



SWISS TREASURES

From Biblical Papyrus and Parchment
to Erasmus, Zwingli, Calvin, and Barth

Exhibition at the University of Chicago Library
September 21 – December 14, 2012





JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND THE BOOK OF BOOKS

The Bible, handed down in various languages and compilations, bears testimony to a rich and varied relationship between God and humanity.

It comprises the word of God not only as law, but also in the form of prophetic language, historiography, and descriptions of human – and humane – existence.

For Judaism as well as Christianity, the Bible was the starting point for an ongoing production of religious texts, whether in the literary codification of the oral Torah or the testimonies to the life and teachings of Jesus within the context of the New Testament.

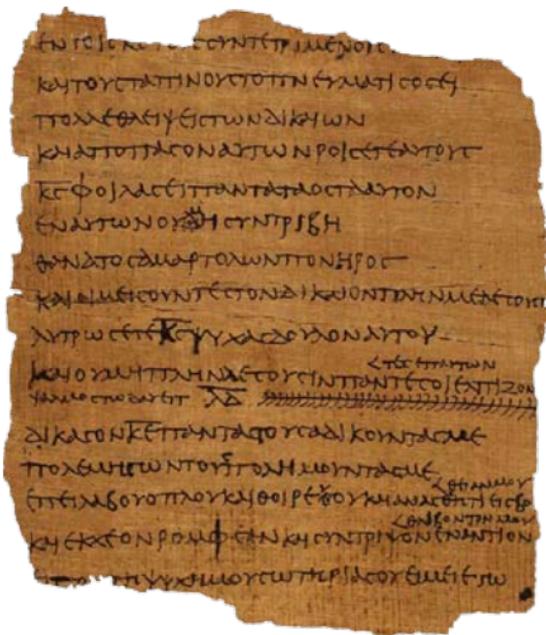
The present objects in particular document the use of biblical texts in the liturgy whose founder was generally considered to have been King David.

On display here is a precious extract on papyrus from the Psalms in Greek (Egypt, 4th century), spectacularly illuminated Latin Psalm extracts on parchment (South Germany, 12th century), an extract from Leviticus from a Samaritan Pentateuch (15th century), and finally an early printing of a Talmud (from the second Order *Moed* “Festivals”, 16th century).

With these comes a marvelously illustrated early printing of the Hebrew Bible (see objects no. 16 and 17).

All of these are precious testimonies to scholarly engagement with the Bible, either produced in Switzerland or brought there, and currently held by such renowned repositories as the Martin Bodmer Foundation (Cologne), the State and University Library of Fribourg, and Basel University Library.

King David. Medieval tradition attributed the composition of all the Psalms to the king-prophet, identified by the Bible as the organizer of the liturgy in Israel (Martin Bodmer Foundation, Cologne [Geneva], CB 30).



1 PSALMS

In the 4th century CE, a member of the Christian community of Egypt bound together a group of nine texts copied during the 3rd and 4th centuries. This collection contains exceptional documents: the oldest preserved testimonies and the only ones known to have been written on papyrus of the *Epistles of Jude and of Peter*; the oldest copies in Greek of the Apocryphal Gospel *Nativity of Mary (the Proto-Gospel of James)*, and of the *Apocryphal Third Epistle to the Corinthians* and the eleventh *Ode of Solomon*; the only copy, fragmented, of a liturgical hymn; and Meliton's *Homily on Easter*, as well as the *Apology of Phileas* and the *Psalms*. The violently anti-Gnostic nature of certain of these texts makes it possible to assert that this anthology was without a doubt gathered by Christians belonging to the Greater Church. The small format of the codex (ca. 15.5 × 14.2 cm, 6 × 5.5 inches) indicates that it was most likely intended for private use. A foundation of Christian piety, the Psalms are of course part of this corpus. While only Pss 33 and 34 have survived on three separate leaves, we can assume that the copy was originally more complete.

Examining the work of the copyist on this 4th-century papyrus is extraordinarily moving, even to someone who has not mastered Greek: the regular and legible handwriting makes it possible to follow the line of the sharpened reed, or calamus, used by the scribe. The letters are vertically traced; the vertical stroke of Φ is very long; the Es are remarkable, with their median bar placed higher than the other letters. The horizontal lines placed over certain groups of letters indicate the abbreviation of a

word, for example ΚΣ for ΚΥΠΙΟΣ, the Lord, the Eternal. The errors are ostensibly corrected by covering the incorrect letter with small points, while the copyist could have more discreetly crossed out or placed only one point on the incriminating character. Each verse of the *Psalms* begins on the next line, leaving an uneven left margin; in the case of a surplus of words, those remaining were written above the verses, indicated by a small bracket. These few observations, while scant and lacking in the erudition called for by such a document, serve to give life to the piety of Christians of the first centuries.

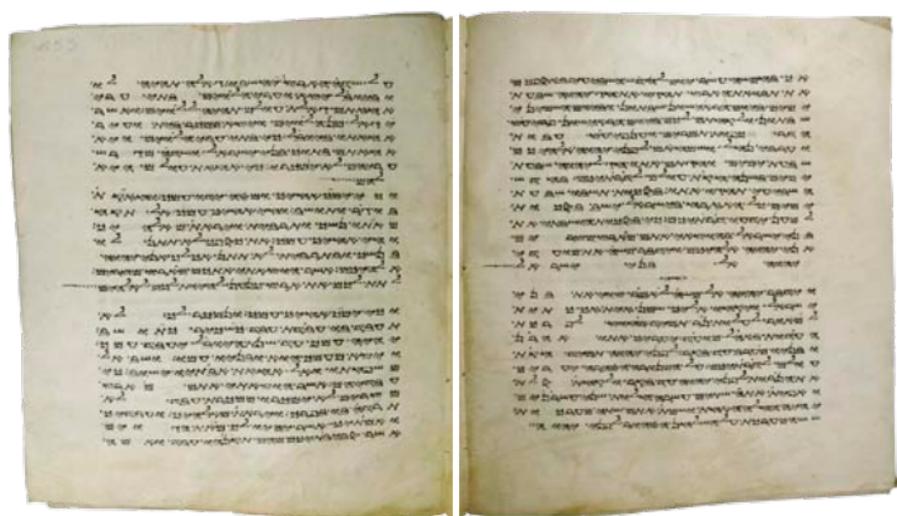
Papyrus Bodmer IX, Psalms 33 and 34 (34 and 35 MT), Greek manuscript, Egypt, 4th century, Martin Bodmer Foundation, Cologne (Geneva). An ornate bar of transversal crescent strokes separates the two Psalms. It reads: ΨΑΛΜΟΣ ΤΩ ΔΑΥΕΙΤ ΛΔ, which is to say, *The Psalm of David 34.*



2 LIBER PSALMORUM

The 150 psalms of the Old Testament, the Psalter, are at the heart of monastic prayer. Regularly read and sung, abundantly glossed to ensure that the fullest meaning is grasped by the cleric, translated early into the vernacular, the Psalms were widely diffused during the Middle Ages. They circulated independently at the same time as they were being inserted into complete Bibles. The same was true of this manuscript, copied and illuminated at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries, in which the Psalms are followed by texts of similar nature extracted from the Old and the New Testaments for example, the

Song of Moses or of Anne, the Psalm of Habakuk, and the Songs of Zechariah and Simeon. The calendar placed at the beginning of the collection contains the names of a number of German saints, allowing us to situate its origin in Southern Germany, probably in the region of Konstanz. Incipit Liber Psalmorum David Regis. (Here begins the Book of Psalms of King David). Codex Bodmer 30, *Liber Psalmorum*, Latin manuscript, Southern Germany, ca. 1200, Martin Bodmer Foundation, Coligny (Geneva).



3 SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

The Hebrew Bible opens with the *Torah*, the five books of Moses, also called Pentateuch according to Greek tradition. The Torah is the foundation of Jewish religion and an essential part of Christian Scripture. The text of the Torah is preserved in two main recensions, or editions. One of them is the text we read in the Jewish Bible and in all modern translations of the Bible. It corresponds to a text fixed as early as the 2nd or 1st century BCE in Jerusalem, and handed down from then until the present day. Besides this edition, the ancient Israelite community of the Samaritans created at about the same time its own edition of the Torah. This probably happened in the city of Samaria, near Mount Gerizim, where the Samaritans had their central temple, and where until today the Samaritan community gathers around the holy place on Mount Gerizim. The Samaritans maintained their specific edition of the Torah through the centuries. The earliest preserved Samaritan copies of the Torah seem not to go back further than the 12th century CE. Most of them were later, and have come down to us in only a few copies, which rest in major libraries in Lon-

don, Paris, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere. One famous manuscript, held in high esteem by the Samaritans, is the *Sefer Abisha*. This copy is the precious treasure of the Samaritan community at Nablus (Cisjordania). The double sheet on exhibit here belongs to the Samaritan Torah of the State and University Library of Fribourg, Switzerland. It is a fine manuscript on vellum, written in 1495 or 1496, probably in Damascus. Its scribe was Jacob ben Joseph ben Meshalma ben Joseph, from the priestly line *Ha-Even*. This master scribe produced six Torah manuscripts between 1482 and 1496.

The Samaritan Pentateuch is important in general Biblical textual history. The specific Samaritan recension is based on a pre-Samaritan text type which occurs also among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Samaritan usage introduced certain typically Samaritan readings into the manuscript, for instance at the end of the Decalogue. On the other hand, in a number of passages Samaritan readings are backed by identical readings in the original Old Greek Bible. This partial identity between the Samaritan text form and that of the Greek translators of the Torah in the 3rd century BCE may prove, in certain cases, that the Samaritan text, together with the Old Greek, preserves an early and more original reading than the Bible text of Jerusalem (the so-called Masoretic text).

The Samaritan Torah in the University Library of Fribourg, Switzerland, is connected with a research center devoted to the textual history of the Hebrew Bible. Another center at the University carries out research in iconography as a main source for the history of the Ancient Near East and the Bible. Studies in Biblical textual history are located at the *Dominique Barthélemy Institute*. Dominique Barthélemy (1921–2002) was a noted research pioneer in textual criticism of the Old Testament.

Right-hand page: Leviticus 23:39–24:6

Left-hand page: Leviticus 25:31–44

Hebrew books are read from right to left. Thus the page on the right hand side precedes that on the left.

This double sheet has been chosen, among other reasons, because it is a loose double sheet (technically called folio). It may therefore easily be detached from the whole book without damaging the binding. It had been the outer double sheet of a quire, that is, of a set of several folded sheets laid one upon the other. This

explains why after Lev 24:6 on the right-hand page the left-hand page continues with Lev 25:31. The section Lev 24:7–25:30 was written on the sheets lying between the right-hand and left-hand pages of the double sheet on exhibit here.

