Vernacular Bible Reading in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe: The "Catholic" Position Revisited

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On the eve of the Council of Trent, there was no outright ban on vernacular Bible reading in the Catholic world, but only regionally diversified positions. In Germany, the Low Countries, Bohemia, Poland, and Italy, vernacular Bibles circulated and were widely read since the Middle Ages. Censorship measures, however, existed in England and Spain, where the official Church had to deal with what it considered erroneous "Bible-based" faith-systems. In France, it was the advent of l'évangélisme *in the 1520s that gave cause to more restrictive measures. In all cases, however, the question should be asked to which degree such censorship measures were effective or whether the laity anyway continued to read their Bibles.*

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On March 22, 1546, the papal legates at the Council of Trent, Giovanni Maria del Monte, Marcello Cervini, and Reginald Pole sent the secretary Angelo Massarelli to the residency of the Spanish Cardinal Pedro Pacheco with a delicate mission. Only a few days earlier, Pacheco had made a plea before the Council fathers to have a general prohibition placed upon Bible reading in the vernacular. The proposal, however, had met with fierce opposition from others, not the least from Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo, Prince-Bishop of Trent and host of the Council, so that a painful division manifested itself among the Council fathers. Masserelli was sent to Pacheco, in order to convince him to drop his hotly-contested proposition. On this occasion, the secretary drew a picture of how differ-

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ently the issue of vernacular Bible reading was treated in the various countries or regions of Catholic Europe:

> And, would the realms of the Spanish and French ever receive the Sacred Books translated in the vernacular? Surely not, since such a translation has been prohibited by royal edicts under the threat of severe punishments, these people would let themselves be guided more by the secular power than by conciliar permission. Moreover, the people in this area have long since learned through experience what kind of scandal, damage, impiousness, and evil such translation has brought in their realms. And would the Germans, Italians, Polish, and other nations be prepared to accept a negative decision? Surely not, since, by contrast, they have seen in several parts of their territory what kind of edification and instruction may result from such a version.[1]

That Massarelli's depiction has not received the same resonance as Martin Luther's bold assertion, that the Bible was largely unavailable to the medieval faithful (which implied that he and his coreligionists had finally made the Word accessible to the common people), is an understatement. Although Luther's dictum has been the foundation for a paradigm—evident in Protestant circles, both popular and scholarly, for centuries[2]—Massarelli's words represent a more nuanced representation of the place vernacular Bible reading held in late medieval and early modern Europe.

This study will use Massarelli's account as a starting point—after having first referred to recent scholarly attempts to deconstruct the aforementioned "Protestant paradigm"—to give an overview of the regionally diversified positions regarding vernacular Bible reading, which existed in late medieval Europe. Furthermore, it will show how these positions inevitably influenced the attitudes which Catholic authorities adopted towards the manifold "new" translations which were published, following the advent of humanism and Protestant Reformation. These two decades

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1. *Massarelli Diarium* III, in: *Concilium Tridentinum. Diariorum, actorum, epistularum, tractatuum*, vol. 1, ed. Sebastian Merkle (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1901), page 519, lines 10–17 (translation ours).

2. See, e.g., Luther's table talk of February 22, 1538, in Martin Luther, *Tischrede* 3767, in: *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden*, vol. 3 (Weimar, 1914), page 598, lines 9–15, taken from Anton Lauterbach's diary of 1538; see also Luther's 1543 pamphlet *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*, in: *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Werke*, vol. 53 (Weimar, 1920), page 523, lines 18–21. For further documentation regarding Luther, see Andrew C. Gow, "The Contested History of a Book: The German Bible of the Later Middle Ages and Reformation in Legend, Ideology, and Scholarship," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, 9 (2009), 2–37, here 19–20.

of extraordinary prolific Bible production, which Max Engammare has rightly qualified as the "vingt glorieuses,"[3] would eventually drive the prelates and theologians present at the Council to reflect upon the desirability of a comprehensive "Catholic" attitude regarding vernacular Bible production and reading, and they did so in the lead-up to the Council of Trent's fourth session, in the period between March 1 and April 8, 1546. And although it is not the aim of this essay to embark on an interpretation of the Fathers' debates, it has the ambition of offering a reconstruction of the puzzle of diversified viewpoints that eventually would resound through the positions taken at the Council. In this reconstruction, this study will bring together the conclusions of recent, but often detailed studies regarding vernacular Bible reading in various European regions during the Middle Ages and Early Modern Era, by framing them in a broad-European picture (including such Central-European countries as Poland and Bohemia), and offering a *longue durée* perspective, hence bridging the transition from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern Era.

Deconstructing the "Protestant Paradigm"

Recent scholarship has re-emphasized that the late medieval Catholic Church did not forbid the reading of the Bible in the vernacular, and that there was simply no central Roman policy pertaining to Bible reading in the vernacular—let alone an outright ban—that could have been in force everywhere in Western Europe, and that biblical books circulated in most of late medieval Western Europe's linguistic regions. The manifold copies containing (parts of) the Bible, both in manuscript and in print form that are still preserved in libraries and archives everywhere in Europe are testament to this historical fact.[4] The most interesting copies show traces of intensive use, names of owners, and marginal annotations (next to sporadic

3. Max Engammare, "Un siècle de publication de la Bible en Europe: la langue des éditions des Textes sacrés (1455–1555)," *Histoire et Civilisation du Livre*, 4 (2008), 47–91, here 48: "Jamais avant les deux décennies 1522–1541, que l'on peut qualifier de vingt glorieuses pour toute l'histoire de la Bible, autant de traductions en langues vernaculaires n'avaient paru."

4. For general overviews on the dissemination of vernacular Bibles in medieval Europe, see Richard Marsden and E. Ann Matter, eds., *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2: *From 600 to 1450* (Cambridge, UK, 2012), as well as Frans van Liere, *An Introduction to the Medieval Bible* (New York, 2014) and Susan Boynton and Diane J. Reilly, eds., *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, and Performance in Western Christianity* (New York, 2011). To include the Central- and Eastern-European traditions, these overviews need to be supplemented with Jože Krašovec, ed., *The Interpretation of the Bible: The International Symposium in Slovenia*, [Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement series, 289], (Sheffield, 1998).

interventions of censorship). Taken together with book lists, found in the inventories of libraries, wills, and estate recordings, as well as other testimonies, both archival and printed, the picture emerges of a community of readers, consisting of (lay) members of religious orders, Beguines and tertiaries, in addition to lay people in the medieval towns, who took an interest in the Bible for their spiritual edification. And although the practice of silent reading became more and more prevalent with the emergence of late medieval spiritual reform movements, which precisely promoted personal Bible reading, one should not lose sight of the continued practice of reading aloud in (smaller) groups, so that the "illiterate" could also hear and profit from this reading. In this sense, one copy of a book usually reached multiple "listeners" or "passive readers."

Recent scholarship has also prompted a reflection on what the notion of "Bible" might include. Since the Reformation Era (and modern research dealing with this period), there is a tendency to consider the Bible in the strict sense as a complete collection of canonical books of the Old and/or New Testament. It should, however, be observed that the Middle Ages leave us with a broader understanding about what the notion of the "Bible" might include. Apart from separate books (the Gospels, the Apocalypse etc.), the notion "Bible" also relates to collections containing the Epistle and Gospel readings from the Mass—sometimes accompanied with short explanations—and Psalters, viz. books that were destined to prepare or to follow the liturgy in the church. In addition, History Bibles should be mentioned, which contain mainly the narrative matter of the Bible, albeit supplemented with extra-biblical and even apocryphal material. Apart from "Bibles," in which the "canonical" text of the Scriptures is dominant, "Bible-based material" also circulated widely in the Middle Ages, such as Gospel harmonies, Lives of Jesus—containing either a text that was close to the canonical Scriptures as well as clear-cut retellings—next to *postils* in which the extensive explanations and glosses overshadowed, to a certain extent, the biblical text itself.[5]

Several of the aforementioned issues have been re-positioned on the research agenda by the Canadian scholar Andrew C. Gow, who made this point with respect to the German situation especially.[6] This has been fur-

5. Compare Sabrina Corbellini *et al.*, "Challenging the Paradigms: Holy Writ and Lay Readers in Late Medieval Europe," *Church History and Religious Culture*, 93 (2013), 171–88, here 177–78.

6. Apart from the aforementioned article by Andrew C. Gow, "The Contested History of a Book," see also Id., "Une histoire de *Geschichtsklitterungen* protestantes: Les Bibles

ther elaborated by a Groningen group of scholars, led by Sabrina Corbellini, who concentrated on similar situations in Italy, France, and in the Low Countries.[7] This scholarship has led to the deconstruction of several established "paradigms" regarding Bible reading in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Era, of which the "Protestant paradigm" was the most tenacious in its assertion that the Bible was a closed book prior to the Reformation and that it was only opened to the masses with Luther's arrival upon the scene—a statement that at least partially can be traced back to the reformer of Wittenberg himself. The paradigm belongs to the kind of "myths" or "legends" that contributed to the construction of confessional identities since the Early Modern Era.

However, the legitimate enthusiasm about having restored a sociohistorical truth to honor should not cause us to lose sight of other evidence, viz., that in most regions of late medieval Europe, the practice of vernacular Bible reading by the laity was debated and was even treated with suspicion in those areas in which popular religious dissidence challenged church authorities by its boasting to have the Bible on its side. In these cases, church authorities tended to condemn idiosyncratic readings of the Scriptures as a breeding ground of errors and even heresies. The concomitant censorship measures taken against vernacular Bible editions did have an effect in some areas—as the history of censorship has particularly demonstrated[8]—but they were not able to end the people's appetite for Bible

médiévales," in: *Vernacular Bible and Religious Reform in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Era*, eds. Wim François and August den Hollander, [Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 287], (Leuven, 2017), 29–52; Gow, "Challenging the Protestant Paradigm: Bible Reading in Lay and Urban Contexts of the Later Middle Ages," in: *Scripture and Pluralism. Reading the Bible in the Religiously Plural Worlds of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, eds. Thomas J. Heffernan and Thomas Burman, [Studies in the History of Christian Traditions, 123], (Leiden, 2005), 161–91.

7. Apart from the aforementioned article by Sabrina Corbellini *et al*., "Challenging the Paradigms," see also Corbellini, "Instructing the Soul, Feeding the Spirit and Awakening the Passion: Holy Writ and Lay Readers in Medieval Europe," in: *Shaping the Bible in the Reformation: Books, Scholars and Their Readers in the Sixteenth Century*, eds. Bruce Gordon and Matthew McLean, [Library of the Written Word, 20], (Leiden and Boston, 2012), 15–39.

