





The Influence of the Greek World on the Translation and Dissemination of Scripture

The Dead Sea Scrolls came to light shortly after World War II at Qumran near the Dead Sea. They have provided an unprecedented picture of texts produced in Palestine in the last two centuries B.C.E. and first century C.E. All the books of the canonical Hebrew Bible are represented in this collection, apart from Esther, and they constitute, by several centuries, the earliest copies to survive of these books in Hebrew. Although the majority of these texts are written in Hebrew, a substantial portion is written in Aramaic; by this time, Aramaic had become the regular language of communication in Palestine, and is the language Jesus would have used in conversing with his disciples. Tellingly, however, a very few of the texts from Qumran were written in Greek. For by the time this collection was created, historical processes had been set in motion by which the Scripture cherished by the Jews would be spread across the world through the vital technology of translation. And the first act of translation was into Greek.

When the Macedonian king Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire in the later fourth century B.C.E., Jerusalem and its surrounding Jewish territories seamlessly passed under the rule of new Greek-speaking overlords. Although Alexander's empire, stretching from the Ganges to Egypt and the Balkans, did not survive his death, a more substantial legacy, that of the Greek language and Greek culture, shaped this whole area for centuries to come. A text called the *Letter of Aristeas* gives an account of the translation of Jewish Scripture into Greek. Ptolemy II, the son of one of Alexander's generals and ruler of Egypt, devoted himself to the task of gathering in his famous library at Alexandria "all the books of the world." He was informed by an advisor that "the laws of the Jews are worth transcribing and deserve a place in your library," and so he set in motion an elaborate series of events by which scrolls containing the Jewish law were sent from Jerusalem

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Fig. 4: Miniature featuring St. Matthew the Evangelist, Gospel Lectionary, in Greek, circa 1050–1080, with additions of 1543, GC.MS.000469, Photo by Ardon Bar Hama

