PART II

LITERARY GENRES FOR THE EXPRESSION OF FAITH

CHAPTER 8

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TRANSLATION

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In the opening scene to Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (*c.*1588–9), we witness the eponymous anti-hero seated in his study and pondering the various branches of knowledge. After dismissing philosophy, medicine, and law, Faustus then turns to divinity, which he assumes to be the best of all disciplines. However, reading the Bible soon tests his assumptions:

> Jerome's Bible, Faustus view it well.
> [He reads] '*Stipendium peccati mors est.*' Ha!
> '*Stipendium*', etc.
> The reward of sin is death. That's hard.
> [He reads] '*Si peccasse negamus, fallimur*
> *Et nulla est in nobis veritas.*'
> If we say we have no sin,
> We deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us.
> Why then belike we must die
> Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
> What doctrine call you this? *Che sera*, *sera*,
> What will be shall be? Divinity, adieu!
>
> (Marlowe 1995; *Dr Faustus* The A Text, I.i.38–50)

Beginning from a position of assumed knowledge, Faustus quickly moves to one of doubt. I do not wish to dwell upon the much-rehearsed arguments relating to Faustus's mis-reading of the Scriptures, or how this connects to soteriological discussions, or even more recent debates that intriguingly point to the interpretive frameworks that have been adopted by contemporary readers leading us to assume that Faustus is engaged in an act of wilful misunderstanding.[1] Instead, I want to focus upon what Faustus is doing

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[1] For further discussion of the possible interpretations of this speech, see chapter 11 of this volume, as well as Parker 2013.

here in relation to biblical translations. The Vulgate (Jerome's) Bible had been used by the Catholic Church for a thousand years, but the location of Faustus's study is Wittenberg.

The play is loosely based upon the allegedly true story of a learned German doctor who sells his soul to the devil in a reckless attempt to be given ultimate knowledge, but much of its plot is concerned with the Reformation—something which is brought sharply into focus by the markedly anti-Catholic satirical scenes in the B Text of the play. Faustus resides in Lutheran Wittenberg, which makes his engagement with the Vulgate Bible of note—not just in terms of the ecclesiastical politics of place, but also in terms of what this implies about the status of the Vulgate Bible to a late sixteenth-century playgoing public. Faustus moves from a position of certainty to one of doubt with regards to salvation as a direct result of his reading Jerome's translation of the Bible: rather than offering guidance into religious matters, the lack of interpretative lens has led Faustus onto the path of damnation.

Whether Faustus wilfully skips over the verses of the Bible that deal with salvation, or is a poor reader of Scripture, or is demonstrating a different mode of textual engagement, is open to debate. However, what I am interested in here is precisely what is being presented to the play-going public who are witnessing Faustus in his study. Earlier in the soliloquy, we observe Faustus engaging with other modes of learning:

> … live and die in Aristotle's works,
> Sweet *Analytics*, 'tis thou has ravisht me!
> [He reads] '*Bene dissere est finis logices*'.
> Is to dispute well logic's chiefest end?
> Afford this art no greater miracle?
> …
> Be a physician, Faustus, heap up gold,
> And be eternized for some wondrous cure.
> [He reads] '*Summum bonum medicinae sanitas*':
> The end of physic is our body's health.
> Why Faustus, hast thou not attained that end?
>
> (I.i.5–9 and 14–18)

Here, Faustus is engaging with branches of learning through the mode of translation. In abjuring philosophy, Faustus is quoting and translating Ramus, not the Aristotlean original, and this draws attention to the fact that Jerome's Bible too was a translation. While translating the Bible was not necessarily viewed as heretical by the Catholic Church, the suppression of translations of the Bible into English after Wycliffe's translations (*c*.1382–95) and the controversies that the Lollards elicited meant that, with regards to the English Bible, Reformation and biblical translation were closely aligned (Killeen and Smith 2015).

As has been noted frequently, English biblical translation influenced the development of the English language and introduced many Hebraisms and common phrases into the English language (David Norton 2000; Crystal 2010; Hamlin and Jones 2010). C. S. Lewis queried the literariness of the King James Bible (1611), but the committees

who were involved in its translation were intensely concerned with language and drew from previous Protestant and Catholic English Bible translations in an attempt to create a stable and accurate text. But what does 'stable' and 'accurate' mean when it comes to translation? Between 1529 and 1532, Thomas More and William Tyndale entered into a lengthy and at times bilious refutation of each other's stance on biblical translation. More's friend and correspondent Desiderius Erasmus may have pre-empted Miles Coverdale in expressing a wish for the word of God to be made available to every ploughman, but More observes what he perceives to be the dangers of translation:

> But now I pray you let me kno your mynd concernyng ye burning of ye new testament in english which Tindal lately translated & (as men say) right wel whiche makethe men mich meruayl of ye burning.
>   It is q[uoth] I to me gret meruayl that eny good cristen man hauing eny drop of wyt in hys hed wold eny thing meruell or complayn of ye burning of ye boke if he knowe ye mater. which who so callith ye new testament calleth it by a wrong name except they wyl call yt Tyndals testament or Luthers testament. For so had tyndall after Luthers counsayle corrupted & chaunged yt from the good & holsom doctryne of Criste to the deuylysh heresyes of theyr own that it was clene a contrary thing. (More 1529: D3^v)