The two pages show the typical writing of the Samaritans. They did not adopt the Aramaic square script used for Hebrew since the 5th and 4th centuries BCE. This script stems directly from the old Hebrew, Syrian, and Phoenician alphabets. Only the consonants are written. The punctuation consists of dots between the words and three kinds of division on the phrase level. The sections are clearly divided: the division appears on the right-hand page between Lev 23 and 24 (corresponding to a *petûhâ*-division in the Masoretic text), and on the left-hand page between verses 34 / 35 and 38 / 39 (where the Masoretic text has a *setûmâ*-division). The layout of the page is characterized by the line at the right-hand side of the page, where the first letter of each line is separated from the following letters by a small space, thereby creating a vertical line. On the left-hand side of the pages similar arrangements may be observed, however less consistently organized. These features give the pages a beautiful and decorative appearance.

Right-hand page: Leviticus 23:39–24:6 is part of the cultic calendar of Israel, presented in the chapters Lev 23–24. The festivals are proclaimed by the Lord. He charges Moses as a prophet to speak in the name of the Lord to Israel, and He will teach Israel to observe the festivals. In Lev 23:39–44, the Lord specifically institutes and explains the Festival of Booths, and the service of both the lamp in the Tent and the bread on the table belonging to the Tent. These fittings, which belong to every ordinary household, show that the dwelling of the Lord in his house, the temple, is similar to a human dwelling. Cultic or liturgical institutions are analogous to human institutions. They make visible the hidden divine presence through the metaphorical mediation of familiar human realities.

Left-hand page: Leviticus 25:31–44 is part of the legislation of the jubilee proclaimed by the Lord on Mount Sinai (Lev 25:8–55). This is an important social institution. Its purpose is the limitation of debts, which are a form of slavery and reduce people to wretchedness.

Slavery and poverty are the two evils which must be banished from Israel. Therefore, every forty-nine years, debts are canceled, slaves recover freedom, and sold family properties return to their legitimate owners. Such an institution, difficult to apply, shows that it is not so much a practical law as a teaching about society and about the solidarity indispensable for human society. In Lev 25:31–44, the divine Legislator specifically ordains the restitution of alienated family properties in order to maintain each Israelite family on its own land. No Israelite family is to lose its property for ever.

Bible + Orient Museum, Fribourg, Switzerland Ms 2001.1 = State and University Library Fribourg, Switzerland l 2057. On display a double sheet: right-hand page fol 152 verso (back side of the folio, without pagination) and right-hand page fol 155 recto (pagination on top of the page to the left; there is another pagination at the bottom of the page: fol 150 recto).

מי הגיד מראש ונדעה:



עם פירוש רשי ותוספות ופסקי תוספות ורבינו אשר
ופירוש המשניות מרמבם ול

תק כל היהודים נהגו מאז ברום יוסטליאנה בניגליאנה הוינו נל בעדה. והוא חיקר הדין שלשים: חזרת אור
הוא מראה מקום הפוסקים: תקן משפט מראה מקום הדין בהריבוב וכסמנו בארבעה טורים:
ונראה מקום התוספות: ומסרת הלש: ואחר כל סמכתא קיעד פסקי
הראש ומסומן חרינין בספר רבינו אשר:

תוסף על הגרסות מקום ספר חיקר רינים בלה לביו בו: יסל ציריקים יק באמצעות יבנאו כל הרינים שבסמכתא ותתנתם בשליש
הפוסקים עמוד גולה המסרים לכל המך: ירצו התלמידים ולא יבין ולא יקפו ויבין אל מות המנע: והביין
בהקדמת האמן מורד יודען בען מברוך ויללה שחבר כל החידושים הנל לחבת כיום את
הרינים עמוד ה' לנספתו ולרען א' יראה תתקלחם כי רבו:

כל המדקדק יתנו בעין בעין וכל המלמד ימנע וימנע סתות בהן חלקה סתותם והפסקים אלף סוף כישום
שקדשו כדי יאסונם עליו ידע שלשים פלגיו ונדקדקו וישמר לבי לחן:

גרסם כסנת אשלה לרש קטן

סרי בסליאה הקרי

העזלה והמחללה ירום הודת והנשוא מלוטה

בפנות השיר אמרוסיאן פרוכיניאן יעזובכור



ROS HASANAH

O P V S,

IN QVO AGITVR DE SOLENNITATE CAPITIS ANNI.

Nunc ab omnibus qui contra religionem Christianam faciebant, expurgatum: et

ab eisdem, qui alia volumina castigauerunt, iuxta mentem Sacri concilij

Tidementini recognatum et approbatum.

4 THE BASEL EDITION OF THE TALMUD, 1578-1580

Since the 15th century, Italy was the center of publication for Hebrew texts. Several complete editions of the Talmud were published there between 1520 and 1551. In the middle of the 16th century, however, the Catholic Church pitted itself against the Talmud. After a number of book burnings, which began in 1553, the Talmud was banned by the *Index librorum prohibitorum* in 1559. It was subsequently re-allowed back into print in 1564, but in a censored version: henceforth it was to be printed only with the omission of all passages directed against Christianity as well as the title "Talmud" (instruction or study). Nonetheless, no Italian publisher dared print the book again, and shortly after 1559 an attempted edition in Zurich failed.

It was not until almost twenty years later that a new start was made in Basel, which recommended itself through its liberal censorship regime as well as a distinguished

tradition of Hebrew printing. Simon von Günzberg zur Gemse of Frankfurt commissioned Ambrosius Froben, the grandson of Johannes Froben, to print a censored version of the Talmud at his own expense.

First of all, they had to secure permission not only from the authoritative Jewish bodies but also from the Protestant council of Basel and the Catholic censors in Italy, and they succeeded. The Inquisitor of Venice, Marco Marini, provided them with their proof text, a copy of an earlier Venetian edition corrected by hand, in which not only objectionable passages had been deleted but in some places Christian corrections had been added in the margins. One of his co-censors was Pierre Chevalier, the Protestant theologian and later Professor of Hebrew in Geneva.

Before going to press, Froben needed the help of an experienced Jewish editor, whom he found in the person of Israel ben Daniel Sifroni from Guastalla, near Padua. Assisted, as we assume, by helping hands whom he had trained accordingly, Sifroni became the very soul of the project, typesetting and correcting the huge work, consisting of 3,678 sheets with at least 30 million letters. The forty-four treatises, divided into six orders, appeared in print between May 1578 and autumn 1580. A print run of 1,100 copies had been agreed upon with Günzberg, but it seems that Froben printed additional copies on his own account.

The decoration of the book consists of woodcut initials with floral patterns, as well as figurative illustrations on the title pages and in chapter headings.

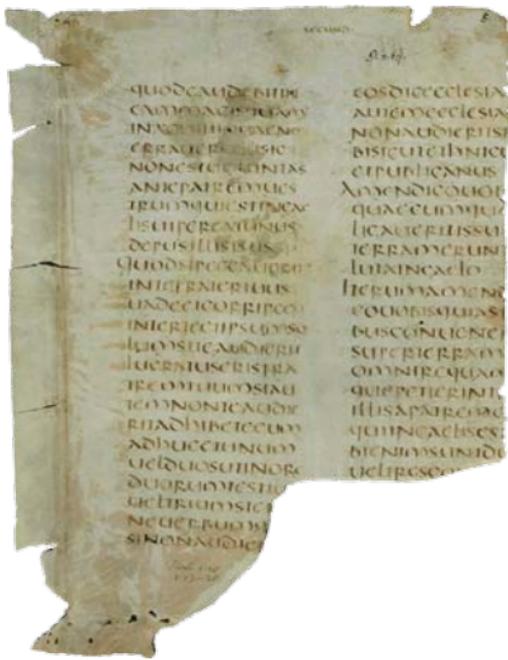
[The Babylonian Talmud \[Talmud Bavli\], Basel, Ambrosius Froben for Simon von Günzberg zur Gemse, 1578–1580, 2° \(Basel University Library, FA I 5a, title page of the tract Ros Hasanah\).](#)

HARTMUT IN MEDIEVAL ST. GALL

The Benedictine Abbey of St. Gall, south of the Lake of Constance in the east of Switzerland, was one of the most important monasteries north of the alps between the 9th and 11th centuries. The Abbey's library was richly stocked with books, especially with Bible manuscripts. Since the Bible was considered the "truest of guides for human life" (Regula Benedicti, 73.3), it had to be available in every monastery. Today, there are still a great number of Latin Bible texts at the Abbey Library, among them manuscripts and fragments from a very early time. Many of them belong to today's most important textual evidence of certain biblical books. The Abbey Library possesses, for instance, the oldest surviving manuscript of the Vulgate version of the gospels, which dates back to the last years of the Church Father Jerome (d. 420), or a gospel book with a Vetus Latina version written in Italy in the 5th century.

From the late 8th century, the monks of St. Gall started to transcribe biblical books at their scriptorium; these belong to the oldest manuscripts written in St. Gall itself. Among the most influential biblical texts at St. Gall are two multi-volume Bibles (the so-called "small" and "large" Bibles of Hartmut) that were produced under the abbots Grimald and Hartmut (841–872; 872–883). Probably Hartmut himself supervised the transcription and correction of older biblical manuscripts. For this task, the one-volume Bible pandect of Alcuin, of which the oldest complete manuscript is kept at the Abbey Library of St. Gall, served as a model.

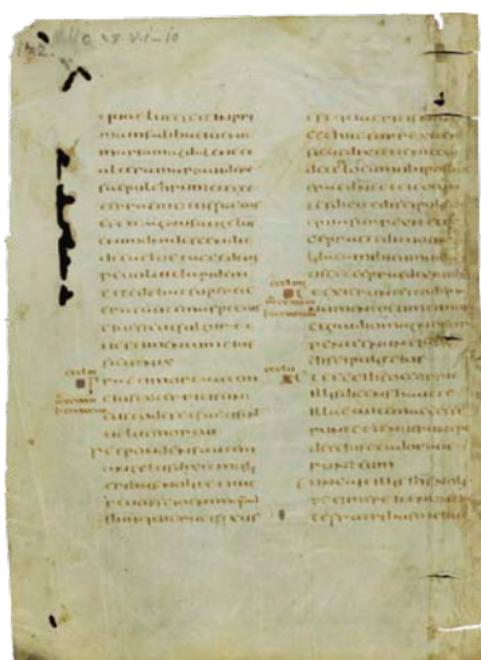
Hartmut (d. after 895), abbot of the monastery of St. Gall (872–883). Pen-drawing in a volume of the so-called "small Bible of Hartmut" (third quarter of the 9th century). Abbey Library of St. Gall, Ms. 7, p. 256.