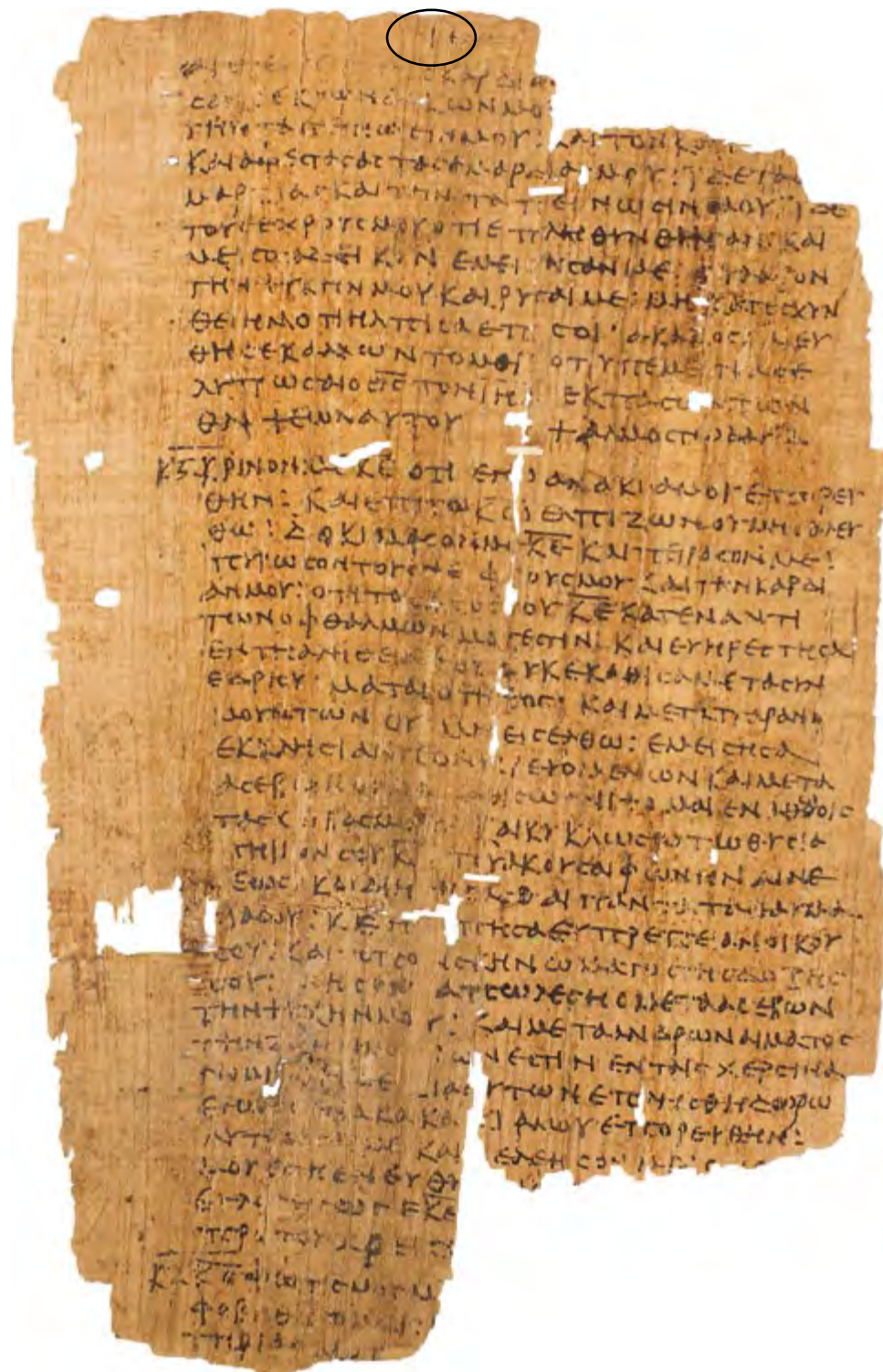


Fig. 11: Bodmer Papyrus XXIV, Page 19 (I), Late 3rd–4th century, GC.MS.000170.4

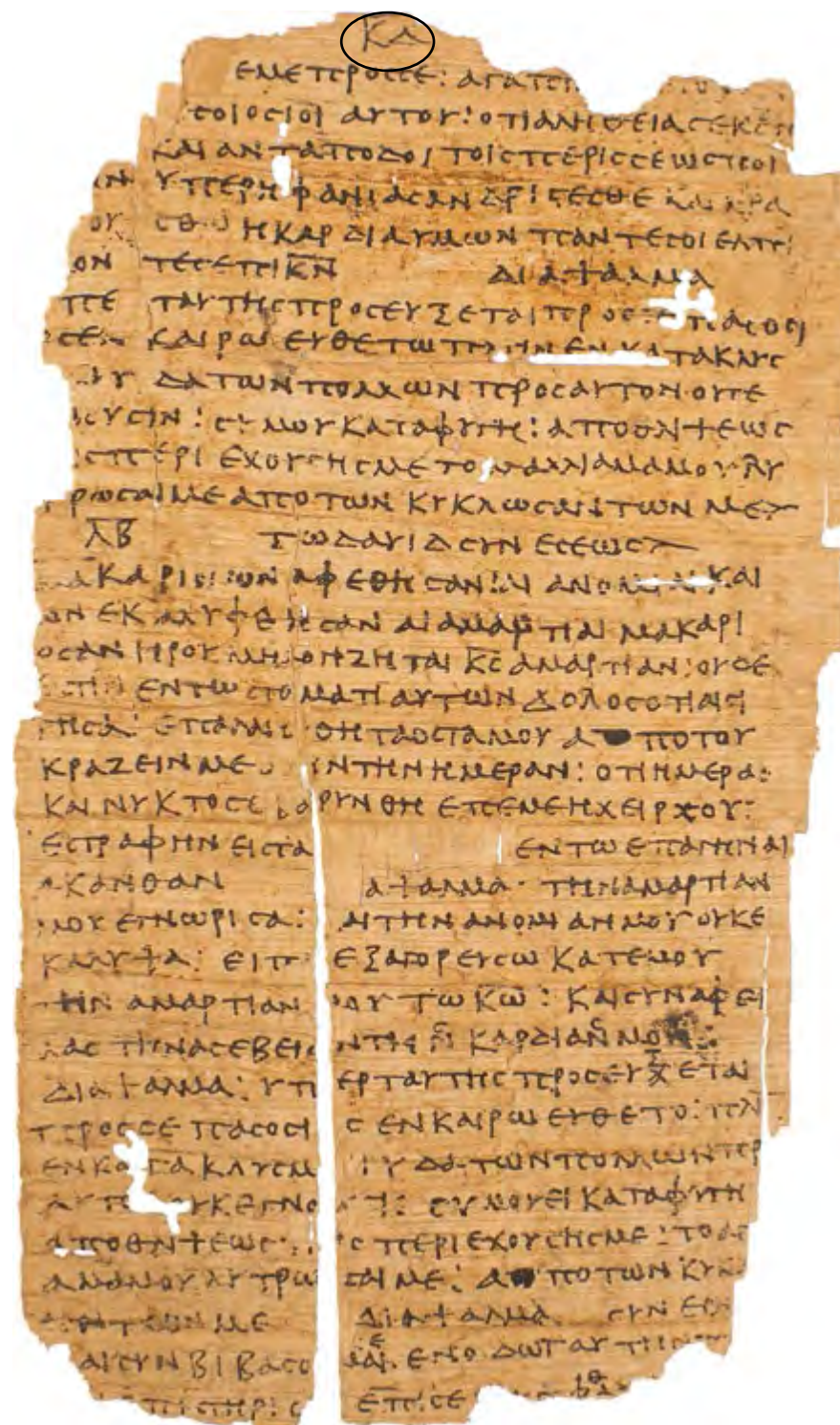


Fig. 12: Bodmer Papyrus XXIV, Page 24 (K), Late 3rd–4th century, GC.MS.000170.6



Fig. 16: Codex Climaci Rescriptus, Sinai, Egypt, 6th–9th century C.E., GC.MS.000149

This reflects the fact that Codex Vaticanus has come to play a central role in attempts to reach an early and pristine text of the Bible. It was already in the papal collection of books by the end of the fifteenth century, and although the great Dutch scholar Erasmus garnered some details of its readings through correspondence while he was working on his ground-breaking publication of the Greek Bible, he did not base his text upon it. In fact Codex Vaticanus was unduly ignored until the nineteenth century, when it became the foundation of the equally ground-breaking publication by Westcott and Hort in 1881, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*. Their work emphasised the primacy of the Alexandrian text-tradition, best exemplified by Codex Vaticanus, over the Byzantine text-tradition, which had come to dominate in the Greek church and, following Erasmus, became equally preponderant in the West. Most scholars today would consider the Alexandrian text-tradition to be superior for approaching the New Testament as it was first written.

17. Codex Climaci Rescriptus

Bible Palimpsest, in Syriac, Greek, and Christian Palestinian Aramaic

Uncial 0205

Sinai, Egypt

6th–9th century c.e.

GC.MS.000149

Little is known of John Climacus, the monk of Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai who wrote, in Greek, the famous *Ladder of Divine Ascent*. This manuscript was made at Saint Catherine's in the ninth century, and contains Climacus' famous work in a Syriac translation. The scholarly monk derived his name from this "*Ladder*" (*klimax*, in Greek), and hence so too did this manuscript.

However, the Codex Climaci Rescriptus is of particular interest because of what lies beneath the Syriac Ladder. It is a palimpsest (*rescriptus* in Latin), which means the scribe responsible for the ninth century text reused older books, whose letters he tried to erase. Those letters are still visible beneath the Syriac writing, and provide the textual treasure of this document.

In fact, eight different books were reused. Two of them contain Greek texts of the Gospels, dated to the sixth or seventh centuries. The other six, which have been dated to the sixth century, are written in Christian Palestinian Aramaic. Like Syriac, this is a dialect of Aramaic, but while classical Syriac came from upper Mesopotamia,



Fig. 17: The same page from the Codex Climaci Rescriptus under normal light (upper) and photographed with Multi-Spectral Imaging (lower)



† ΤΟ ΚΕ ΤΗ ΜΑΡΚΗ ΑΓΙΟΝ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ †



κηνιακή πρὸ τῶν θώπων·
 ερχέτο τοῦ ἐὸς ἀγγελοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου·
 τοῦ ἐὸς· ὅς γάρ αὖτε ἐν
 τοῖς προφήταις· ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος
 ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἀγγελοῦ μου

Ε
 κ. α
 1

Fig. 21: Miniatures depicting St. Mark the Evangelist and the Baptism of Christ opening the Gospel of Mark, Four Gospels with Kephalaia, in Greek, copied by Manuel Hagiostephanites for John of Crete, Archbishop of Cyprus, dated 1156, GC.MS.000484, Photo by Ardon Bar Hama



The Bible Continues to Spread Across Northeast Africa

The church historian Eusebius, writing in the early fourth century C.E., tells us that Mark the Evangelist, having written his Gospel, went to Egypt to preach its message within decades of Jesus' crucifixion. The church at Alexandria, one of the most important and most controversial until the Islamic conquest of the seventh century, indeed traces its foundation to the activities of Mark. However it arrived, the Christian message quickly spread across North Africa, which was to produce some of the most notable figures in the early church. In the Latin-speaking West lived Tertullian and Augustine, while the Greek-speaking East produced Origen and later Arius, famous for his heretical views, and Arius' great opponent, Athanasius of Alexandria. The writings of some of these luminaries contained much that was seen as heretical and was rejected (in the case, for example, of Arius and Origen); figures such as Athanasius and Augustine, who were often responding polemically to opposing views, produced texts that had an enormous impact on their contemporaries and shaped the future of the church worldwide.

Although Greek was the lingua franca in the eastern part of this region, as in Palestine, during the period of Roman rule, other languages flourished and important early translations of the Bible, into Coptic and Ge'ez, have their origin here. Furthermore, Egypt's dry climate has preserved more early texts than any other part of the early Christian world.

The church in Egypt had at its head the patriarch of Alexandria, the Greek city founded by Alexander the Great. However, most people living in Egypt spoke a vernacular Egyptian, which during this period we call Coptic, and by the third century the Bible had begun to be translated into numerous local dialects. The church flourished until the Islamic conquest of 641–2, after which its ecclesiastical hierarchy lost its status and influence, and conversions to Islam reduced its numbers. Today the

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 Fig. 23: **Detail of Mary and John at the Crucifixion, Triptych of the Virgin and Child**, Gondarine School, Tempera and Gesso on Wood, Ethiopia, 17th century, GC.ART.000246



30. Prayers of the New Moon from Karaite Prayer Book, in Hebrew

Fragment discovered in the Cairo Genizah
Cairo, Egypt
Mid-12th century
GC.PPR.010102

31. Morning Prayers from Karaite Prayer Book, in Hebrew

Fragment discovered in the Cairo Genizah
Cairo, Egypt
Mid-12th century
GC.PPR.010104

32. Prayers for Feast of Booths from Karaite Prayer Book, in Hebrew

Fragment discovered in the Cairo Genizah
Cairo, Egypt
Mid-13th century
GC.PPR.010105

When Grenfell and Hunt discovered the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, they found themselves digging up the city's rubbish dump, where damaged books and documents mingled with all manner of household refuse. In contrast, the Jews showed great fastidiousness in disposing of their books. Traditionally synagogues would have a "geniza," a room or cupboard set aside to receive worn-out documents. If texts included the name of God, they could not be simply discarded, and those in the geniza would eventually be gathered up and buried in such a manner as to show the required respect. It was not just Torah scrolls that would be placed in the geniza, however; all manner of documents, some apparently very mundane, would end up there.

The famous "Cairo Geniza," the geniza attached to the Ben Ezra synagogue in Fustat, Old Cairo, is principally remarkable because it was not emptied for a millennium. It gathered documents from the ninth until the nineteenth century, when European visitors began avidly to remove its contents. Its documents are in various locations, notably Cambridge University, the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, the John Rylands Library in Manchester, and the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Over 280 thousand documents have been taken, in Arabic, Hebrew, and Aramaic. Nearly 25,000 of them are biblical texts, and the earliest of them are among the oldest extant texts of the Hebrew Bible (the Dead Sea Scrolls provide the only group substantially earlier). They are therefore very important for understanding the text of the Bible, and in particular the Masoretic text, which is the standard version of the Hebrew Bible printed today.