8. Philipp Hofmeister, "Bibellesen und Bibelverbot," *Österreichisches Archiv für Kirchenrecht*, 17 (1966), 298–355, here 313–28; Robert E. Lerner, "Les communautés hérétiques," in *Le Moyen Âge et la Bible,* eds. Pierre Riché and Guy Lobrichon, [Bible de tous les temps, 4], (Paris, 1984), 597–614; Klaus Schreiner, "Volkstümliche Bibelmagie und volkssprachliche Bibellektüre. Theologische und soziale Probleme mittelalterlicher Laienfrömmigkeit," in: *Volksreligion in hohen und späten Mittelalter*, eds. Peter Dinzelbacher and Dieter R. Bauer, [Quellen und Forschungen aus dem Gebiet der Geschichte, N.F. 13], (Paderborn *et al*., 1990), 329–73, here 360–64; Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, "La Bible française au Moyen Âge. Des premières traductions aux débuts de l'imprimerie," in: *Les Bibles en français. Histoire illus-*

reading in other areas. The complex "dynamic" between Bible reading and censorship was already fully recognized by authors of a bygone generation, as Jean Leclercq formulates it: "It seems as though they [the series of prohibitions] were never completely absolute and, in any case, they were never totally efficient."[9] Up until today, a tension is tangible between social historians, emphasizing that the laity read the Bible anyway, and historians of ecclesiastical institutions, who point to the effective results of ecclesiastical censorship measures. Whatever the case may be, the map of Bible reading in late medieval Europe is multicolored and complex.[10]

Local Traditions Related to Vernacular Bible Reading in the Late Middle Ages

The overview starts in France, especially since the aforementioned issues concerning the definition of what a Bible is, as well as the relation between censorship measures and actual Bible reading, amongst other topics, continue to evoke debate among scholars dealing with the French situation. Of lasting importance in this regard are the Waldensians. Being active from the last quarter of the twelfth century onwards, they emphasized the simplicity and poverty of the apostolic lifestyle and declared that they based their views upon the Gospel, which was read and commented upon in secret "conventicles" and preached by itinerant preachers. The Waldensians, also referred to as the "Poor of Lyons," recruited adherents not only in their region of origin, but also expanded their influence as far as northeastern France—to Germany's borderlands—in northern Italy, and in the southwestern "Occitan" language area. When Bishop Bertram of Metz complained to Pope Innocent III of the so-called heretical groups thought to be active in his diocese, and who convened, discussed, and preached from French translations of the Bible, the pope replied with a renowned letter entitled *Cum ex iniuncto* (1199), as well as with other documents. The pope did not denounce vernacular Bible reading in itself, but

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trée du Moyen Âge à nos jours, ed. Pierre-Maurice Bogaert (Turnhout, 1991), 13–46, here 41–43; Marie-Elisabeth Henneau and Jean-Pierre Massaut, "Lire la Bible: un privilège, un droit ou un devoir?," in: *Homo religious: autour de Jean Delumeau* (Paris, 1997), 415–24.

9. Jean Leclercq, "Les traductions de la Bible et la Spiritualité médiévale," in: *The Bible and Medieval Culture*, eds. Willem Lourdaux and Daniel Verhelst, [Mediaevalia Lovaniensia; series 1, studia 7], (Leuven, 1979), 263–77, here 275: "Il semble bien qu'elles [les séries de prohibitions] ne furent jamais tout à fait absolues et, en tout état de cause, elles ne furent jamais tout à fait efficaces" (translation ours).

10. An earlier version of the subsequent overview has been published in Wim François, "La Iglesia Católica y la lectura de la Biblia en lengua vernácula, antes y después del Concilio de Trento," *Mayéutica*, 39 (2013), 245–73, here 246–56.

instead opposed secret conventicles in which the Bible was freely discussed, as well as the practice of the ministry of preaching without having received any prior ecclesiastical approval. Innocent III's *Cum ex iniuncto* has been included among the *Decretals* of Gregory IX in 1234 and, as such, has become part of the Western Church's canon law.[11] Adversaries of Bible reading in the vernacular have invoked *Cum ex iniuncto* as an official (papal) ban on vernacular Bible reading on more than one occasion, thus ascribing it a validity extending to the entire Western Church. However, this was never the pope's intention, as the defenders of vernacular Bible reading, and historians in their wake, do not hesitate to emphasize.[12]

In the southern part of what is now France,[13] Occitan-language biblical material circulated in both orthodox and heterodox milieus, viz., Waldensian and Cathar, as is evidenced by the surviving manuscripts. Measures taken against the Waldensians, and against the Cathars or Albigensians also included some serious reservations being expressed relating to Bible reading in the vernacular. This was the case, for instance, with the pronouncements made at the provincial councils of Toulouse in 1229 and 1246.[14] If the production of vernacular biblical material was slowed down by these measures, it was revived with gusto in the fourteenth century, when "Catholic normality" was "fully resumed."[15]

France, north of the Loire, saw the production of large quantities of manuscripts containing (parts of) the Bible, including the *Old French Bible*

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11. See in this regard: *Decretales Gregorii IX Lib. V Tit. VII De Haereticis c. XII*, in: Emil Ludwig Richter, ed., *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, vol. 2: *Decretalium Collectiones*, ed. Emil Friedberg (Leipzig, 1881), cols. 784–87.

12. For a discussion of this text, see Leonard E. Boyle, "Innocent III and Vernacular Versions of Scripture," in: *The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*, eds. Katherine Walsh and Diana Wood, [Studies in Church History: Subsidia, 4], (Oxford, 1985), 97–107. See also Van Liere, *An Introduction to the Medieval Bible*, 190–94.

13. For a general introduction to late medieval Bible translations in French, see Clive R. Sneddon, "The Bible in French," in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2, eds. Marsden and Matter, 251–67; Pierre Nobel, "La Traduction biblique," in: *Translations médiévales. Cinq siècles de traductions en français au Moyen Âge (XI^e–XV^e siècles): Étude et répertoire*, vol. 1: *De la* translatio studii *à l'étude de la* translatio, eds. Claudio Galderisi and Vladimir Agrigoroaei (Turnhout, 2011), 207–23. An important reference continues to be that of Bogaert, "La Bible française au Moyen Âge," 13–46.

14. *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, eds. Ioannes Dominicus Mansi *et al*., vol. 23 (Florence, 1779; 2nd ed., Paris, 1903; anastatic repr., Graz, 1961), cols. 197 and 724.

15. Margriet Hoogvliet, "Questioning the 'Republican Paradigm': Scripture-Based Reform in France before the Reformation," in: *Vernacular Bible and Religious Reform*, eds. François and Den Hollander, 75–106, here 83–89; Sneddon, "The Bible in French," 263.

or the *Bible (française) du XIII^e siècle* (*ca.* 1220–60)—"the first complete vernacular Bible translation in Western Europe"[16]—Guiart des Moulins's *Bible Historiale* (1291–95),[17] in addition to separate Bible books, such as the Books of Salomon, the Epistle and Gospel readings from the Mass, and Bible-based texts such as the Life of Jesus and the Passion story. A combination of materials from the *Old French Bible* as well as Des Moulins's *Bible Historiale* led in the first decade of the fourteenth century to the creation of the *Bible Historiale complétée*, the most important French Bible text of the late Middle Ages and whose manuscripts circulated in large quantities from then onwards. Close examination of the original manuscripts has revealed that these biblical books were actually used and read by lay people across all social strata and that they were never far out of reach for the middle and lower classes living in urban settings.[18]

An abridged version of this text containing only the biblical history, was produced by the Lyonese Augustinian friars Julien Macho and Pierre Farget, and printed in 1473–74. This *Bible abrégée* eventually went through fourteen editions. Two New Testaments, containing a text by the same Augustinian friars, were printed in Lyons in *ca*. 1476–78 and *ca*. 1478–80. A version of the *Bible Historiale complétée*, revised by Jean de Rély, King Charles VIII's confessor, was eventually printed *ca.* 1496–99, seeing about ten reprints prior to the beginning of the Reformation era.[19] In addition, printed versions of the Life of Jesus, as well as Passion narratives, circulated in large quantities. Interesting materials also include the biblical texts of the liturgy, accompanied by the commentaries of Nicholas of Lyra, that

16. Sneddon, "The Bible in French," 256, and Id, "The Old French Bible: The First Complete Vernacular Bible in Western Europe," in: *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, eds. Boynton and Reilly, 296–314.

17. The term "Bible Historiale" or "History Bible" may be misleading, since all manuscripts of Des Moulins's translation also contain (parts of) the Prophetical Books.

18. See especially Margriet Hoogvliet, "Encouraging Lay People to Read the Bible in the French Vernaculars: New Groups of Readers and Textual Communities," *Church History and Religious Culture*, 93 (2013), 237–72, here 250–71. Compare with Nobel, "La traduction biblique," 222–23.

19. Bettye Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles*, vol. 1: *Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures*, [Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 192], (Geneva, 1983), and Martine Delaveau and Denise Hillard, eds., *Bibles imprimées du XV^e au XVIII^e siècle conservées à Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne, Bibliothèque Mazarine, Bibliothèque de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français, Bibliothèque de la Société biblique. Catalogue collectif* (Paris, 2002). See also Denise Hillard, "Les éditions de la Bible en France au XV^e siècle," in: *La Bible imprimée dans l'Europe moderne*, ed. Bertram Eugene Schwarzbach (Paris, 1999), 68–82, here 74–82.

were translated by Pierre Desrey of Troyes. Apart from his Latin-French *Psaultier*, published in 1492, his *postilles et exposicions des epistres et evangiles* went through about eight editions between 1492–93 until 1521 (with further editions and adaptations until 1551).[20] Desrey's *postilles* are a good case to explore the limits of what a Bible for the laity may include. They contain the Latin text of the Epistle and Gospel readings from the Mass on Sundays and Feast days. The extensive expositions, said to be based upon the comments of Nicholas of Lyra, are in French. As Desrey wrote in the prologue, the *postilles* were designed as a pulpit help for priests and preachers who had not received a thorough education and should preach to their flock.[21] Also of interest is the format, since the majority of the books are folios that made them more useful as reference and study books and less appropriate for private devotional reading. Further research is necessary to figure out whether Desrey's *postilles* found their way to a broader readership of lay readers, as the distinguished Groningen scholar Margriet Hoogvliet is inclined to assume.[22] In 1511, Desrey extended his edition project, including expositions on the lessons of the Lenten Fast, to which in an even further stage explanations to the lessons of the saints' days were added. His so-called *grandes postilles* also provided marginal cross references in Latin, confirming the impression that they were designed first for priests and preachers, and not for the laity.

A landmark in the history of Bible reading and censorship was set out in England, where vernacular biblical material circulated at the end of the Middle Ages, mostly, but not exclusively, as paraphrases on parts of the Bible. However, these paraphrases did not lead to any prohibitory measures being taken.[23] The ecclesiastical authorities did take measures, however, when John Wycliffe and his followers, the Lollards, engaged in a project of translating the "naked" text of the complete Bible from the 1370s onwards and whose purpose was to give it a broad readership. At the same time, they sought to promote the ideas of the self-sufficiency of the Scrip-

20. Hoogvliet, "Encouraging Lay People," 249–50.

21. *Les postilles et expositions des epitres et evangiles dominicales*, ed. Pierre Desrey (Troyes: Guillaume Le Rouge, 1492 [=1493 n.s.]), sig. Aiii r–v.