5 FRAGMENT OF AN EARLY VETUS LATINA VERSION OF THE GOSPELS FROM THE 5TH CENTURY

At the Abbey Library of St. Gall, seventeen fragments of an early transcript of the gospels in Latin survive. The erstwhile gospel book was written in a neat uncial script in Italy (presumably in Rome) during the 5th century. This gospel book found its way to the Abbey of St. Gall in the 8th century, where glosses and comments were added. When these gospel texts were no longer used in St. Gall, the book was taken apart. Some of the sheets were used to strengthen the boards and spines of other manuscripts. The true value of these fragments was recognized in only the 18th century. The fragments, about ten percent of the original text, were then removed from the bindings and have since then been stored separately. The text reproduces one of the many Bible texts which were read by Christians until the translation of the Bible by Jerome finally became prevalent. These Bible texts are today called “Vetus Latina” texts. In the history of the Vetus Latina tradition, these fragments from the Abbey Library of St. Gall carry the siglum n (16).

Abbey Library of St. Gall, Ms. 1394, p. 66 (Mtt 18:13–20).
Parchment – 31 × 22.5 cm, 12.2 × 8.8 inches – Italy (probably Rome) – 5th century.



6 FRAGMENT OF THE OLDEST VULGATE VERSION OF THE GOSPELS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 5TH CENTURY

At the behest of Pope Damasus I (366–384), Jerome (d. 420) wrote a reliable, new translation of the text of the Bible, because the complaints about the different wordings of the Holy Scripture had become louder and louder. Using the Hebrew and Greek Bible texts, Jerome revised the four gospels and the other books of the Old and New Testaments. His translation later became the most commonly used Bible version of the Middle Ages, even though some of the older biblical books, the so-called *Vetus Latina* texts, remained in use until the 8th and 9th centuries. With the beginning of scientific Bible research in the 16th to 17th centuries, Jerome's translation of the Bible therefore received the name "Vulgate"; the word "vulgata" meaning "common" or "well-known." As one of their greatest treasures, the Abbey Library of St. Gall is in possession of a total of 110 smaller and larger sheets with a transcript of the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John), which is considered to be the world's oldest Vulgate version. In critical editions of the Vulgate, the fragments from St. Gall carry the siglum Σ . The Book of Gospels was written during Jerome's lifetime in the first or second decade of the 5th century in Upper Italy, presumably in Verona, in a regular late antique half-uncial. It probably found its way to the Monastery of St. Gall in the 8th or 9th century, where it was soon no longer needed because there were later transcripts of

the gospels, which were easier for the monks to read. Because of this, the book was taken apart and the sheets were used to strengthen the boards and spines of other books.

The condition of these pieces of parchment, removed from the bindings around 1800, varies greatly: the script has faded in some instances, and traces of glue are encountered quite frequently. The thin parchment has become brittle over the centuries. On the other hand, there are sheets, like the text shown here about the Resurrection of Jesus from the Gospel of Matthew, that still are in very good condition and as easy to read as they were on the day they were written.

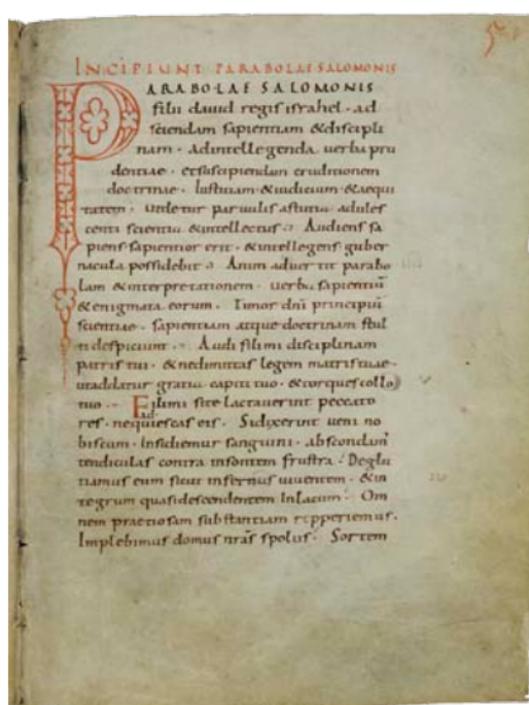
Abbey Library of St. Gall, Ms. 1395, p. 132 (Mtt 28:1–10).
Parchment – 23 × 18.5 cm, 9 × 7.2 inches – Italy (probably
Verona) – 400/420.



7 ALCUIN'S BIBLE

Alcuin of York (ca. 730–804), the most prominent theologian at the court of Charlemagne and later abbot in Tours, undertook a revision of the Bible. In the first half of the 9th century, about two complete Bible pandects with Alcuin's text were produced each year at the Tours scriptorium. Of these, the oldest complete manuscript, written during Alcuin's lifetime, was brought to St. Gall where it was used to correct older Bible texts.

Abbey Library of St. Gall, Ms. 75, p. 3. Parchment – 840
pp. – 55 × 40 cm, 21.6 × 15.7 inches – Tours, Abbey of St.
Martin – ca. 801–804.



8

THE “SMALL BIBLE OF HARTMUT”

Hartmut, abbot of St. Gall (872–883), had two multi-volume Bibles written at the abbey’s scriptorium – a large one for liturgical purposes and a smaller one for his private studies. To correct the text he found in older St. Gall manuscripts, he drew upon various sources: Alcuin’s and Theodulf’s Bible pandects as well as Jerome’s Bible commentaries. The volume on display contains the following biblical books: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, I and II Chronicles.

Abbey Library of St. Gall, Ms. 7, p. 5. Parchment – 460 pp. – 23.5 × 17 cm, 9.2 × 6.7 inches – St. Gall – third quarter of the 9th century.



DESIDE

R S T M V S

Qui te nō norit, Mūsas quoque nesciat
esse.
In summo sedem namq, Helicone tenes.



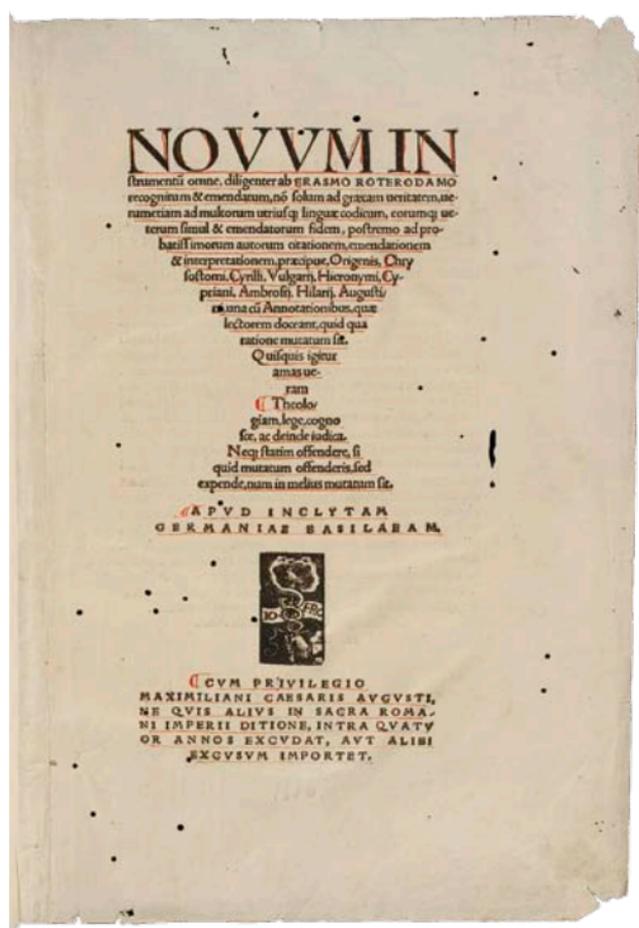
ERASMUS IN HUMANISTIC BASEL

Throughout his life, the New Testament was at the center of Erasmus's interest and work. His education at the Brethren of the Common Life opened up a twofold access to him: on the one hand, he saw Jesus Christ, in the tradition of the *Devotio moderna*, as the model of a Christian life to be imitated in all respects. On the other hand, in St. Jerome, the Church Father venerated by the Brethren, he found a role model for a Christian humanism, the basis of which is the care and cultivation of language, the love of the word: philo-logy.

If one wishes to imitate Christ, one must know him. The question of where the best image of Christ is to be found was answered by Erasmus in the humanist spirit: in his own words, i.e., in the New Testament. As early as 1503, he recommended the *imitatio Christi* on the basis of the New Testament in his *Enchiridion militis christiani*. Inspired by St. Jerome as well as the Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla, whose annotations on the New Testament caught his attention in 1504, Erasmus inspected the New Testament in all its many and partly diverging versions. Valla had tried to improve the text of the Vulgate, St. Jerome's translation of the New Testament, which had been in common use for centuries, by comparing it to the original Greek text. Erasmus decided to provide access to the original text and spirit of the New Testament, bringing them to as wide a readership as possible. At the center of his work was the establishment of the original Greek text expurgated of errors of transmission, a correct Latin translation, and a commentary elucidating the precise meaning of each passage from its historical and literary contexts. Moreover, his series of comprehensive editions of the biblical commentaries and other works of the Church Fathers, above all that of St. Jerome, as well as his own paraphrases of the New Testament and a number of other works, all served the same purpose. This access *ad fontes*, to the sources, relativized the significance of the Vulgate and paved the way for translations into the vernaculars. But as the doctrine of the Church was founded in certain instances on the exact wording of the Vulgate, it saw that its authority as well

as that of its teachers was placed in jeopardy. Therefore Erasmus was criticized severely for his method of proceeding. He defended himself by publishing not only a number of individual tracts, but also emended new editions of the works under attack.

Jean Jacques Boissard, *Icones quinquaginta virorum illustrium doctrina et eruditione praestantium ad vivum effictae*, vol. 1, Frankfurt, Theod. De Bry, 1597 (Basel University Library, BH X 20, p. 220).



9 THE NEW TESTAMENT OF 1516

During his stay in Cambridge in 1511, Erasmus began improving the Latin text of the New Testament by comparing Greek and Latin manuscripts. In the end, the result of this work amounted to annotations on more than 1,000 passages, and probably also in a corrected copy of the Vulgate. With these manuscripts in his luggage, he arrived in Basel in August 1514 to meet his future printer, Johannes Froben.

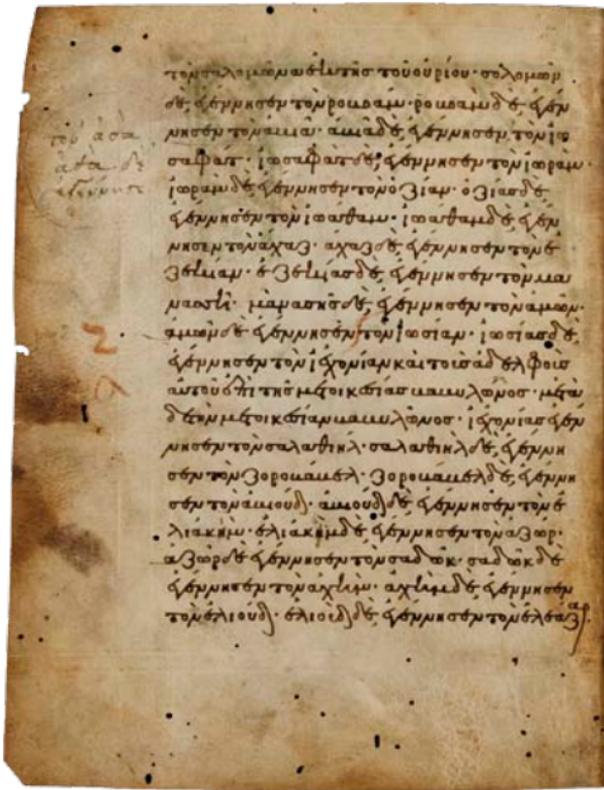
We have reason to believe that Erasmus's original project consisted merely of a revised edition of the text of the Vulgate with annotations on the constitution of the text. It was only in Basel that he decided, together with his printer, to edit the original Greek text as well. Even as

late as autumn 1515, they were discussing whether the Greek and Latin texts should be printed separately or in parallel columns.