Fig. 28: Prayers of the New Moon from Karaite Prayer Book, in Hebrew, Fragment discovered in the Cairo Genizah, Cairo, Egypt, Mid-12th century, GC.PPR.010102



Fig. 35: Full-page miniature depicting King David playing the lyre, Psalter with Weddase Maryam and various endnotes, in Ge'ez, Ethiopia, Mid-19th century, GC.MS.000294

38. Life and Miracles of the Virgin Mary, in Ge'ez

Copied by the scribe Wäldä Maryam
Ethiopia
Late 19th century
GC.MS.000329

During the fourth century C.E., both the Egyptian and Ethiopian churches opposed any doctrinal developments which, in their view, diminished the status of Christ. Thus they abhorred Arianism, and subsequently rejected the Chalcedonian view that Christ had two natures, a human nature and a divine nature. Their rejection of the Council of Chalcedon may be partly due to a perception that the council was upholding, to some degree, the heretical position of Nestorius, who was suspected of a low view of Christ's status demonstrated in his rejection of the title Theotokos, "Mother of God," for the Virgin Mary. And indeed one of the salient features of the Ethiopian church is an enthusiastic veneration of Christ's mother.

Evidence for the Ethiopian church is fairly scanty before the high Middle Ages, and it is therefore hard to trace such veneration until that point. However, in the middle of the fifteenth century, the great emperor Zara Yaqob (1434–1468) put the veneration of Mary on a new institutionalised footing, and literature and visual art provide ample evidence of its subsequent popularity.

The *Weddase Maryam* ("Praise of Mary") is a sequence of seven prayers in honor of Mary, one for every day of the week; the text is frequently found at the end of the Psalter, which bears witness to its liturgical use. Ethiopian tradition attributes the text to Ephrem the Syrian, but in actual fact the Ge'ez prayer sequence appears to be based on a sequence of hymns to the Virgin, the *Theotokia*, part of the Copto-Arabic liturgy of the medieval Coptic church. This provides interesting evidence for the continued influence of the Egyptian church on the Ethiopian church even after the former had come under Islamic rule, while the latter remained independent.

The two Psalters here (GC.MS.000290 and GC.MS.000294) include the *Weddase Maryam*; appropriately they are illuminated with illustrations of King David, to whom the Psalms are traditionally attributed, and the Virgin and Child. The first Psalter (GC.MS.000290) also has a depiction of Saint George, a very popular saint in Ethiopia. The artistic style is local; David is even presented as an Ethiopian king, who is playing a *begena*, a distinctive Ethiopian harp. However, influences from afar can be detected as well. Mary is giving suck to her son, an iconographical scheme which seems to have appeared in Ethiopia in the fifteenth century under the influence of the art of western Europe.

Many miracle stories connected with Mary circulated in Ethiopia. These in fact originated in medieval France but were brought to Ethiopia via Palestine following the Crusades. They were translated into Ge'ez at the beginning of the fifteenth century and thenceforward took on a life of their own, adapted and augmented to a considerable degree. At first, books of the miracles would be soberly decorated with a depiction of the Virgin, but from the seventeenth century, illustrations of the miracle stories themselves enlivened the texts with varied and novel iconography. The book displayed here (GC.MS.000329) combines miracle stories about the Virgin with an account of her life. The representational style is typically Ethiopian, and the lively palette is dominated by the traditional colors of yellow, green, and red (the colors of the Ethiopian flag to this day). The iconography is up to date, however; the soldiers in Herod's army are carrying rifles, betraying the book's nineteenth-century date.

The artist signed his work: in several places in the manuscript, the name of the scribe, Wäldä Maryam, is recorded. The book's patron is also recorded. On f66r, a text states that Täklä Haymanot commissioned the text "for the salvation of his body and soul." An actual depiction of Täklä Haymanot is found on f120r, where he lies prostrate beneath the Virgin and Child; this posture of extreme humility, expressing supplication, is typical of donor portraits in Ethiopian art, and can be seen also, for example, in the Psalter (GC.MS.000290).



Fig. 36: Full-page miniature depicting the Adoration of the Magi, Life and Miracles of the Virgin Mary, in Ge'ez, Copied by the scribe Wäldä Maryam, Ethiopia, Late 19th century, GC.MS.000329

39. Large Processional Cross

Brass
Ethiopia
18th century
GC.OBJ.00121

Fig. 37: **Large Processional Cross**, Brass, Ethiopia, 18th century, GC.OBJ.00121



40. Icon of the Virgin and Child, Gondarine School

Tempera and Gesso on Wood
Ethiopia
17th century
GC.ART.000228

41. Large Processional Cross

Brass
Ethiopia
18th century
GC.OBJ.000128

42. Gospel Book, in Ge'ez

Ethiopia
20th century
GC.MS.000123

The rulers of Aksum produced a magnificent series of coins, in bronze, silver, and gold, from the third to the ninth century C.E., some of them elaborate bimetallic pieces. Under Ezana, in the first half of the fourth century, a change occurred: the symbols of the sun and crescent moon, understood to represent the gods hitherto worshiped at Aksum, were replaced by the Christian cross, which remained thereafter the symbol of the kingdom's religious allegiance.

In 1204 the fourth Crusade concluded, ignominiously, with the sack of Constantinople. Ethiopia was a beneficiary of this event, since according to tradition a fragment of the True Cross made its way from Constantinople to the mountain of Amba Geshen in northern Ethiopia, creating increased enthusiasm for the veneration of the cross (and

subsequent Ethiopian tradition claims that the mother of Constantine, Helena, the discoverer of the True Cross, buried this relic on the mountain herself). Indeed, the feast of the True Cross (Masqal) is celebrated with particular vigor in the Ethiopian church.

It is no surprise, then, that the cross has been a central feature of Ethiopian imagery in the decoration of books and churches. Books are commonly bound in leather and decorated with blind tooling, enlivened

Fig. 38: **Icon of the Virgin and Child**, Gondarine School, Tempera and Gesso on Wood, Ethiopia, 17th century, GC.ART.000228



The Jewish and Christian Faiths Extend to China

The story of the Bible in China is not written yet. Nevertheless, several sources allow us to suspect that the Jewish and later the Christian Scripture were brought to the region by merchants and business travelers, who—very much like the Apostle Paul—practiced their faith and associated with likeminded believers wherever they went.

Until the early seventeenth century, the existence of Jews in China was completely unknown. While living in Beijing, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), the Italian Jesuit who founded the Catholic missions of China, received a Chinese visitor named Ai T'ien who claimed to worship only one God. When noticing an image of Mary with Jesus, Ai believed it to be an image of Rebecca with Esau or Jacob. Ai then informed Ricci that many Jews lived in Kaifeng, and that a splendid synagogue would hold a great number of books and writings. After sending a Chinese Jesuit to Kaifeng to copy the beginnings and endings of the synagogue's literary works, Ricci was able to verify that the texts resembled the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Jewish Scripture, known to Europeans.

The settlement of the so-called Kaifeng Jews is thought to have preceded the Christian era. The religion may have entered China as early as the dynasty of Han between 206 B.C.E.–226 C.E.. A synagogue was erected in Kaifeng in 1163 C.E.. During the Song Dynasty (960–1127 C.E.), Kaifeng was one of the largest cities in the world with a population estimated to be between 400 thousand and 700 thousand, with a prospering Jewish community. In the early eighteenth century the congregation disintegrated and assimilated with the Chinese society. The synagogue, called the Temple of Purity and Goodness, was part of a complex of several buildings, including a study hall, a ritual bath, a communal kitchen, and kosher meat preparation facilities.

The synagogue remained in ruins after a flood in 1852. A traveler, who visited Kaifeng in February of 1866, reported that the synagogue

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Fig. 47: **Chinese Torah Scroll, in Hebrew (detail)**, Kaifeng, China, Mid-17th century, Photo courtesy of Bridwell Library Special Collections, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University



Fig. 48: Chinese Torah Scroll, in Hebrew, Kaifeng, China, Mid-17th century, Photo courtesy of Bridwell Library Special Collections, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

it found its way to the United States during the twentieth century and is now held at the Bridwell Library at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

50. Chinese Manuscript, in Hebrew

Exodus 10:1–13:6
Kaifeng, China
Mid-17th century
GC.MS.000664

The Kaifeng Synagogue also used manuscript codices containing the vowels, probably as an aid to reading the unvocalized Torah. The text is separated into sections, each section representing the reading for one week of the year. All the following manuscript codices are written on paper.