22. Hoogvliet, "Encouraging Lay People," 264, compare with 269.

23. For a general introduction to the vernacular Bible in English, see the overviews by Richard Marsden, "The Bible in English," in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2, eds. Marsden and Matter, 217–38, and "The Bible in English in the Middle Ages," in: *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, eds. Boynton and Reilly, 272–95. See also the overview, even though it is written from a Protestant "Tyndalian" point of view: David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven, CT and London, 2003). In addition, see Van Liere, *The Medieval Bible*, 199–203.

tures as well as other "heretical" ideas.[24] In the wake of the Oxford Synod of 1407–09, which was convened by Archbishop Thomas Arundel, the so-called Oxford Constitutions were issued, forbidding any (new) translation of the Bible into English or any other vernacular language without prior approval from the local bishop or by a provincial council.[25] Discussion still prevails as to the degree to which this ban was effectively enforced, especially given the large number of manuscripts—over 250—containing the Wycliffite or Lollard texts that are known to have survived and are still preserved in libraries and archives.[26] It has, moreover, been demonstrated that changes to the layout, such as the removal of Wycliffite paratextual material (the *Great Prologue* and marginal glosses particularly), the addition of the Old Testament readings from the Mass to New Testament manuscripts, and a table of contents facilitating the retrieval of the liturgical readings made the copies also acceptable to an orthodox—both clerical and lay—readership.[27] Even the categorization of "heterodox" and "orthodox" is called into question, and careful attention needs to be paid to "the 'grey areas' between orthodox and heterodox theology in late medieval England."[28] Whatever the case may be, for about 130 years, from 1409 onwards, *in principle*, the mere possession of English books relating to the Bible by ordinary lay people could result in a charge of heresy. The ban on vernacular Bible production resulted in no editions being printed in England and the printing industry lacking any significant development in the

24. On John Wycliffe and the so-called "Lollard" Bibles, see the works of Anne Hudson, especially: Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford, 1988), 228–77, here 228–47, and Mary Dove, *The First English Bible: The Text and Context of the Wycliffite Versions*, [Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 66], (Cambridge, UK, 2007).

25. For a discussion of the *censura*, see, for example, Anne Hudson, *Lollards and their Books*, [Literature series, 3], (London and Ronceverte, 1985), 67–84 and 147–48; Nicholas Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change in Late Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's *Constitutions* of 1409," *Speculum*, 70 (1995), 822–64; and Kantik Gosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy: Authority and the Interpretation of Texts*, [Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 45], (Cambridge, UK, 2002), 86–111.

26. See especially Dove, *First English Bible*, 46–58; also Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 232–34.

27. See, amongst others, Eyal Poleg, "Wycliffite Bibles as Orthodoxy," in: *Cultures of Religious Reading in the Late Middle Ages: Instructing the Soul, Feeding the Spirit and Awakening the Passion*, ed. Sabrina Corbellini, [Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 25], (Turnhout, 2013), 71–91.

28. Michael G. Sargent, "Censorship or Cultural Change? Reformation and Renaissance in the Spirituality of Late Medieval England," in: *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, eds. Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Gosh, [Medieval Church Studies, 21], (Turnhout, 2011), 55–72, here 60–61 and 71–72.

country. This was different from other European countries, where the printing of Bible books contributed an important boost to the development of the new industry.[29]

Influenced by the Bible-based "heresy" of Wycliffe, and as part of his efforts to promote the Czech national character, Jan Hus likewise came forward as a defender of Bible translations in the vernacular. The Bible had already been entirely translated in Czech in the 1350s and 1360s (to be found in the *Dresden* or *Leskovecká Bible*); its origin may be due to a movement of spiritual *resourcement*, eventually resulting in the *Devotio Moderna*, which caused interest in Bible reading among (semi-)religious women. Three further "redactions" of the Czech Bible followed, and it is thought that the second and third redaction, both from the early fifteenth century, may have had their origin in milieus close to Jan Hus (although it remains highly debatable whether Hus himself actually contributed to these translations).[30] Vernacular Bible reading became a characteristic element of all strands in the Czech Church, be they Roman-Catholic, Utraquist—the Czech national confession tolerated by Rome—or Hussite. The most iconic of these were the Hussite or Taborite women who were well-schooled in the Bible and who sometimes even served as preachers. The fact that the said women were able to compete with Catholic clergy, when it came to their knowledge of the Bible, was later to be used with some frequency as an argument in the pleas against the introduction of vernacular Bibles.[31] A further reworked version of the Czech Bible, known as the "fourth" redaction, was eventually put into print, the first being the *Prague Bible* (1488) and, soon after, the *Kutná hora Bible* (1489).

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29. Compare with Gow, "Contested History of a Book," 21; and Susan Powell, "After Arundel and before Luther: The First Half-Century of Print," in: *After Arundel*, eds. Gillespie and Gosh, 523–41, here 534.

30. For an introduction to the Bible in the Czech language, see Jaroslava Pečírková, "Czech Translations of the Bible," in: *The Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Krašovec, 1167–1200, here 1169–75; Vladimír Kyas, *Česká bible v dějinách národního písemnictví* (Prague, 1997) [in Czech language]; compare with Jaroslav Kadlec, "Die Bibel im Mittelalterlichen Böhmen," *Archives d'Histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 39 (1964), 89–109, here 91–98. For the older view about the implication of Hus in vernacular Bible translation, see, amongst others, Matthew Spinka, *John Hus: A Biography* (Princeton, N.J., 1968), 77–79.

31. Compare with Thomas A. Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride: The First Reformation in Hussite Bohemia*, [St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History], (Aldershot, 1998), 171–72; Kadlec, "Die Bibel im Mittelalterlichen Böhmen," 97–98. Often quoted is the testimony of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the later Pope Pius II, who during a journey in Bohemia in 1451 noticed that simple Taborite women were superior to Italian priests in the field of biblical knowledge.

The confrontation with the Bible-based "heresies" of the Wycliffites and Hussites led Jean Gerson, the chancellor of the Paris Faculty and one of the most influential theologians of his time, to implore the Council fathers at Constance in 1417 to issue a prohibition on Bible reading in the vernacular that would extend to the entire Church. He maintained his warning with a reference to previous heterodox movements that he knew from his native France, such as the Poor of Lyons and the Beghards. Their eagerness for a free reading of religious literature in the vernacular, including Bibles, had burdened them with the suspicion of heresy.[32] The Council of Constance did not issue this general prohibition, but Gerson's negative standpoint was taken up by his colleagues at the Faculty of Theology in Paris, who would invoke it as a reference stance when confronted with the "new" translations issued under the impulse of biblical humanism.

An ambiguous picture regarding Bible reading in the vernacular can also be observed in Spanish and Catalan-speaking regions.[33] Gemma Avenoza, the author of the article in the *New Cambridge History of the Bible*, waxes lyrical about the possibilities of Bible reading in the multicultural context of late medieval Spain: ". . . Hispanic peoples of diverse languages and nations read, handled, adapted and translated the Bible: Christians, Jews, Albigenses, Waldensians or other sects. . . ."[34] Given the presence of Jews in Leon and Castile, a large group of biblical, viz., Old Testament texts were translated from the Masoretic Hebrew, for use by

32. See especially Jean Gerson, *De necessaria communione laicorum sub utraque specie*, in: *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 10: *L'Œuvre polémique (492–530)*, ed. Palémon Glorieux (Paris, 1973), 57–58. It was possible, as a result of his confrontation in Constance with the Bible-based "heresies" of the Wycliffites and Hussites, that Gerson became far more restrictive regarding Bible reading in the vernacular. Earlier statements ascribed to him are more nuanced. See Hoogvliet, "Questioning the 'Republican Paradigm'," 89–97; Guillaume H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, *Jean Gerson, Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology*, trans. J.C. Grayson, [Studies in the History of Christian Thought, 94], (Leiden, 1999), 335–39; and Bogaert, "La Bible française au Moyen Âge," 42–43.

33. See Gemma Avenoza, "The Bible in Spanish and Catalan," in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2, eds. Marsden and Matter, 288–306, and Avenoza, "Las traducciones de la Biblia en castellano en la Edad Media y sus comentarios," in: *La Biblia en la Literatura Española*, vol. 1*: Edad Media*, 1/2 *El texto: fuente y autoridad*, eds. Gregorio del Olmo Lete and María Isabel Toro Pascua (Madrid, 2008), 13–75; and Emily C. Francomano, "Castilian Vernacular Bibles in Iberia, c. 1250–1500," in: *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, eds. Boynton and Reilly, 315–37. See also Sergio Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición de la Biblia en lengua vulgar: defensores y detractores* (León, 2003) and Klaus Reinhardt, *Die biblischen Autoren Spaniens bis zum Konzil von Trient*, [Corpus scriptorum sacrorum Hispaniae; Subsidia, 7], (Salamanca, 1976).

34. Avenoza, "The Bible in Spanish and Catalan," 288.

Catholic—often noble—readers, and probably also by members of the Jewish community, while other biblical texts were translated from the Latin Vulgate. However, the lines between Jews and Christians in medieval Spain were not always obvious, with conversions and reconversions occurring on both sides, whereas the Castilian language ("romance") provided all groups with a common forum language.[35] Among the most famous Castilian translations of biblical passages were those incorporated in the *Fazienda de Ultramar*, an itinerary to and description of the Holy Land, mostly translated from the Hebrew (*ca*. 1230), the *Salterio bilingüe* discovered by Pedro Cátedra, and the numerous passages included in King Alfonso X's *General estoria*, a kind of world history, based upon the Vulgate (*ca*. 1270–84). A prestigious enterprise, too, was the *Alba Bible*, a Castilian translation of the Hebrew Bible, which includes glosses and points to diverging interpretations between Christians and Jews (*ca*. 1430). Although the *Alba Bible* and comparable books were only within the reach of wealthy people, manuscripts containing the Psalms or the Epistle and Gospel readings from the Catholic Mass, translated in Castilian, found their way to a broader devout readership—as was the case in other cultural areas of Europe. These were the kind of texts that were eventually offered in print, starting with *Las Epístolas y Evangelios* by Gonzalo García de Santa María—published in 1484-85 and therefore to be considered the first printed edition of a biblical text in Castilian—and including also the *Epistolas y evangelios con los sermones y doctrinas por todo el año*, made by an anonymous author and published in 1506.

Moving now to Catalan Bibles, we should notice that little manuscript material has been preserved. Noteworthy, then, is the so-called *Fifteenth Century Bible* that has its origin in the *Portacoeli* Charterhouse in Valencia and has—incorrectly[36]—been ascribed to Bonifacio Ferrer. It was the basis for the first printed Bible, the *Valencia Bible* of 1478, as well as for a separate edition containing the Psalms, *ca*. 1480 (Barcelona). No complete copies of the *Valencia Bible* or even of the aforementioned *Las Epístolas y Evangelios* by Gonzalo García de Santa María are known to exist. This confronts us with another aspect of the Spanish vernacular Bible milieu: the harsh treatment and even active destruction of copies of the Bible.[37]

35. Francomano, "Castilian Vernacular Bibles in Iberia," 327–32.

36. Avenoza, "The Bible in Spanish and Catalan," 298.

37. Avenoza, "The Bible in Spanish and Catalan," 293–305; Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 27–44; also Luis Gil Fernández, "Los Studia Humanitatis en España durante el reinado de los Reyes Católicos," *Península. Revista de Estudos Ibéricos*, 2 (2005), 45–68, here 50.