The edition published in spring 1516 contained the following parts:

- A dedication to Pope Leo X.
- An exhortation (*paraclesis*) to commit thorough study to the New Testament as the basis of Christian life.
- An instruction (*methodus*) to the correct interpretation of the New Testament, which is to be founded on the mastery not only of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages but of the entire educational canon of antiquity.
- A (preventive) defense (*apologia*) of Erasmus' treatment of the text of the Vulgate.
- The original Greek text of the New Testament accompanied, in a separate column, by Erasmus's new Latin translation, the real centerpiece of the edition. What Erasmus tried to achieve here was a) to expurgate St. Jerome's version of errors of transmission, but also of mistranslations; and b) to improve the text in terms of grammar and style.
- Notes (*annotationes*), in which Erasmus first of all corroborated the divergences of his text from the Vulgate, with readings from the Greek and Latin manuscripts he had consulted as well as references to ancient commentators. Secondly, they were also a means of safeguarding his text against future distortion. Thirdly, in them he explained difficult passages. Moreover, rather along the way and chiefly in the later editions, he elaborated on various theological and ecclesiastical topics.

Novum Instrumentum omne, diligenter ab Erasmo Roterodamo recognitum & emendatum, ... una cum Annotationibus ..., Basel, Johannes Froben, 1516, 2° (Basel University Library, FG V 38, fol. aa1r).



10 THE GREEK TEXT AND ITS SOURCES

For constituting the Greek text, Erasmus had several manuscripts at his disposal in Basel that are extant to this day.

It seems that for each part Erasmus prepared one particular manuscript – not the same for all texts – as a printer's copy. For example, in the manuscript reproduced here, the primary copy for the Gospels, he added a generation to the line of Jesus Christ's forefathers by re-inserting Asa, who had been omitted in the manuscript. There wasn't enough time for collating all the manuscripts systematically. Erasmus's assistants, Johannes Oekolampad and Nikolaus Gerbel, continued their editorial work on the text while proof-reading, by comparing the galley proofs with the other Greek manuscripts available on the one hand and, on the other, with Erasmus's translation and annotations. But even so, numerous errors went unnoticed, only some of which were eliminated in later editions.

Downright irresponsible from a modern point of view is the fact that, because the only manuscript at hand lacked its final folio, Erasmus translated the end of the Apocalypse back into Greek from the Vulgate. It must be said, however, that he documented his course of action in the annotations and subsequently replaced this text with the original in a later edition on the basis of the *Biblia polyglotta complutensis*.



Another element subject to harsh criticism was his treatment of the Comma Johanneum (1John 5:7-8):

For there are three that testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

Since the first part of this passage, crucial for the doctrine of the Trinity, was to be found only in the Vulgate but not in any of the Greek manuscripts known to him, Erasmus omitted it and reinstated it only in a later edition, against his better judgment and under protest.

With his edition of the Greek text, originally a by-product of his reform of the Vulgate, Erasmus has exerted lasting influence on the further transmission of the Greek New Testament, for it became the basis of the evolving *textus receptus*, the standard text.

The Gospels, Greek manuscript, late 11th/early 12th c. (Basel University Library, AN IV 1, Bl. 2v).

Novum Instrumentum omne, diligenter ab Erasmo Roterodamo recognitum & emendatum, ... una cum Annotationibus ..., Basel, Johannes Froben, 1516, 2° (Basel University Library, FG V 38, fol. A1r).

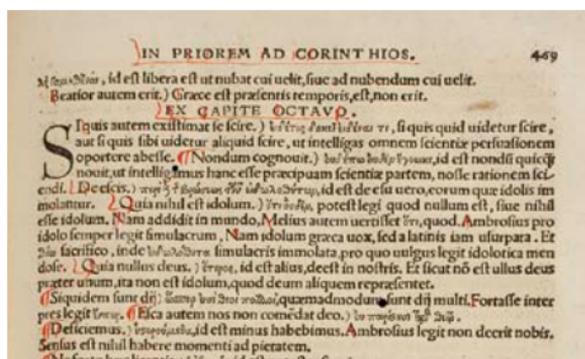
nam castitas graecam proprietatem reddi non potest, explicuit sententiam huius loci, ad hunc modum. Hoc autem ad utilitatem uestram dico, non ut laqueum uobis injiciam sed ut ad id quod honestum est, & inuente facit seruire domino, ab his uero distractione uos adhorter. Addit hanc sententiam in latinis codicibus omnino non inueniri propter interpretationis difficultatem. *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*, uertit honestum, & *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον* reddidit quod inuente facit seruire domino, & pro *ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον* posuit ab his ulla distractione.

¶ Turpem se uideri existimat. *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*, si quis turpe aut indecorum existimat in uirgine. ¶ Si fuerit superadulta. *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*. Nam id uertit superadultam, cuius flos iam praeierit. Quod Ambrosius ita reddidit, si sit ultra pubertate, id quod uulgo rideri solet, cum animum uocant uirginem.

¶ Non peccat si nubat. *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*, id est nubat. Quia uerbum *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον* commune est uiro ducenti uxorem, & puella nubenti uiro. Unde subito Paulus mutato numero uerbi sponsum & sponfam respexit, aut certe ad locentem filiam & sponfam.

¶ Nam qui statuit. *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*, id est qui uero stat firmus.

¶ Secundum meum consilium. *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*, id est mea sententia, siue meo ius dico. ¶ Potestatem autem sui habens. *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*, habet non habens, quando hic uariant exemplaria. ¶ Et hoc iudicauit, melius decreuit hoc quidem loco, *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον*, quod alias ita uertit. ¶ Liberata est a lege, cui autem u. in. Graeca paulo fecus habent, *ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡμετέριον* 2174



11 + 12 THE SECOND EDITION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (1519)

As Erasmus himself admitted, in 1515/16 the first edition had been completed overhastily, under great pressure, and consequently contained a number of errors and inconsistencies. The surge of criticism that followed immediately induced him to start preparing a second edition soon after the publication of the first, though in strict secrecy because he didn't want to jeopardize sales of the large first print run.

Apart from the correction of obvious errors, Erasmus continued to improve the text of the Vulgate. Having concentrated mainly on the Epistles in 1516, he now subjected the entire text to thorough revision. Moreover, he emended the Greek text by means of new manuscripts. For later editions, he also consulted the Greek Bible of Aldus Manutius (1518) and the *Biblia polyglotta complutensis*.

The annotations were substantially enlarged, almost by a third, which also had the consequence that the work was now usually bound in two volumes rather than one. Certain individual notes swelled into veritable treatises, e.g., the *Annotatio* on 1Cor 7:39, which evolved into Erasmus's most comprehensive disquisition on the topic of marriage and divorce: in 1516, it had comprised two lines, which became ten pages in 1519. And Erasmus even continued to expand it in subsequent editions.

In order to enhance the attractiveness of the edition, but also to refute the critics, a number of new texts were

(Nam qui statuit) &c. a tempore, id est, qui uero sit firmus, nisi quod uerbum *uero* de
 flatio sonat (Græcis & Hebr.) (Potestatem autem sui habent.) *Uero* habet, non habent,
 quamquam hæc uariant exemplaria. (Et hoc iudicabit, Melius decreuit, sine flatio,
 hoc quidem loco, ubi quædam alia ita uerbit.) (Liberata est a lege, cui autem male,
 noxar.) Græca paulo loca habent, *liberata est a lege*, id est, libera est ut ma-
 leat cui uelit, sine ad erubescendum cui uelit. Quamquam quod semel in huius operis initio
 iam testatur, perpetuo testatum haberi par est, in toto opere, ne nullquam esse uide
 reuocandi dogmata autorem, tamquam inuicem studio motore studiose, semper inuocato
 de illa, facta iudicio faceret, &c. ecclesie, de eorum quibus uerbis donum euoluerant
 acipientis contigit a Christo, tamen idem hoc loco nominatim testor ob quosdam in
 hac rebus captiuiores, quod pure Christianam hominem debeat. Porro ut non arbitror
 contemnitiosum a quoque dicitur magno aut uictuillo dicitur, ita non gratiam a
 merito dicitur, si quis adorat quod sit reclusus, etiam si sit illorum qui docent. Scio re-
 ceptissimum esse inter Christianos ubi semel cogit nati inuicem, nullo pacto posse dicitur,
 nisi morte alterius. Atque in hac sententia prope modum facile Origenes, & Chrysolomus
 (sine dubio certe sicut Hieronymus & Augustinus), eamque uicem episcoporum consilii
 auctoribus de doctrinalium legum auctoritate esse confirmatam, quia ex hoc postillam
 loco natus apparet, deusque & theologiarum scholarum concilio comprobata. Ceterum
 si semper hoc bonis uirtu cordi fiat, opinionem in melius commutare, & leges oca phar-
 maca conuenit ad morborum habitum ac rationem accommodare, consideremus an
 hic expedit idem fieri, etiam expedit, an liceat, ut matrimonia quaedam diuisantur non
 tenere, sed grauis de causis, neque per quoslibet, sed per ecclesie prefectos, aut iudices
 legitimos, &c. diuisant, ut liberum sit utriusque uel utriusque, aut alteri certe qui diuortio
 non dedit causam. Primum enim hoc est apostolice pietatis, omnium salum quoad licet
 conuolere, de infamis etiam ecclesie membri sua cura facere. Videmus autem tot hor-
 minum mala infelix consilio sua obire, cum casu utriusque, qui fortasse diuisant
 uerba possent. Quod si fieri possit citra iniuriam diuini precepti optandam opior omni-
 bus pijs. Sin minus, uotum tamen ipsum pijs arbitror, præsertim cum charitas optet
 non mandare de quæ fieri non possunt. Optat Moyses dederi de libro uiræ, optat Paulus
 tunc fieri a Christo pro foribus. Non desunt autem qui ita loquuntur a recte dicitur
 pro matrimonio licite cum alia copulari, ne quis proximas hæc propositionem uelut
 inuadant. Ac modis omnibus aduersum existimant expellendam, & indignam que uo-
 cetur in disparationem. Siquidem Origenes homilia in Mattheum septima, testatur sibi
 notos fuisse quosdam episcopos, qui permiserunt uxori bus que cum uirum diuortium fecer-
 rant, alijs muliere uirum, ac fatetur hoc ab eis factum aduersus preceptum domini ac Pauli,
 sed tamen factum non damnat, quod existimet sibi probabili causa adductos id permis-
 sisse, ne quid deterius committeretur, nimirum oblocutos dicitur cordi, quo consilio Pau-
 lus permiserit & uiciale incontinentibus secundas nuptias. Quod exemplum ita confirmat
 Origenes, ut diuisa uideri uideat quæ libidinibus, non prole gratis maritum alterum
 desideret permittere nouas nuptias, quod uero permittere, ut reiecta uxore adultera, dicitur
 se digniores. Deinde non uidetur addubitare, quin uiro liceat cui permittit Euangelium
 ob adulterium repudiare, nec Paulus huic precepit ut uxori reconcilietur, sed annotauit
 Origenes ab episcopis hoc etiam uxori bus permittendum, quod Paulus nominatim uidetur
 prohibere. Eiusdem opinionis fuit Pollentius quidam, ut ut apparet gratis de exalto
 tua, contra quem liberis dicitur agit Augustinus. Sed agit non ut cum habeat, sed ut
 cum Antagonista. Itaque refellit diuisa sententiam, ut hæc eos a iuuen non intente. Quam
 de diuisa Ambrosius sine controversia, ut non orthodoxas modo, uerum etiam probate
 sanctimonie, tribuit uiro ius ducendi alteram uxorem, ubi priorem ob culpam admissam
 repudiavit. Neque dubium est, quin in episcopis exerceant in suis quod recte inuicem fieri
 ferat. Scripsit autem eorum caput epistolæ ad Corinthios priores scripturam, hanc in
 modum. Et uiuum uxorem non dimittere. subaudiatur autem, excepta fornicatione cui
 fa. Et ideo non subicit dicitur de muliere, quod si dicitur manere sic, quia uiro licet duc-
 ere uxorem si dimiserit uxorem peccante, quia non ita lege constituitur
 licet mulier.