Traditionally, the entire Torah is read throughout the course of one year. It is accordingly divided into fifty-four portions, called *parashah*, which are recited during the Shabbat morning service for each week. The cycle begins and ends on the holiday of Simchat Torah—between mid-September and early October—at which the last and the first verses of Torah are read, a practice that is often accompanied with dancing and music.

Each portion carries a name that is derived from the first word. The reading on this page is called *Bo*, Hebrew for “Go,” the first word spoken by God in the passage.

Then the Lord said to Moses, “*Go to Pharaoh* (בֹּא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה); for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his officials, in order that I may show these signs of mine among them.” (Exodus 10:1)

51. Chinese Manuscript, in Hebrew

Exodus 27:20–30:10
Kaifeng, China
Mid-17th century
GC.MS.000665

This *parashah* is called Tetzaveh (תִּצַּוֶּה) “you shall command,” named by the second word of the Hebrew reading.

You shall further command the Israelites to bring you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, so that a lamp may be set up to burn regularly. (Exodus 27:20)

Being read as the twentieth Torah portion of the year, it represents the eighth section from Exodus. The text on the image begins in the middle of Exodus 29:20 and ends in verse 24. This codex has twenty-two leaves.

52. Chinese Manuscript, in Hebrew

Deuteronomy 16:18–21:9
Kaifeng, China
Mid-17th century
GC.MS.000666

This *parashah* is called Shoftim (“judges”) and constitutes the forty-eighth weekly Torah reading.

You shall appoint *judges* (שֹׁפְטִים) and officials throughout your tribes, in all your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, and they shall render just decisions for the people. (Deuteronomy 16:18)

Fig. 49: Chinese Manuscript, in Hebrew, Deuteronomy 16:18–21:9, Kaifeng, China, Mid-17th century, GC.MS.000666



The passage on the image represents Deuteronomy 19:4-8. The codex contains twenty-four double-ply leaves; its dimensions are 112 by ninety-five millimeters.

53. Chinese Manuscript, in Hebrew

Weekday Evening Prayers
Kaifeng, China
Mid-17th century
GC.MS.000663

The Evening prayers comprise a set of traditional prayers, benedictions, and citations from the Scriptures. The codex consists of twenty-four leaves (including three flyleaves); its dimensions are 190 by 115 millimeters. Not all pages are written by the same hand. While most pages are unvocalized, the manuscript does contain some text with the vowels added.

Fig. 50: Chinese Manuscript, in Hebrew, Weekday Evening Prayers, Kaifeng, China, Mid-17th century, GC.MS.000663



Biblia Latina: The Bible of the Medieval West

The figure of Jerome (ca. 347–419/420) is one of the most familiar in Western art: the emaciated bearded hermit, draped in an incongruous scarlet cardinal's robe and accompanied by a lion, pursuing the scholar's life in the wilderness of Bethlehem as he translates the Bible into Latin. The Bible that arose from Jerome's efforts, the "Vulgate," is often supposed to represent an attempt to allow a broader public to understand the Scripture in their regular tongue, Latin. In fact, this picture of Jerome is a fantasy, but his scholarly labors laid the foundations for the reading and dissemination of the Bible in the West for centuries to come.

By the time of Jerome's birth, the Bible had existed in Latin versions for a century and a half. Both western Europe and, in particular, North Africa, housed expanding congregations who made use of Latin translations, and we can see this "Old Latin" version vividly presented through numerous quotations in the letters of Cyprian, who was bishop of Carthage in the mid-third century.

By the second half of the fourth century, the variety of Latin translations caused perplexity. Pope Damasus I (366–384) aimed to bring order and consolidation to the church, emphasizing the authority of the see of Rome. It was for him that Jerome began his translation, producing a Latin version of the Gospels that reflected a deep scholarly knowledge of the original Greek texts. However, after the death of Damasus, Jerome went further than anybody expected in his thoroughgoing work of biblical revision and translation. He moved to Bethlehem and emphasized the need to consult the Hebrew original of Old Testament texts—a reliance and pursuit of "Hebrew Truth," *Hebraica Veritas*, that was not to everyone's taste by any means.

Jerome discussed and defended his practice of translation in a lively correspondence and in prefaces written for the individual books of the Bible translated by him. Both sides of his correspondence with Augustine

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Fig. 51: Illuminated
Capital 'I' opening
Genesis, Italian
Pocket Bible,
in Latin, Venice
or Padua, Italy,
Mid-13th century,
GC.MS.000459



Tertullian (ca. 160–ca. 225) frequently quotes biblical texts in Latin (though on many occasions he may be translating the quotation himself, for his present purposes, rather than citing a translated text already in existence). However, the quotations made by Cyprian provide the largest corpus of early witnesses to the Old Latin translations.

This fifteenth-century manuscript of his letters contains fifty-eight quotations from the Old Testament and eighty-two from the Gospels. On the pages displayed, the beautifully clear Renaissance layout is only mildly sullied in the large title on the right where the scribe mistakenly wrote “alie aepistolae” for “aliae epistolae” and inspired a grubby correction. Near the bottom of the left-hand page, in a text actually written by an anonymous contemporary of Cyprian but attributed to Cyprian for many centuries, one of the biblical quotations can be easily seen, beginning in the fifth line from the bottom; it is Isaiah 42:1: “Ecce puer meus dilectissimus ponam sup[er] eum spiritu[m] meum [et] iudicium gentibus nunciabit.” (“Behold my very beloved servant; I will place upon him my spirit and he will announce judgement to the nations.”) This Old Latin translation differs from the Vulgate which, for example, uses “servus” (“servant”) rather than “puer” as here.

58. Saint Jerome, Letters and Adversus Jovinianum

Italy

Circa 1400–30

GC.MS.000115

Jerome was a compulsive correspondent, and the large collection of his surviving letters provides an insight into his thoughts on translating the Bible, as well as areas where he disagreed sharply with contemporaries. The letters were preserved and copied frequently, valued for just these reasons, and this copy was made in Italy, perhaps Naples, during the first few decades of the fifteenth century; Jerome’s letters would be printed for the first time in Rome in 1468.

The selection of Jerome’s letters in medieval collections varied (and some indeed are falsely attributed to him), and the order was not uniform either. Letters written by his correspondents to Jerome are often included. This copy opens with a letter from Pope Damasus (Letter 35), in which Jerome is asked to clear up several points of biblical interpretation, for example, why God’s commands to Noah treated some animals as unclean (Genesis 7:2), even though God had created all things good. Damasus is an important figure in this context because it was for him that Jerome is thought to have begun his translation.

Jerome’s correspondence with Augustine is featured early in this manuscript (folios 28–49). Augustine was by no means enthusiastic about Jerome’s emphasis on using Hebrew sources as authoritative

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Fig. 54: Illuminated Capital ‘D’ featuring St. Jerome, seated at a scribal desk, Saint Jerome, Letters and Adversus Jovinianum, Italy, circa 1400–30, GC.MS.000115, Photo by Ardon Bar Hama



which was inspired by ancient images of divinized Roman empresses. A Christian touch is added by the blue roundel at the very top in which is delicately represented the lamb and flag, representing the risen Christ.

This book demonstrates the durability and long use of vellum manuscripts. In 1632 Pope Urban VIII issued a new Roman Breviary, which contained revised hymns. In response, this manuscript was very carefully altered, for a new scribe scraped away defunct texts and replaced them with the new wording, so that the book could continue to be used in liturgy. Inscribed labels pasted to the edges of the pages were used to mark places of liturgical significance, and their late date demonstrates that the book was in use at least until the eighteenth century.

69. Calendar, Gradual, Sacramentary, with early musical notation

Saint Gall, Switzerland

Circa 1000

Item on loan from the Abbey Library of Saint Gall (Stiftsbibliothek Saint Gallen), Saint Gallen, Switzerland

Although throughout the Middle Ages biblical texts were regularly sung in the context of liturgy, it is not possible to reconstruct exactly how they sounded. The ability to write down musical notation was lost after the end of classical antiquity, and attempts to revive it in order to record plainchant are found in manuscripts by the end of the ninth century, at the latest; some have linked this revival to the efforts of Charlemagne, a century earlier, to reform liturgy in his realms after the Roman pattern.