In northern Aragon, the Synod of Tarragona in 1233 first issued measures against vernacular Bible reading that were part of a broader reaction against the Waldensians and Cathars (or Albigensians) who were active in the region adjacent to the aforementioned "Occitania."[38] Another synod in Tarragona, targeting the Beguine movement specifically, issued a prohibition on the possession of vernacular books in 1317.[39] More important, however, was the "second" wave of opposition that the Spanish Inquisition unleashed against vernacular Bibles from the fifteenth century onwards. This opposition formed part of a reaction against the remaining Jews in Spain, or against the *conversos*, Jews who had converted to Catholicism, but whose loyalty to the faith was questioned. The prohibitions were intended to prevent Jews and *conversos* from continuing their Jewish worship clandestinely, from interpreting the Scriptures according to their former Hebrew traditions and, thus, from secretly initiating their children in the Mosaic Law. Massive burnings of Bibles in both Catalonia and Castile have been recorded from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards. These actions culminated in the strict prohibition of vernacular Bibles, probably issued by the Inquisition in 1492, with the consent of the so-called Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella. The measures taken by the Inquisition are believed to account for the scarcity of extant copies of the complete Bible, both in manuscript and in print.[40] The Spanish measures against vernacular Bibles would even become one of the key arguments cited by adversaries of free Bible reading.

It should be noted, however, that other editions were published with the explicit consent of the Catholic monarchs. These were published in order to provide orthodox versions that could be linked with the liturgy. This was particularly true of the *Epístolas y Evangelios* by Ambrosio de Montesinos, which were in fact a revision of those by Gonzalo García de Santa María, first published in 1512, and which went through several reprints in Antwerp and elsewhere.[41]

Whereas Bible censorship was largely successful in Spain, and was able to exert influence upon Bible printing in England, as well as leave its mark in France—although whether it was actually able to slow down Bible pro-

38. *Sacrorum Conciliorum*, eds. Mansi *et al*., vol. 23, col. 329.

39. Ibid., vol. 25, cols. 628–29; see also Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 89–96.

40. Avenoza, "The Bible in Spanish and Catalan," 289–90; Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 96-111.

41. Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 45–46.

duction and Bible reading remains debatable—a very different picture arises when considering the situation in Germany.[42] Building upon a centuries-old manuscript tradition, about seventy German vernacular Bible texts were printed between 1466 and 1522, prior to the Reformation. Eighteen of them were pandects or complete Bibles, the first being the *Mentellin Bible* of 1466.[43] True, there were efforts to prevent the vernacular Bible from falling into the hands of the uneducated—let alone "heretical"—people,[44] such as Charles IV's imperial prohibition of 1369, aimed at the Beguines, or Archbishop Berthold von Henneberg's attempts to stop the printing of vernacular religious works (Bibles especially) in Mainz in 1486, to mention only the most famous examples. But none of them were able to impede effectively the interest generated in vernacular versions of the Scriptures in Germany among clerics, nobles, and literate townspeople alike, as has been observed by Andrew C. Gow:

> In the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Biblical material was widespread, popular and well known among literate townspeople, clerics and nobles alike, especially in the Empire. Full Bible translations usually belonged to wealthy burghers, the gentry/nobility and religious houses (Brethren of the Common Life, etc.), with relatively large numbers of German Bibles showing up in inventories especially for the period 1500 to the Reformation. Translations of particular sections of Scripture were even more common and widespread.[45]

A similar situation can be found in the Low Countries. By the end of the Middle Ages, several parts of the Bible, such as History Bibles, Psalters, translations of the New Testament, Gospel harmonies, as well as books

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42. See Andrew C. Gow, "The Bible in Germanic," in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2, eds. Marsden and Matter, 198–216, and the aforementioned essay by Gow, "The Contested History of a Book." See also Rudolf Bentzinger, "Zur spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Bibelübersetzung. Versuch eines Überblicks," in: *"Ik lerde kunst dor lust." Ältere Sprache und Literatur in Forschung und Lehre. FS Christa Baufeld*, ed. Irmtraud Rösler, [Rostocker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft, 7], (Rostock, 1999), 29–42, and Thomas Kaufmann, "Vorreformatorische Laienbibel und reformatorische Evangelium," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 101 (2004), 138–74.

43. Compare with John L. Flood, "Les premières Bibles allemandes dans le contexte de la typographie européenne des XV^{e} et XVI^{e} siècles," in: *La Bible imprimée dans l'Europe moderne*, ed. Schwarzbach, 144–65.

44. A synod held at Trier in 1231 noticed that a heretical group had access to Bible translations in German. Obviously the Waldensians are who are meant (*Sacrorum Conciliorum*, eds. Mansi *et al*., vol. 23, col. 241).

45. Gow, "The Contested History of a Book," 11, compare with 18–19 (on the unequalled work of Erich Zimmermann in the field of late medieval German Bible ownership) and 27–32.

containing the Epistle and Gospel readings from the Mass, were widespread.[46] One of the most influential texts proved to be the *Herne Bible*, a translation requested by a rich lay patrician, Jan Taye, and made by a monk from the Carthusian monastery of Herne (near Brussels) between 1359–84, notwithstanding clerical opposition against vernacular Bible translations referred to by the monk in his prologues. Very influential were also the *Northern Dutch Translation of the New Testament* also called the *New Testament of the Devotio Moderna* (*ca*. 1387–99), and the *Psalter of the Devotio Moderna* (*ca*. 1415). The *Devotio Moderna* or Modern Devotion was a spiritual reform movement that had its origins in the same period as those led by Wycliffe and Hus but, in contrast to these two, remained within the Church. It is said to have given an important impetus to the origin as well as to the spread of vernacular biblical material in the Low Countries—even as far as Bohemia! But also in this case, it should be observed that the modern devotees had to stand up for their right to read (parts of) the Bible, against detractors who sought to prohibit such reading. Whereas the *Herne Bible*, in the tradition of the History Bibles, may have been destined mainly for continuous reading, manuscripts containing the Epistle and Gospel readings from the Mass and the Psalms (according to the translation of the *Devotio Moderna*) were conceived of as being a vernacular aid to following the Latin liturgical services in the church. The books were mainly read by (semi-)religious women, such as canonesses regular, tertiaries of St. Francis, and Beguines, but were also not out of the reach of lay people living in the world. The Passion narrative was also quite a popular text. Part of the material was printed, beginning, in 1477, with the *Delft Bible* which was an Old Testament version without the Psalms and which was based largely upon the text of the *Herne Bible*. This edition was immediately followed by the supplementary printing of the Epistles and Gospel readings from the Mass, as well as by Psalters, and would go through several reprints in Gouda, Utrecht, Delft, and other towns in the northern part of the Low Countries. The availability of the texts in print "and the advantages of high output and low price"

46. For an introduction to the late medieval Dutch Bible, see the first part (ed. Youri Desplenter) of Paul Gillaerts *et al*., eds., *De Bijbel in de Lage Landen. Elf eeuwen van vertalen* (Heerenveen, 2015), 31–202; see also August den Hollander, "Late Medieval Vernacular Bible Production in the Low Countries," in: *Basel 1516. Erasmus' Edition of the New Testament*, eds. Martin Wallraff, Silvana Seidel Menchi, and Kaspar von Greyerz, [Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation. Studies in the Late Middle Ages, Humanism and Reformation, 91], (Tübingen, 2016), 43–58; and Suzan Volkerts, "Reading the Bible Lessons at Home: Holy Writ and Lay Readers in the Low Countries," *Church History and Religious Culture*, 93 (2013), 217–37.

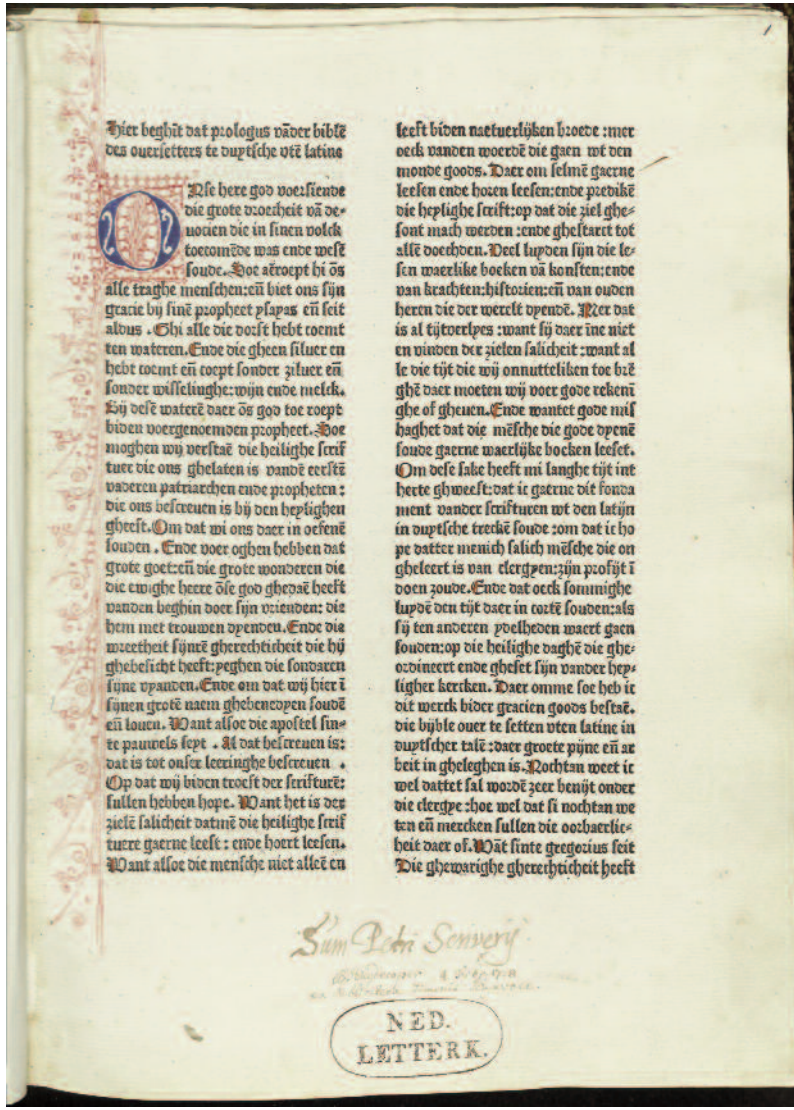

FIGURE 1. [Delft Bible,] Delft: Jacob Jacobszoon van der Meer and Mauricius Yemantszoon van Middelborch, 1477 (Leiden, UB, 1498 B 11–12. Reproduced by permission). Provenance: Sum Petri Scriverij [Petrus Scriverius (1576–1660)] / B. Huydecoper 4 Febr. 1728. ex Bibliotheca Simonis Schijnvoet [1652–1727] (see Van Duijn, *De Delftse Bijbel*, 231).

contributed demonstrably to the further opening up of vernacular biblical material to a lay, urban audience.[47]

Regarding Italy,[48] it may be concluded that biblical texts in the vernacular also played a fairly important role in the devotional life of late medieval burghers, merchants, and craftsmen, especially in Tuscan Florence and Siena, but also in Bologna and other towns in northern Italy. Many of these burghers may have been members of the religious confraternities which flourished in the wealthy towns of late medieval Tuscany (and, by extension, in other regions of northern Italy). These burghers ordered, copied, and collected manuscripts containing biblical texts to read them in the privacy of their houses and to nourish their spiritual life. Networks were created in which burghers exchanged religious books, bequeathed Bibles to convents, or, inversely, borrowed such texts from the monasteries.[49] Tertiaries of St. Francis as well as other (semi-)religious women in Italy—whether influenced by *Devotio Moderna* or not—were also very keen on devotional books in the vernacular, which included biblical materials.[50] In this case, church authorities had no fundamental objections to lay people reading the Bible in the vernacular. Building upon an important manuscript tradition, the Italian Bible translated by the Camaldolese monk Nicolò Malerbi, was first printed in 1471, eventually going through at least fifteen

47. Mart van Duijn, "Printing, Public, and Power: Shaping the First Printed Bible in Dutch (1477)," *Church History and Religious Culture*, 93 (2013), 275–99, here 289; compare with Id., "Targeting the Masses: The Delft Bible (1477) as Printed Product," in: *"Wading Lambs and Swimming Elephants": The Bible for the Laity and Theologians in Late Medieval and Early Modern Era*, eds. Wim François and August den Hollander, [Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 257], (Leuven, 2012), 1–19. See also Mart van Duijn, *De Delftse Bijbel. Een sociale geschiedenis 1477–circa 1550* (Zutphen, 2017).