Non est con-
 tumelia di-
 uinum ser-
 uare.
 Leges ut
 pharisa
 pro moribus
 mutantur.
 Charitas
 uocum.
 Mirat per
 pro matrimo-
 nio licite cum
 alia copulari.
 Diuortia
 oim morte
 mona ab
 episcopis.
 Origenes.
 Pollentius.
 Ambrosius
 uiro facit
 ius ducendi
 alteram.

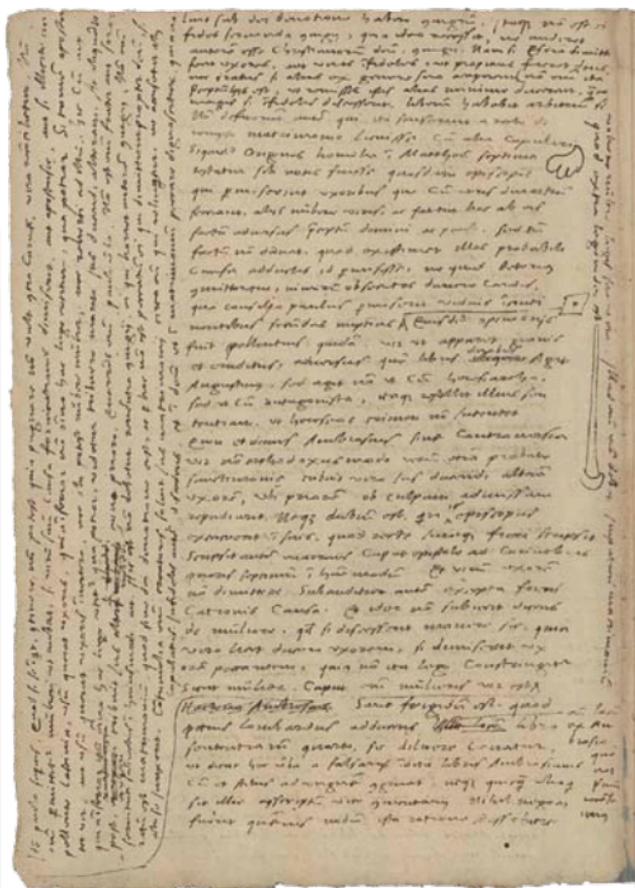
E Caput

added in the new edition, first of all a Breve from Pope Leo X, stating his explicit endorsement to the edition. The short *Methodus* of 1516 was greatly amplified and renamed as *Ratio verae theologiae*. To give readers with less education or time a quick overview of the central issues, Erasmus added a survey of 111 points preceding the text, thereby responding to criticism, as well as lists of irrefutable instances of evident errors of transmission and translation. Another novelty was the first edition of the Eusebian canon tables.

Also noteworthy is the fact that, no other edition of the Greek text then being available, this edition was used by Martin Luther as the basis for his German translation of the New Testament, published in 1522.

Annotatio on 1Cor 7:39 in the 1st edition: Novum Instrumentum omne, Basel, Johannes Froben, 1516, 2° (Chicago University Library, Case folio C 4 516, S. 468/69).

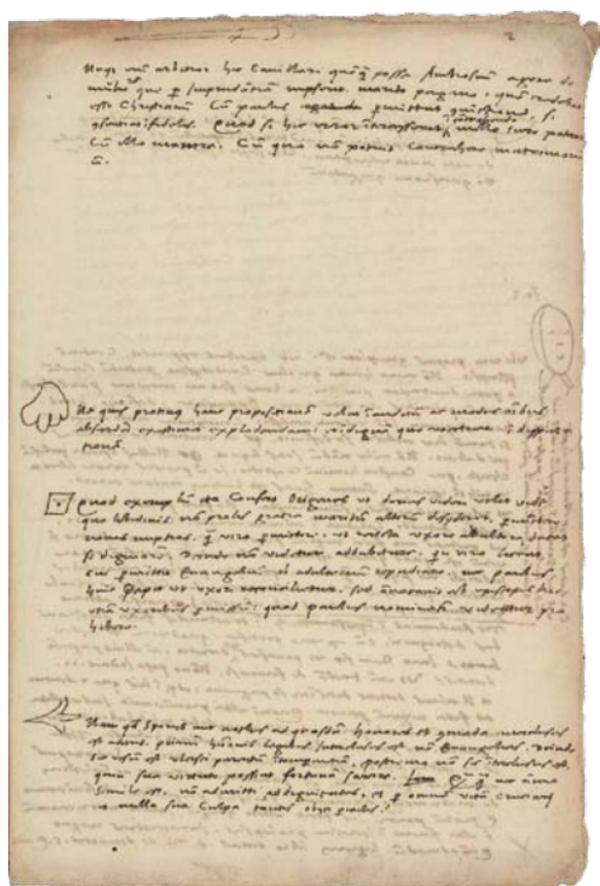
Beginning of the Annotatio on 1Cor 7:39 in the 2nd edition: Novum Testamentum omne / multo quam antehac diligentius ab Erasmo Roterodamo recognitum, emendatum ac translatum, ... una cum Annotationibus recognitis. Basel, Johannes Froben, 1519, 2° (Basel University Library, FG V 41, p. 325).



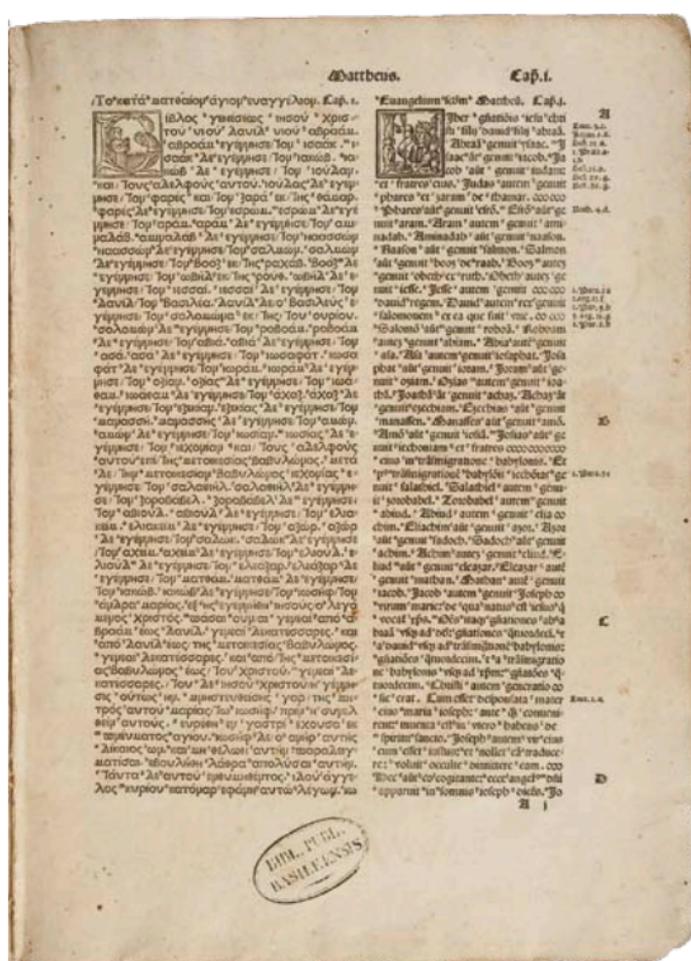
13 ERASMUS AT WORK

Looking at Erasmus's successful publications, we can state that their volume increased from one edition to the next. Little was eliminated, nor was very much corrected; indeed, Erasmus supplemented the texts with new arguments, new evidence, new references to authorities, or entire new chapters.

The same procedure can be observed, in the rare instances where Erasmus's manuscripts have survived, at the stage before going to print: Erasmus drafted a text – probably quite swiftly – which he augmented with several supplements when revising it for a second or third time. At times he erased whole paragraphs to re-write them. But usually even at this stage, rather than rephrasing his line of thought, he complemented what he had written. One of the rare instances where this is to be observed is in a notebook that Erasmus used to conceive his extensive supplement of 1519 on *Annotatio* 1Cor 7:39. The reproduction shows the second page and another page containing additions to it. Erasmus is bound to have written the main text at one sitting. Even at this stage he replaced “illum locum” in line six from the bottom with a more precise description in the right-hand margin. Next, he added to line eight from the bottom two passages from the commentary of Ambrosiaster, from which he



had just been quoting. He now made use of the rest of the margin, starting on the left, moving on to the top and finally filling what had been left blank on the right. The page being full now, he used a new one for his notes on the passages quoted from Ambrosiaster. Little symbols marked the additions and the respective places where they were to be inserted. Two further amendments that he conceived on re-reading the text were also incorporated on the additional sheet, again marked by little symbols. Yet this was not the end of the creative process. A comparison of the manuscript with the text as actually printed reveals several modifications. As we know from other works, Erasmus used to go on revising his texts even while they were being typeset. First a fair copy of his manuscript was prepared for the typesetter, which Erasmus then revised once more. And finally, further corrections could be made in the course of proof-reading. [Manuscript of Annotatio on 1Cor 7:39 in the 2nd edition of 1519, 2° \(Basel University Library, Erasmuslade A IX 56, fol. 691v und 701r\).](#)



14 THE BIBLIA POLYGLOTTA COMPLUTENSIS

Between 1514 and 1517, a polyglot edition of the Bible was produced at the University of Alcalá de Henares near Madrid. It is called *Biblia polyglotta complutensis* after the Roman name of Alcalá. The *spiritus rector* of the project was Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436–1517), a central figure in Spanish ecclesiastical as well as political life of the day (he became Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain in 1495, and Cardinal and General Inquisitor in 1507). He initiated the institution of a university in Alcalá founded on humanist principles, where the three biblical languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, were to be taught.