More argues that, far from disseminating the word of God to a wider audience, biblical translation has become a means by which Tyndale and Martin Luther disseminated Reformist principles to the masses. This is emphasized further in More's *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* (1532), where he takes Tyndale's *An Answer to More's Dialogue* (1531) chapter by chapter and unrelentingly refutes every statement that Tyndale makes. Taking issue with Tyndale's decision to translate *ekklësia* as 'congregation' rather than 'Church', More defends Erasmus from similar condemnations of his choice of words:

> Then [Tyndale] asketh me why I haue not contended with Erasmus whom he calleth my derlynge, of all thys longe whyle for translatynge of thys worde *ecclesia* in to thys worde *congregatio*. And then he cometh forth wyth hys fete proper taunte, that I auour hym of lykelyhed for makynge of hys boks of Maris in my howse. There had he hyt melo saue for lakke of a lytell salte. I haue not contended wyth Erasmus my derlynge, bycause I found no suche malycyouse entent wyth Erasmus my derlynge, as I fynde wyth Tyndale. For had I fownde wyth Erasmus my derlyng the shrewde entent and purpose that I fynde in Tindale: Erasmus my derlynge sholde be no more my derlynge.
>
>   (More 1532: q4$^{r–v}$)

The repetition of the words 'my derlyng' is not only rhetorically effective in establishing a binary between the 'heretical' views of Tyndale as opposed to the 'right-minded' beliefs of More and Erasmus, but also points to a larger, European, humanist discourse. A coterie of some of the most learned thinkers of the day corresponded with each other (usually in Latin) across Europe. In order to understand how translation relates to

religion and literature, it is vital to understand that translation was integral to a humanist education: Faustus at his study is not only demonstrating knowledge of the disciplines he is scrutinizing, he is also exhibiting an understanding of language.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, very few people spoke English in continental Europe at a time when a knowledge of several languages was common amongst the educated elites and the literate middling sort. At the same time, however, Reformists criticized the lack of understanding—not just amongst the laity, but also by the clergy—of Latin. For Reformists, translating the word of God into vernacular tongues allowed the priest (as much as the ploughman) to understand the Gospels.

Of course, there were Old English precedents for translating elements of the Bible and, in *The Obedience of the Christian Man* (1529), Tyndale asserts that King Æthelstan (895–927), often regarded as the first monarch to rule over a united England, commissioned a vernacular Bible (B7ᵛ). There is no evidence to support this claim, though there are Old English translations of parts of the Bible, especially the psalms, and Reformists such as John Bayle in his *Actes of the English Votaries* (1560) looked to tales of British Christians battling against marauding Saxons who came to settle on the British Isles as a way to assert that there was a pre-existing Church in the British Isles before St Augustine arrived in England to convert the Anglo Saxons. Reformists could, and did, appropriate a rich literary inheritance and the past to their cause.

Despite these claims of literary precedence when it came to translating the Bible, those in England who continued to support the Church in Rome declared vernacular translation to be heretical and expressed fear that it encouraged readers into misunderstanding the Scriptures. However, as we saw in the way in which Marlowe opens *Doctor Faustus*, knowledge of Latin does not necessarily lead to comprehension. Theorists such as Jacques Derrida made much of the inherent instability of language, but poststructuralists were certainly not the first people to recognize the ways in which language obfuscates meaning. This was something that has occupied thinkers since classical times and informed early modern anxieties regarding understanding. In *Bailikon Doron* (printed in Scotland, 1599; England in 1603 and a bilingual Welsh-English text in 1604), King James VI of Scotland (later James I of England) cautioned against the discrepancy between intention and interpretation:

> It is true olde saying, That a King is as one set on a scaffold, whose smallest actions & gestures al the people gazingly do behold: and therefore although a King be neuer so precise in the dischargeing of his office, the people who seeth but the outward parte, will euer judge of the substance by the circumstances, & according to the out warde appearance (if his behauiour be light or dissolute) will conceiue preoc-cupied conceit of the Kings inward intention, which although with time (the tryer of al trueth) it wil vanish, by the euidence of the contrarie euents, yet *interim partitur iustus*: and prejudged conceites will (in the meane time) breed Contempt, the Mother of Rebellion and disorder: And besides that it is certain, that all the indifferente actiones and behauiour of a man, haue a certaine holding & dependence, either upon uertue or vice, according as they are used or rules: for there is not a middes betuixt them, no more nor betuixte their rewardes, Heauen and Hell. (James VI 1599: sig, Rʳ–Rᵛ)

While James believes that time will reveal all, Niccolò Machiavelli presents an alternative view over how the differences between intent and the interpretation of intent can be manipulated in order to successfully govern a territory:

> To those seeing and hearing him, [a prince] should appear a man of compassion, a man of good faith, a man of integrity, a kind and religious man. And there is nothing so important as *to seem* to have this last quality. Men in general judge by their eyes rather than their hands; because everyone is in a position to watch, few are in a position to come in close touch with you. Everyone sees what you appear to be, few experience what you really are. (Machiavelli 1999: 57–8)

The distinction between what one is, what one appears to be, and how a monarch navigates the interpretative lenses of his or her subjects may appear to be a markedly different issue to early modern translation, but at the heart of each is an anxiety with regards to the inherent instability of interpretation. Biblical translation was deliberately archaic as a means to stabilize language, but as Lucy Munro has recently shown, these archaisms took two distinct forms. One type of archaism looked to outmoded words as a means of anchoring the (new) national Church within a literary and linguistic tradition and the other, perhaps paradoxically, took the form of neologisms that swiftly became old-fashioned. Catholic translators, in particular, adopted Latinate neologisms as a means of asserting the linguistic differences between faiths. Past and present becomes combined as archaic style lends text a sense of linguistic simplicity and establishes intimacy between reader, text, and timeless utterances (Munro 2013: ch. 3). Archaism in religious translation becomes a way to authorize the text while allowing writers and readers to inhabit the same religious and literary community and to articulate religious identity.

The use of archaism in religious translation would seem to imply that deliberate interpretive strategies were employed as a means to navigate what translation theorists refer to as the 'source text' and the 'target language' into which the text is translated. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers on translation, however, exercised considerable care in understanding the relationship between source text and translation and what this might imply about the literary and ecclesiastical status of the translation. In Francis Marbury's letter to the Reader that prefaces Henry Holland's translation, *A Treatise of God's Effectual Calling* (1603), Marbury distinguishes between translation and paraphrase and advises that we remain sensitive to the idioms of the target language:

> For a good translator is neither a *paraphrast* nor a *periphrast*, which is committed by needless changing or adding words. He so behaveth himself that the comparing of the original will compare his fidelity, and that they which know of no original would take the translator for the author himself. He must naturalise his translation for the reader without injuring the gift of the author in the native work. (Rhodes, Kendal, and Wilson 2013: 172–3)

Marbury attacks the fallacy of paraphrase, and also convoluted translations that say more of the translator's whims than express fidelity to the source text. In doing so,

Marbury observes that the translator is writing for two distinct audiences: a reading public conversant in the language of the source text and who can therefore judge the quality of the translation, and the monoglots who can assess the merits of the translator's abilities to naturalize the narrative under translation and render it understandable and pleasing to a new audience. Indeed, when reading a translation of French romance in 1653, Dorothy Osborne complained that the quality of the translation was poor due to it being so markedly francophone 'that 'twas impossible for one who understood not French to make any thing of them' (Moore-Smith 1928: 91). For the early modern reader, a good translation ought not to reveal its status as a translation and it ought to be naturalized into the target language.

These discussions would seem to imply that the principles of early modern translation have an affinity with contemporary translation theory, where the translator is an almost anonymous force within the text; he or she is a person who silently and faithfully translates and edits the text into its target language. However, the humanist education presented the methods of translation in a very different way. Writing in 1559, Laurence Humphrey presents his reading public with the literary and the godly qualities of the translated text:

> It is God who enables us to express ourselves through language; hence doing this intelligently, in ways suited and familiar to people's hearing and perception, will bring benefit not just privately to the proprietor of the material, but also in general to everyone who hears him. And when an accurate translation is provided something more than just useful is going on, something wonderfully godlike, whether through the live voice in public assemblies, or through pen and writings for the sake of posterity. This is how—by practicing the good office of translation—we can incite some people to virtue and urge them into the fellowship of the Christian religion, and call others back out of vice and superstition; and (in brief) be of mutual help and benefit to one another on any matter whatever. (Rhodes, Kendal, and Wilson 2013: 264–5)

For Humphrey, translating is a communal and sensory act that is facilitated by God. The act of translating is emotional and spiritual, affecting auditors as well as the translator. Since God is the enabler of verbal utterances and expression, all forms of speech and translation have the potential to become religious or devotional undertakings: Basil, whose *An Exhibition … to the study of humaine learnyne* was translated into English by William Baker in 1557 explicated how the 'good' could be distilled from the 'bad' elements of pagan texts as a way of advocating their being read and translated by Christians. Whereas More and others heavily censured the translating of Bibles as those who undertook the translations were believed by them to be advancing heresies in the vernacular, others perceived the very act of translating as being a spiritual undertaking. While God may facilitate verbal expression, Humphrey still maintained that there was an appropriate method to good translation (Norton 1984: 11–14).

Humphrey observes that there are three modes of translation: the 'overscrupulous or unduly restrained' kind, which translates word for word and in doing so fails to be sympathetic to the target language; the variety that 'is freer and looser and allows itself

too much licence', which comprises too many neologisms and embellishments to do justice to the target language or the source text; 'the third method, the "middle way" … is straight-forward but learned, elegant but faithful' (Rhodes, Kendal, and Wilson 2013: 266–8). For Humphrey, translation is like the porridge that Goldilocks steals from the three bears: the perfect translation mediates the perils of remaining too faithful to the source text and the translators allowing themselves too much literary licence. A good translation is sympathetic to both the original text and the language into which it is being translated.

