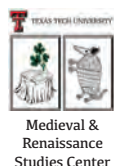


Pre-Modern Bibles

From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*



Janis Elliott and John Howe



This exhibition, which ran from 18 August 2018 until 3 March 2019 at the Museum of Texas Tech, and the catalogue to commemorate it, were made possible in part by grants from Humanities Texas, the State Affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities; Civic Lubbock, Inc.; as well as the through the support of the Helen Jones Foundation.

Cover illustration:

Mondsee Gospels Treasure Binding with the Evangelists and Crucifixion

The Walters Art Museum, Manuscripts & Rare Books, W.8

Oak boards covered with leather, Byzantine or Islamic silk damask on the spine, silver filigree, gilded panels, ivory panels, niello, gold leaf, and rock crystal
Regensburg, Germany, 11th-12th century

Image courtesy of the Digital Walters

<http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W8/>



Special Thanks

Sponsors

- The Museum of Texas Tech University
- The Medieval & Renaissance Studies Center, Texas Tech University
- The Department of History, Texas Tech University
- The Office of the Vice President for Research & Innovation, Texas Tech University

Generous funding provided by

- The Helen Jones Foundation
- Humanities Texas, the State Affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities
- Civic Lubbock, Inc., Cultural Arts Grant

Lenders

- Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, University of Houston
- Brown Library, Abilene Christian University
- Timothy C. Graham and the Institute of Medieval Studies, University of New Mexico
- Lanier Theological Library, Houston
- Moody Memorial Library, Baylor University
- Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, Austin
- Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
- The Remnant Trust, Inc., at Texas Tech University
- Alfred and Patricia Smith College of Biblical Studies, Lubbock Christian University
- Waldo Library, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo

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Our gratitude extends also to Lloyd Allred, Joe Arredondo, Mona Bozorgi, Timothy C. Graham, Emily Guy, Ann Hanson Howe, Thomas Francis Howe, Jesse Long, Shayne Sims, Lane Sobehrad, and Angela Mariani Smith for their assistance and support of this project.



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Pre-Modern Bibles:

From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Complutensian Polyglot Bible

Today's Bible is usually a single printed volume, composed of many canonical books consistently arranged and neatly divided by standard chapters and verses. Yet this was not the Bible known during most of Christian history. Pre-modern biblical scholars had to wrestle with multiple manuscripts, both scrolls and codices. They tried to present what they saw as the Word of God in hand-written copies that would be accurate, affordable, and understandable. Moreover, they needed to communicate this biblical material to an audience that was mostly illiterate. Scribes and artists presented it in ways we still find impressive. And as biblical scholars were struggling to understand and transmit sacred scripture, they developed techniques of scholarship, principles of textual criticism, and ideals of the sacred dignity of the writer's task that still animate scholars today.

This exhibit presents the largest collection of original and facsimile pre-modern and early modern biblical manuscripts ever assembled on the southern High Plains. From the Dead Sea scrolls to renaissance triumphs of biblical scholarship such as the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible* (celebrating its 500th anniversary) and the *King James Bible*, one can trace aspects of the ongoing attempt to comprehend the sacred through biblical texts and documents, the most challenging intellectual project of Western Civilization.

John Howe (History) and Janis Elliott (Art History), co-curators, September 2019.

Medieval Christians saw God as artist and architect of all creation, and the human transmission of the Word of God in material form as participation in God's work. The medieval assumption that scholarly and artistic creativity is virtuous underlies the story presented in the Pre-Modern Bibles exhibition and its catalogue.

Right: Frontispiece, God as Architect or Geometer of the Universe
Vienna Moralized Bible
Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 2554, fol. 1v
Paris, 1208-1214
Facsimile

Courtesy of Janis Elliott
Image courtesy of Mona Bozorgi

IN: ORIE: D EX: CIET: ET: TERRE: SOLE ET: ET: LUNA: ET: COZ: ET: LUDEN:





From Scrolls to Codices

Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea scrolls, including many of the earliest surviving examples of biblical texts, were found in caves near the shores of the Dead Sea in Israel, carefully stored away in ceramic jars. Researchers collected fragments of nearly a thousand different documents from eleven Qumran caves near Khirbet Qumran in the 1940s and 1950s, all of which appear to have been produced during the last two centuries BCE (Before the Common Era) and the first century CE (Common Era).



Cave 4Q at Qumran

Image courtesy of Wikipedia (Public Domain)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qumran_Caves#/media/File:Qumran.jpeg



Left: Dead Sea Scrolls Jar
Ceramic
Reproduction

Courtesy of the Alfred and Patricia Smith College of Biblical Studies, Lubbock Christian University

DEAD SEA SCROLLS JAR
Reproduction
Courtesy of the Alfred and Patricia Smith
College of Biblical Studies,
Lubbock Christian University



The *Great Isaiah Scroll*, from the first century CE, was discovered in 1947 in a clay jar in a cave at Qumran, near the shores of the Dead Sea. It is the largest and best preserved of the Dead Sea scrolls. Except for minor variants, it is very close to the standard Masoretic text of Isaiah in the Hebrew Bible (despite being a thousand years older than the earliest copy previously known).

Great Isaiah Scroll
 Jerusalem, Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum
 Qumram, 1st Century CE 1st Century CE, 24' x 10 1/2"
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Lanier Theological Library



The *Habakkuk Scroll* was one of the first discovered, and best preserved, of the Dead Sea scrolls. The author comments on the meaning of the first two chapters of the biblical book of the prophet Habakkuk. He urges resisting your enemies by keeping faith but he may be thinking less about Habakkuk's Babylonian foes than about the Romans of his own time.

Commentary on Habakkuk Scroll
 Jerusalem, Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum
 Qumram, 1st Century CE, 8" x 3 1/2"
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Lanier Theological Library
 Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Habakkuk_Commentary#/media/File:The_Commentary_on_Habakkuk_Scroll_\(1QpHab\)_Written_in_Hebrew_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Habakkuk_Commentary#/media/File:The_Commentary_on_Habakkuk_Scroll_(1QpHab)_Written_in_Hebrew_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)



View of exhibition cases displaying scrolls and codices

Scrolls



During the first centuries of the Roman Empire, large secular and religious texts were routinely written on scrolls of joined sheets of papyrus or parchment. Biblical scrolls, particularly the Torah scrolls that contain the first five books of the Bible attributed to Moses, would become the focal point of Jewish religious identity after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 BCE.

As the Christian religion emerged, Christians initially used the Jewish scriptures in scroll form, but they quickly transitioned from scrolls to book-like codices, using scrolls only for relatively rare illustrated biblical and liturgical texts. Nevertheless, all during the ancient and medieval centuries, Christian artists freely depicted angels, saints, and evangelists holding scrolls, often with significant texts written on them, a practice directly ancestral to the text-filled “balloons” of today’s comic strips.



Torah scrolls are still central to rabbinical Judaism today. People who do not use scrolls assume that locating particular texts within them must be very cumbersome and time consuming, but a skilled Torah reader, using the plates and handles, can access texts quite quickly.

Left: Torah scroll with roller plates and handles
Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 790
Parchment and wood, 2' 4" deep
16th century

Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.