Following the example of Origen's Hexapla, a synoptic edition of the Old Testament in various versions, Jiménez arranged for the printing of the entire Bible in its various languages. Volumes 1–4 comprised the Old Testament with the text of the Vulgate in the central column flanked by the Hebrew text and the Septuagint on the left and right respectively. In the first volume, at the bottom of the pages of the Pentateuch, the Targum of Onkelos, an Aramaic translation, was also printed along with a Latin translation of it. Volume 5 contains the original Greek

text of the New Testament and the Vulgate, while volume 6 consists of explanatory texts for the study of the New Testament.

It was probably Demetrios Ducas, an assistant of Aldus Manutius until 1509, who was responsible for the constitution of the Greek text of the New Testament, whereas it is assumed that Diego López Zúñiga, subsequently a fierce critic of Erasmus, collated manuscripts and handled the text of the Vulgate. Another prominent contributor was Elio Antonio de Nebrija, who retired from the project, however, because he disagreed with the treatment of the Vulgate text. For just like Erasmus, Jiménez wanted to re-establish the original text of the New Testament as the center of theological endeavor, in the most correct form achievable. As opposed to Erasmus and Nebrija, however, rather than reforming the Vulgate Jiménez wanted to retrieve its original wording.

The printing of the New Testament was finished as early as January 1514, i.e. before the Basel edition. But it was only in 1520 that the Pope granted permission for sale, and distribution seems not to have started before 1522. By that time, Erasmus's edition had already been released in several printings and thousands of copies, and therefore became the basis of subsequent editions. Nonetheless, in his later editions Erasmus adopted readings from the Complutensis.

Beginning of the Gospel according to Matthew in: Biblia polyglotta ... nunc primum impressa ... de mandato ac sumptibus ... Francisci Xiemenez de Cisneros ... [Alcalá de Henares] : In Complutensi universitate (Arn Guill. de Brocario), Vol. 5, 1514, 2° (Basel University Library, FA II 10c, fol. A1r).

ZWINGLI IN REFORMED ZURICH

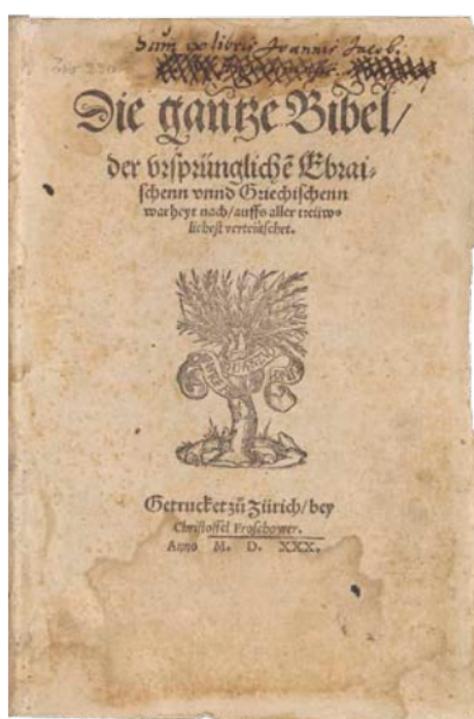
Christoph Froschauer the Elder (ca. 1490–1564) was born in Oettingen in the south-east of Germany. He came to Zurich, then a little town, and worked in the printing office of Hans Rüeegger, which was located “im Wyngarten.” Rüeegger died in 1517, and Froschauer took over the firm. The business was growing, compelling him to look for more space. In 1528, he was able to rent a part of the Barfuesser-Cloister. Around 1550, he had to leave these buildings, but was able to buy a part of the Cloister of the Dominican nuns, which then was called “Zur Froschau.” He also possessed two houses in the so-called Stüssihofstadt in the center of town.

In 1519, he became a citizen of Zurich, the same year in which the Reformer Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531) began preaching there. Froschauer also belonged to Zwingli’s circle, and he printed nearly all his works. A lifelong friendship developed between Froschauer and Zwingli. Froschauer concentrated on printing Reformation leaflets, Bibles, and tracts written by Zwingli, Leo Jud (1482–1542), Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575), Rudolf Gwalther (1519–1586), and others, but also various scientific works, for example the 1534 atlas of the St. Gall Reformer Joachim Vadian (1484–1551), with an interesting world map showing the newly discovered continent America, or the famous 1547/48 chronicle of Johannes Stumpf (1500– ca. 1577) with nearly 4,000 woodcuts, or the well-known 1551–1558 “*Historia animalium*” of the physician and naturalist Conrad Gessner (1516–1565), a pioneer work in modern zoology.

In 1563, Froschauer stopped printing, dying in 1564. His son Christoph Froschauer, Jr., continued the business until his death in 1585. Froschauer, Sr., published over 700 titles and Froschauer, Jr., nearly 400. They printed not only in German, but also, as in the case of their Bibles, in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and English. The total number of Froschauer books which appeared during the 16th century is estimated at over 800,000.

Probably the most important title printed by the Froschauers during the 16th century was the Bible. Between 1524 and 1564, when the elder Froschauer died, on average

one complete edition of the Bible appeared every year! In 1525, Zwingli founded the so-called “Prophezey” in Zurich, the first Academy in Reformed Protestantism. The teachers and professors at this school revised the Froschauer Bibles repeatedly, going back to Luther’s translation of the New Testament and the already translated parts of the Old Testament. Moreover, from 1527 on, they themselves also translated the Prophets of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. In this fashion, they completed a full translation of the Bible in Zurich as early as 1529. The Froschauer Bibles and New Testaments were in such great demand that from 1524 until 1585 editions appeared almost annually. Allowing for an average of 3,000 copies per edition, this meant that for the more than seventy-one German Bibles and parts of the Bible were produced during this time, the Froschauer printing office produced a total of 200,000 copies for the market. Considering that 16th-century Zurich had a population of only 7,000–8,000, it is not surprising that Froschauer Bibles could be found far beyond the city on the Limmat as well as in other regions and trading areas. Huldrych Zwingli, Swiss reformer (1484–1531), painting by Hans Asper, 1549 (Zentralbibliothek Zürich, call number: Inv 6).



15 THE FIRST ZURICH BIBLE IN ONE VOLUME

The Froschauer Bible, published in five parts between 1524 and 1529, was the first complete German Bible to

have been rendered not from the Latin but from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. Luther would need five more years to finish his own translation of the whole Bible. The first German Bible in one volume, whose translation was based on the original languages, was not printed in Zurich but in Worms by Peter Schoeffer in 1529, but the second was published in Zurich by Froschauer in 1530. [Bible \(German\), Zurich, Christoph Froschauer, 1530, 8° \(Zentralbibliothek Zürich, call number: Zwingli 230\).](#)



16 THE SPLENDID FOLIO EDITION

The folio version of 1531, which included seven different alphabet initials and over 200 woodcuts, represents the finest of Zurich's artistry in printing during the 16th century. The scholarly additions were creatively organized to include 14,775 parallel text annotations, fifty-nine references to classical authors from antiquity, and 1,800 marginal annotations, some of them against Catholics, Anabaptists, and Luther. This edition was revised and reprinted several times. This copy of the 1545 edition has been carefully colored by hand.

[Bible \(German\), Zurich, Christoph Froschauer, 1545, 2° \(Zentralbibliothek Zürich, call number: RRg 34\).](#)



17 A SWISS REFORMER READS THE HEBREW BIBLE

This bilingual copy (Hebrew/Latin) of the Old Testament was printed in Basel, the most famous town for Hebrew printing in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. The Hebrew text was translated into Latin by the well-known Basel scholar Sebastian Münster. The Zurich Reformer Heinrich Bullinger bought the Bible and annotated parts of it by hand. The price was 4 Pounds and 10 Schillings, at that time about half the monthly earnings of a country parson.

Old Testament (Hebrew), Basel, Johannes Bebel, 1534, 2°
(Zentralbibliothek Zürich, call number: Zw 301).



18 FIVE SCHOLARS AND ONE BOOK

According to the handwritten dedications on the title page, this New Testament belonged to five famous Swiss

protestants and scholars of the 16th century: “Sum Rodolphi Gualtheri Tig: 1550”; “Rod. Gualtherus D[omino] Henrycho Bullingero patris et affini suo colendiss[imo] D[ono] D[edit]”; “Bullingerus meo F[ilio] suo Henrycho Bullingero D[ono] D[edit] 1553”; “HBullingerus suo Henrycho Lavathero D[ono] D[edit] 1576”; and “HLavaterus suo amico suaviss[imo] D[omino] Wol[fango] Musculo D[ono] D[edit] 1581.”

New Testament (Greek), Paris, Simon Colinaeus, 1534, 8° (Zentralbibliothek Zürich, call number: AW 826).



19

THE FROSCHAUER BIBLES AND THE ANABAPTISTS

The Hutterites, an Anabaptist group that began in the Tyrol in the 1520s and soon gained a large following, maintaining contacts with Switzerland and especially Zurich, over the centuries have shown a preference for the Froschauer Bibles and New Testaments. This copy has a typical Hutterite binding with symbolic plants and acorns.

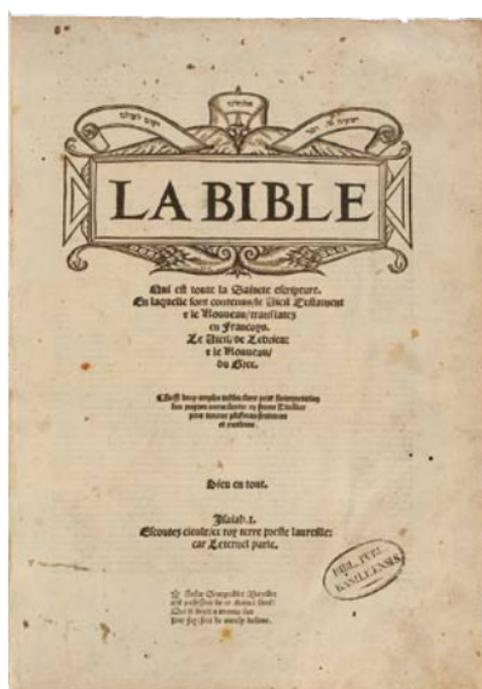
Bible (German), Zurich, Christoph Froschauer, 1538, 8° (Zentralbibliothek Zürich, call number: AW 336).