This volume, made at the monastery of Saint Gall around 1000, contains liturgical texts with marks of accompanying musical notation, known as *neumes*, added above the text. The style is distinctive of the German-speaking area: the *neumes* are sloping, and a given stroke can represent two or more musical notes. The notation used at Saint Gall itself is of outstanding complexity and richness, making full use of a wide repertoire of *neumes* with subtle variation.

When this manuscript was made, the use of the musical staff to indicate pitch, a development associated with Guido d'Arezzo, was still two or three decades in the future. These *neumes* in themselves cannot consistently indicate relative pitch; the notation is not designed to record and convey to a reader a completely unknown melody. Instead the notation was valuable in helping to learn plainsong and accurately to recall it.

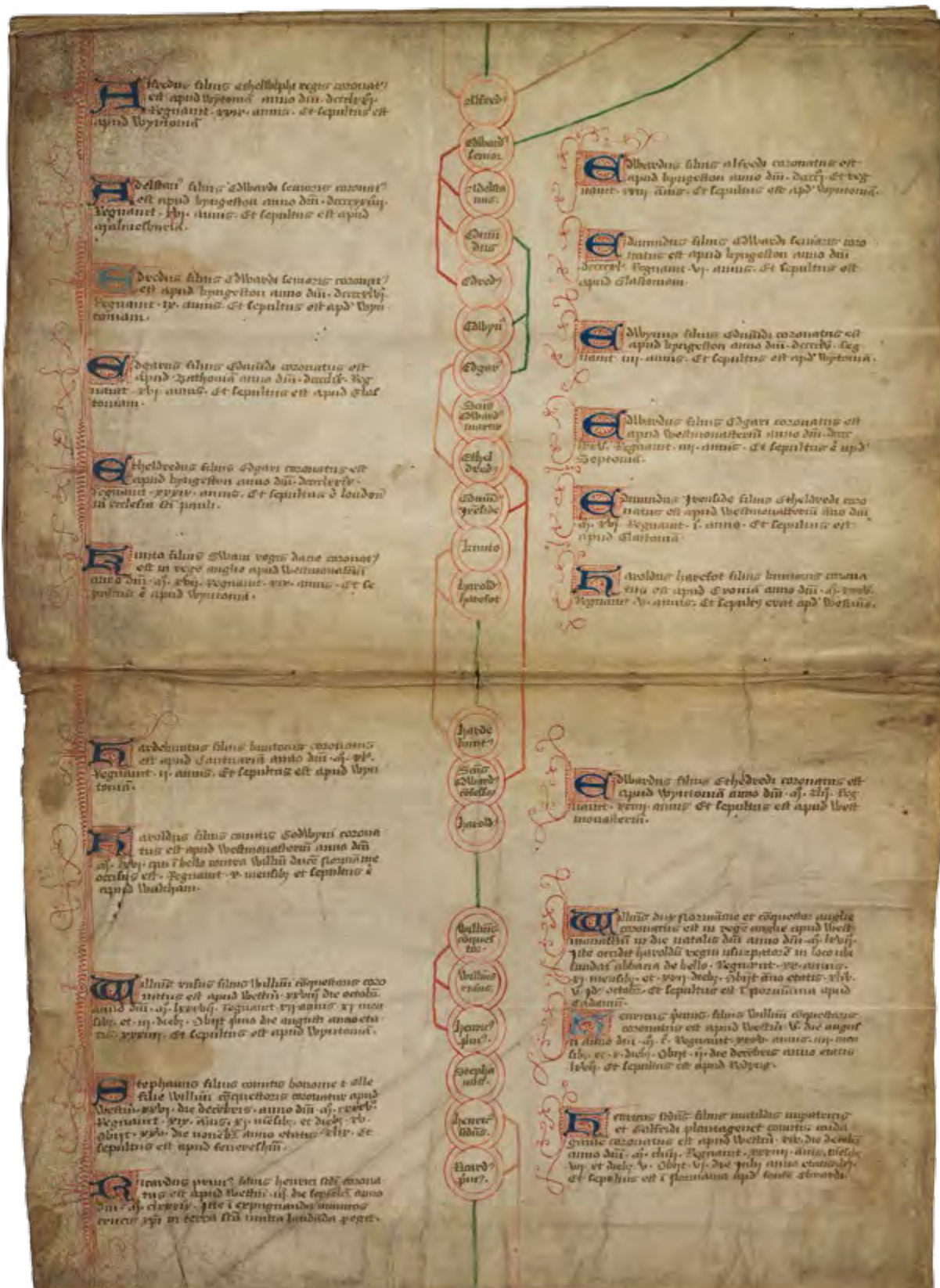
As a result, modern attempts to reconstruct medieval plainsong are inevitably imperfect and fraught with controversy. This book played an important role in the modern revival of plainsong, which began in the nineteenth century, when it was issued as a facsimile in 1889.

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Fig. 61: Opening to Psalm 1, featuring an illuminated initial 'B' depicting King David, Liturgical Psalter with Hymnary for Advent and Easter, Illuminated by the Workshop of Antonio da Monza, Milan, Italy, circa 1490-1500, GC.MS.000347, Photo by Ardon Bar Hama



Fig. 63: Opening to Psalm 1, featuring an illuminated initial 'B' containing the Tree of Jesse, Hours and Psalter of Elizabeth de Bohun, Countess of Northampton, England, possibly Cambridge, 1330–35, with additions of circa 1340, GC.MS.000761



Insular Christianity: Bringing the Gospel to the British Isles

Translations of the biblical text into English have been made for more than 1,100 years. This in itself is a unique record among the vernacular tongues of western Europe. Equally unique is the level of opposition and persecution met with, at some periods, by those who sought to carry out these translations.

For several centuries the Bible was known in the British Isles only in Latin. Christianity first arrived during the Roman Empire, which is the context for the story of Saint Alban, reputed the first Christian martyr of Britain. Following the withdrawal of Roman power and the arrival of non-Christian Germanic groups from Europe, a fresh attempt to spread the Christian message was begun when, in 597, the monk Augustine arrived in Kent, sent from Rome by Pope Gregory the Great. Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury and is revered as a Saint, and following his mission the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of southern Britain converted, one by one. Meanwhile, a separate Christian tradition had been preserved and nourished among the descendants of the ancient Britons, who flourished still in Ireland and in the northern and western corners of Britain. This Celtic church experienced some conflict with the church newly established among the Anglo-Saxons, but rapprochement led to the development of what has been identified as a distinctive tradition: Insular Christianity.

Northumbria was one of the chief centers of Insular Christianity and saw the production of many lavish and visually distinctive biblical texts, such as the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Barberini Gospels (*Vat. MS. Barberin. Lat. 570*). Bede, a Northumbrian monk, recorded the story of the gospel's progress in England in the first great work of British historiography (see catalogue item 74) and was a notable scholar in his own right. The language of all these texts is Latin, but the visual decorations of the biblical texts constitute the most recognisable examples of local Celtic art.

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Fig. 66:
Genealogical Chronicle of the Bible and Kings of England to Edward IV, showing here the kings from Alfred the Great to Richard I, England, likely London or Westminster, After 1471–75, GC.MS.000450, Photo by Ardon Bar Hama



The Printing Revolution and the Mass-Production of Major European Translations

The mass production of Bibles begins with the introduction of the printing press. Until the fifteenth century any publication had to be copied by hand if an edition was to be produced and disseminated in numbers. The process was slow, costly, and liable to human error, and as a result most people did not have access to copies of the Christian Bible. Yet in the middle of the fifteenth century a technological revolution, the movable-type printing press, was introduced by Johannes Gutenberg (ca. 1395–1468) in Mainz, Germany, and this invention would transform the fabric of Western civilization. Publishers were now able to produce copies of the Bible faster, at lower cost, and with a greater degree of precision. Books had suddenly become affordable.