Joshua Scroll
Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. Gr. 431, pt. B
Byzantine, 10th century, 34" x 16" x 6" (open)
Facsimile

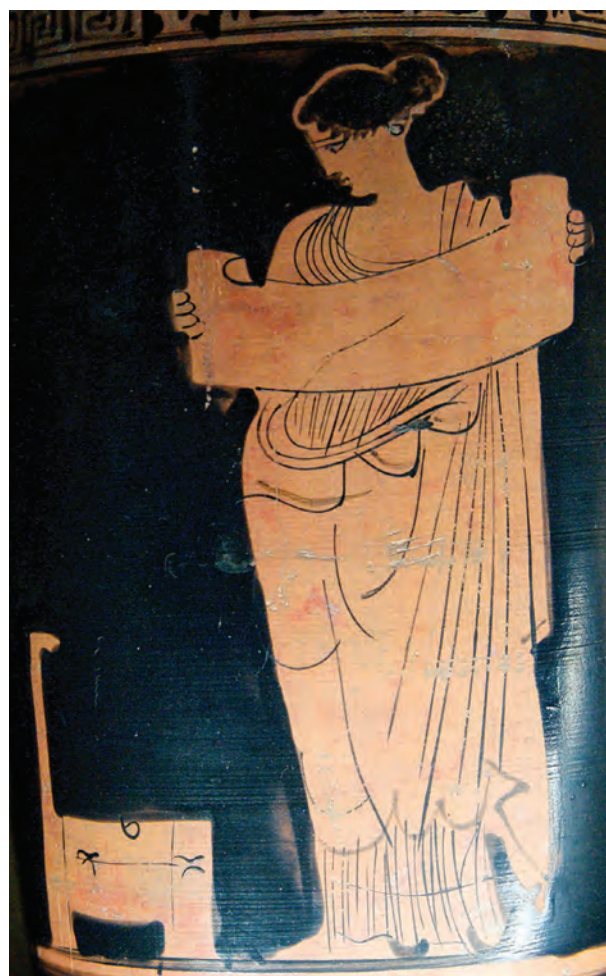
Courtesy of the Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries

Even after Christians had generally adopted the codex for their Bibles and liturgical books, they still continued to use scrolls on occasion for liturgical ceremonies, pictorial displays, and other purposes where the unusual format would be striking. The *Joshua Scroll* here, from the Byzantine Imperial Court School, is an Eastern Christian example of an illustrated scroll. Here the military victories in the early chapters of the Book of Joshua are profusely illustrated on about fifteen parchment sheets sewn together as a scroll.

Scrolls were hard to store. They did not stack well, and were easily crushed unless they were kept wound on a spindle. The standard storage solution was to keep them in chests to protect them from damage, damp, and destructive pests. In the vase detail shown, a Muse reading her scroll stands next to an open box, from which it had presumably come.

Right: Detail of a Muse reading a scroll
Attic Red-Figure Ceramic Vase
Paris, Louvre Museum, Department of Greek, Etruscan,
and Roman Antiquities, Cat. 2220
Boeothia, ca. 435-525 BCE

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Muse_reading_Louvre_CA2220.jpg





Master of the *Ingeborg Psalter*
 Psalm 14:1, Historiated Initial d: The Fool with Two Demons
 Psalter
 Los Angeles, Getty Museum, MS 66, fol. 56
 Noyon (?), France, after 1205

Image courtesy of Digital Getty
<http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/127959/master-of-the-ingeborg-psalter-initial-d-the-fool-with-two-demons-french-after-1205/>

Banderoles

Medieval Christians envisioned angels as messengers who could carry scrolls (see Rev 10:1-2). Less ominously, on modern holidays cards, their scrolls may be inscribed “Merry Christmas.” Medieval illustrators recognized that scrolls could be employed to express speech. A “banderole” is a scroll image used to function as a “speech bubble.”

Here the “Master of the *Ingeborg Psalter*,” an illustrator active in France around the year 1200, is attempting to illustrate Psalm 14:1: “The fool hath said in his heart that there is no God.” He shows the fool, inspired by delighted demons, using a banderole to proclaim that “Non est Deus.”

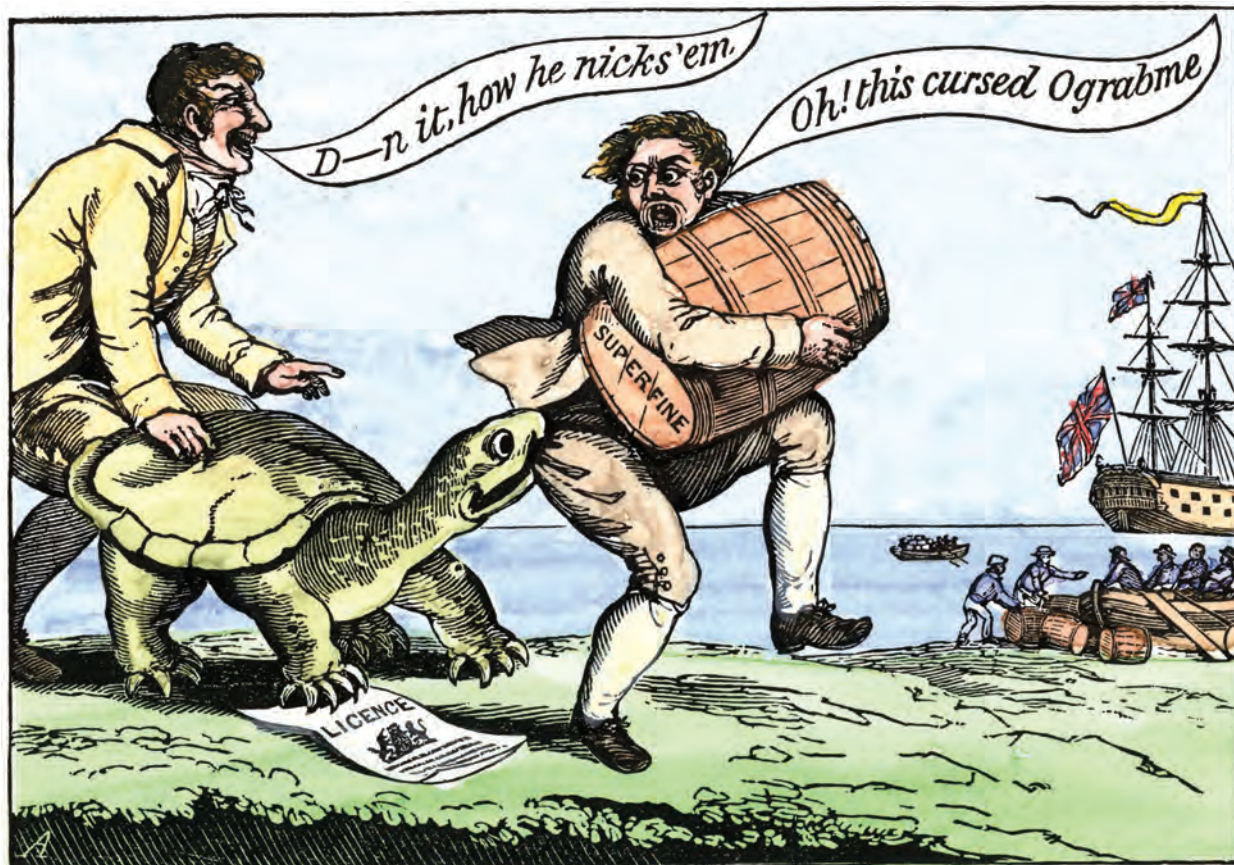
From Scrolls to Banderoles to Text Bubbles

Left: Bernhard Strigel
Detail of Saint Anne and an Angel showing a banderole
Madrid, Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza
Oil on canvas
Memmingen, Germany, ca. 1506

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Strigel_1506-detail.jpg



Banderoles continued to be used up into the contemporary world. Although students of comic book art have sometimes attempted to acclaim particular twentieth-century cartoonists as the inventors of speech bubbles, the evidence is clear that these ultimately developed out of scrolls by way of medieval banderoles. Thus, scrolls, a largely obsolete form of text storage, ultimately gave rise to the systems of floating dialogue texts used in comic books and graphic novels today.