In making these assertions, Humphrey is not presenting a radical view of translation, but merely echoing the practice of the humanist schoolroom. Translation was an integral part of education, where scholars learned the art of composition, rhetoric, and executing a translation creatively. Fidelity to the original text—except where the Scriptures were concerned—was of less importance to the schoolroom translator than producing a stylish text. Whereas Marbury may note a distinction between paraphrase and translation and Humphrey advocates a compromise between fidelity and creativity, in the humanist schoolroom the distinctions between paraphrase and translation, creative writing and rhetorical exercise, break down. Yet the choices made in terms of what is translated shed light on early modern culture: they show us how individuals engaged with past utterances and to what end; how texts circulated across Europe; the status of vernacular languages in relation to the *lingua franca*, Latin, and classical languages; they also reveal the politics of translation in terms of who these texts are being translated for and how the reading public consumed these texts. Despite the printing press being an 'agent of change' (Elizabeth Eisenstein), in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many texts—perhaps especially translations and women's writing—continued to circulate in manuscript form. Scholars are only beginning to unearth the vastness of manuscript circulation, but manuscript texts could—and did—move beyond small coteries who knew the author; they were copied by a wider reading public, sometimes making their way into print. When texts were printed, the material object can enlighten us with regards to how readers engaged with the text.

Eamon Duffy has described Protestant books of hours as 'Trojan Horses': by adopting the appearance and paraphernalia of Catholic texts, printers were making Protestant devotional writing more palatable to a sceptical reading public; they 'smuggled' in new religious and devotional practices as a way of converting an orthodox reading public (Duffy 2006: 171). Elizabeth Salter has modified this argument, offering a fluid representation of popular reading and devotional practices in the Tudor period (Salter 2009: 106–20). However, what these 'Trojan Horses' are also doing is translating Catholic ways of reading into Protestant modes. Far from shielding the text from censure through donning the weeds of Catholicism and transforming it into a text that presents Protestant teachings, these texts blur the distinctions between Catholic and Protestant devotion. Translation, therefore, functions on a variety of levels that may not necessarily be rooted in recreating or adapting the source text to the target language.

So far, I have provided a brief and general overview of early modern translation theory and practice and emphasized how translation was integral to humanist ways of

learning as well as outlining some of the issues that arise when translating Scripture. I will now briefly survey some of the types of translation and how they connect to early modern religion and literature. Inevitably such an overview is not exhaustive, but it gives a sense of the diversity of engagement with literary and religious discourses in early modern England. These discussions will focus upon Erasmus, the Sidney Psalter and Anthony Munday's translations of Iberian prose romances. In so doing, I will give a flavour of the types of translations that are being undertaken within the circles of Northern Renaissance humanist learning, amongst those who had connections at court and in popular culture. As a coda, I will briefly return to drama as a way of seeing how translation operates across all the major literary genres. Of course, this leads to glaring omissions—the translation strategies employed by women and how this feeds into women's devotional writing being one, and the penitential psalm translations of Thomas Wyatt, Henry Howard, and others being another. In order to understand the relationship between religion and literary texts, we must first take into account the divergence of thought between medieval and early modern learning.

More may have defended Erasmus when William Tyndale detected a degree of hypocrisy in More's stance on biblical translation, but Erasmus courted controversy in his use of the Scripture. More and Erasmus were two of the key thinkers of Northern Renaissance humanism and Erasmus was quite scathing of the philosophies that underpinned teaching in the medieval universities. The dominant mode of thought within the medieval universities was scholasticism, which sought to reconcile Christian doctrine with the Aristotelean teachings that had been rediscovered in Western Europe and first translated into Latin in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Scholasticism endeavoured to reconcile faith and reason. Quotations from authorities such as Boethius, Aristotle, St Augustine of Hippo, and the Bible would be synthesized in accordance with how the disputer drew distinctions from the meaning of words. In the literary form of the *quæstio*, opposing views would be presented and reconciled: one question leads to another and each question is systematically addressed to give the appearance of a unified whole. Such unity can lead to contradiction; this is seen in Thomas Aquinas's teachings where early criticisms are present within his own work. The scholastics were influential in the development of some branches of linguistics, logic, philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, law, and political theory. Although the Scottish scholastic John Duno Scotus (*c*.1266–1308) was admired by modern philosophers such as Heidegger, the Renaissance humanists were critical of their scholastic forefathers. The humanists perceived scholasticism as generating inelegant texts that were too abstract, which defied logic and had too heavy a reliance upon (and deference to) authority.