48. Lino Leonardi, "The Bible in Italian," in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2, eds. Marsden and Matter, 268–87 and Edoardo Barbieri, "Éditeurs et imprimeurs de la Bible en italien (1471–1600)," in: *La Bible imprimée dans l'Europe moderne*, ed. Schwarzbach, 246–59.

49. Among the many publications by Sabrina Corbellini, see "Looking in the Mirror of the Scriptures: Reading the Bible in Medieval Italy," in: *"Wading Lambs and Swimming Elephants,"* eds. François and Den Hollander, 21–40; "« Se le scienze e la scrittura sacra fussino in volgare tu le intenderesti. » Traduzioni bibliche tra Medioevo e Rinascimento in manoscritti e testi a stampa," in: *La Traduzione del Moderno nel Cinquecento Europeo. Dynamic Translations in the European Renaissance. Atti del Convegno internazionale Università di Groningen, 21–22 Ottobre 2010*, eds. Philiep Bossier, Harald Hendrix, and Paolo Procaccioli (Manziana [Rome], 2011), 1–21; and "Reading, Writing and Collecting: Cultural Dynamics and Italian Vernacular Bible Translations," *Church History and Religious Culture*, 93 (2013), 189–216.

50. See amongst others, Gabriella Zarri, *Libri di spirito: editoria religiosa in volgare nei secoli XV–XVII* (Turin, 2009), 63–67, 89, and 150–53.

editions prior to the Reformation. In addition, other important texts that were published prior to the Reformation include innumerable editions of the Epistle and Gospel readings from the Mass and about three complete editions of the Psalter (not counting books containing the penitential psalms), alongside editions of separate Bible books (such as two editions of the Gospels with commentary by Simone Fidati da Cascia and five editions with translations of the Apocalypse, amongst others).[51]

The presence of Bibles, vernacular and otherwise, has also been attested to in medieval Sicily and other regions of southern Italy.[52] However, in the late Middle Ages, Sicily, Sardinia, and the Kingdom of Naples were added to the Aragonese Crown, which even managed to introduce the Spanish Inquisition to Sicily and Sardinia in 1487 and 1492 respectively (something that never succeeded in the Kingdom of Naples). Whether bringing this part of Italy into the Spanish religious-cultural sphere had negative consequences for the diffusion and reading of vernacular Bibles has not been sufficiently examined, but the developments confront us once more with the diversified regional traditions regarding Bible reading in the vernacular on the eve of the Reformation.

Returning to the words that secretary Massarelli addressed to Cardinal Pacheco, we can also notice a reference to the appreciation of vernacular Bible books by the Polish people. Therefore, this study shall conclude this section with some remarks regarding Bibles in that language. Polish vernacular Bible production was not that impressive in the Middle Ages. One reason for this may have been the existence of New Testament translations in Czech, a language quite close to Polish.[53] It was the Psalter primarily

51. Franco Pierno, "*In nostro vulgare dice*. Le glosse lessicali della Bibbia di Nicolò Malerbi (Venezia, 1471): tra lingua del quotidiano, tradizione lessicografica e Parola di Dio," *Studium*, 2 (2015), 176–97. For the various editions, see Edoardo Barbieri, *Le Bibbie italiane del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento: storia e bibliografia ragionata delle edizione in lingua italiana dal 1471 al 1600*, vol. 1, [Grandi opere, 4], (Milan, 1991), 185–236; Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Printed Italian Vernacular Books, 1465–1550: A Finding List*, [Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 194], (Geneva, 1983), 82–94 and 243–47.

52. Henri Bresc, *Livre et société en Sicile (1299–1499)*, [Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani. Bollettino. Supplementi, 3], (Palermo, 1971), s.v. *Biblica* and *Psalterium*.

53. For an overview see Bernard Wodecki, "Polish Translations of the Bible," in: *The Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Krašovec, 1201–33, here 1201–05; see also Rajmund Pietkiewicz, "Tradycja rękopiśmienna polskich przekładów biblijnych od XIII do XVI wieku," ["Polish Biblical Translations in the Tradition of Written Manuscripts since the 13th to 16th Centuries,"] *Wrocławski Przegląd Teologiczny*, 21 (2013), 29–50; Id., *Biblia Polonorum. Historia Biblii w języku polskim*, vol. 1: *Od początku do 1638 roku* [The History of the Bible in the Polish Language, vol. 1: From the Beginnings to 1638] (Poznań, 2016), 149–74 (678–79

that was translated into Polish and was widely circulated from the thirteenth century onwards. In this regard, mention should be made of the *Psalterium Florianum* or *Psałterz Floriański* (fourteenth/fifteenth century, Latin, German, and Polish), the *Psalterium Pulaviense* or *Psałterz Puławski* (end of the fifteenth century, offering the Psalms according to their biblical order but with liturgical notes), and the Psalms found in the *Modlitwy Wacława* (the Prayers of Wenceslas), dating from *ca.* 1470-80. It has been assumed that the translation of the four Gospels, and very probably the whole New Testament, existed in the 14th century. More important still is the *Queen Sophia Bible* or *Biblia królowej Zofii*, commissioned by Sophia of Halshany, the fourth wife of the Polish King Ladislas Jagiełło, which was finished *ca.* 1455. Although only fragments remain, the two-volume Bible contained both the Old and the New Testament. Apart from the important Polish Psalter tradition and the *Queen Sophia Bible*, fragmentary texts of separate Old and New Testament books (fifteenth century) and from a New Testament translation (early sixteenth century) have been preserved. A Gospel Harmony in Polish from the end of the fifteenth century or the beginning of the sixteenth century has also been completely retained.[54]

The printing industry followed the tendencies that were already present in the manuscript tradition, as it had elsewhere in Europe. In this case it should also be noticed that vernacular Bibles were only sparsely put into print. A Polish version of Ecclesiastes (1522) as well as 66 excerpts from the Gospels, supplemented with fragments from Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy (1527/28, the so-called *Gospel Book of Ungler*), are known to have been printed, but most prints concern the Psalms: the *Psalterium Cracoviense* or Cracow Psalter (1532), which offers the text of the aforementioned manuscript text of 1470–80, the Psalter of Walenty Wróbel (manuscript from 1528 but first printed in 1539),[55] and the Psalter of Mikołaj Rej (first edition 1546).[56]

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for an English summary). Consult for further literature. I thank my colleague Prof. Rajmund Pietkiewicz for giving his extremely useful comments on an earlier draft of these paragraphs.

54. A list of Polish manuscript Bibles can be found in Pietkiewicz, *Biblia Polonorum*, vol. 1, 619–20.

55. See Rajmund Pietkiewicz, "*Zoharz proroka Dawida* w przekładzie Studium bibliograficzno-bibliologiczne," in: *Ex Oriente Lux: Księga Pamiątkosra dla Księdza Profesora Antoniego Tioniny w 65. rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Waldemar Chrostowski (Warsaw, 2010), 378–98.

56. Pietkiewicz, *Biblia Polonorum*, vol. 1, 175–253, 625–48 (list of printed Polish Bibles), and 680–99 (English summary); see also Wodecki, "Polish Translations of the Bible," 1205–06.

Vernacular Bible Reading, Humanism, and Reformation

Biblical humanists,[57] among whom Erasmus is the most important, emphasized the need for a thorough reform of Church and theology, as well as the laity's spiritual life, which should be maintained by a return *ad fontes scripturarum*. Erasmus himself published his revised version of the Latin New Testament, based upon the "original" Greek (*Novum Instrumentum* 1516), which was actually conceived as a very appropriate starting point for vernacular versions to be based upon. In one of the introductory writings to the *Novum Instrumentum*, the so-called *Paraclesis*, Erasmus appealed to the laity to read the Bible (in the vernacular), an appeal that was further elaborated upon in the introduction to his *Paraphrases* to the Gospel of Matthew (1522).[58]

Martin Luther, as well as the Protestant reformers in his wake, considered the Bible to be the only sufficient and reliable source of theological truth and the only thing necessary for the laity's life of faith (*sola scriptura*), positioning it against the traditions of the Catholic Church, both in regard to doctrine and (liturgical and disciplinary) customs. When Martin Luther published the first vernacular version of his New Testament in 1522 and his complete Bible in 1534, he mainly based it upon the novel source texts published by Erasmus (especially the second edition of 1519) and other biblical humanists—as has frequently been emphasized in (Protestant) historiography—but he also used the Vulgate and was inevitably influenced by the German Bible language that had developed in the course of a centuries-long translation tradition.[59] Luther's version became in its turn an

57. See Engammare, "Un siècle de publication de la Bible en Europe" and the same author's overview of the literature until the end of the 1990s: Max Engammare, "De la chaire au bûcher, la Bible dans l'Europe de la Renaissance. Pour rendre compte d'une production récente abondante," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 61 (1999), 737–61.

58. Wim François, "La condamnation par les théologiens Parisiens du plaidoyer d'Érasme pour la traduction de la Bible dans la langue vernaculaire," *Augustiniana*, 55 (2005), 357–405, here 357–77.

59. Gow, "The Contested History of a Book," 23–27. Among the manifold introductions to Luther's Bible translations, see Euan Cameron, "The Luther Bible," in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 3: *From 1450 to 1750*, ed. Euan Cameron (Cambridge, UK, 2016), 217–38; Stephan Füssel, *Das Buch der Bücher. Die Luther-Bibel von 1534: Eine kulturhistorische Einführung* (Cologne *et al*., 2002)—this very useful scholarly brochure has been translated in various languages, including both English and French; John L. Flood, "Martin Luther's Bible Translation in its German and European Context," in: *The Bible in the Renaissance: Essays on Biblical Commentary and Translation in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Richard Griffiths, [St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History], (Aldershot, 2001), 45–70 and Heinz Blanke, "Die Abteilung 'Die deutsche Bibel' in der Weimarer

important "source" for the manifold translations of the Reformation Era. Confronted with Luther's new translation, the Catholic Church in Germany did not react by imposing a strict ban on vernacular Bible editions, but by putting "good" Bibles into the people's hands, viz., Bibles in which confessionnally sensitive passages from Luther's Bible had been corrected on the basis of the Vulgate. Indeed, where the "heretics" claimed to be in the right, with the Bible on their side, the Catholic authorities had to fight them with the same arms and allow for "good" Catholic vernacular Bibles to counter Protestant versions. The best known of these German Catholic *Korrekturbibeln* are the New Testament of Jerome Emser (1527), and the Bibles of John Dietenberger (1534) and John Eck (1537).[60]

Again, the situation in the Low Countries was very similar to that found in Germany. When the first editions appeared, based upon the text of Erasmus and/or Luther,[61] the authorities did not react with a general ban on vernacular Bibles. Instead, the only Bible editions that were prohibited were those containing prologues, marginal glosses, summaries above the chapters, and other "paratextual" elements that might influence the interpretation of the reader in a heterodox direction. The discussion of the Bible's interpretation, which took place in semi-clandestine gatherings or conventicles, was also forbidden.[62] Just as in Germany, the authorities were

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Lutherausgabe," in: *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Sonderedition der kritischen Weimarer Ausgabe. Begleitheft zur Deutschen Bibel* (Weimar, 2000), 25–60.