EMBARGO.

Above: Richard Marshall
Political Cartoon Opposing President Jefferson's Embargo on Trade with Foreign Ports
Woodcut print, 1806

Image courtesy of Alamy Stock Photos
<https://www.alamy.com/cartoon-protesting-the-embargo-act-of-us-president-thomas-jefferson-image6907139.html>

Making Manuscripts

A pre-modern Bible was a major undertaking. A complete codex Bible (manuscript bound like a book) with prefaces, apocrypha, and addenda contained a million words on hundreds of sheets of papyrus or even more expensive parchment. Scribes had to write out the text by hand—over six months of full-time work. Bookbinders had to sew the sheets into a usable permanent volume and build a protective cover for it. A single pre-modern Bible, therefore, required a year or more to produce; deluxe Bibles took even longer. Not surprisingly, even after complete single-codex Bibles were first assembled in the fourth century, they remained relatively rare.



Papyrus scroll

Courtesy of the "Paleography and Codicology: A Seminar on Medieval Manuscripts," offered through the Institute of Medieval Studies, University of New Mexico, by Timothy C. Graham



Papyrus

Papyrus, a reed common to the Nile Delta and similar wetland regions, was used as early as 3000 BCE to make a writing surface similar to paper. The sticky inner layer of the reed was extracted as thin strips, laid together, and then covered by another layer at right angles to the first. After soaking with water, the two layers were hammered together into a single sheet, then dried under pressure, and polished to a smooth surface. The resulting sheets were trimmed to size (typically sixteen inches) or glued end-to-end to create scrolls. The trimmed scrap was utilized for draft documents.

In Egypt papyrus reeds were plentiful and relatively cheap and, in the arid climate, buried papyrus paper could survive millennia. In moister Europe, however, papyrus disintegrates quickly and rarely survived more than a couple of centuries.

Parchment

An ultra-refined leather writing material, usually made from the skins of sheep, goats or cows, is called parchment. Although hides are expensive, resistant to ink, and inflexible unless well prepared, they are universally available and can be converted into parchment manuscripts that can last for millennia. Most of the Dead Sea scrolls, for example, are parchment scrolls that have survived for about two thousand years.

Skin of calf vellum

Adult animal skins require more whitening and polishing to make parchment. The highest quality parchment, called vellum, is made from the skins of unborn or just born animals. Vellum was preferred for luxury manuscripts because it was whiter, smoother, lighter, and had fewer imperfections.

Courtesy of the "Paleography and Codicology: A Seminar on Medieval Manuscripts," offered through the Institute of Medieval Studies, University of New Mexico, by Timothy C. Graham



How to make parchment

Hides were soaked in lime to soften them. Then they were tied into frames and the tension gradually increased. Excess flesh was removed using a special crescent shaped knife known as a lunellum. When the stretched skin was removed from the frame, it would still retain its new shape.

Right: Detail of a Simian parchenter
Romance of Alexander, Alexander and Dindimus,
Li Livres du Graunt Caam
Bodleian Library MS. Bodl. 264, fol. 84r
Bruges (?), c. 1400

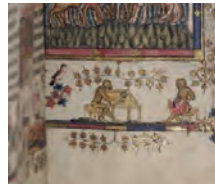


Image courtesy of Digital Bodleian
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/inquire/p/dd0bac6b-31af-437c-b9ea-7f481804628b>



Left: Parchment maker at work
Hausbuch der Mendelschen
Zwölfbrüderstiftung
Nuremberg Stadtbibliothek, ca. 1426

Image courtesy of Wikimedia
Commons
<http://indenwittenhasewint.blogspot.com/2012/12/1-making-of-parchment.html>



Above: Exhibition view of tools and materials for making manuscripts

Tools and Materials for Writing on Parchment



Lunellum

A *lunellum* is used to scrape flesh and fur from parchment skin. The knife's crescent shape helps prevent accidental piercing of the membrane.

Image courtesy of Western Connecticut State University Photographs and Miscellanea, RG8. WCSU Archives.
http://archives.library.wcsu.edu/omeka/files/original/Western_Connecticut_State_University_Photos_and_Miscellanea_RG8/4781/lunellum.jpg



Bone Folder

A bone folder is a simple instrument for making dry pressure lines on parchment or for guiding folding. It was less likely than metal tools to accidentally cut the parchment.

Courtesy of John Howe

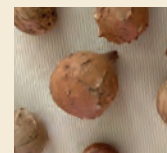


Cut goose quills

The writing implement of choice was a feather from the left wing of a goose, cut at a specific angle to accommodate right-handed scribes.

With a proper quill knife and some baking to harden the feather, a point could be cut that would hold ink and yet produce a very precise line. Although in Hollywood's imagination scribes write with full elegant plumes, more common would have been cut quills, with much of the feather removed; scribes would have found it simpler to work without dealing with extraneous feathering.

Courtesy of John Howe



Oak Galls

To create inks that last for centuries is no small achievement. Medieval scribes settled on iron-gall ink. It starts with oak galls, the

apple-like material that grows around a Gall wasp egg laid in the bud of an oak tree. This is mixed with iron sulphate and gum arabic, producing a liquid that turns black—thick enough to stay on the quill, yet thin enough to sink deeply into the writing surface.

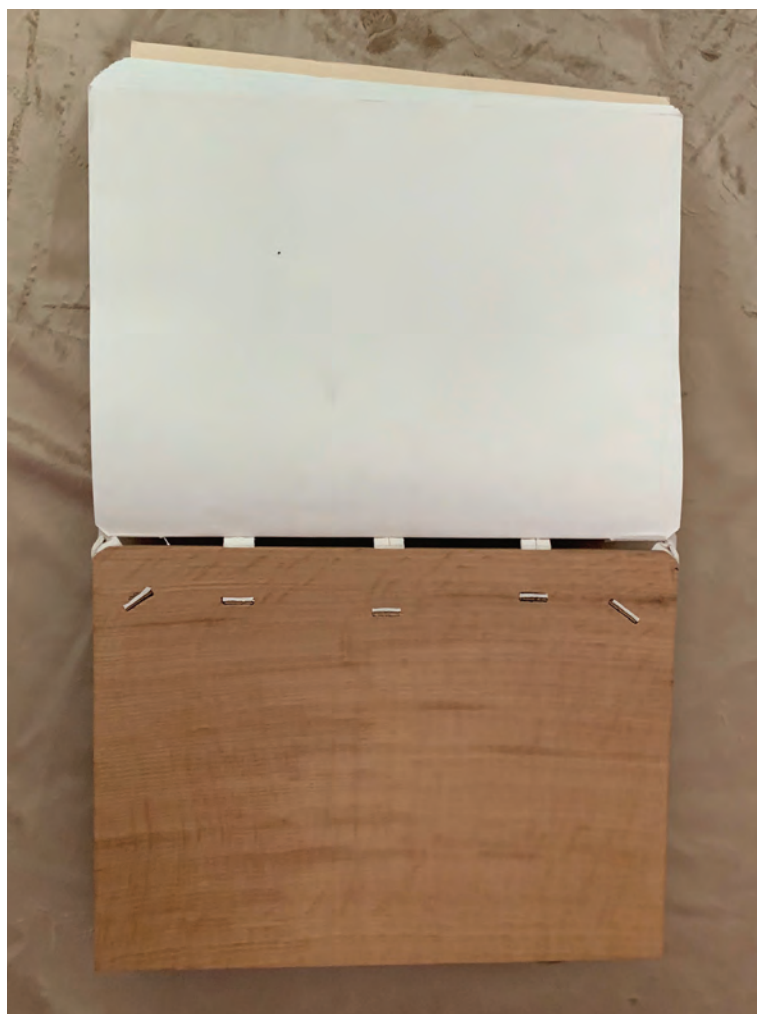
Courtesy of the "Paleography and Codicology: A Seminar on Medieval Manuscripts," offered through the Institute of Medieval Studies, University of New Mexico, by Timothy C. Graham



Assembling the Codex

Scrolls needed boxes (*armaria* in Latin) to protect them from pests and to prevent them from being crushed.

