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Trinity College, Cambridge, MS R.7.31

Trinity College, MS R.7.31 is a collection of biblical sentences against idolatry which the young King Edward VI (b. 12 October 1537, acc. 28 January 1547, d. 6 July 1553) located and translated into French as a gift for his maternal uncle, Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset (b. c.1500, d. 22 January 1552). Somerset was the recipient of Edward's gift translation not in his capacity as lord protector of the realm but in the second office to which he was appointed on 4 February 1547, the 'governor of the king's person'. As Roger Ascham explained in *The Scholemaster* (1570), a sixteenth-century 'governor' had something approaching fatherly responsibility for a child's physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual education.

In sixteenth-century England a practice emerged whereby aristocratic children produced demonstrations of their learning which they presented to their parents or governors as marks of affection and duty. In the case of royal offspring, these shows of erudition were often circulated at court. For instance Edward's half-sister, the Princess Elizabeth, produced multi-lingual translations, bound in covers of her own embroidery, as gifts for Henry VIII and Katherine Parr. Her 1544 prose translation of Marguerite de Navarre's *Le Miroir de l'âme pécheresse* (Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Cherry 36, ff. 2r-63r, ed. Mueller and Scodel), presented to Parr, made its way to John Bale and James Cancellor, who printed it with alterations in 1548 and 1590, and 1568, 1580 and 1582, respectively. Trinity College, MS R.7.31 is one of Edward's early academic performances and designed to reassure Somerset of his progress in French grammar, composition, italic handwriting and his understanding of reformed religious doctrine.

In the document of his activities, often referred to as his 'Chronicle', Edward wrote that in 1544, at the age of six years, he was removed from the care of women 'to be brought up in learning by Mr. Dr. [Richard] Cox, who was after his Almoner, and John Cheke... Master of Arts, two well-learned men, who sought to bring him up in learning of tongues, of the scripture, of philosophy, and all liberal sciences. Also John Belmaine, Frenchman, did teach him the French language' (p. 3, ed. Jordan). Yet Edward composed this entry some years after the establishment of his household at Hampton Court. While Cheke certainly taught Edward Latin from mid-1544, a letter from Cox to William Paget demonstrates that the king did not begin to study French until 12 October 1546, his ninth birthday. Bills authorised by the royal stamp confirm that in September 1546 the French Huguenot Jean Belmaine (fl. 1546–59) was transferred from the Princess Elizabeth's household to become 'schoolmaster to my lord the Prince grace for the French tongue', at a wage of forty marks a year. It seems fitting that Edward's first surviving French exercise, produced under Belmaine in December 1546, was a letter to his half-sister (Inner Temple Library, Petyt MS 538, ed. Nichols, vol. 46, f. 10). Belmaine continued to instruct Edward after his accession in January 1547. Indeed, as the schoolmaster's 18 April 1553 gift to Edward of a French translation of the 1552 Book of Common Prayer shows (British Library, Royal MS 20A14), he remained attached to his royal pupil to the end of his life. The king made good progress in grammar under Belmaine. While he had not advanced sufficiently by February of 1547 to converse with the new French ambassador, his reading and writing skills developed quickly, probably facilitated by his previous exposure to Latin.

It seems likely that by mid-1547, therefore, Edward was ready for a writing challenge in French beyond the genre of the familiar epistle. As the king explained in his dedicatory epistle to Somerset in Trinity College, MS R.7.31 he had read his 'Bible en Anglois' (the Great Bible which his regime had insisted be chained in every church) and collected from it 'many Sentences which speak against idolatry'. Then, for his own 'understanding and study of French Scripture', Edward had translated these places 'into the French tongue, then rewritten them in this little book' to offer them to his uncle (f. 3r). In fact, the exercise which followed this letter was both less comprehensive and more complicated than Edward had described.

