence of Erasmus' colloquies had allowed translators to use them to intervene in, and comment on, the changing socio-religious politics of Reformation England. During the uncertain years of the Henrician Reformation, the often fierce anti-clericalism but doctrinal orthodoxy of his works provided a relatively safe means

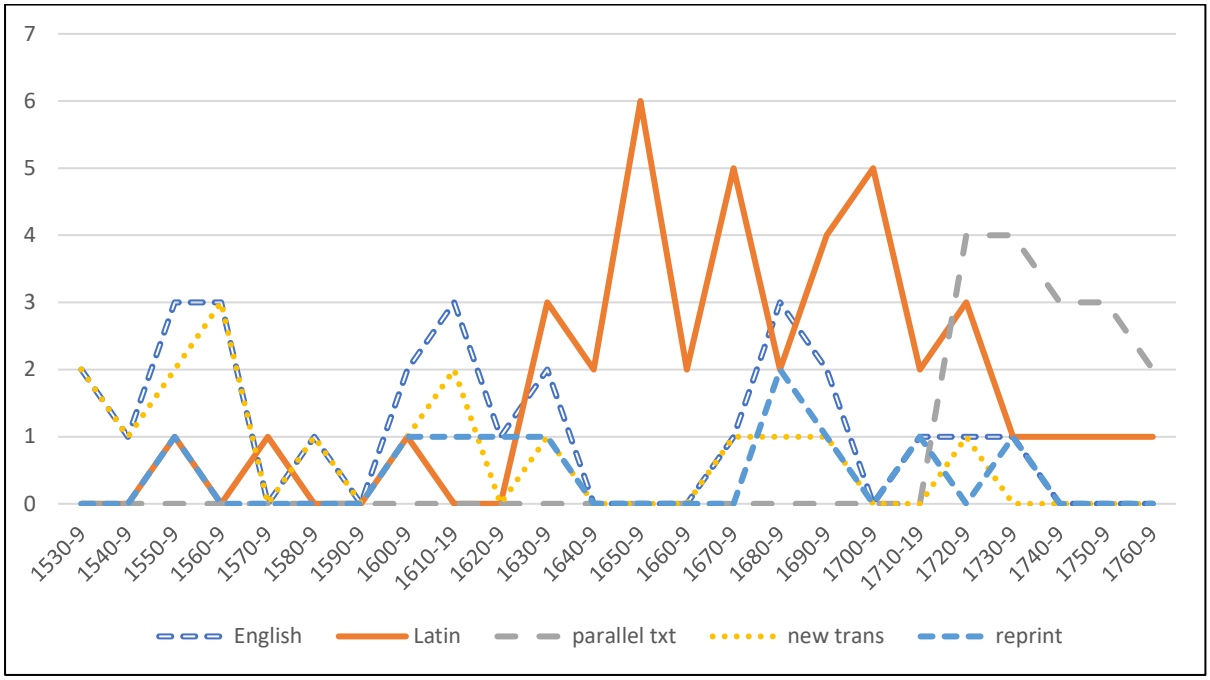
[67] Thomas Brown, *Seven new colloquies* (1699; Wing E3209), A2r, B5v-B8r.
[68] The colloquies are: "Non-sequiturs," a section from "Formulae," "De rebus ac vocabulis," "Conjugium impar" ("The unequal match"), "Opulentia sordida" ("Penny-pinching"), "Conjugium," and "Senatulus" ("The lower house").
[69] John Clarke, *Erasmi colloquia selecta: or, the select colloquies of Erasmus* (Nottingham, 1720), A1r. For the rise of the parallel text, see Figure 1.

by which evangelical printer-publishers and translators could promote ideas associated with the new faith, especially in editions proclaiming support for government-imposed religious policy. In the early seventeenth century, translations reflect not just anti-clericalism and anti-papalism but also the conflict between different wings of the English church over the place of ceremony versus Scripture, and show translators creatively adapting Erasmus (a proponent of free will) to suit Calvinist soteriology. In contrast, in the febrile post-Restoration period, his colloquies offered a vehicle for articulating distance from fanaticism, be it by foregrounding Erasmus' irenicism (L'Estrange) or his literariness (Brown). It is only with the primacy of Clarke's edition that Erasmus' colloquies were finally relegated to the schoolroom for which they were originally ostensibly designed, and Erasmus became an object of study, rather than an agent co-opted into the various, and varying, religious struggles of England's Long Reformation.

Table 1: Extant English translations of Erasmus' colloquies before 1640

Date	**Translator**	**Printer/publisher**	**Short-title of translation/STC number**	**Colloquies translated/ adapted**
1534	Anon.	Robert Copland for John Bydell	*[Funus]*	"Funus" *‡
1537?	Anon.	n.p.	*Pylgremage of pure devotyon*	"Peregrinatio religionis ergo" *‡
1545	Philip Gerrard	Richard Grafton	*Epicure*	"Epicureus"
1550?	Edmond Becke	John Mychell	*Two dyaloges*	1. "Cyclops" 2. "De rebus ac vocabulis"
1557	attrib. John Rastell	Abraham Vele	*Mery dialogue*; another edn (1557) printed by John Cawood for Antony Kytson (STC² 10455)	"Conjugium" † ‡
1566	E.H.	William Griffith	*Diversoria*	"Diversoria"
1567	Thomas Johnson	Henry Binneman for William Pickering	*Very mery and pleasaunt historie*	"Exorcismus" *
1568	Nicholas Leigh	Henry Denham	*Modest meane to mariage*	1. "Proci et puellae" *† 2. "Adolescentis et scorti" * †‡
1584	Reginal Scot	Henry Denham for William Brome	*Discoverie of witchcraft*	Includes translation of "Alcumista" *
1606	William Burton	[Valentine Simmes] for Nicholas Ling	*Utile-dulce*; also issued in 1606 as *Seven Dialogues* Another edition, *Seaven Dialogues* (1624), printed for John Smithwick (STC² 10458a)	1. "Ixthouphagia" * 2. "Naufragium" *‡ 3. "Conjugium" †‡ 4. "Adolescentis et scorti" *†‡ 5. "Puerpera" † 6. "Peregrinatio religionis ergo" * ‡ 7. "Funus" *‡
1610	Robert Snawsel	N. Okes for Henry Bell	*A looking glasse for married folkes* Later edns (also printed for Henry Bell) 1619, 1631 (STC² 22886.5, 22887)	"Conjugium" †‡
1615	F.S.	W. White for Thomas Pavier	*Picture of a wanton*	"Adolescentis et scorti" *†‡
1637	Thomas Heywood	R. Oulton for R. Hearne to be sold by Thomas Slater	*Pleasant dialogues and dramma's*	1. "Naufragium" *‡ 2. "Proci et puellae" †‡
Key	* Colloquies which contain anti-clerical material in the original † Colloquies about women/female behaviour ‡ Colloquies translated more than once before 1640			

Figure 1: Editions of Erasmus' *Colloquies* printed in England, 1530-1769[70]



[70] Data from ESTC.