Codex books required protective covers, often with fasteners on the open side to keep the papyrus or parchment closed tight to prevent exposure to moisture. Pre-modern codices were more complicated than today's mass-produced paperbacks with glued spines that quickly fall apart. Bookbinding required technical knowledge and skilled craftsmanship. Scribes worked with stacks of four or five sheets, cut so that they could be folded in half to create gatherings of 8-10 bifold pages. The gatherings were sewn down the central fold to form quires. The quires were then stacked on a special frame where they could be sewn to leather cords, thongs or other forms of binding tape, running at right angles to the folds of the quires. Pressure on the pages kept the book tight during binding. Once all the quires were sewn together, the tapes or cords were threaded through channels drilled into heavy wooden cover boards, pulled tight, and anchored into place with wooden chocks hammered into the slots (heavy oak covers helped keep parchment pages flat). The boards would then be covered, for beauty and for protection, with leather or metal.



Right (Top and Bottom): Two views of a model illustrating codex construction (11" x 15")

Courtesy of the "Paleography and Codicology: A Seminar on Medieval Manuscripts," offered through the Institute of Medieval Studies, University of New Mexico, by Timothy C. Graham



Left: Replicas of the binding of the *St. Cuthbert Gospel Book*, with and without cover. The model with wooden boards reveals the "Coptic stitch" binding that holds the pages and the quires together. The second replica shows the finished book protected by red goat leather, tooled and decorated in raised relief.

Courtesy of the "Paleography and Codicology: A Seminar on Medieval Manuscripts," offered through the Institute of Medieval Studies, University of New Mexico, by Timothy C. Graham

The original *St. John's Gospel* was found in *St. Cuthbert's tomb* when it was opened in 1104. London, British Library, Additional MS 8900
Abbey of Wearmouth-Jarrow, Northumbria, early 8th century, 5 1/2" x 3 1/2"

Codices

Although Christians enthusiastically adopted the codex, they did not invent it. The Latin word *caudex* originally meant tree trunk, and, in this context, probably referred to paired wooden boards tied together on one side with string, then waxed on the interior surfaces so that a scribe could write with a stylus. Waxed tablets of this sort were used well into the High Middle Ages (1000–1250) as a standard medium for preliminary compositions and student exercises. Around the time of Christ, Greeks and Romans began to recognize that one could include more text by side-stitching papyrus or folded parchment sheets together into small sections called quires. Quires could then be bound together to create a codex “book.”

Christians seem to have adopted the codex more enthusiastically than any other group. Perhaps the reason was economic; in a scroll a scribe could write only on one side of a sheet, leaving the other side blank, whereas in a codex a scribe could write on both sides. The savings in material costs would have been important to a relatively poor, persecuted religious community. Christians so quickly and decisively embraced the codex that when Augustine of Hippo describes in his *Confessions* (ca. 397) how he opened at random a book of the Epistles, he is able to assume that his readers recognize and understand how a codex works. The codex became the standard form for Christian books.



The codex format did not automatically lead to the physical Bible we know today. Bookmaking and binding demanded very high skills so as to stitch multiple quires together tightly and yet have them open smoothly to any given page within. Questions still had to be answered about exactly what religious books constituted the approved canon of Scripture, how these books should be arranged and presented, and in what languages. In how many volumes should they be bound?

In the fresco on the left, Augustine holds a scroll (the old technology) in his left hand, while he pages through a codex (the new technology) with his right hand.

Detail of fresco image of Augustine of Hippo
Lateran Palace, Sancta Sanctorum
Rome, ca. 6th-7th century

Image courtesy of the Poster Corp

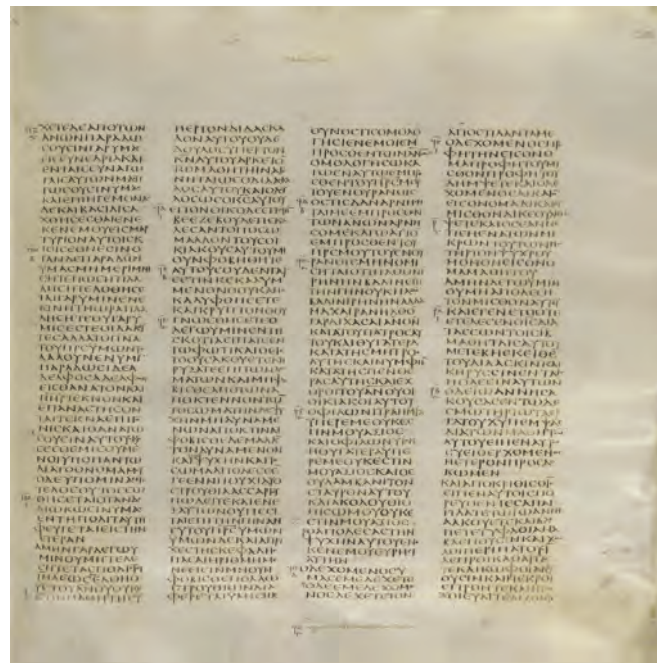


View of the exhibition cases displaying early Bible codices. The *Codex Sinaiticus* appears on the lower shelf, far left.

Codex Sinaiticus

The *Codex Sinaiticus*, is a Greek text of the Bible produced in Constantinople or Alexandria, named after the Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai, where it was preserved between at least 1761 and the middle of the nineteenth century. This austere but well-produced parchment codex has been hailed as “the oldest substantial book to survive.” It is a complete Bible (a “pandect Bible”), unlike most other Late Antique biblical manuscripts that contain only individual books or groups of books. It is an exemplar of the Greek text of the *Septuagint* (the Old Testament in the version adopted by early Greek-speaking Christians) and the Christian New Testament. The *Codex Sinaiticus*, as a collection of early biblical texts, includes several books not found in the Hebrew Bible, among them 2 Esdras, Tobit, and Judith, as well as additional New Testament books.