Despite these criticisms of the scholastics, the humanists still looked to the authority of antiquity. In addition to this, rhetoric and skills in debating were important features of the early modern classroom as were the reading, interpreting, and translating of classical Greek and Latin texts. In this respect, although Renaissance humanists defined the learning that took place in the classroom as different to its precursors, it grew out of medieval scholasticism. Humanists understood the education system and the study and

translation of literature as being a way to 'train' a citizen to assume their role in civil society.

Humanists copied, edited, translated, and disseminated classical texts, perhaps most notably the works of Virgil and Cicero. This presents some challenges with regards to how to present pagan authors in a Christian context. These fed into issues regarding original sin, free will, and grace and whether writers who did not have access to Christian teachings could offer anything of moral or spiritual value to a Christian civil society. The problem of will was central to Reformation debates regarding soteriology—the branch of theology concerned with salvation. Aristotelean intellectualism and Arabic neoplatonism presented a universe governed by necessary connections. These necessary connections allowed little room for human autonomy. In the fourteenth century, the problem of free will led to discussions regarding the absolute power of God (*potentia absoluta dei*) and the ordained power of God (*potentia ordinate dei*). In the fifth century, St Augustine had helped to have Pelagianism—the belief that original sin did not exist and an individual could live sinless and gain salvation without the intervention of the grace of God—declared a heresy, but the difficulties in reconciling predestination and free will continued. In some respects, the Reformation emerged as much as a consequence of debates and doctrinal disputes expressed in the universities as it was a reaction to the perceived iniquities of the papacy, and the most celebrated humanist of his day, Erasmus, found his writings were both praised and censured. Although he saw much to approve in Luther's critiques of the Church, the two men could not be reconciled on the matter of free will: Luther perceived Erasmus's stance to be Pelagian heresy and Erasmus favoured reform of the Church rather than following Luther in rejecting the medieval sacraments and advocating a form of predestination that seemed to deny free will.

Despite their similar disillusionment with, and shared criticism of, the Catholic Church, the two men ended up on different sides of the confessional divide, with Luther sparking a break from the Catholic Church and Erasmus (eventually) publishing critiques of Luther's stance. These debates may seem to have little to do with translation, but both men advocated the translation of religious texts into vernacular languages, though perhaps Luther approached translation from a theological perspective and Erasmus from a rhetorical one that was rooted in the humanist classroom. As the early modern period progressed, Pelagian and Augustinian notions of free will versus predestination would be superseded by Calvinist and Arminian doctrines of salvation, but the unsettled status of the body, soul, grace, and salvation would sow the seeds of a new form of devotional writing, perhaps especially amongst women. Medieval pieties were abandoned, to be replaced with other notions of selfhood, which would culminate in René Descartes's *Meditations* (published 1641).

On the eve of Reformation, however, Erasmus's most famous work, *Moriae ecomium seu laus* (*The Praise of Folly*, 1511) appeared. Here, Erasmus draws upon Lucian's satires to produce an ironic encomium. Folly (Moira—also a pun on the name of his friend, the wise fool, Thomas More), in the garb of a jester, praises herself and her followers. The text is divided into three sections: initially, Folly lampoons her

followers, and both celebrates and mocks earthly pleasures before moving on to attack the nobility, the Church, and academia as well as the pretences, hypocrisies, and delusions that govern individuals within their various professions. The nobility come under attack for their love of empty titles and lack of regard for the common good. The Church and the universities are especially rebuked: Folly condemns the Pope's love of worldly pleasures and desire for war, the way the Church profited from the superstitions of the laity, and more generally, she lambasts the corrupt and envious priesthood and orders of monks. Human pretensions and scholarly wrongheadedness come under fire in Folly's criticism of the universities: scholastic theology, in particular, is criticized, but the conceited pride in their learning mean that scholars, rhetoricians, and poets are all seen as abandoning Christian principles. These criticisms have a destabilizing effect upon the text as the rhetoric that Erasmus employs runs parallel to the kinds of arguments that come under fire within the text. There is a degree of playfulness in how Erasmus presents his arguments while at the same time exposing the foibles of human learning.

The final section draws from St Paul's assertion that 'We are all fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised' (I Corinthians 4:10). The 'folly' of Christian piety is here celebrated. Viewing Neoplatonic notions of the relationship between the soul and matter as a way to comprehend Christian revelation, Folly asserts that by abjuring worldly affairs, Christians can set their sights on higher things: Christian piety is a form of madness through which an individual can achieve perfect happiness.

The Praise of Folly is a *tour de force* in rhetoric, the appropriation of classical and humanist learning, and of Christian piety. It was translated into all the major Western European languages and Thomas Chaloner's English translation appeared in 1549. These translations meant Erasmus's text continued to be read by those not versed in Latin throughout the early modern period. Its focus upon the relationship between body and soul and the foibles of the material world rejected medieval scholasticism and the perceived corruptions of the Church. In some respects, Erasmus's *The Praise of Folly* offers a prolonged exegesis on Pauline teachings through synthesizing Christian doctrine with Platonic philosophies. It is a sophisticated text, imbued with wit, wordplay, and the rhetorical flourishes that it lampoons. The allegory becomes as self-critical as it is critical of all human frailty. *The Praise of Folly* is one of the major texts of Northern Renaissance humanism and, although Erasmus remained within the Catholic commune, pre-empted Reformist critiques of the Catholic Church. It was a hugely successful text; it was also controversial, especially after Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of All Saints Church in Wittenberg in 1517.