The Gutenberg Bible was a reproduction of the Vulgate, the version of the Old and New Testament in Latin as it was authorized by the Roman Catholic Church for public use by their clergy. The text was printed in two columns, and after it came off the press small blue and red ornamentation was added by hand. In the fifty years after Gutenberg's invention over a hundred editions of the Latin Bible were published, and translations into French, German, and Italian appeared. Furthermore, at least three editions of the Hebrew Old Testament were produced and several editions of the Greek Psalter. The 1481 *Psalterium Graeco-Latinum cum Canticis* presents a text in Greek with a Latin translation on the opposite page. It contains the Psalms and Old and New Testament canticles, which were used in the liturgy of a church service. Because this Psalter contains the *Magnificat* of Mary and the *Benedictus* of Zechariah from the first chapter of Saint Luke's Gospel, it is the earliest printed text containing portions of the Greek New Testament.

At the turn of the fifteenth century much of Europe erupted with religious unrest, fueled by easy and quick access to printed publications about contemporary developments. Without the new media the

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Fig. 72: **The Bible, in Czech**, Printed by Jiří Melantrich. Prague, Czech Republic, 1577, GC.BIB.001015

The Judeo-Christian Tradition in Central and Eastern Europe

After the turmoil and confusion following the collapse of the western Roman Empire, Christian Europe became more stable in the eleventh century. In Germany the population grew significantly and created a strain on the economy. The Slavic territories to the east, however, were underpopulated and offered unclaimed land for farming and great opportunities for trading. German-speaking Jews were among the first settlers to move into these eastern parts of Europe.

From the end of the Middle Ages until the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of millions of Jews by the Nazi regime, more Jews lived in central and eastern Europe than anywhere else in the world. Important Jewish centers and institutions were established, fostering and developing distinct forms of religious practices.

Although the first wave of settlers had migrated already in the tenth century, most Jews settled in Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the twelfth century. By 1897, for example, Russia had registered 5.2 million Jews. As they immigrated from the west, Jews found living conditions more favorable and their legal security more enhanced. They were granted their own limited jurisdiction and were typically allowed to govern themselves across national boundaries. They spoke their own language, Yiddish, which is based on High German but is strongly influenced by various German dialects. Yiddish also includes vocabularies from the Hebrew, Aramaic, Slavic, and from Romance languages, and it utilized the Hebrew alphabet in its written form. In the course of the sixteenth century, rabbis from Polish educational institutions were requested to teach in France and Germany, reversing the earlier relations of dependence. Most families, however, remained poor.

The Jews of eastern Europe are called Ashkenazi, plural Ashkenazim, from Hebrew Ashkenaz (“Germany”). They are distinguished from Sephardic (Spanish) Jews by the use of Yiddish, numerous cultural

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Fig. 96: Torah Scroll, in Chasidic Ari Script, Poland, Late 19th century, GC.SCR.000683 and Silver Yad with Enamel Inlays, Russia, 1896, GC.ARK.000782



ABOVE
Fig. 100: Torah
Scroll, in Chasidic
Ari Script, Poland,
Late 19th century,
GC.SCR.000683

worshiper impure, but also may cause damage to the expensive, hand-written scrolls. Parchment does not absorb ink very well; therefore, not touching it will keep the lettering in good condition. This exemplar is 24.6 centimeters long with a diameter of 2.3 centimeters.



Fig. 102: Silver
Yad with Enamel
Inlays, Russia, 1896,
GC.ARK.000782



110. Silver Tefillin Covers with Engraved Flower Designs

Ukraine

Circa 1800

GC.JUD.000679.1–2

Fig. 101: Silver
Tefillin Covers
with Engraved
Flower Designs,
Ukraine, circa 1800,
GC.JUD.000679

The different holidays of the Jewish calendar encourage the use of beautifully decorated objects during their rituals. The items represent examples of excellent eastern European craftsmanship.

The tefillin, also referred to as phylacteries, are a set of small leather boxes that contain pieces of parchment inscribed with Torah verses. One tefillin is placed on the upper arm, and the strap is wrapped around the lower arm, hand, and fingers, whereas the other tefillin is placed above the forehead. It serves as a reminder to the person praying that God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. The scriptural base is obscure, although Deuteronomy 11:18 is sometimes quoted:



Fig. 103: Esther Scroll with Silver Filigree Scroll Case, Poland, circa 1900, GC.SCR.001971/GC.ARK.000896

Pilgrims and Patriots: The Bible in North America

The Bible has been a part of North America's history ever since French, Spanish, and English explorers came to the continent. The Bible that came over on the Mayflower in 1620 was the Geneva Bible. Originally published in 1560, the Geneva Bible was the standard edition before the dominance of the King James Version of 1611. Providing useful study aids in the outside columns of the biblical text, it also served an educational purpose. Bent toward Calvinistic teachings, these aids included introductions for each book of the Bible, brief commentaries on the biblical text, and reference notes to help the reader locate parallel passages.

The first book ever printed in North America was the Bay Psalm Book of 1640. It became so popular that nearly every church in Massachusetts Bay embraced it. The importance of the Bay Psalm Book for the religiously minded colonist cannot be overstated. The title page to one of the later editions captures the role this book played in the community by alluding to Saint Paul's words, "Speak to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). Its many editions played a pivotal role in fashioning the cultural milieu that helped lead the way to American political and religious independence from England.

However, the Bible was not the only book that strongly influenced Christians in the colonies. Books like John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* were also kept in high regard. Written as an allegorical narrative concerning the struggles and triumphs of the Christian life, Bunyan's work became a common companion to the English Bible and was one of the most influential religious texts ever written in English. In some notes he jotted down in 1830 on *Pilgrim's Progress*, literary critic and poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge called it "the best *Summa Theologicae Evangelicae* ever produced by a writer not miraculously inspired."

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Fig. 110: Eliot Indian Bible, in Algonquin, Translated by John Eliot, Printed by Samuel Green, Second Edition, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1685, GC.BIB.001469