Right:
Codex Sinaiticus
 London, British Library, Additional MS 43725, fol. 249v-250r
 Constantinople or Alexandria, ca. 330–360, 15” × 13½”
 Facsimile



Courtesy of Special Collections, Brown Library, Abilene Christian University
 Image courtesy of the British Library Blogs
<https://blogs.bl.uk/services/blog/6a00d8341c464853ef0120a85f8cec970b/search?filter.q=codex+sinaiticus&search.x=0&search.y=0>

Rossano Gospels



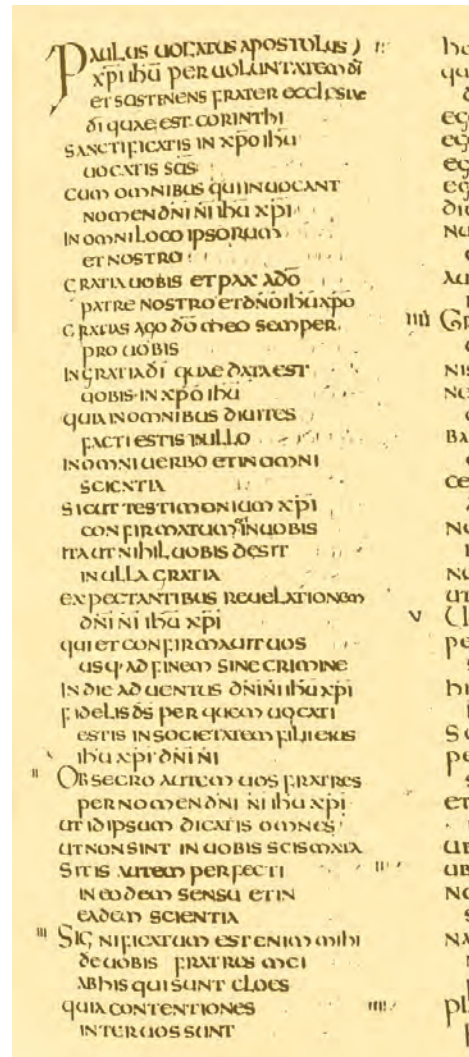
The Trial of Christ, The Death of Judas
 Rossano Gospels (*Codex purpureus Rossanensis*), fol. 8
 Rossano, Calabria, Museo diocesano, Biblioteca Arcivescovile
 Syria, 6th century, 12 1/4" x 10 1/4"

Courtesy of the Waldo Library, Western Michigan University
 Image courtesy of Art Resources

The *Rossano Gospels*, one of the earliest surviving illuminated manuscripts of the New Testament, has been preserved at the cathedral of Rossano in Italy since around the sixth century. Today only one and a half Gospels survive comprising most of the first volume of what would originally have been an elegant two volume set. The title of "*codex purpureus*" relates to the color of its pages, parchment sheets dyed imperial reddish purple. It includes a cycle of illustrations of scenes from the life of Christ, sometimes with an added a lower register offering portraits of the Old Testament prophets who foretold them.

Codex Amiatinus

The *Codex Amiatinus* is a pandect, the earliest surviving single-volume *Vulgate Bible*. It was produced by monks of the Abbey of Wearmouth-Jarrow in Northumbria around 700 CE. The manuscript consists of 1000 parchment folia made from about 500 calf skins. It is almost one foot thick and weighs 75 pounds. Below, the image on the left shows the monumental scale of the codex, while the image on the right displays an example of the text (1 Corinthians 1:1-21, fol. 950r). It is the best surviving text of the *Vulgate*, Jerome's authoritative Latin translation made ca. 382–420. The monks intended to send this magnificent manuscript as a gift to Pope Gregory II (d. 731). However, it was lost during the journey and, centuries later, was discovered in Tuscany.



Codex Amiatinus
 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Amiatinus 1
 Northumbria, Abbey of Wearmouth-Jarrow, ca. 700 CE, 19" x 13 ½" x 10"
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Waldo Library, Western Michigan University
 Images courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Left: View showing scale
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Codex_Amiatinus_01.jpg

Right: Detail of the Vulgate Bible text, 1 Corinthians, 1: 1-21
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Codex_Amiatinus#/media/File:Codex_Amiatinus_\(1_Cor_1,1-21\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Codex_Amiatinus#/media/File:Codex_Amiatinus_(1_Cor_1,1-21).jpg)

Display Bibles and Gospel Books

Bibles and Gospel Books could be extraordinarily deluxe. Christians believed that the prosperity of their communities was due to divine favor. One way to render God benevolent was to build and endow churches. Another was to commission grand Bibles or Gospel Books, manuscripts that were privileged above all other books used by the Church, such as missals for the liturgy, antiphonaries for music, pontificals for episcopal rites, or law books for

ecclesiastical administration. Whereas those books embodied customs and regulations that could change over time, the Bible's text, at least in theory, was permanent. Christians who invested tremendous effort and wealth in Bibles and Gospel Books were investing their resources in codices that could be treasured indefinitely. Indeed ornate Bibles were often given as diplomatic gifts and were protected over other treasures in times of conflict.



Lindisfarne Gospels

These Gospels were written by Irish monks on the Island of Lindisfarne in Northumbria, England. The *Incipit* page (or beginning) of each Gospel is preceded by the evangelist's portrait (on the previous page, fol. 26r, not shown) and a "carpet page" (fol. 26v) —intricately patterned pages featuring crosses, which perhaps echo the gold, gems, and interlaced metalwork of the now-lost exterior cover.

Cross Carpet page (left) and *Incipit* to the Book of Matthew (right)
Lindisfarne Gospels
London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero D. IV, fols. 26v-27r
Northumbria, Lindisfarne Abbey, ca. 700, 12" x 16"x 2 1/2" (open)
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries



Godescalc Evangelistry

Left:
Fountain of Life (left) and Initial page for the Vigil for Christmas (right)
Godescalc Evangelistry
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS. Nouv. Acq. Lat. 1203, fols. 3v-4r
Aachen, 781–783, 12 ¼" x 8 ¼"
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries

An Evangelistry contains selections of the Gospels to be read at Mass throughout the liturgical year. The Fountain of Life image symbolizes Christ's birth, appropriately placed adjacent to the text for the Vigil for Christmas. The conical shrine topped by a cross mimics the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem but the two harts (deer) at the entrance recall the harts at the entrance to the Lateran Baptistery in Rome and thus the image also commemorates the baptism of Charlemagne's son Pepin who was baptized by Pope Hadrian I in April 781 in the Lateran Baptistery.

The manuscript was written in gold and silver ink on purple-dyed parchment. The dedicatory poem at the end of the manuscript informs us that it was commissioned by Charlemagne and his wife Hildegard in 781 and completed by the Frankish scribe Godescalc in 783. This is the earliest known of many manuscripts commissioned by Charlemagne (d. 814) during his long reign as king of the Franks and as Emperor of the Romans. Charlemagne was proud of his gorgeous display books, yet he also wanted them to be readable. The revised liturgical texts used standard punctuation and spacing between words. They also contain an easily legible script, largely identical to that found in the *Godescalc Evangelistry*, which we today call "Carolingian minuscule." It serves as the basis of the "small letter" fonts used today, thanks to early humanist printers who wrongly believed that this script, found in the earliest books generally available to them, must have been how the Romans wrote.

Right: Author portrait and symbol of St. Luke
Godescalc Evangelistry
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS. Nouv. Acq. Lat. 1203, fol. 1r
Aachen, 781–783
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Godescalc_Evangelistry#/media/File:Vangeli_di_godescalco_\(evangelista_luca\),_Ms._Lat_1203_f._1r._21x31_cm,_parigi_bibliotheque_nationale,_783_circa.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Godescalc_Evangelistry#/media/File:Vangeli_di_godescalco_(evangelista_luca),_Ms._Lat_1203_f._1r._21x31_cm,_parigi_bibliotheque_nationale,_783_circa.jpg)



Golden Codex of Echternach

The *Codex Aureus Epternacensis* (*Golden Codex of Echternach*) was produced by the Abbey of Echternach (Luxemburg). This is a spectacular example of a deluxe Gospel Book. The manuscript contains the *Vulgate* translation of the four Gospels, prefaced by the Eusebian canon tables. The biblical text (not shown here) is entirely written in gold (hence the *Golden Codex*). The manuscript's images are a major example of Ottonian illumination.