60. Not that much scholarly literature has been devoted to these Catholic *Korrekturbibeln*. There is the recent summary of Roman Fischer and Jourden Travis Moger, "Johannes Dietenberger and his Counter-Reformation German Bible," *The Journal of the Bible and its Reception*, 3 (2016), 279–302. More elaborate studies are to be found in Katharina Tummuseit, *Gesamtsatzstrukturen, ihre Aufbauprinzipien und Textfunktionen in der Offenbarung des Johannes von anno 1522 bis anno 1545 in den Übersetzungen von Luther, Emser, Zwingli, Dietenberger und Eck*, [Berliner sprachwissenschaftliche Studien, 16], (Berlin, 2009) and Karl-Heinz Musseleck, *Untersuchungen zur Sprache katholischer Bibelübersetzungen der Reformationszeit*, [Studien zum Frühneuhochdeutschen, 6], (Heidelberg, 1981). These studies are, however, not widely available outside Germany.

61. For the early modern Bible production and censorship in the Low Countries, see the second part (ed. Wim François) in: Gillaerts *et al*., eds., *De Bijbel in de Lage Landen*, 203–388; Wim François, "Die volkssprachliche Bibel in den Niederlanden des 16. Jahrhunderts. Zwischen Antwerpener Buchdruckern und Löwener Buchzensoren," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 120 (2009), 187–214; and A.A. den Hollander, *De Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen. Dutch Translations of the Bible 1522–1545*, [Bibliotheca Bibliographica Neerlandica, 33], (Nieuwkoop, 1997). An important reference work continues to be Cebus Cornelis de Bruin, *De Statenbijbel en zijn voorgangers. Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen vanaf de Reformatie tot 1637*, rev. Frits G.M. Broeyer (Haarlem, 1993).

62. On Bible reading and Bible censorship, see also Wim François, "Die 'Ketzerplakate' Kaiser Karls in den Niederlanden und ihre Bedeutung für Bibelübersetzungen in den Volks-

Figure 2. *Den Bibel. Tgeheele Oude ende Nieuwe Testament. . .* , Antwerp: Willem Vorsterman, 1532 (KU Leuven, Maurits Sabbe Library, P22.055.1/Fo BIJB. Reproduced by permission). According to the provenance data, the Bible was in the first part of the seventeenth century in the possession of some Premonstratensians belonging to the Abbey of Parc, near Louvain: Ad usum fr. francisci wennen Rel. parcensis Anno 1626 / Ad usum fr. frederici holman Rellig. Parcensis, Pastoris in Wingen S.Georgij 1635.

keen to provide the population with a trustworthy translation, based upon the Vulgate and devoid of all interpretative glosses. This was, for example, the aim of the Dutch Vorsterman Bible, named after the printer who published this Bible for the first time in 1528, as well as the French Bible by the humanist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, which was printed by Martin Lempereur in 1530 (Separate editions of Lefèvre's New Testament had been published from 1525 onwards, his Old Testament from 1528 onwards).[63] These versions were published with the explicit consent of the Louvain theologians, whereas their colleagues in Paris had forbidden Lefèvre's translations.

Indeed, Martin Lempereur's emigration to the Low Countries to print Lefèvre's versions there was precisely dictated by the fact that these texts were forbidden in Paris, even though they were based largely upon the Vulgate. The Paris Faculty of Theology had already shown opposition to Lefèvre's versions immediately after their publication in Paris, from the summer of 1523 onwards, but managed to issue an official condemnation in August 1525, which was immediately confirmed by the Parlement de Paris, and reissued by the latter in February, 1526.[64] In several documents stemming from the Paris theological milieu, this prohibition was justified with reference to the Poor of Lyons, the Beguines, and Beghards, as well as to the "Bohemians," and with mentioning the stance the theologians' historic leader, Jean Gerson, had taken against them.[65] The aforementioned *Bible*

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sprache: Der 'Proto-Index' von 1529 als vorläufiger Endpunkt," *Dutch Review of Church History*, 84 (2004), 198–247; A.A. den Hollander, *Verboden bijbels: Bijbelcensuur in de Nederlanden in de eerste helft van de zestiende eeuw*, [Oratiereeks], (Amsterdam, 2003), 6-10. In addition, see Wim François, "Vernacular Bible Reading and Censorship in Early Sixteenth Century. The Position of the Louvain Theologians," in: *Lay Bibles in Europe. 1450–1800*, eds. A.A. den Hollander and Mathijs Lamberigts, [Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 198], (Leuven, 2006), 69-96, here 79–89.

63. Still important to the study of Lefèvre's translation is Alfred Laune, "Lefèvre d'Étaples et la traduction française de la Bible," *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 32 (1895), 56–72. See also: Guy Bedouelle, *Lefèvre d'Étaples et l'Intelligence des Écritures*, [Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 152], (Geneva, 1976), 112–20; and Pierre-Maurice Bogaert and Jean-François Gilmont, "De Lefèvre d'Étaples à la fin du XVI^{e} siècle," in: *Les Bibles en français*, ed. Bogaert, 47–106, here 54–55.

64. Wim François, "The Condemnation of Vernacular Bible Reading by the Parisian Theologians (1523–31)," in: *Infant Milk or Hardy Nourishment? The Bible for Lay People and Theologians in the Early Modern Period*, eds. Wim François and A.A. den Hollander, [Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 221], (Leuven, 2009), 111–39, here 126–27. See there for additional literature.

65. See, e.g., the letter of the Faculty's syndic, Noel Beda, to Desiderius Erasmus, May 21, 1525, in: *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, vol. 6, eds. Percy Stafford Allen *et al.* (Oxford, 1906), nr. 1579, page 85 line 147–page 86 line 171, and the plea by the Faculty's

Historiale complétée and *Bible abrégée* were not affected by the Paris condemnation—which obviously took aim at "new" translations— but continued to be printed (and read).[66] Up until 1545–46, the former went through twenty and the latter through seven additional editions. Also versions of the Life of Jesus, and other Bible-based works, in addition to the (*grandes*) *postilles* of Desrey (another nine editions until 1551) continued to appear, as mentioned before.[67] It must, nevertheless, be admitted that the Paris theologians, supported by the Parlement de Paris, were able to put a halt to the printing of "new" Bible translations, which they considered to be a spin-off of the *évangélisme*, the French Bible-based reform-movement considered to propagate erroneous teachings. The consequence was that the culture of vernacular Bible reading in France did not receive the extra encouragement from the humanist movement, as was the case elsewhere in Europe.

After the last late medieval translations had been published in 1545–46, no further Bible versions *stricto sensu* were printed in Paris in the twenty years that followed, nor in those parts of France that were under the Paris authorities' jurisdiction. However, Bible-based material with a link to the official liturgy of the Church continued to be printed. For example, in 1545 the production of the *postils* began, authored by Gabriel Dupuy-

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lawyer Jean Bochard against the Reform-minded bishop of Meaux, Guillaume Briçonnet, on August 29, 1525 (Caesar Egassius Bulaeus, *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis. . .* , vol. 6 [Paris: Pierre de Bresche . . . et Jacob de Laize-de-Bresche. . . , 1673], 182).

66. In the Faculty's condemnation of August 1525, taken over by the Parlement de Paris, all translations of the Bible in the vernacular or even parts thereof seem to be targeted. In the pronouncement of the Parlement of February 5, 1526, however, the prohibition was meant for versions of the New Testament "de nouveau translatez de latin en françoys." It is unclear whether the Faculty and the Parlement had, already from the beginning, the intention of prohibiting only the "new" translations and to leave the late medieval versions unaffected, or whether this mitigation was only introduced in the course of the process. In the last case, it is not known who or which lobby-group might have been responsible for the mitigation. Whatever the case may be, late medieval translations, such as *Bible Historiale complétée* and *Bible abrégée* continued to be printed in Paris. Compare François, "The Condemnation of Vernacular Bible Reading by the Parisian Theologians," 126–27; Francis M. Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne: A Bibliographical Study of Books in French Censured by the Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris, 1520–1551*, [Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 172], (Geneva, 1979), 25–77 and 77–78; and *Registre des procès-verbaux de la Faculté de Théologie de l'Université de Paris de janvier 1524 à novembre 1533*, ed. James K. Farge, [Textes et documents sur l'histoire des universités], (Paris, 1990), nr. 63, pp. 105–06. In her publications Margriet Hoogvliet has insisted upon the important nuance included in the words "de nouveau translatez de latin en françoys," as well as upon the continuing publication of late medieval versions. See her "Questioning the 'Republican Paradigm'," 101–04.

67. Compare Hoogvliet, "Encouraging Lay People," 264. Discussion remains open about the actual audience of the Latin-French *postilles* by Pierre Desrey. Compare with supra, 31.

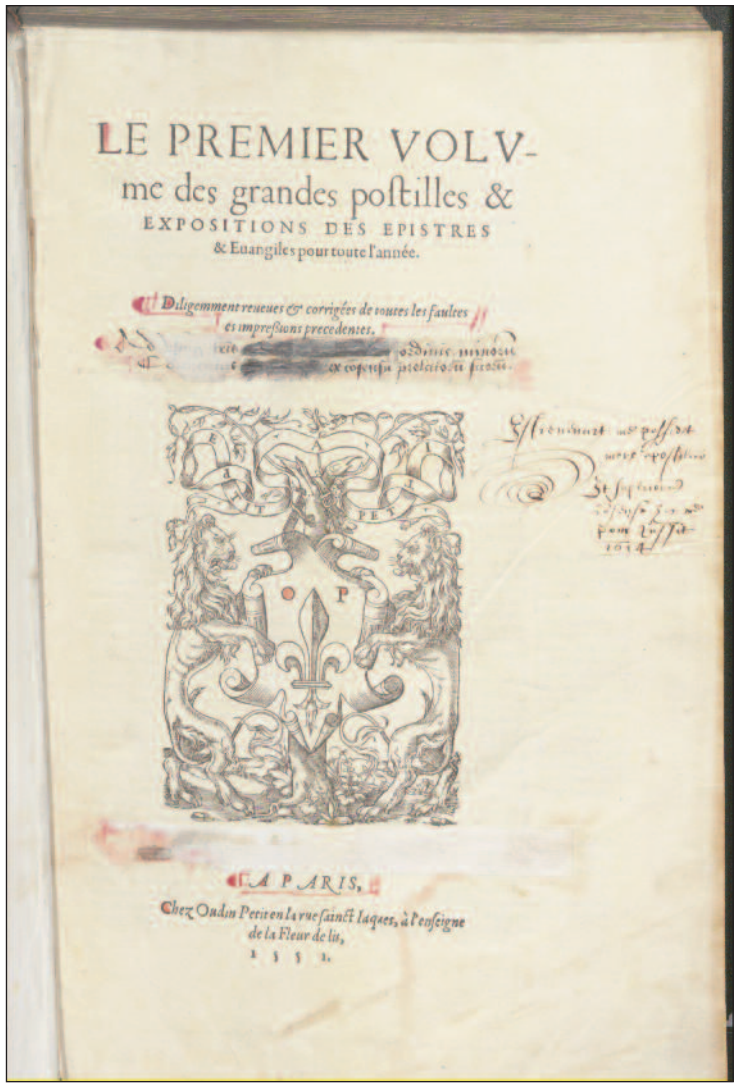
herbault, which offered the Epistle and Gospel readings of the liturgical year and were followed by a long commentary, all in French. They were, in a certain sense, the successor to Desrey's *postilles*, the last edition of which appeared in 1551. A French translation of the Psalms by Dupuyherbault was also offered in print (1555). Most of these editions were in octavo- and sextodecimo-format and were, therefore, conducive to personal reading. Lefèvre's French Bible translations, for their part, continued to be published beyond the reach of the Paris theologians, in centers such as Lyon, Alençon, and Antwerp. Further research should reveal the degree to which Lefèvre's editions were "smuggled" from the periphery into the households of France's heartland. But whatever the case may be, the different attitudes of the Paris and Louvain theologians regarding Lefèvre's translation is a strong indication that on the eve of Trent a univocal Catholic position regarding vernacular Bible reading did not exist and that, instead, there were only geographically diverse attitudes.