The king only worked through part of the Old Testament in Trinity College, MS R.7.31. With a couple of deviations (notably a f. 5v reference to the Books of Wisdom), Edward's citations began with Exodus (f. 4r) and finished with the Book of the Prophet Hosea (f. 20r). The king explained in conclusion that 'there were other places in sacred scripture' which spoke against idolatry, 'as much in the Apocryphal Books as elsewhere', but he had not 'mentioned for the present' since 'they correspond to those places which have been referred to already' (f. 20r). Even this philosopher-king in the making could be enough of a boy to tire of a long and somewhat repetitious task of extracting and translating similarly-themed passages to get to the New Testament.

More surprising, however, was the freedom with which Edward translated the word of God in his 'little book'. Indeed, the liberties that the king took in rendering his 'places' are such that had he not stated that he had worked from the English Bible, it would have been difficult to identify it as his source text. Comparison to a contemporary French bible which Belmaine must have known, the 1535 Bible de Serrières, translated by Pierre Robert Olivetan and introduced by Jean Calvin, suggests that the king was not familiar with its vocabulary. Instead, as the following table reveals, Edward often used French cognates for English words. Where the Bible de Serrières prohibited the making of '*image taillée*' (sig. diiii^r) and the Great Bible condemned the 'grauen ymage' (sig. dV^r), Edward wrote '*ymage grauee*' (f. 5v). Yet the following examples below also illustrate how loosely the king translated the English text.

Place: letters ref. chapter sections marked in the Great Bible, cited in Edward's MS.	Great Bible: I have used STC 2070	Edward VI's Translation in TCC, MS R.7.31
1. Exodus 20 A.	Thou shalt make the no grauen ymage, nether any symilitude that is in heauen aboue, ether in the erth benethe or in the waters under the erth. Thou shalt not worshyppe them, nether serue them. (sig. dV ^r)	Tu ne te feras ymage grauee, ny Sembla[n]ce d'aucune chose quo soit au Ciel, ou en la Terre, ou en la Mair qui est dessus la Terre, tu n'adoreras luers Ymages. (f. 5v)
2. 1 Kings 8 B.	For they have not caste ye awaye, but me: that I shuld not rayne over the[m]. And as they have ever done (sence I brought them out of Egypte into this daye and have forsaken me, and serued other gods) even so do they unto the. (sig. DVII ^v)	Ainsy comme ilz m'ont delaissé, et ont seruy a autres Dieux qu'a moy, ainsy maintenant font ilz a toy. (f. 12r)
3. Judges 2 B.C.D	And then [the] children of Israel dyd wyckedye in the syght of the lorde, and serued Baalim, and forsoke the Lorde God of	Semblablement losue dit au liure des Iuges que les Enfans d'Israel seruirent a autres Dieux qu'au

	<p>their fathers, whych brought them out of the land of Egypte, and folowed straunge goddes, euen of the goddes of the nacyons that were round about them, and bowed themselues unto them, and angered the lorde. They forsoke the lorde, and serued Baal and Astharoth. and the wrath of the lorde waxed hote agaynst Israel, and he delyuered them into the ha[n]des of raueners, that spoyled the[m], and solde them into the handes of their enemyes rounde aboute them, so [that] they had no power any longer to sta[n]de before their enemyes. But whethersoever they went out, the hand of the lord was agaynst them with euell lucke, euen as the lord promysed them, & as he sware unto them. And he punyshed them sore.</p> <p>Neuerthelesse the lorde rayzed up Judges, which delyuered them out of the ha[n]des of their oppressers... (sig. BV^f)</p>	<p>Seigneur, comme a Baal et a Astaroth, et qu'alors le Seigneur fut courroucé, et les liura entre les Mains de leurs Ennemis. (f. 10r)</p>
4. Exodus 15 C.	<p>[Moses and Israelites sing] Who is lyke unto the, O Lorde, among Goddes? Who is lyke the so glorious in holynes, fear full in prayses, shewing wonders? (sig. dIV^f)</p>	<p>Dieu a aussy dit. Qui est semblable a moy entre les Dieux des Gentilz? Qui est si Glorieux? ou qui est celuy qui monstre si grans Miracles entre les Dieux? (f. 7r)</p>
5. Ezekiel 20 C.	<p>Walcke in my statutes, kepe my lawes and do them, hallowe my sabbathes: for they are a token betwixte me and you, [that] ye maye knowe howe [that] I am the Lorde your God. (sig. MMVII^f)</p>	<p>Gardéz mes Loix et Ordonances, et santifiéz mes iours de Festes, pourtant que c'est vn Signe entre vous, et moy; afin que vous congnoissiez que ie suis le Seigneur vostre Dieu, qu'il n'est nul autre Dieu, que moy seullement. (f. 18v)</p>