The illustrations in the *Codex Aureus* include not only evangelist portraits but also narrative scenes from the Gospels and from Christ's parables, for example, the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. The story is told on three registers of continuous narrative, an artistic strategy dating to Roman times but revived and developed in the Carolingian period in order to illustrate the Bible in the least amount of space.

Left and above (detail): The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard
Codex Aureus Epternacensis (*Golden Codex of Echternach*)
Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, MS Hs 156142, fol. 76
Echternach, 1030–1050, 17 3/4" x 12 1/4"
Facsimile

Courtesy of Special Collections, Brown Library, Abilene Christian University
Images courtesy of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg



It was common for a luxury manuscript to receive a gilded and bejeweled book cover to mark its sacred value. The front cover of the *Codex Aureus* of Echternach was made about fifty years before the manuscript it now covers. The repoussé metalwork, which is hammered into relief from the reverse side, portrays figures important to Echternach Abbey, including relief images of the Ottonian Emperor Otto III, the four Evangelists, and the Virgin Mary and St. Peter (patron saints of the Abbey). The metalwork cover is attributed to a workshop in Trier and was probably made in the later tenth century. An earlier carved ivory panel of the Crucifixion, whose style is related to Carolingian art, is incorporated into the gilded cover.

Right:
Front cover of the *Codex Aureus Epternacensis*
Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, MS Hs 156142
Gold, gems, ivory
Trier, 10th century

Image courtesy of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg





Christ in Majesty
Codex Aureus Epternacensis
Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, MS Hs 156142, fol. 1
Echternach, 1030–1050
Facsimile

Courtesy of Special Collections, Brown Library, Abilene Christian University
Images courtesy of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg

Paris Bibles

The modern Bible was shaped by the twelfth- and thirteenth-century theology and philosophy schools of the University of Paris. Wandering scholars flocked to the university, but they did not want to tote around cumbersome folio-sized codex Bibles. They needed small, portable, easy-to-navigate Bibles. They also wanted all the parts arranged in the same standard order, and divided by uniform chapter breaks, so that there could be a standard curriculum.

The professional scribes and book sellers of Paris responded by producing school Bibles for personal use and consultation. By using vellum or specially prepared thin parchment, they could fit whole Bibles into 400–500 page codices, some small enough to carry in a pocket. Mass production led to standard features such as running headers that made it easier to arrange separate quires into proper order and for readers to find specific chapters. Paris Bibles often used red and blue accents for running headers and chapter numbers.

For the first time, several aspects of the Bible became permanent. The Paris Bibles definitively arranged the Old Testament books and apocrypha, the Gospels and the Epistles, with an eye toward chronological order that reflected the interests of Paris theologians. Paris Bibles adopted a system of chapter divisions attributed to Professor (later Archbishop) Stephen Langton (d. 1228), but which perhaps had earlier roots in England. These divisions did not include verse numbers, a feature which did not appear until the sixteenth century, after printed Bibles had made them easier to standardize.



The Paris pocket Bible above shows a page from the Psalms. This manuscript is an example from Northern France representing the small format that spread quickly throughout Western Europe. This is a complete Bible, only about 7 ¾" x 5 ½" x 3" in size, and easily transportable. The parchment pages' gilded edges are a feature of the original manuscript. The straps (only partially seen) and the metal clasps were used to close the book and provide protection for the manuscript.

Above left:
Genesis 1
Paris pocket Bible
Lubbock, *The Remnant Trust Inc.*, no. 1188, fol. 1
Paris, ca. 1250, 7 ¾" x 5 ½" x 3"

Above right:
Cover with clasps
Paris pocket Bible
Lubbock, *The Remnant Trust Inc.*, no. 1188
Paris, ca. 1250, 7 ¾" x 5 ½" x 3"

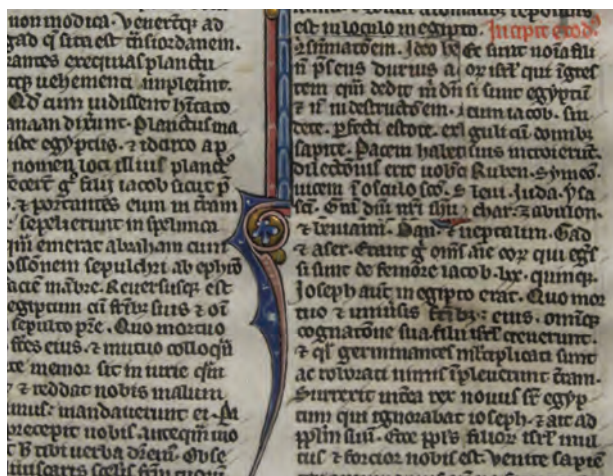
Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.



2 Peter: 1-3
 Rubricated Bible Leaf in Latin
 Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 0474
 Paris, ca. 1250, 5 3/4" x 4"

Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.

A page of Peter's second epistle from a Paris pocket Bible features rubrication (red letters for emphasis), a running header, red and blue highlights, and chapter divisions. Note the fancy pen flourishes on the initial "S."



Vulgate Bible leaf (detail)
 Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 0481
 Paris, ca. 1270, 18 1/2" x 14 1/2"

Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.

Not all Paris Bibles were pocket Bibles, and not all portable Bibles were Parisian. Here is an elegantly decorated rubricated leaf from a large-format Bible that nevertheless includes characteristic Parisian elements. The central decoration marks the beginning of the Book of Exodus.

How to Read a Pocket Bible

In a series of forty portraits of scholars at their desks, artist Tommaso da Modena provided decoration for the Dominican refectory at Treviso, showing Dominican scholars at work. In the image immediately below, Nicholas of Rouen is using a magnifying glass to read a pocket Bible. Beneath that image, Hugh of St.-Cher is depicted with eye-glasses, the earliest known image of a scholar wearing glasses.



Nicholas of Rouen



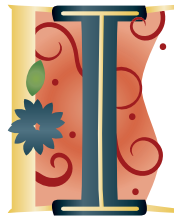
Hugo of St.-Cher

Tommaso da Modena
 Details of frescoes of two Dominican scholars
 Church of San Nicolò
 Treviso, 1352

Images courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Top:
[https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tommaso_da_modena_ritratti_di_domenicani_\(il_cardinale_di_rouen\)_1352_150cm,_treviso,_ex_convento_di_san_niccol%C3%B2,_sala_del_capitolo.jpg](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tommaso_da_modena_ritratti_di_domenicani_(il_cardinale_di_rouen)_1352_150cm,_treviso,_ex_convento_di_san_niccol%C3%B2,_sala_del_capitolo.jpg)

Bottom:
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tommaso_da_modena_ritratti_di_domenicani_\(Ugo_di_Provenza\)_1352_150cm,_treviso,_ex_convento_di_san_niccol%C3%B2,_sala_del_capitolo.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tommaso_da_modena_ritratti_di_domenicani_(Ugo_di_Provenza)_1352_150cm,_treviso,_ex_convento_di_san_niccol%C3%B2,_sala_del_capitolo.jpg)



Inspired Scholars

We take inspiration for granted. Dedicated scholars labor into the night, surrounded by their books. Then thinkers have light bulbs suddenly appear above their heads. Enlightenment comes through quick and almost inexplicable comprehension. Yet the original etymology of inspiration involves more complex ideas: it derives from words meaning to “breathe into,” and refers to supernatural beings imparting a truth or idea or vitality itself.