CALVIN (1509–1564) AND GENEVA

Everything was not always easy for Calvin in Geneva. In July 1536, Guillaume Farel was in Geneva and recognized Calvin, who was on his way to Basel. Farel asked Calvin to remain as pastor in the lakeside city, which had just pledged itself to the Reformation in May. However, Calvin and Farel were banished from Geneva in April 1538 for a lack of ecclesiastical discipline. Called to return in 1541, Calvin strove immediately to strengthen doctrine and to organize discipline among Genevans. It was only after the elections of February 1555 that the party favorable to Calvin took power and made life more hospitable for the Reformer, although illness affected him strongly, obliging him to stop preaching from October 1558 until June 1559. During all those years, Calvin dedicated a good part of his activities to the Bible: lessons in theology which gave rise to biblical commentaries written with the help of secretaries and students, daily preaching every other week, and twice every Sunday (approximately 250 hour-long sermons each year), and correcting the Bible. He was not able, however, to dedicate enough time to editing the New Testament of Olivétan (1535, object no. 20) in 1542, which appeared in 1543. He took more time with the Old Testament, his edition appearing in 1546 (object no. 21), but he remained unsatisfied. Calvin proposed, therefore, that a team set to work for six years to arrive at a satisfactory result. This happened after his death, when in the early 1570s a team of Genevan professors and pastors commenced their sixteen-year project, publishing in 1588 a new translation, which would become the French Genevan Bible (object no. 22).

Illustration: Pierre Woeiriot, engraving of John Calvin printed on the reverse of his *Recueil des opuscules* (1566) with his device *Prompte et sincere*: promptly and sincerely.



20

THE OLIVETAN BIBLE (1535)

The first French-Protestant version of the Bible based on original languages, Hebrew and Greek, was done by Pierre Robert Olivetan, a kinsman of John Calvin (they both came from Noyon, a little town in Picardy in northern France). This folio Bible was commissioned by a group of Vaudois in the Piedmontese Alps in 1532, and the translation was completed by Olivetan single-handedly in only two years, published at Neuchâtel in June 1535. This was an amazing feat, given that he used Hebrew and Greek source texts and even consulted rabbinical commentaries at first-hand.²

Calvin did not aid his kinsman in the translation, although on its title page he does grant a special privilege: “John Calvin to Emperors, Kings, Princes, and all Nations placed under Christ’s authority.”³ This text marks one of Calvin’s first Protestant declarations: the Bible is in no need of prerogatives or permissions, because Jesus Christ is above all political authorities.

One particular feature of the copy on display is that certain of its initial purchasers, mostly in Neuchâtel, and encouraged by the publisher’s printed Ex Libris on the title page, could inscribe a verse quatrain which included their name. In the copy on display we read:

André George, dict Mazelier
Est possesseur de ce Saint livre:
Qui si [= s’y] veult à jamais lier
Par foy, sera de mauix delivré.

(André George, called Mazelier / is the owner of this Holy book. / Whoever wants to be bound with it for ever / by faith, will be freed from troubles.⁴)

La Bible Qui est toute la Sainte escripture. En laquelle sont contenus, le Vieil Testament et le Nouveau, translatez en François: le Vieil, de l'Ebrieu, et le Nouveau, du Grec.
Neuchâtel, Pierre de Vingle, June 1535.¹

2°, Basel University Library (shelfmark F G III 39).

¹ See Bettye Thomas Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles: Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 192; Geneva: Droz, 1983), B1535win, No. 66.

² See Max Engammare, "Olivétan et les commentaires rabbiniques: Historiographie et recherche d'une utilisation de la littérature rabbinique par un hébraïsant chrétien du premier tiers du XVIème siècle," in *L'Hébreu au temps de la Renaissance* (ed. by Ilana Zinguer; Brill's Series in Jewish Studies 4; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 18–54.

³ "Joannes Calvinus, Cesaribus, Regibus, Principibus, Gentibusque omnibus Christi Imperio subditis" (verso of the title page).

⁴ This copy belonged to Jean-Rodolphe Ostervald (1687–1763), who was pastor of the French Church in Basel for fifty years and gave his copy to the University Library. He was the son of Jean-Frédéric (1663–1747), who translated the Bible into French (1744).



21

1546 BIBLE WITH A SWORD (THE PRINTER'S TRADEMARK ON THE TITLE PAGE)

This is the second revision of the Olivetan Bible, made under the auspices of John Calvin himself. Although Calvin was aware that the translation needed adjustments,

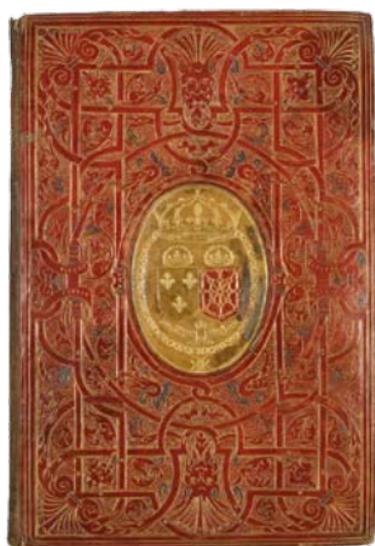
writing in the foreword that the reader “should not wonder if many mistakes escaped him [Olivetan],” the corrections are minimal, Calvin having devoted insufficient attention to the Hebrew text.

In contrast to the big folio set in Gothic, here we find a Roman font printed in a book of convenient size, for bringing to church or reading at home. In that same period, all English Bibles were in folio (e.g., the 1539 *Great Bible*). The French Bible therefore was highly useful, which accounts for the fact that the Olivetan Bible was still on sale in Geneva at the end of the 17th century. After 1540, every edition of the Bible from Geneva had Roman block capitals, as did Bibles in France, whether Catholic or Protestant.

*La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte esriture, en laquelle sont contenez le vieil Testament et le nouveau, translatez en François, et reveuz, le vieil selon l'Ebrieu, et le nouveau selon le Grec, Geneva, Jean Girard, 1546.*¹

4°, Geneva, Library of Geneva (shelfmark: Bb 2248 Rés.).

¹ See Bettie Thomas Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles: Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 192; Geneva: Droz, 1983), B1546[gir], No. 129.



22

THE BIBLE OF THE PASTORS AND PROFESSORS OF GENEVA (1588)

This is the last and most important revision of the Olivetan Bible, coming at the end of the 16th century. A team led by Corneille Bertram for the Old Testament and Theodore de Beze for the New Testament worked sixteen years, revising the entire text in the light of the original Hebrew

and Greek, and depending somewhat on the Latin translation of the Old Testament by Tremellius (1575–1579). Almost every verse has been reworked from its handling in the last major revision, by Robert Estienne in 1559, for the Bible of 1560. The marginal philological notes have disappeared, giving way to doctrinal and ecclesiastical notes; it was no longer a question of knowing how the biblical text was established, but rather of how to read it and believe it!

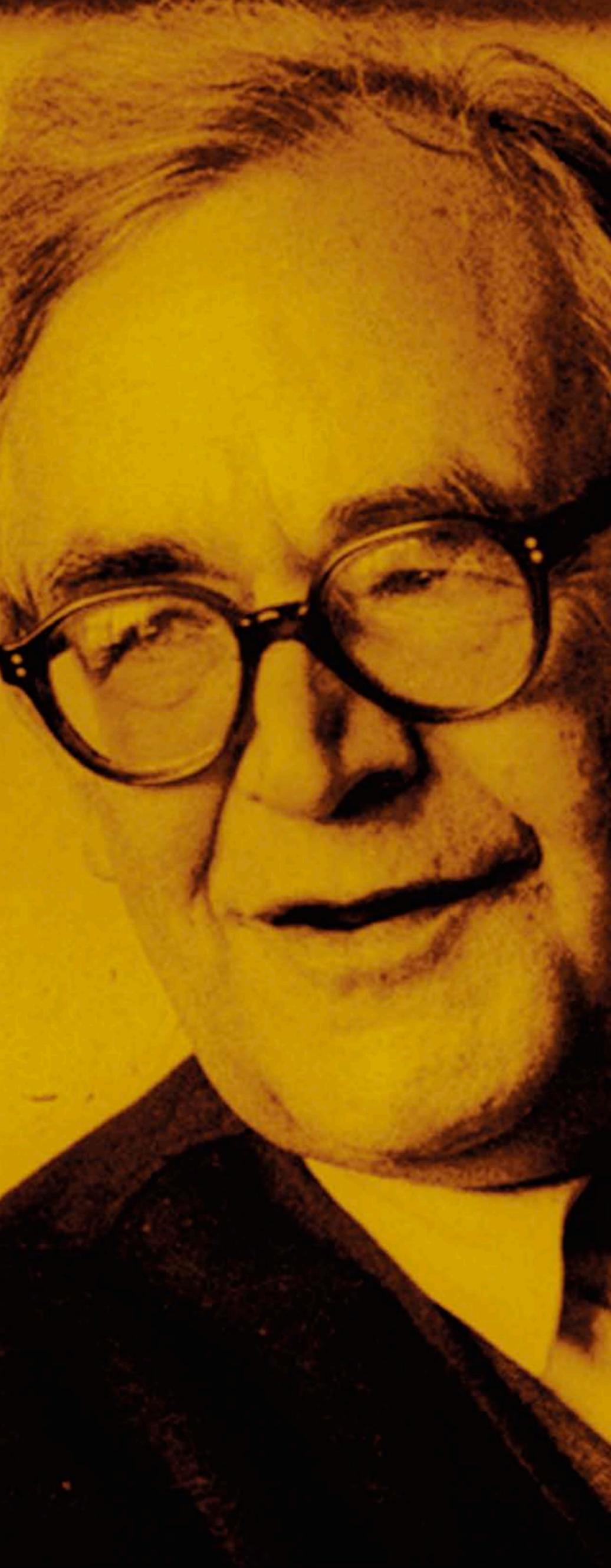
The project which John Calvin had formulated in the foreword to the 1546 Bible was now realized. Fifty years of Protestant translation of the Bible into French therewith achieved their remarkable quintessence, which held first place for more than a century, until the translations of David Martin and Jean-Frédéric Ostervald at the beginning of the 18th century.

This version was published in three formats (2°, 4°, 8°; folio, quarto, octavo) to suit the needs of the Church and State (a copy was used in the Council) and individuals alike. The print run was more than 10,000 copies, second only to the Geneva Psalter in 1562.

The copy shown here is remarkable for its ornate binding, of Genevan origin, which the City Council had commissioned for Henri de Navarre when he became king of France, as Henri IV (1589). Because this elaborate work took time, the Bible could not be sent to him before 1593. Since the king converted to Catholicism in July 1593, one year before his coronation in Reims, the copy remained in Geneva. This exhibit is the occasion of the book's first journey out of Switzerland.