In the first example Edward simply abbreviated the final sentence of a quotation from Exodus 20, perhaps on the grounds that that the French verb *adorer* combined the meanings of the two English words, 'to serve' and 'to worship'. In the second example his tendency to compress the detail of the Great Bible text was exaggerated. Edward excised God's explanation to Samuel of the Israelites' rebellious motive for idolatry, 'that [God] shuld not rayne over the[m]', and the historical context of their flight from Egypt. What remains in Edward's rendering is a neat, powerful parallelism. As the third example shows, Edward frequently epitomised much longer biblical passages. Indeed most of his extracts from Judges are summaries rather than close translations. While the original passage in the Great Bible contained much repetition, perhaps to emphasise to a listening audience the ongoing and repeated idolatry of the children of Israel and the extent of God's anger, Edward simply summarised its core lesson for the reading faithful. In the fourth example the king seems to have misremembered the original speakers in the biblical text, or decided that the words describing the Lord's omnipotence would carry greater authority if they issued from God's mouth than from the lips of Moses and the Israelites. The effect of this change is confusing, however, since Edward's version has God acknowledging the existence of '*les Dieux des Gentilz*' and simply claiming to be preeminent '*entre les Dieux*'. In the fifth example, however, Edward's memory and theology was back on track. Indeed to God's original instructions to the Israelites

in Ezekiel, Edward has added a final emphatic sentence in which the Lord reminds his people that there is no other God but him alone.

Edward's errors and his free translation practice may help us reconstruct Jean Belmaine's classroom methods and the pedagogical object of this particular exercise. First, the king's mistake in example four makes it clear that Edward was not translating directly from an open English Bible. Perhaps Belmaine had read passages aloud while Edward took notes, or he the tutor had instructed his pupil to read a block of text, close his bible and recapture its key features from memory in French. This would certainly account for the king's tendency (in examples one to three) to epitomise long, repetitious passages and to emphasize the core doctrine of his text (in example five). Alternatively, Edward may have taken down quotations directly in English and then shut his book and performed the translation into French from memory. This final possibility seems to align most neatly with his explanation of the exercise to Somerset. It would have required Edward to locate the places in his English Bible, to learn them sufficiently well to reproduce them in another language, and to place them in a logical order with connecting sentences in his 'little book'. Rather than being a simple grammatical exercise in French, it was a task which increased Edward's biblical knowledge and his capacity to use it to evidence one side of an argument.

The king's free style suggests that Jean Belmaine taught Edward differently from his half-sister, Elizabeth. The princess's translation of the first chapter of the first French-language edition of Jean Calvin's *Institution de la Religion Chrestienne* (1541) (National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, MS RH 13/78, ff. 1r-89v, ed. Mueller and Scodel) was probably performed under Belmaine, who corresponded with Calvin in the 1540s. Elizabeth's English version echoes closely the vocabulary, word order and phrasing of Calvin's original. While Elizabeth made some strategic adjustments where she disagreed with the reformer's theology, the overall pedagogical object of her translation was to achieve textual comprehension and fidelity.