Western ideas of inspiration evolved out of pre-modern images of biblical authors and scholars. The prophets spoke for God; the evangelists were inspired. And those scholars who could read and comprehend the Sacred Scripture shared in this divine grace. Pre-modern and early modern artists attempted to portray this visually. Modern and contemporary images of inspiration are often secularized versions of their iconography. To some extent the last vestiges of a religious aura still influence our perceptions of dedicated university teachers and their quest for knowledge.

Western images of inspired scholars derive from evangelist portraits, the images of Gospel writers working with the aid of divine inspiration. These portraits were placed in front of Gospel texts in the early medieval West and continued on even longer in Orthodox and Slavic biblical traditions.



26



Evangelist Portraits

Evangelist portraits had precedents in the classical secular tradition of the author portrait, a frontispiece in a classical manuscript that was sometimes its only illustration. But those images seem to have been restricted to human portraits. This can be seen in an author portrait of Vergil, prefixed to a fifth-century copy of the *Aeneid*. Here the author is a human figure, passively seated, shown with his desk and writing instruments.

Author Portrait of Vergil
The Vatican Illuminated Vergil (Vergilius Vaticanus)
 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Vat. lat. 3225, fol. 14r
 Rome, ca. 400 CE

Image courtesy of Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vergilius_Romanus



The still extant portion of the *Rossano Gospels*, from sixth-century Syria, contains the oldest surviving evangelist portrait. Like a Roman author portrait, the author is depicted with the tools of his trade. But Mark is actively writing, not passively sitting, and he has an external figure to personify his divine inspiration, a sort of muse, recalling the ancient tradition of philosophers with muses.

St. Mark inspired to write the Gospel (stain over Mark's shoulder)
Rossano Gospels (Codex Purpureus Rossanensis)
 Rossano, Calabria, Museo Diocesano Cathedral MS 042, fol. 121r
 Syria, 6th century
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Waldo Library, Western Michigan University
 Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Rossano_Gospels#/media/File:RossanoGospelsFolio121rStMark.jpg

One way to portray human beings working under divine inspiration is to juxtapose the four evangelists with their four exotic images of inspiration: a lion (for Mark), an ox (for Luke), a man (for Mathew), and an eagle (for John). These symbolic creatures, who have various ancient Near Eastern prototypes, manifest divine revelations in the Hebrew Bible (Ezekiel 1:10; Daniel 7:9-13; Isaiah 6:2); and are echoed in Revelations 4:7. They were already linked to the evangelists by the second century, and became a standard way to portray them as inspired writers.



Detail of St. Mark author portrait with his symbol, the winged Lion
Lindisfarne Gospels
London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero D.IV, fol. 137v
Lindisfarne, Northumbria, ca. 700
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Lindisfarne_Gospels_\(710-721\)_-_BL_Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV#/media/File:St_Mark_-_Lindisfarne_Gospels_\(710-721\),_f.93v_-_BL_Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Lindisfarne_Gospels_(710-721)_-_BL_Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV#/media/File:St_Mark_-_Lindisfarne_Gospels_(710-721),_f.93v_-_BL_Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV.jpg)



Detail of St. Luke author portrait with his symbol, the winged Bull
Godescalc Evangelistary
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Nouv. Acq. Lat. 1203, fol. 1r
Aachen, 781-783
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Godescalc_Evangelistary#/media/File:Vangeli_di_godescalco_\(evangelista_luca\),_Ms._Lat_1203_f._1r._21x31_cm,_parigi_bibliotheque_nationale,_783_circa.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Godescalc_Evangelistary#/media/File:Vangeli_di_godescalco_(evangelista_luca),_Ms._Lat_1203_f._1r._21x31_cm,_parigi_bibliotheque_nationale,_783_circa.jpg)



Detail of St. Matthew author portrait with his symbol (upper right corner), the winged Man
Ebbo Gospels
Épernay, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 1, fol. 18v
Hautvillers, 816-835

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=ebbo+Gospels&title=Special:Search&go=Go&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1&searchToken=ak3hxp2711k8gvsrx2zy5jce#%2Fmedia%2F-File%3ASaint_Matthew2.jpg



Detail of St. John author portrait with his symbol, the Eagle
Freising Gospel Book
Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, Walters Ms W. 4, fol. 356r
Diocese of Freising, Germany, ca. 875

Image courtesy of the Digital Walters
<http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W4/>



Above: Jan van Eyck
 St Jerome in his Study
 Oil on linen on oak panel
 Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts
 Netherlands, 1435

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jan_van_eyck_san_girolamo_nello_studio_1435_ca_01.jpg



Above: Saint Gregory the Great with his symbol the Dove
 Ivory relief from the cover of a Sacramentary manuscript
 Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum
 Lorraine (?), late 10th century

Image courtesy of Creative Commons, CCO 1.0. Universal Public Domain https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kunsthistorisches_Museum_10th_century_ivory_Gregory_the_Great_23062013.jpg



Above: Lucas Cranach the Elder
 Albrecht of Brandenburg as St. Jerome in His Study
 Sarasota, Florida State University, John and Mable Ringling
 Museum of Art
 Germany, 1526

Image courtesy of Wikimedia commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lucas_Cranach_d._%C3%84_046.jpg

In the Lucas Cranach painting above, Jerome has been transformed into Martin Luther's nemesis, Cardinal Archbishop Albert of Mainz/Brandenburg, and his potentially inspirational symbolic lion has acquired a whole circus of symbolic animals.



Italian (Roman School) Painter
Gregory the Great
Houston, Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, no. 1984.21
Rome (?), ca. 1620

Courtesy of the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

In early modern Counter-Reformation art, the symbolic animals remain. In this dramatic image of Gregory the Great (590-604 CE), the pope/saint is wearing a sumptuous velvet cape with gilded thread brocade and a matching, deep red velvet, fur-trimmed cap. He twists to open his ear to the dictations of the dove of the Holy Spirit while pointing to the writings that he has already transcribed. The spiritual authority of Gregory is emphasized here through dress and gesture. One idiosyncrasy, already obvious in the images of Jerome on the previous page, is that renaissance and baroque art, seeking to reaffirm a hierarchical Church, often routinely portrayed clerical scholars in elaborate pontifical costumes that most authors would not normally wear while writing.

Scholars in their Studies

Another way to reveal the sacred calling of Biblical scholars was to present them in unique settings. In the ancient world, philosophers were presumed to have abandoned the distractions of the regular world. Ideally this was achieved through philosophical leisure (*otium*) in country villas surrounded by nature, a setting assumed to facilitate philosophical contemplation. The same tradition also influenced Christian scholars insofar as they were seen as the new philosophers. But Christianity was a religion of the Book, actually of a Bible consisting of many separate books, which themselves had been supplemented by biblical commentaries. Christian scholars needed libraries, special rooms where they could store and consult their books without being disturbed. Artists could depict them as dedicated workers in special study rooms, surrounded by well-used books, elaborate scribal equipment, and perhaps religious items to help them maintain focus. The mark of a dedicated scholar was life in his own world. During the Renaissance, when bookish humanists dominated intellectual life, this scholarly image won universal favor.