Erasmus may have been critical of the Catholic Church, but he sought reform of the Church rather than schism and the Reformation. However, his writings appear to have remained popular with Protestants. In 1543, Nicholas Udall was commissioned by Katherine Parr to oversee the translation of Erasmus's Latin *Paraphrases on the New Testament* into English. The project appears to have crossed confessional divides, with

translations by the orthodox Princess Mary appearing alongside those by strongly Protestant figures such as Katherine Parr and Miles Coverdale. As noted earlier, Francis Marbury observed a distinction between paraphrase and translation and the two undertakings suggest different relationships between source text and target language. However, these paraphrases formed a part of early modern popular piety, as did the translation of psalms.

Perhaps the most popular form of religious translation in the early modern period was psalm translation. While translating the Bible into English was controversial, psalm translation was not. Translating the psalms was undertaken partly as an act of devotion and partly as a literary exercise. By far the most widely-used psalm translation in the early modern period was Sternhold and Hopkins, which are set in common metre. Widely critiqued for their inelegancy, they remained popular in Church worship until the late seventeenth century (Quitslund 2008).

At the other end of the spectrum, amongst the psalms celebrated for their literary merit is the Sidney Psalter. Begun by Philip Sidney, his sister Mary translated the remaining 107 psalms and revised some of Philip's forty-three translations after his death in 1586. The Sidney Psalter would not appear in print until 1823. Despite this, the text circulated widely and the complete psalter and individual psalms were copied by the reading public. The influence that they had on seventeenth-century lyric poetry attests to their popularity. For example, Psalm 88 is riven with a sense of agony, alienation, and supplication that chimes with the tone of John Donne's *Holy Sonnets*. At the same time, its verse form prefigures George Herbert's poetry.

The Sidney Psalter is a dexterous piece of devotional writing: its complex use of varying verse forms suggest that they were not intended for public Church worship, but instead are a feat of private devotional practice. They are also a literary achievement: the Sidney Psalter is not just an exercise in devotional writing, but aligns the psalms with a newfound sense of confidence in vernacular poetry and in the English Church. Philip Sidney's militant Protestant chivalric principles were to cost him his life during the Dutch revolt in the Spanish Netherlands. In this context, verse translation not only becomes a means of asserting the linguistic and literary qualities of the English language, but also reaffirms English Protestant poetics. By completing the psalter, Mary Sidney continues to weave religious devotion with political and social commentary.

Writing of English metrical psalms, Hannibal Hamlin observes that it is not how accurately they are translated that makes them interesting, 'but the imaginative boldness of their error' (Hamlin 2004: 11). It is not so much imaginatively bold inaccuracies in translation that the Sidney Psalter evinces, but rather an audacious refashioning of their form. Donne, in his poem, 'Upon the Translation of the Psalms by Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke his Sister', described the psalms as 'The Highest Matter in the noblest form' (l. 11). For Donne, the Sidney Psalter is not only a work of sophisticated lyric poetry, but also a well-crafted work of devotion. Echoing Humphrey's assertion that good translations are elegant, faithful, and learned, Donne praises the Sidneys' 'sweet learned labours' (l. 54).

Despite (or, perhaps, because of) these claims of poetic value, Donne locates the psalms within a framework that focusses upon national identity:

> A brother and a sister, made by thee
> The organ, where thou art the harmony.
> Two that make one John Baptist's holy voice,
> And who that Psalm 'Now let the Isles rejoice'
> Have both translated, and applied it too,
> Both told us what, and taught us how to do.
> They show us islanders our joy, our King,
> They tell us *why* and teach us *how* to sing. (ll. 15–22)

Taking Psalm 97 as a starting point ('The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad *thereof*' Psalm 97: 1), Donne retranslates the call to rejoice in the Lord to a celebration of translation. The Sidney Psalter takes on a didactic quality, instructing English speakers on how to engage with the Psalms and with God.

Throughout the rest of the poem, Donne makes use of an extended metaphor that connects the harmony of the spheres, God, and David to the Sidneys' lyrical translations. The voices merge into one, implying a cohesive unity between God, the cosmos, David as originator, and the Sidneys as translators. The Psalms become not just a triumph of scholarship and translation, but also one of devotion.

Psalm translation was the most common form of religious translation in the early modern period and practised by men and women, but biblical translation was by no means the only form of religious translation that was undertaken at this time. As we have seen, Erasmus's *The Praise of Folly* was not only a triumph of humanist exposition on Christian teaching, it was also a widely read text that was translated into many languages and crossed national borders and confessional divides. So too were romances.