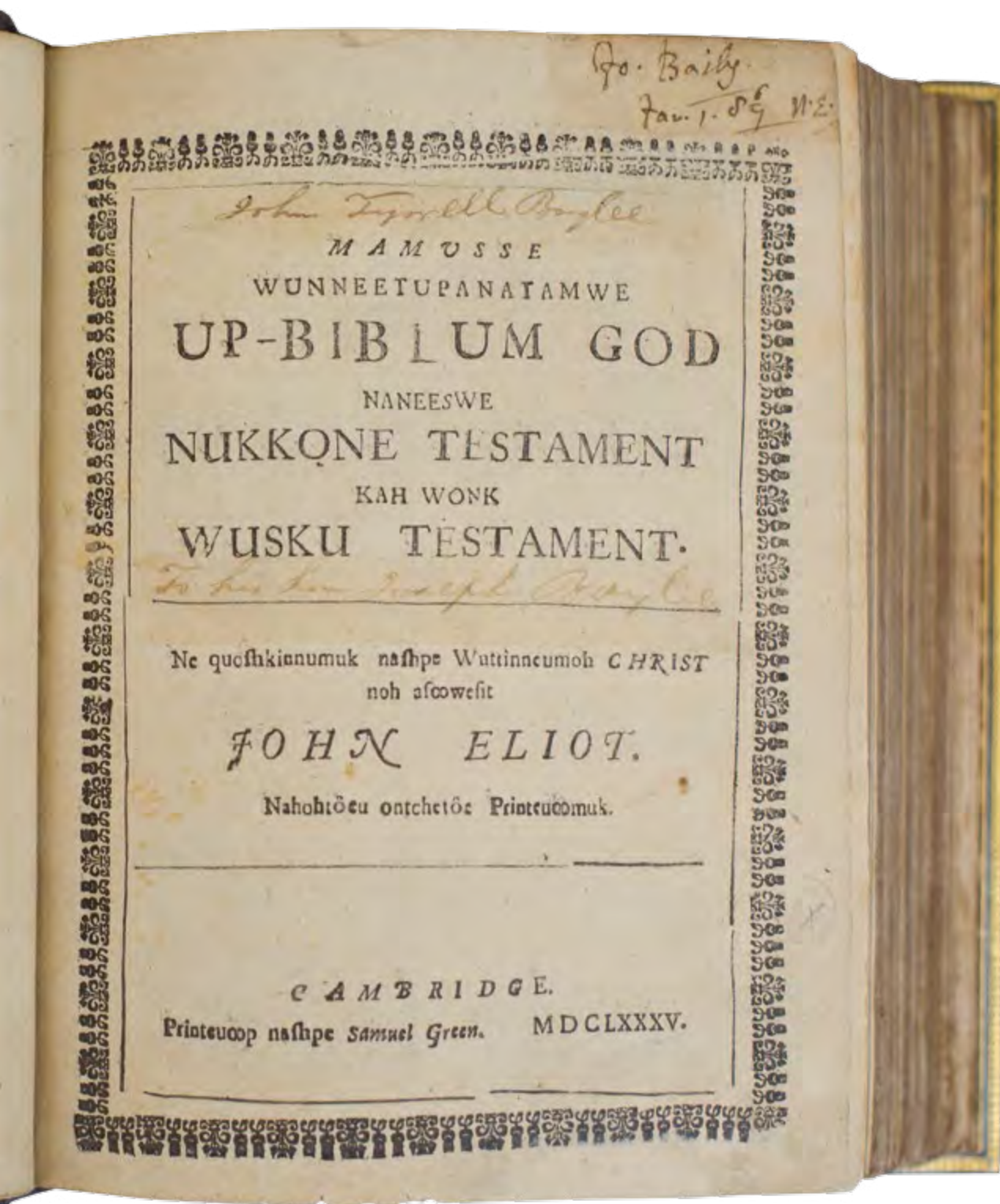




Fig. 113: Fold-out, "A Mapp Shewing the Order & Causes of Salvation & Damnation," *The Works of John Bunyan*, Recovered from Shipwreck between England and America, Printed by William Marshall, London, England, 1692, GC.PBK.000154

122. Indian Diglot of the Gospel of John, in English and Algonquin

Boston, Massachusetts, United States
1709
GC.BIB.001152

From the earliest stages of exploration, English settlers encountered the native peoples of North America. Christian colonists saw this as opportunity for missionary work, and they began to translate the Bible into the languages of the Native Americans. One of the first translations produced was a Massachusetts diglot of the Gospel of John. It was printed in Boston in 1709 and originally contained the Psalms as well. Experience Mayhew (1673–1758), a Congregationalist minister and missionary, prepared the original edition. To the left is an English translation accompanied by a Massachusetts dialect to the right.



Fig. 114: Indian Diglot of the Gospel of John, in English and Algonquin, Boston, Massachusetts, United States, 1709, GC.BIB.001152

123. Saur Bible, in German

Christopher Saur
Germantown, Pennsylvania, United States
1743
GC.BIB.001592

The earliest Bible in a European language printed in North America was Christoph Saur's (1695–1758) Luther edition. It was printed in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1743. By trade Saur was a tailor. However, when he acquired a press that had been sent from Germany by German Baptists, he began devoting his attention to printing. His first publications were religious newspapers and almanacs, but Saur had aspirations to publish a complete German Bible. He reproduced one of Luther's German editions and approximately 1,200 were printed for German-speaking colonialists. The Bible was created using mainly black ink, but Saur also used red in some places, such as on the title page. Johann Erasmus Luther (1642–1683), a German type founder from Frankfurt, donated the beautiful German typeface for Saur's project.

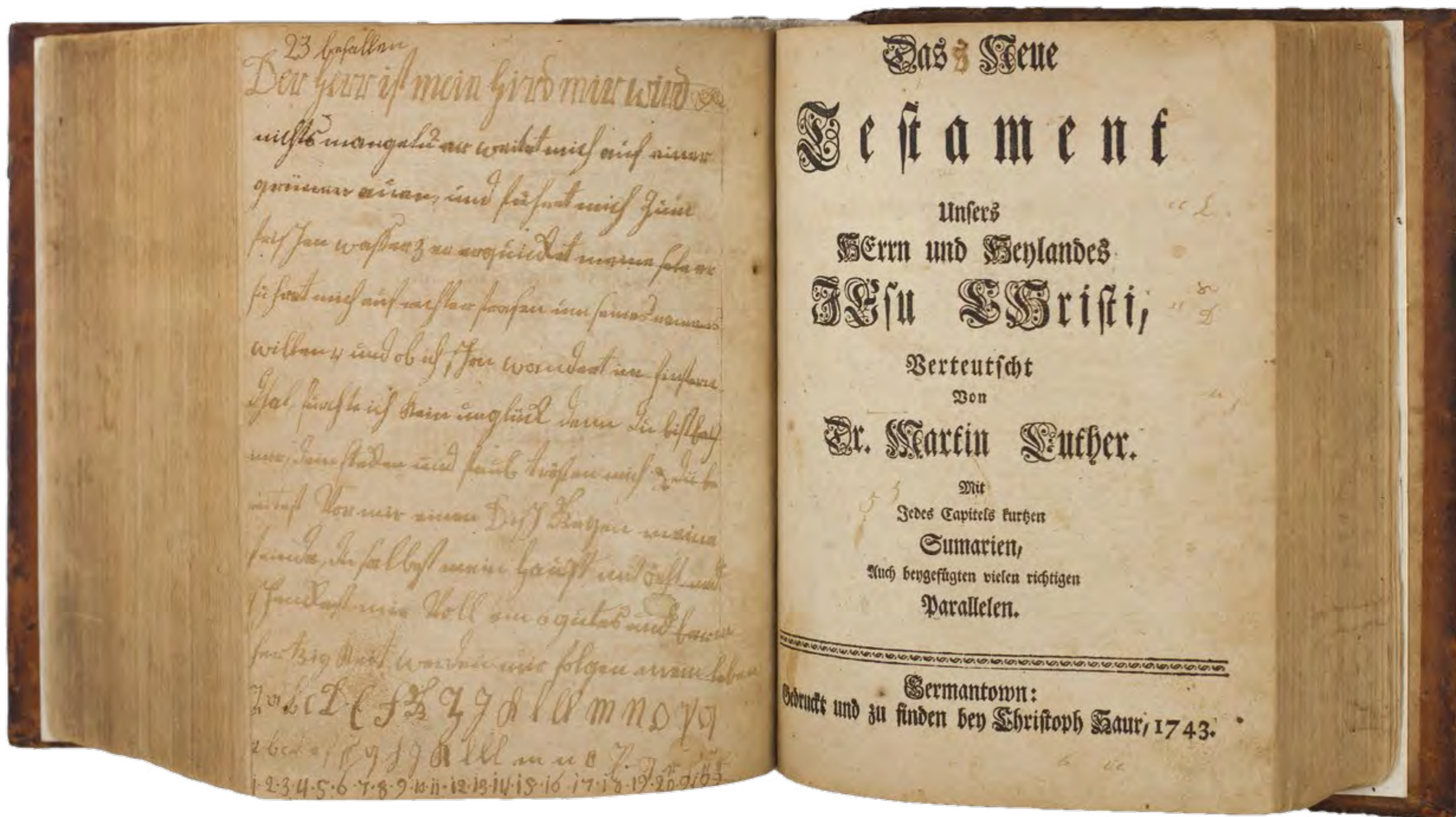


Fig. 115: New Testament Title Page, Saur Bible, in German, Christopher Saur, Germantown, Pennsylvania, United States, 1743, GC.BIB.001592



An Abundance of Translation

Until the eighteenth century, the efforts of Great Britain and the Netherlands—the early Protestant colonial powers—were slow to evangelize the populations of their colonies. This situation changed when the Protestant mission movement began. It is marked by the dispatch of Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg (1682/83–1719) and other missionaries to Tranquebar in India through the Danish-Halle Mission in 1705/06. Supported by the influential Francke Foundations (Franckesche Stiftungen) in Halle, which developed into one of the most important promoters of mission activity, these first missionaries benefitted from the political and religious connections between the Danish Royal Court and the pietistic circles in Germany and from their personal contacts to August Hermann Francke. Since 1710 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK)—significantly influenced by the pietistic court preacher Friedrich Michael Ziegenhagen—contributed to the mission financially as well as logistically. After founding the Missions College in Copenhagen, the Royal House of Denmark endeavored to strengthen its position as the initiator and sponsor of the mission. The Danish-Halle-Mission was an internationally and ecumenically operating organization. Their sponsoring institutions comprised a variety of nations and denominations.