In addition to Lefèvre's Bible editions, Erasmus's plea for a vernacular Bible, as included in the introduction to his *Paraphrases* to Matthew, was subject to an examination by the Paris theologians. In a long epistolary exchange with Noël Beda, the "syndic" of the Paris Faculty, Erasmus noted, among other arguments, that during his youth in his native Low Countries, the Bible was read in Dutch and French.[68] Erasmus's self-defense was, however, to no avail; his plea for a vernacular Bible as found in the introduction to his *Paraphrases* to Matthew eventually resulted in a condemnation that was issued in 1527 by the Paris theologians, and published in 1531.[69] This pronouncement by the influential theological Faculty of Paris should be considered a landmark in the controversy regarding vernacular Bible reading that raged in the Catholic Church, since it was repeatedly cited by opponents to such reading in the years that followed.

A situation comparable to that of France also occurred in England. Given the Oxford Constitutions still in force, there was no chance that William Tyndale would obtain a permission to publish his English translation of the New Testament, which was, moreover, largely indebted to Erasmus's Latin-Greek New Testament and was also based upon Luther's German translation. Tyndale's New Testament was, therefore, published on the Continent, first, in 1526, in Worms and subsequently in Antwerp. However, it was immediately affected by prohibitory measures promul-

68. Desiderius Erasmus to Noel Beda, June 15, 1525, in: *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, vol. 6, eds. Allen *et al*., nr. 1581, page 105 lines 733–42.

69. François, "La condamnation par les théologiens parisiens," 377–88.


LE PREMIER VOLV-
me des grandes postilles &
EXPOSITIONS DES EPISTRES
& Euangiles pour toute l'année.

Diligemment reueues & corrigées de toutes les fautes
es impressions precedentes.

A PARIS,
Chez Oudin Petit en la rue sainct Iaques, à l'enseigne
de la Fleur de lis,
1551.

FIGURE 3. *Le premier (-second) volume des grandes postilles & expositions des Epistres & Euangiles pour toute l'année*, ed. Pierre Desrey, Paris: Oudin Petit, 1551 (KU Leuven, Maurits Sabbe Library, P278.664.28/Fo GUIL Prem. Reproduced by permission). According to the provenance data, the book was in the first part of the seventeenth century in the possession of some members of the convent of the Friars Minor in Lille, in today's France: Ad usum fratris allardi de molendino ordinis fratrum minorum Conventus Insulensis. Ex consensu prelatorum suorum / Estievenart me possidet, more apostolico et superiorum consensu hic me poni iussit 1614.

gated by the English authorities.[70] Of these Reformation-minded New Testaments, "hundreds or even thousands of copies were illicitly shipped to London, hidden between the pages of more orthodox publications or between the folds of bales of dried cloth, in spite of the efforts of the English authorities to stop the smuggling."[71] Further Bibles met the same fate—e.g., Myles Coverdale's 1535 complete Bible—until King Henry VIII, having broken with the Church of Rome without, however, becoming a full-blooded Protestant, allowed in 1538 an English Bible to be printed (the *Great Bible* of 1539, which was a revision of the so-called *Matthew Bible* by Myles Coverdale). Given the importance of Anglo-Saxon historiography, the particular English situation was extrapolated to the whole of Western Christianity more than once and contributed to the spread of the ill-famed paradigm of the late medieval Catholic Church prohibiting vernacular reading by the laity.[72]

In Spain, Charles V and his administration continued the same restrictive Bible policy which the Inquisition had initiated decades earlier to keep the *conversos* on a tight leash and which now was used to curb the *Alumbrados* and Protestants in their eagerness to read and interpret the Scriptures (although Charles V's administration displayed far more biblical-humanist leanings in the Low Countries). Spanish Bible versions that were aimed at following the official liturgy of the Church were, however, tolerated.[73] This was especially the case with the abovementioned *Epístolas y Evangelios* by Ambrosio de Montesinos, which went through more than 25 editions from its first appearance in 1512 until deep in the 1550s. To a

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70. On William Tyndale and his Bible translations, see, for example, Daniell, *William Tyndale,* 108–11, 142–45, and 169; Id., *The Bible in English*, 140–59. A summary is to be found in Id., "William Tyndale, the English Bible, and the English Language," in: *The Bible as Book: The Reformation*, eds. Orlaith O'Sullivan and Ellen N. Herron, [The Bible as Book, 2], (London, 2000), 39–50; Guido Latré, "William Tyndale: Reformer of a Culture, Preserver of a Language, Translator for the Ploughboy," in: *Tyndale's Testament*, eds. Paul Arblaster, Gergely Juhász, and Guido Latré (Turnhout, 2002), 11–24; and also David Norton, "English Bibles from *c.* 1520 to *c.* 1750," in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 3, ed. Cameron, 305–44, here 305–15.

71. See W. François, "The Antwerp Printers Christoffel and Hans (I) van Ruremund, Their Dutch and English Bibles, and the Intervention of the Authorities in the 1520/30's," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte/Archive for Reformation History*, 101 (2010), 7–28, here 16.

72. Compare Gow, "Contested History of a Book," 21.

73. I am very grateful to Prof. Ignacio García Pinilla (Universidad de Castilla–La Mancha) for sending me the text of his lecture entitled "The Debate on Bible Reading by Lay People in Spain in the Sixteenth Century," which he gave at the conference *Lay Readings of the Bible in Early Modern Europe* (Le Studium Conferences, Tours, FR, September 24–26, 2015). Compare Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 45–54 and 112–16.

lesser degree, also Psalters in the Castilian language were brought onto the market, such as *El salterio de David en lenguaje castellano* probably made by a certain Gomez Santa Fimia (first edition Lisbon, 1529), the *Harpa de David* by Benito Villa (first edition 1538), and the *Psalterio de David con las paraphrases y breves declaraciones* by Reinier Snoy (1546).[74] The New Testament in Castilian, made by the "Protestant humanist" Francesco de Enzinas on the basis of both the Vulgate and Erasmus's New Testament—a work that he produced at least partially in Philipp Melanchthon's Wittenberg house—was published in 1543 outside Spain, in Antwerp.[75] For the sake of completeness, it should be emphasized that both Tyndale's New Testament and Enzinas's version, unlike Lefèvre's French edition, were published in Antwerp without any official consent being sought from the authorities in the Low Countries.

The Italian Bible, translated by the Camaldolese monk Nicolò Malerbi (1471), went through fifteen printed editions before the Reformation, as previously observed, and another twelve would follow, up until 1567. The printing of Epistle and Gospel readings from the Mass as well as the Psalter (alongside other biblical editions) also continued.[76] However, humanism and the Reformation also acted in Italy as a stimulus to the production of New Testament translations and, by extension, to new Bible versions. It was the Reform-minded Florentine layman Antonio Brucioli who was the first to publish a New Testament (in 1530) and a complete

74. An interesting, but quite unknown project was a translation of the Gospels, accompanied with a commentary, compiled by the Benedictine monk Juan de Robles between 1545–58. His goal was to put the biblical text at everyone's disposal. In this work, Robles showed himself a proponent of vernacular Bible reading. Unfortunately, Robles was unable to publish his work. See Hélène Rabaey, "La *Nueva traslación y interpretación española de los cuatro sacrosantos Evangelios de Jesu Christo* de fray Juan de Robles, un alegato a favor de la lectura en lengua vulgar de los Evangelios y la concordia entre cristianos," in: *Humanismo y Pervivencia del Mundo Clásico V. Homenaje al profesor Juan Gil*, eds. José María Maestre Maestre *et al.*, vol. 2 (Alcañiz and Madrid, 2015), 1037–53.

75. For further reading on Enzinas's New Testament, see Els Agten, "Francisco de Enzinas, a Reformation-minded Humanist with a Vernacular Dream: A Spanish Translation of the New Testament," *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, 14 (2013), 218–41; Victoria Christman, "*Coram imperatore*. The Publication of Francisco de Enzinas's Spanish New Testament (1543)," in: "*Wading Lambs and Swimming Elephants*," eds. François and Den Hollander, 197–218; Jonathan L. Nelson, "'Solo Saluador': Printing the 1543 New Testament of Francisco de Enzinas (Dryander)," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 50 (1999), 94–116. See also the recent dissertation by Peter W. Hasbrouck, *Enzinas to Valera: Motives, Methods and Sources in Sixteenth-Century Spanish Bible Translation*, [Doctoral Dissertation, Boston University, Philosophy], (Ann Arbor, MI, 2015).

76. See Edoardo Barbieri, *Le Bibbie italiane del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento*, 237–72; Jacobson Schutte, *Italian Religious Books*, 82–94 and 243–47.

Bible (in 1532) that were said to be based upon the original Greek and Hebrew, but, more probably, went back to Santes Pagnino's Latin translation of the Hebrew Old Testament and Erasmus's translation of the Greek New Testament (and even contained reminiscences of Malerbi's earlier version). But, this did not cause the authorities of the Catholic Church to prohibit Bible printing and Bible reading; instead, the same mechanism that had been in effect in Germany and in the Low Countries also arose in Italy. Two Dominicans from the Florentine San Marco monastery provided a Catholic translation—a correction of Brucioli's translation in fact—viz., Fra Zaccaria of Florence in 1536 (the New Testament only) and Sante Marmochino in 1538 (the complete Bible).[77] In short, on the eve of Trent, the Italian peninsula belonged to the regions were vernacular Bible production flourished and found its way unhindered to an audience of lay, religious, and clerical readers. It was only after 1567 that the situation would change, when the last genuine Catholic vernacular Bible was brought onto the market, and the Church, at the instigation of the Inquisition, managed to implement important restrictions on the production of vernacular Bible editions, thus forcing the laity to find other avenues to become familiar with the text and content of the Bible.