In Edward's case, however, Belmaine set exercises which were designed to teach the king to make theological arguments. Indeed, having made a similar collection of sentences from scripture on the justificatory power of faith for Somerset in December 1548 (British Library, Additional MS 9000, ed. Nichols), Edward embarked on a full-blown French treatise against the primacy of the pope in December 1548. The king finished the first draft (British Library, Additional MS 5464) in March 1549. Belmaine's hand is on this manuscript, correcting Edward's French and softening a number of his claims (MacCulloch, pp. 26-7). Then in August 1549 Edward produced a final version for his uncle's perusal (Cambridge University Library, MS Dd 12. 59, ed. Nichols; an English translation was printed in 1682). He used biblical citation, epitome, paraphrase and references to prove his fiercely polemical case and to disprove contrary arguments. Jean Belmaine evidently set Edward exercises like Trinity College, MS R.7.31 to teach his pupil to defend key doctrines of his reformed English church with authority and vigour.

In this case, the doctrine concerned was the case against the presence of images in churches. Archbishop Cranmer's speech at Edward's coronation had urged the young king to imitate Josiah in ensuring that 'God [was] truly worshipped, and idolatry destroyed, the tyranny of the bishops of Rome banished from your subjects, and images removed' from his churches (ed. Cox, p. 127). This sentiment became formal church policy in the Edwardian Injunctions of 31 July 1547. Their stated purpose was, 'theaduanceme[n]t of the true honor of almighty God', which

depended on ‘the suppression of Idolatrye, and Supersticio[n], throughout all [Edward’s] Realmes and Dominio[n]s’ (sig. aii^r). Edward noted their proclamation in the ‘Chronicle’ of 1547. He explained that their purpose was to take ‘away divers ceremonies’, a policy which would be enforced by the ‘commission sent to take down images’ and justified in ‘certain homilies... set forth to be read in the church’ (p. 6, ed. Jordan).

Indeed the Injunctions were frequently bound with the official Edwardian Homelies, which had been written by Cranmer and others. The Injunctions required that the faithful should ‘not set furthe or extolle any Images, Reliques, or miracles, for any supersticion, or lucre’ (sig. aiii^r). They instituted quarterly preaching against ‘woorkes deuised by mannes phantasies’, such as beads, images and pilgrimages, since these objects encouraged ‘Idolatry and supersticio[n]’ (sig. aiii^r). The third, and most radical injunction, required parish priests to remove and destroy any ‘suche Images, as they knowe... to bee, or haue been so abused with pilgrimage or offringes’. The tenth regulation provided guidance for priests and churchwardens on what constituted a superstitious object. They were to:

take away, utterly extincte, and destroye, all shrines, coveringe of shrines, all tables, candelstickes, tryndelles or rolles of waxe, pictures, payntynges, and all other monuments of fayned miracles, pilgrimages, Idolatry, and supersticio[n]: so that there remayn no memory of the same, in walles, glasses, windowes, or els where, within their churches or houses. And they shall exhorte all their parishioners to doo the like within their seuerall houses (sigs cii^v-ciii^r).

These were radical regulations and must have seemed like wanton and malicious destruction of God’s house to many parishioners.

The removal and destruction of images and shrines was explained and justified by the 1547 Homelies which followed, particularly in Cranmer’s account ‘Of good workes annexed unto faithe’. There the Archbishop described idolatry as the result of the fall of man. While the classical gentiles and the Israelites of the Old Testament had instinctively sought the seed of religion, their corrupted state caused them to worship their ‘awne phantasies’ on their own material terms (sig. H.iv^v), rather than follow God’s commandments against idolatry. Cranmer lamented the tendency of men in his own time to similarly prefer human inventions, such as papal decrees and stained glass windows, to the word of God and the faith of Christ.