As an essential prerequisite for the mission activity, the missionaries studied the local languages and translated parts of the Bible, devotional literature, and hymn books into Tamil and Telugu languages, as well as into Portuguese. By establishing mission-operated presses, they were able to print their own works on site and without delay. In all these activities they became role models for the large number of missionaries following in their steps all over the world.

During the nineteenth century, a great interest developed for mission work in Africa. Establishing a culture of writing in Africa was considered of utmost importance, and the stations founded by

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Fig. 126: Woodcut
featuring St. Luke,
The New Testament,
Latvian Language
Translation, Printed
by S.L. Frolich,
Riga, Latvia, 1730,
GC.BIB.000970

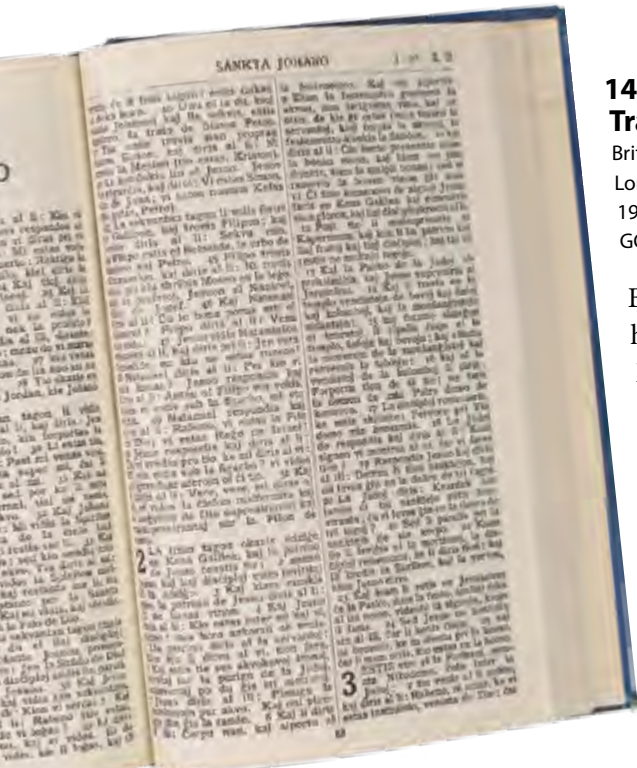


Fig. 137: **The Holy Bible, Esperanto Language Translation**, British and Foreign Bible Society, London, England, 1947, GC.BIB.001114

147. The Holy Bible, Esperanto Language Translation

British and Foreign Bible Society
London, England
1947
GC.BIB.001114

By 1887 a Polish linguist named L.L. Zamenhof had constructed a new language, which he called Esperanto. It is estimated that several hundred thousand people are fluent in Esperanto today; most of them live in Europe, East Asia, and South America. Zamenhof had hoped that a simple, neutral language would help overcome national differences. In 1954 UNESCO recognized Esperanto as a language and recommended its use to all its member states. The British and Foreign Bible Society had issued this Esperanto translation of the Bible already seven years earlier.

148. The New Testament, Tshiluba Language Translation

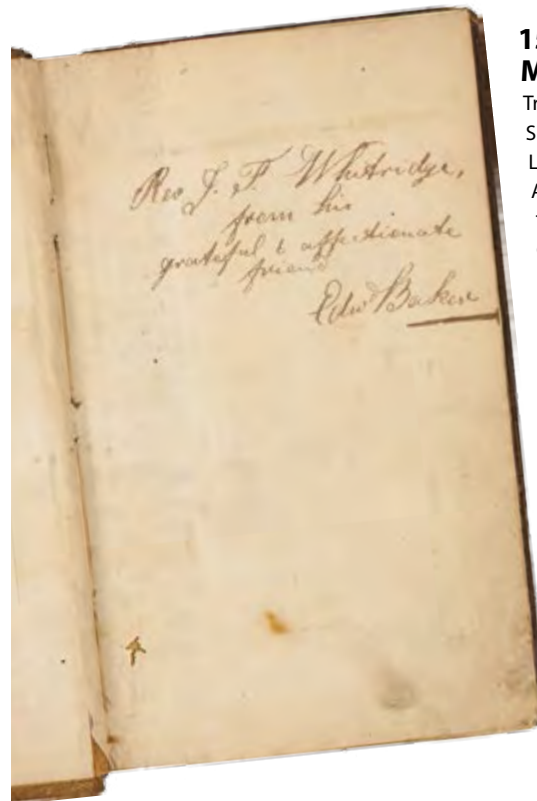
Bible Society of Congo Leopoldville, Democratic Republic of Congo
1962
GC.BIB.001234

The African continent is home to about three thousand native languages, and it is estimated that the Bible is now available in about seven hundred of them. According to the Wycliffe Global Alliance, seven hundred of the eight hundred language groups with the greatest translation needs live in the heart of Africa—in Nigeria and in the French-speaking areas of central Africa.

149. Madonna and Child

Sculpture of coated wood
Artist: Adamo Kamte
Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso
1990
Item on loan from the Vatican Museums, Vatican City

Fig. 138: **The New Testament, Tshiluba Language Translation**, Bible Society of Congo Leopoldville, Democratic Republic of Congo, 1962, GC.BIB.001234



150. The New Testament, Malagasy Language Translation

Translated by David Jones and David Griffiths
Signed by printer, Edward Baker
London Missionary Society
Antananarivo, Madagascar
1830
GC.BIB.002868

David Jones, a Welsh missionary with the London Missionary Society and a university-trained linguist, worked with Radama I, king of Madagascar (1793–1828), to develop a standardized writing system for the Malagasy language in preparation for his translation of 1830.

151. The Holy Bible, Persian Language Translation

English and American Bible Society in Istanbul
Istanbul, Turkey
1885
GC.BIB.002945

Fig. 139: **Front flyleaf signed by printer, Edward Baker, The New Testament, Malagasy Language Translation**, Translated by David Jones and David Griffiths, Printed by Edward Baker, London Missionary Society, Antananarivo, Madagascar, 1830, GC.BIB.002868



Fig. 140: **The Holy Bible, Persian Language Translation**, English and American Bible Society in Istanbul, Istanbul, Turkey, 1885, GC.BIB.002945

The Bible Goes to the Moon

On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy addressed a joint session of the United States Congress with a speech entitled “A Special Message to Congress on Urgent National Needs.” In the address President Kennedy asked for seven billion dollars to nine billion dollars for the then stagnant American space program. His famous words were heard around the world: “This nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before the decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth.” Kennedy’s aspirations became a reality with NASA’s Apollo space program, which conducted six successful manned lunar landings during 1969–72.

The first Apollo mission was slated for February 21, 1967. However, during a pre-launch drill on January 27, a fire broke out in the cabin of the Command Module and all three astronauts aboard were tragically killed. NASA immediately organized a review board to determine the cause of the fire. Thousands of employees at NASA were devastated by the disaster. Yet in the wake of such a terrible event, Reverend John M. Stout—who had joined NASA in 1962 shortly after Kennedy’s speech to Congress—established what would later become known as The Apollo Prayer League. The group initially met informally to pray for the safety of the NASA astronauts. However, as time went on the group became an official organization and took on new goals, one of which was to take the Bible to the moon.

Reverend Stout was a close friend of Edward H. White II, the astronaut who completed the first spacewalk on Gemini IV in 1965 and the senior pilot of Apollo 1 killed in the pre-launch fire. In 1967, White had voiced that he had taken a small Bible with him on his historic spacewalk and that he dreamed of one day taking a Bible to the moon. After the fire of Apollo 1, Reverend Stout took it upon himself to achieve White’s dream. However, as the Apollo program went on, Stout’s commitment to this dream took on unique challenges. NASA

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Fig. 157: Complete Lunar Bible, Microfilm in Gold Frame, Flown to the Moon on Apollo 14, United States of America, 5 February 1971, GC.BIB.003832 and GC.OBJ.000373, Photo by Ardon Bar Hama





Fig. 159: Miniature featuring St. Matthew the Evangelist, Four Gospels with Kephalaia, in Greek, copied by Manuel Hagiostephanites for John of Crete, Archbishop of Cypurs, dated 1156, GC.MS.000484, Photo by Ardon Bar Hama.