To conclude this part on vernacular Bibles in the early Reformation era, one should refer to the rich Bible tradition in the Czech language that continued to be fostered in the early sixteenth-century Utraquist milieus (e.g. the *Venice Bible* of 1506 and the editions which followed in its wake). The New Testament of Klaudián (from 1518) and the New Testament of Lukáš (from 1525) stem from the Protestant Union of the Czech Brothers or Unitas Fratrum. The New Testament of Pilsen (1527) was a Catholic initiative. Whereas the aforementioned editions were based largely upon the Vulgate, the New Testament by Václav Beneš Optát from 1533 was the first to take Erasmus's Latin-Greek New Testament as its point of departure.[78]

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77. See, amongst others, Élise Boillet, "Vernacular Biblical Literature in Sixteenth-Century Italy: Universal Reading and Specific Readers," in: *Discovering the Riches of the Word*, eds. Corbellini, Hoogvliet, and Ramakers, 213–33; Gigliola Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo: la censura ecclesiastica e i volgarizzamenti della Scrittura (1471–1605)*, [Saggi, 460], (Bologna, 1997), 23–74; Andrea Del Col, "Appunti per una indagine sulle traduzioni in volgare della Bibbia nel Cinquecento italiano," in: *Libri, idee e sentimenti religiosi nel Cinquecento italiano: 3–5 aprile 1986*, eds. Adriano Prosperi and Albano Biondi (Modena, 1987), 165–88. On Brucioli, see also Ivano Paccagnella, "La 'Bibbia Brucioli'. Note linguistiche sulla traduzione del 'Nuovo Testamento' del 1530," in: *Omaggio a Gianfranco Folena*, vol. 2 (Padua, 1993), 1075–87; and Franco Giacone, "*Du vulgaire illustre* à l'illustration de la Parole: la Bible de Brucioli (1532)," in: *La Bible imprimée dans l'Europe moderne*, ed. Schwarzbach, 260–87.

78. Pečírková, "Czech Translations of the Bible," 1175–89.

Where Poland is concerned, it was noted previously that it was mainly the Psalters that were printed, according to late medieval texts. With a view to the printing of the complete text of the New Testament, the initiative was taken by Jan Seklucjan, a convinced Protestant (Lutheran) who commissioned the humanist Stanisław Murzynowski to translate the New Testament. The latter used an array of texts, such as Erasmus's *Novum Testamentum*, the Vulgate, Luther's German translation, as well as the Czech New Testament, and old Polish manuscripts, obviously. The translation was published in several parts in Königsberg between 1551–53.[79] The first Catholic New Testament in Polish, a translation of the Vulgate, was only printed in 1556 in Cracow (Szarffenberger's New Testament) followed by the entire Bible (Leopolita Bible) in 1561 (2nd edition in 1575/77).[80]

Concluding Remarks

From the aforementioned overview, it should be obvious that, on the eve of the Council of Trent, there was no unequivocal Bible policy in the Catholic Church, and instead there existed only local traditions that had grown historically and were often very diverse. The general picture is that in regions where the Church was confronted with other sets of beliefs, such as in Spain, or had to challenge "heretical" movements, such as in England, the authorities issued edicts with the general intention of stemming the tide of production and reading of Bible translations in the vernacular—which in the case of Spain may have been more efficacious than it was in England. The reasoning was, after all, that an idiosyncratic reading of the Bible may easily give rise to erroneous and even heretical viewpoints. In France, which in the late Middle Ages saw the presence of heterodox Bible-based movements such as Waldensians, Beguines, and Beghards, the Church did not proclaim a general prohibition on vernacular Bible editions, until the powerful Paris Faculty of Theology together with the Parlement de Paris, issued a prohibition of that kind in the 1520s after having

79. Wodecki, "Polish Translations of the Bible," 1122–23; also David A. Frick, *Polish Sacred Philology in the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation: Chapters in the History of the Controversies (1551–1632)*, [University of California Publications in Modern Philology, 123], (Berkeley *et al*., 1989), 12–33; Pietkiewicz, *Biblia Polonorum*, vol. 1, 332–50. Another initiative from the Protestant side was the so-called New Testament of Jan (Sandecki-)Malecki from 1552. It proved to be not the entire New Testament, but only two pages—Jan Malecki printed his own translation of Matt. 1 to show to Albrecht Hohenzollern that he was able to translate and to print the entire New Testament, but eventually he did not carry out his plans.

80. Wodecki, "Polish Translations of the Bible," 1207–08; also Frick, *Polish Sacred Philology*, 50–66; Pietkiewicz, *Biblia Polonorum*, vol. 1, 350–81, 625–48 (list of printed Polish Bibles), and 680–99 (English summary).

been confronted with the reform-minded *évangélisme* and the vernacular Bibles issued in its wake. The question remains, however, as to how efficacious these prohibitory measures were, especially in those parts of France that fell beyond the Faculty and Parlement's sphere of influence. The situations in Germany, the Low Countries, Bohemia, Poland, and Italy were very different, since in these regions vernacular Bible translations circulated and were widely read in the late Middle Ages. The spread of vernacular editions in the wake of the Reformation was not met with a general prohibition on all vernacular Bibles, but by a selective prohibition of Reformation-minded editions, while at the same time being countered by the production of "good" Catholic editions.

When the papal legates in Trent sent secretary Massarelli to Cardinal Pedro Pacheco in order to convince him not to force through the proposition prohibiting vernacular Bible reading, the depiction the secretary presented to him of the sensibilities in the diverse local churches of the Catholic world was not far from reality. On the one hand, the authorities in Pacheco's Spain and in France had already issued prohibitions against Bible reading, even though many of the faithful may have continued to read vernacular translations, at least in France. On the other hand, in the Catholic Churches in Germany—and by extension in the Low Countries and Bohemia—as well as in (the northern part of) Italy and Poland, Bible reading in the vernacular was traditionally seen as something edifying to the common people. In his comments, Massarelli did not mention England, which had adopted restrictive legislation for about a century and a half, but which had experienced a dramatic policy change under Henry VIII, and was in 1546, from the point of view of the Catholic Church at least, going through a very complicated religious situation. Massarelli also neglected to mention the Scandinavian lands that had definitely opted for Lutheranism.[81] To those countries in favor of vernacular Bible reading, he may have added Dalmatia-Croatia, amongst others. In Trent, the Council fathers, being engaged in long and often hot-tempered debates in which the proponents and adversaries of vernacular Bible reading held each other in an equilibrium, decided not to take any definitive decision in 1546, and continued to leave it in the hands of the local (both civil and ecclesiastical) authorities.[82] In this sense, the conciliar

81. See Jonatan Pettersson, "Nordic Bible Translations in Medieval and Early Modern Europe," in: *Vernacular Bible and Religious Reform*, eds. François and Den Hollander, 107–50.

82. On the issue of vernacular Bible reading at Trent, see, amongst others, Els Agten and Wim François, "The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bible Reading: What Happened in the Build-Up to and during the Fourth Session," in: *The Council of Trent: Reform and Controversy in Europe and Beyond (1545–1700)*, vol. 1: *Between Trent, Rome and Wittenberg*, eds.

debates offered an excellent "state of the art," but were by no means determinative for the further evolutions in the Church.

On considering further evolutions in the Catholic Church, reference is often made to the first official and "universal" Roman Index of 1558–59, by which Paul IV Carafa, former head of the Inquisition, forbade the reading of the Bible in all vernacular languages, unless explicit permission was given by the Holy Office of the Roman Inquisition. The influence of this first Roman Index was actually very limited (although its impact is still exaggerated in some scholarly literature). Due to its harshness and inapplicability, it found barely any reception in the Catholic world. Not even in Carafa's own Italy, where vernacular Bibles continued to be printed quite undisturbed until 1567, was the Index enforced. It was precisely to offer an alternative to Carafa's Index that the Council fathers during Trent's third period (1562–63) started drafting a new Index that was eventually published in 1564 by Pius IV. Its so-called *Regula Quarta* or fourth rule, of ten, was devoted to vernacular Bible reading: It had to admit that more harm than good would arise from the indiscriminate reading of the Bible in the vernacular, but it allowed lay people the opportunity to read the Bible if they asked and obtained written permission from the local bishop or inquisitor. This shows that by that period, the Catholic Church, due to its confrontation with the Reformation, had become far more reluctant. An even harsher Counter-reformational line would quickly gain the upper hand in the Roman Curia, especially in the Congregation of the Inquisition, for whom the 1558–59 ban remained the guiding norm. It managed to enforce a ban on vernacular Bibles by the very start of the 1570s in Italy and later in the entire Church, eventually forcing Clement VIII to suspend Trent's *Regula Quarta* in his 1596 Index. But again, as regards the countries of Central and Western-Europe, a "general dispensation" had to be granted in the early seventeenth century, so that Bible reading in the vernacular remained possible there. By that period a new "geography" of ver-

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Wim François and Violet Soen, [Refo500 Academic Series, 35/1], (Göttingen, 2018), 101–30; Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 161–78; Vittorio Coletti, *L'éloquence de la chaire. Victoires et défaites du latin entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance*, trans. Silvano Serventi, [Cerf Histoire], (Paris, 1987), 199–224; Robert E. McNally, "The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles," *Theological Studies*, 27 (1966), 204–27; Leopold Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache: Geschichte einer Lebensfrage bis zum Ende des Konzils von Trient*, [Wiener Beiträge zur Theologie, 5], (Vienna, 1964), 237–64; and Ferdinand Cavallera, "La Bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente (IV^{e} Session)," in: *Mélanges E. Podéchard. Études de sciences religieuses offertes pour son éméritat au doyen honoraire de la Faculté de Théologie de Lyon*, [Bibliothèque de la faculté catholique de théologie de Lyon, 1], (Lyons, 1945), 37–56.

nacular Bible reading had become apparent in the Catholic Church,[83] with the Mediterranean countries Italy, Spain, and Portugal maintaining a prohibitory policy,[84] and the nations of Central and Western-Europe seeing a more tolerant policy.

83. See the essay by Gigliola Fragnito, "Per una geografia delle traduzioni bibliche nell'Europa cattolica (sedicesimo e diciasettesimo secolo)," in: *Papes, princes et savants dans l'Europe moderne. Mélanges à la mémoire de Bruno Neveu*, eds. Jean-Louis Quantin and Jean-Claude Waquet, [Ecole pratique des hautes études. 4e section: Sciences historiques et philologiques, 5; Hautes études médiévales et modernes, 90], (Geneva, 2007), 51–77; compare Fragnito, "Interdiction et tolérance des Écritures Saintes en langue vernaculaire dans l'Europe catholique (XVI^{e}–XVII^{e} siècles)," in: *Vernacular Bible and Religious Reform*, eds. François and Den Hollander, 205–20. For further reading, see, amongst others, François, "La Iglesia Católica y la lectura," here 262–73; Vittorio Frajese, "La politica dell'Indice dal Tridentino al Clementino (1571–1596)," *Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà*, 11 (1998), 269–345; Gigliola Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo*, 75–226; Jesús Martínez de Bujanda, René Davignon, and Ela Stanek, *Index de Rome 1557, 1559, 1564. Les premiers index romains et l'index du Concile de Trente*, [Index des livres interdits, 8], (Sherbrooke and Geneva, 1990); Jesús Martínez de Bujanda, Ugo Rozzo, and Peter G. Bietenholz, *Index de Rome 1590, 1593, 1596. Avec étude des index de Parme 1580 et Munich 1582*, [Index des livres interdits, 9], (Sherbrooke, 1994).

84. Recent scholarship, however, has emphasized that even in these circumstances, the laity, especially in Italy, were able to remain familiar with the content of the Bible through books containing the Epistles and Gospel readings from the Mass and poetic translations of the biblical text, amongst others.