Vernacular prose romance has long been accused of being the reading matter of the idle and fanciful. While texts such as Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* have been extensively examined—perhaps especially in relation to Ireland and its militant Protestant agenda—the translations into English prose of Iberian romances by Anthony Munday have, until recently, been largely overlooked. As one study observes, Munday was a prolific author who produced more texts and was writing for a longer period of time than almost all of his contemporaries. Yet, Munday is often considered to be a minor literary figure (Hamilton 2005: xv). Perhaps part of the reason for this is that his writing is nebulous and difficult to categorize.

A playwright who wrote an anti-theatrical tract and went on to be one of the dominant pageant-writers for the City of London, Munday has been described as both a rabid Protestant and a converted or lapsed Catholic (C. Turner 1928; McCoog 1993). Donna B. Hamilton makes the case for Munday's denunciations of the Pope and expressions of loyalty to the crown with his apparent lack of Protestant spirituality by proposing that Munday may have been sympathetic to Catholic loyalism. For Catholic loyalists, fidelity to the old faith and to the crown was not incompatible: English Catholics could have the appearance of conformity in the late sixteenth century simply because they did not

object to Elizabeth's reign and assumed an appearance of outward conformity by participating in Church of England worship at least once a month. While some chose recusancy and fines, imprisonment and the possible torture that may ensue, or went into exile, or became martyrs for their faith, many Catholics maintained political loyalty to England and either converted to Protestantism or assumed an outward appearance of conformity while continuing to subscribe to Catholic doctrines.

Discussions with regards to Munday's religious beliefs are likely to continue due to what Hamilton identifies throughout her study as the Janus-like stance adopted by the writer. Munday is often regarded as a 'hack' writer and as a purveyor of cheap print and popular culture. While he certainly was no a courtier poet, his varied career included roles such as Messenger of Her Majesty's Chamber, and he was commissioned to write plays by Philip Henslow, to write Lord Mayor shows and to revise John Stow's *The Survey of London*. Such roles place him at the centre of court intrigue and municipal authority and Hamilton argues that Munday used this status to rally against the emerging English Protestant identity presented by contemporaries such as Spenser and Philip Sidney:

> Munday's success … depended in part on his deflecting attention from any notion of himself as possessing authority or acting autonomously, as is suggested by his work as a gatherer, translator, reporter, government mouthpiece, collaborator and reviser. However, the accumulated effect of tracking his work across decades erases the impression that Munday exercised little agency, leaving instead a sense of Munday as an engaged writer who … wanted to make an impact upon what would come to be known as English identity. In gathering, translating, reporting, collaborating, and revising, Munday repeatedly put back into print materials that Protestant versions of English or British identity had eliminated and were continuing to invalidate. Cultural work of the first order, these acts involved feeding, even aggressively contaminating, English ideological and historiographical discourses with materials from Catholic, European and pre-Henrician traditions. (Hamilton 2005: xviii–xix)

In Hamilton's reading of Munday's writing, Duffy's 'Trojan Horses' have been inverted: whereas Duffy argued that in the early years of the Reformation in England, Protestants made the new religion palatable to an orthodox public by appropriating the textual apparatus of the Catholic Book of Hours, Hamilton suggests that Munday covertly and subtly maintains the vitality of Catholicism within a country that has become increasingly accustomed to Protestant doctrines and poetics.

Hamilton's discussions are intriguing and make for detailed and startling reappraisals of Munday's work. However, as she acknowledges in her concluding remarks and throughout her discussions, the argument she presents requires some qualification due to the equivocation that is present within Munday's writing and the reading strategies that need to be employed (2005: 197). Furthermore, Munday was known to have informed on priests and other Catholics and worked for Elizabeth's notorious torturer of Catholics, Richard Topcliffe (Hill 2004: 36). At the same time, his translations of Iberian romances and their being dedicated to Catholics or people close to Catholics as well as

his collaborations on the controversial play, *Sir Thomas More* (1592–4) would seem to contradict the notion that Munday was a zealous persecutor of Catholics.

Munday's personal beliefs may never be uncovered, nor will we know if early modern readers engaged with his translations as acts of covert religious defiance. However, what this emphasizes is the pliability of religion. Since the 'religious turn' within early modern studies, scholars have come to realize that the weight and volume of religious texts printed in the period vastly outnumbers secular texts. They have also come to understand that the simple binary of 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' underestimates the complexities of faith and religious devotion as an individual experience and part of everyday life and we need to recognize that faith is unique to each individual (Jackson and Marotti 2004). Munday's writing intersects with religious and political discourses in a variety of ways that are often opaque and this is especially true of his romance translations.

These texts were originally written in the early sixteenth century and offer Spanish (Catholic) commentary upon the English conquest of Ireland. Their translation into French and Munday's working from the French translations arrive at key points in relation to European religion and politics. Munday's translations were printed and reprinted between 1588 and 1639—a period that includes the aftermath of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, continued tensions with Spain until the signing of the peace treaty that ended the Anglo–Spanish war in 1604, the disastrously miscalculated Spanish Match, the personal rule of Charles I and reforms in Church worship that led to the Bishops Wars in the years leading up to Civil War. Given the unpopularity of Spain with the English, the appearance and popularity of outmoded Iberian romances in English seems remarkable.