Cranmer’s sermon and the Edwardian Injunctions echoed the writings of a number of continental evangelicals, above all the theology and ecclesiastical policies of Jean Calvin. As Calvin had set out in both his Genevan Catechism of 1545 and in the post-1539 *Institutes*, including the 1541 version from which Belmaine had taught Elizabeth, the central purpose of creation was for men and women to understand God rightly and glorify him in their worship and life (ed. Baum, Cunitz and Reuss, vol. 6, cols 9-10). In the first chapter of his 1541 *Institutes*, for instance, Calvin explained that we might know God, and learn to honour him, through contemplating his words and his works. Yet, he argued in *De Necessitate reformandae ecclesiae* (1543), the fall had hampered humankind’s ability and will to do so. The gentiles and Israelites continued to seek the seed of religion but they were constrained by their own material form to glorify their earthly inventions instead of God’s spiritual creations. Traditional Catholic piety similarly perverted worship, Calvin claimed, because it supposed that God’s infinite magnificence could be contained in finite objects, like

man-made beads, glass or statues. The truly faithful must attack such idolatry, Calvin argued, and worship in a purely spiritual manner, devoid of props, as had been commanded by God in many places in the bible (ed. Baum, Cunitz and Reuss, vol. 6, cols 459-461, 501-4).

Edward's dedicatory letter to Somerset suggests that his exercise against idolatry had also been shaped by Calvin's critique. First, Edward explained there were 'many places' in the bible which spoke against the worship of images, yet 'so many have dared and dare to commit idolatry, by making and worshiping images' (ff. 1v-2r). Such people failed to understand that God 'cannot be seen in material things, but He wants to be seen in his works'. Through contemplating 'the excellencies of the firmament and the perfect and marvellous things upon it', Edward explains, 'one can imagine the Creator who has formed them through his Words alone' (f. 2r-v). So, he concluded, our 'Spiritual Eye sees much better through these things which are of God, than our Bodily Eye can see in things which a human creature has made and formed' (ff. 2r-3v). In his comparison between past and contemporary (Catholic) idolaters, in his dichotomy between the material and spiritual worlds, and in his insistence that we must know God through his creations and word, Edward reproduced the emphases of the French reformer. Having set out his argument in this letter, Edward went on to substantiate it in the body of his text using scriptural places.

As such, Trinity College, MS R.7.31 provides a keyhole through which we may glimpse the Calvinist theological priorities of the early Edwardian church. Edward himself was to be no passive bystander in its transformation. From the first year of his reign, Jean Belmaine was teaching the king to be a militant defender of the reformed faith.

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The Byble in Englyshe, that is to saye the conte[n]t of al the holy scrypture, both of ye olde, and newe testame[n]t, with a prologe therinto, made by the reuerende father in God, Thomas archbysshop of Cantorbury. This is the Byble apoynted to the vse of the churches (London: Edward Whitechurch, 1540) STC 2070

La Bible qui est toute la Sainct escripture. En laquelle sont contenus, le Uieil Testament & le Nouueau transltez en Francoys. Le Uieil de L'ebrieu & le Noouveau

ou Grec Acheue, trans. Pierre Robert Olivetan, into. Jean Calvin (Serrières: Pierre de Wingle, 1535)

Iniunccions geue[n] by the moste excellent prince, Edward the sixte, by the grace of God, kyng of England, Frau[n]ce and Irelande: defendor of the faythe, and in earthe vnder Christ, of the church of Englande and of Ireland, the supreme hedde: to all and singuler his louyng subiectes, aswell of the clergie, as of the laietie (London: Richard Grafton, 1547) STC 10090.2

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----- *A godly meditation of the soule, concerning a loue towards Christ, our Lorde, aptly translated out of French into Englishe by the right highe, and most vertuous Princesse Elizabeth, by the grace of God, of England, Fraunce and Ireland, Queene; Whervnto is added godlye meditations, set forth after the alphabet of the Queenes Maiesties name*, ed. James Cancellar (London : J. Charlewood? for H. Denham, 1580) STC 17321 reprinted as part of STC 1892

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