*La Bible, qui est toute la sainte Esriture du Vieil et du Nouveau Testament, Autrement l'Ancienne et la Nouvelle Alliance. Le tout reveu et conferé sur les textes Hebrieux et Grecs par les Pasteurs et Professeurs de l'Eglise de Geneve.*¹
Folio. Library of Geneva (shelfmark: Bb 553 Rés.).

¹ See Bettye Thomas Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles: Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 192; Geneva: Droz, 1983), B1588geneve, Nos. 515, 516, 517; Max Engamamre, "Cinquante ans de révision de la traduction biblique d'Olivétan: les bibles réformées genevoises en français au XVIe siècle," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 53 (1991): 347–377.



BARTH – SWISS THEOLOGIAN IN TOTALITARIAN GERMANY

Karl Barth was born in Basel, Switzerland, on May 10, 1886. After studying Protestant theology in Berne, Berlin, Tübingen and Marburg, he served as a pastor in Geneva and in the rural-industrial village of Safenwil in the Canton of Aargau from 1909 through 1921. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 meant a double disappointment to him: on the one hand, almost all of the German theologians with whom he had studied and whom he deeply revered adopted the war rhetoric of the German Empire. On the other hand, the international social movement fell apart, as socialists throughout Europe became “social patriots” who joined and supported their respective countries’ decision to go to war. Barth had built up an individual theology, which mixed a liberal approach to exegesis and dogmatics with a socialist bearing toward the quest for justice in the relationship between workers and factory owners, working class and bourgeoisie. Now he felt the urgent need for a new foundation, and after several philosophical attempts he began in 1916 to look seriously for a new understanding of the Bible. Well aware of the history of theology and philosophy, especially in view of Immanuel Kant’s critical philosophy, he tried to understand and to explain what it meant that in the Bible we are not to search for human views of the divine but rather for God’s view of mankind and his will for it. Therefore, turning the usual understanding of scripture upside down, Barth became one of the founding fathers of 20th-century theology. Though deeply rooted in the theology of the Reformers, his work’s influence transcends denominational boundaries.

[Karl Barth 1955, photograph by Maria Netter.](#)

Jesus Christus, wie er uns in der Heiligen Schrift bezeugt wird, ist das eine Wort Gottes, das wir zu hören, dem wir im Leben und im Sterben zu vertrauen und zu gehorchen haben.

Wir verwerfen die falsche Lehre, als könne und müsse die Kirche als Quelle ihrer Verkündigung außer und neben diesem einen Worte Gottes auch noch andere Ereignisse und Mächte, Gestalten und Wahrheiten als Gottes Offenbarung anerkennen.

1. I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me (John 14:6).

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved (John 10:1, 9).

Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the sole Word of God which we must hear and which we must trust and obey in life and in death.

We reject the false doctrine, that the Church could and must acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this sole Word of God, still other events and powers, forms and truths, as God's revelation.

The primary document: Karl Barth's manuscript of the Barmen Theological Declaration as he set it down in writing on the occasion of the first meeting of those charged with drafting it (Karl Barth Archive Basel).

auf eigene gefaßte gute Vorsätze, wir meinen aber zu allerletzt die zweifelhafte Erinnerung an allerlei hinter uns liegende Umschwünge unsres seelischen Lebens, wenn wir uns auf unser Gestorbensein berufen, sondern wir berufen uns damit auf das, was Gott getan hat. Gott hat zwischen uns und die allgewaltige Sünde hineingestellt den Tod Christi. Das ist das Ereignis, das sie und uns auseinander rückt. Denn dieses Ereignis ist die Negation jener Allgewalt. In diesem Ereignis "hat Gott eintreten lassen den Tod des Todes, die Sünde der Sünde, das Gift des Gifts, die Gefangenschaft der Gefangenschaft" (Luther).

Baptism is his [God's] word, the word by which he expresses his love toward us ([Rom] 5:8), and by which he receives our love toward him ([Rom] 8:28). Baptism is neither an ideal nor an experience, but essence and being. Baptism does not signify, but is a new creation. We do not rely on dogma and we do not hypostatize religious ritual, as the old and new churches do, we do not tremble in fear before supernatural threats, and we do not let heavenly promises move us, we do not look up to divine commandments, and we do not look back at the good intentions we have made, and least of all do we call to mind the dubious roster of the various reversals in our former spiritual life, falling back on our own deadness, but rather we rely on what God has done. God has placed Christ's death between us and almighty sin. This is the event that separates us from sin. For this event is the negation of that omnipotence. In this event, God "made real the death of death, the sin of sin, the poison of poison, the captivity of captivity" (Luther).

Barth comprehensively set forth this new hermeneutical position in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, whose first edition in 1919 was swiftly superseded by a completely revised second edition in 1922. In the meantime, in 1921, Barth had been appointed Professor at the University of Göttingen in Germany, on the basis of the first edition. Later, in 1925, Barth was appointed to a chair at Münster University and in 1930 at Bonn University. In 1935 he was expelled from Germany and was appointed as professor in Basel.

[Page 1 of the 10th exercise book: Barth's exegesis of Rom 6:3 \(Karl Barth Archive Basel\).](#)



THE BOOK OF BOOKS AND THE NEW WORLD

We know that expeditions to the New World awoke the desire of Christian missionaries to make the Bible available to people they hoped to evangelize. This gesture, part of the “civilizing” effort, remains part of the ongoing discussion around the translation of biblical texts. In its day, it brought Europeans face to face with the question of how to transmit religion to people who did not know scripture and whose language Europeans did not speak.

It was an enormous undertaking. On view here is John Eliot’s translation of the Bible into Natick, the dialect of the Algonquins of Massachusetts. Eliot devoted more than ten years to this task, collaborating closely with the natives; his 1663 edition is the oldest complete translation of the Bible printed in North America. Thirty-four years earlier, in 1629, the Dutchman Albert Cornelisson Ruyl of the East India Company published the first translation of a biblical text printed in a non-European language: the Gospels according to Matthew and Mark in Malay. Also, already in America in the 16th century, the Franciscans had translated various prayers and liturgical texts.

In the wake of John Eliot, throughout the 18th century translations of the Bible proliferated. For example, in 1766, a translation of the New Testament into Inuktitut was made by Paul Egede, son of the Norwegian Hans Egede, who evangelized the Inuits in Greenland.

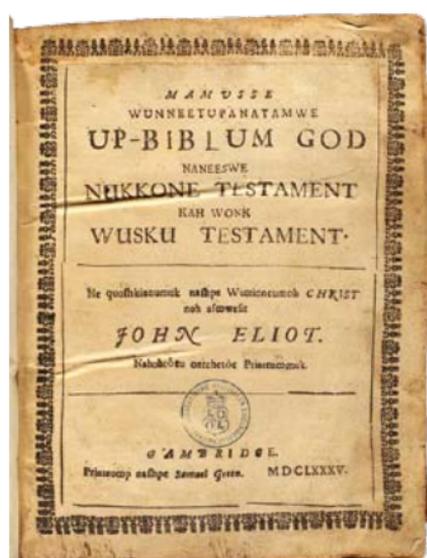
It becomes clear upon further reflection that the ostensible will to assimilate the other by converting him or her to Christianity forced missionaries to pay attention to the people they hoped to convert, opening themselves to their language and customs and also, paradoxically, becoming the memorialists of those they annihilated by virtue of keeping alive the written trace of their languages.

Thus, in Eastern Canada the Catholic missionary Pierre Maillard constructed a Mi’kmaq grammare, employing both a phonetic alphabet and a pictographic system

to translate the Bible and other religious texts into the Algonquin language.

Another remarkable example is the work of the Baptist Pastor Silas Rand, who translated the New Testament and several parts of the Old Testament into Mi'kmaq, with the aim of convincing that people to abandon Catholicism for Protestantism. His text was published in 1875 in Halifax. The ethnographic and philological eye that he trained on the natives, however, also pushed him to collect and then translate into English their myths and legends, thereby preserving for future generations the oral traditions of the Mi'kmaq (Legends of the Micmacs, 1864).

Christopher Columbus, *De Insulis nuper in mari Indico repertis*, [Basel], J. B. [Johann Bergmann], 1494, Edition placed after Carolo Verardi, *Historia Baetica* (Martin Bodmer Foundation, Cologne [Geneva], IncB 247).



26

THE “ELIOT INDIAN BIBLE”

John Eliot's Algonquin translation of the Bible was the first to be printed in North America. Printed less than fifty years after the Puritans first established a presence in New England (in 1639) and less than twenty-five years after the first book was printed in America (*The Book of Psalms*, 1640), it is a testimony to the activities of the missionaries who made contact with the native population. This monumental book of 1,180 pages, with some 4,000 characters per page, was the work of John Eliot, who, between 1649 and 1659, spent ten years translating the Bible “into a foreign language, for which he had to construct a vocabulary and much of its grammar.”

Another four years went by before the book could be printed. In 1660, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel sent a professional printer called Marmaduke Johnson to New England to print it in the original. With the help of Samuel Green and a young native called James, he did so in three years.

In September 1672, the authorities ordered that all remaining copies of the first edition of the Indian Bible should be bound. The edition was probably on the point of being sold out. Many copies were subsequently lost or destroyed during the civil wars of 1675–1676. It was thought that a new edition was needed. Eliot requested authorization and began to revise the entire translation in 1677.

From: Charles Méla, *Legends of the Centuries. Looking through a Legendary Collection. Martin Bodmer Foundation* (Paris: Editions Cercle d'Art, 2004).

Genesis 1:1–2

1. Weske kutchissik a ayum God kesuk kah Ohke.
2. Kah Ohke mômatta kuhkeuanauneunk quttinnoo kah monteagunninno, kah pohkenum woskeche moonôï, kah wun Nashauanitoomoh God popomshau woskeche nippekontu.

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Mamusse Wunneetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God Naneswe Nukkone Testament Kah Wonk Wusku Restamen. Cambridge [Mass.], Samuel Green, 1685 (Old Testament) and 1680 (New Testament), 2nd ed. Martin Bodmer Foundation, Cologny (Geneva).

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Project Management

Dr. Gabriella Gelardini, Senior Research Associate in New Testament, Theological Faculty of the University of Basel, Switzerland with:

Prof. Dr. Konrad Schmid, Professor of Old Testament and Ancient Judaism, Theological Faculty of the University of Zurich, Switzerland

Christoph Ebell, Science and Technology Counsellor, Embassy of Switzerland, Washington

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Contacts

Project Management

Dr. Gabriella Gelardini, University of Basel, Nadelberg 10,
4051 Basel, Switzerland

www.swisstreasures.ch

gabriella.gelardini@unibas.ch

(+41) 061 / 267-27-95 or (+41) 061 / 401-27-75

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