Whereas the allegory of *The Faerie Queene* presents to a reading public the triumph of Protestantism and endorses a Protestant agenda in Ireland, Munday's romances appear to retain the residues of criticism of English policy. Munday removed much of the Catholic oaths and rituals in the Palmerin and Amadis chivalric cycles, but for Hamilton they still retain the residues of a Catholic agenda, which make them thorny texts in Protestant England (Hamilton 2005: ch. 3). To an extent, this claim could be made of any allegorical texts that transcend national and confessional borders, and Munday's 'unabashedly pragmatic' (Hill 2004: 70) approach to his writing career means it is difficult to decipher the meaning of any political-religious impulses, implicit or explicit. However, Hamilton's discussions do shed light on the complexities of early modern translation and religion. Whereas scriptural translation drew attention to the need to translate word for word to maintain accuracy in the presentation of biblical exegesis, translation of prose romances required modification to make them 'fit' for a Protestant reading public. Such amendments extend to stylistics. As Helen Moore notes, in comparison to French translations, Munday's English translations are heavily inflected and bear the characteristics of Euphuism (Moore 2000: 340).

Regardless of the extent to which Munday removed or sanitized Catholic practices in his translations, the status of the romance genre in relation to religion is of note. The numerous translations across Europe of the Iberian romances attests to their success with the reading public, but, as Louise Wilson observes, 'In the course of the sixteenth century, the terms "Amadis" and "Palmerin" … came to stand metonymically for the

kinds of frivolous or harmful text which humanist and religious writers counselled against' (Wilson 2011: 121). Translations of romances, therefore, are not of note so much for their religious content as for the objections raised about the effect that the reading of them would have on the reader. Women, in particular, were believed to be at risk due to their alleged prolific reading of romances. Reading, Helen Smith tells us, was understood in this period as an embodied act and the psychological and physical effects of reading 'dangerous' texts and virtuous texts was therefore a matter of concern to moralists (Smith 2010).

Despite these controversies, Munday's romances were clearly popular as they went into several editions during his lifetime and after his death in 1633. The same cannot be said of John Webster's *The White Devil* (1612), whose lack of box office success Webster blames upon its performance in an 'open and black' theatre' in 'so dull a time of winter' to 'ignorant asses' (Webster 2008: 5). In this play, Vittoria is implicated in the murder of her husband and of her lover's wife and is put on trial. This scene has been of interest to critics because of its treatment of women in contrast to men, but what I am interested in here is its attitude to language:

> VITTORIA: Pray my lord, let him speak his usual tongue.
>   I'll make no answer else.
> FRANCISCO: Why you understand Latin.
> VITTORIA: I do sir, but amongst this auditory
>   Which come to hear my cause, the half or more
>   May be ignorant in't. (III.ii.13–17)

This exchange establishes a metadramatic connection with the play-going public, but it also satirizes the judicial process: upon being ordered to speak 'his usual tongue', the lawyer finds it impossible to refrain from interjecting malapropisms and incomprehensible neologisms, so much so that Vittoria remarks, 'Why this is Welsh to Latin' (III.ii.39). The lawyer is unable to move between languages; this draws to attention the absurdity of the trial, which is overseen by a biased Cardinal. In the lack of impartiality displayed by the Cardinal, we see that the play also focuses upon matters of faith. Crucifixes are retranslated into symbols of the family and its disintegration, and the adoption of Priestly robes as disguises by the revengers mirrors the duplicity that Protestants believed laid at the heart of the Catholic faith (Williamson 2007). The play inverts rites of marriage, confession, and extreme unction to present a Catholic society imbued with moral ambiguity, and questions whether faith is compatible with revenge. Here, translation and religion become fragmented, but other dramatic works were translated to voice displeasure at monarchical antics.

Early Tudor interludes such as John Heywood's translation of Lucian, *The Play of the Weather*, which was printed in 1533, have been linked to the king's Great Matter and the religious political concerns that underpinned Henry's decision to break with Katherine of Aragon and with Rome (Walker 2005: ch. 6). A century later, biblical narratives were used to condemn monarchical antics in the early years of the Civil War: a translation

of George Buchanan's tragedy, *Baptistes sive Calumnia* (*c*.1542), which tells the death of John the Baptist, entitled *Tyrannicall-Government Anatomised*, was sponsored by Parliament in 1643 (Willie 2013: 66). Latin comedies and tragedies that drew from biblical sources flourished in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and were translated from, and to, vernacular languages (Leo 2015).

This chapter has surveyed some of the concepts relating to translation, religion, and literature in the early modern period. Given the weight and volume of translations undertaken at this time, it is not meant to be exhaustive or come to any neat (or reductive) conclusions with regards to the complexities of engaging with early modern translation theory and religion. Rather, it has offered a snapshot of some of the issues that are at stake across a range of religious genres. Translation crossed national and confessional divides and consequently, when considering English literature, we must also consider European perspectives, changing cultural conditions, and how translators recreated a narrative in a new language.