Ezra at work, author portrait, the earliest image of a scholar in a biblical library

Codex Amiatinus
 Florence, Medicea Laurenziana
 Library, MS Amiatinus 1, fol. 5r
 Northumbria, ca. 700
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Waldo Library, Western Michigan University
 Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Codex_Amiatinus#/media/File:Cassiodor_in_Vivarium.jpg



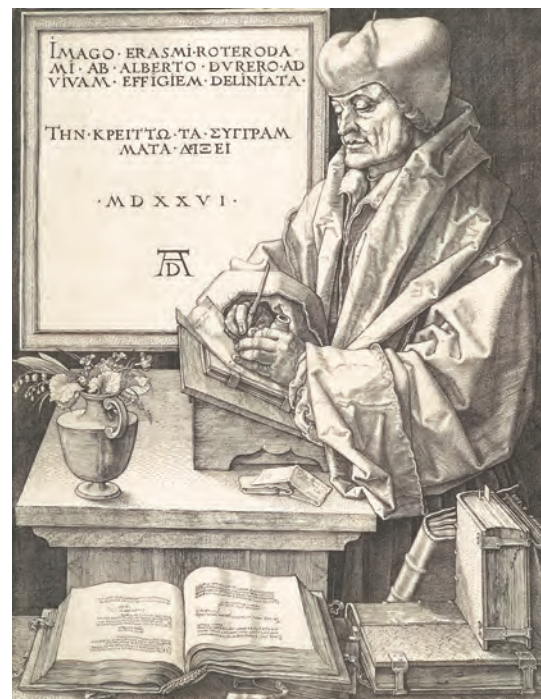
Niccolò Colantonio
 Saint Jerome in His Study
 Naples, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte
 Detached fresco from San Giorgio Schiavoni
 Naples, ca. 1450

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/03/Colantonio%2C_San_Girolamo_nello_studio%2C_1444%2C_01.JPG/2048px-Colantonio%2C_San_Girolamo_nello_studio%2C_1444%2C_01.JPG



Albrecht Dürer
 St Jerome in his Study
 Engraving
 Nuremberg, 1514, 10" x 7"

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=Albrecht+D%C3%BCrer++St+Jerome+in+his+Study+engraving++1514&title=Special%3ASearch&go=Go&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:St_Jerome_in_his_study\)__AD_\(monogram\)_LCCN2004665119.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=Albrecht+D%C3%BCrer++St+Jerome+in+his+Study+engraving++1514&title=Special%3ASearch&go=Go&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:St_Jerome_in_his_study)__AD_(monogram)_LCCN2004665119.jpg)



Albrecht Dürer
 Portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam
 Engraving
 Nuremberg, 1526, 9 3/4" x 7 1/2"

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ea/Albrecht_D%C3%BCrer_-_Erasmus_of_Rotterdam_%28NGA_1943.3.3554%29.jpg

The delight in images of the dedicated scholar, evident in the portraits of Jerome and Erasmus above, came to color some modern evangelist portraits. Bible writers may also be models of scholarly patience and dedication. In this early seveneenth-century portrait of Paul, he appears to be carefully proofreading his work, though his quill is still suspended in air in a traditional gesture of inspiration. Although the artist is clearly trying to emphasize the simplicity of Paul, he still manages to evoke the traditional library through the notes, the scroll, and the codex that are all foregrounded on Paul's desk.

This canvas has some unusual features, perhaps due to the circumstances of the painter, as explained by the Blaffer Foundation on its website:

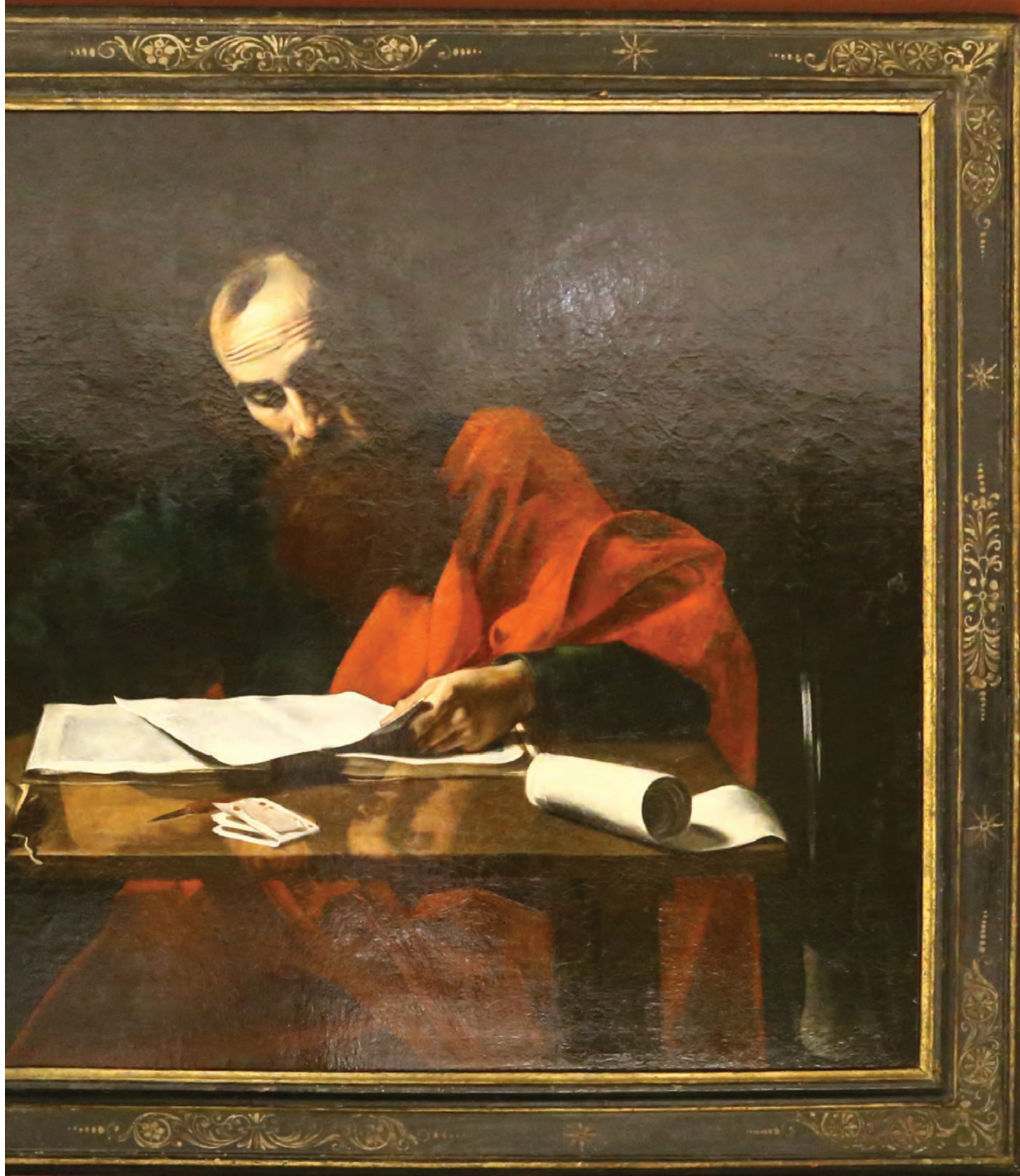
“The striking contrast between light and shadow, together with the simplicity of the half-length figure of Saint Paul, reveal this composition’s debt to Caravaggio, whose radical paintings were enormously influential in the early 17th century. This painting is three compositions superimposed on a single canvas. Underneath the image of Saint Paul Writing His Epistles is a Christ Crowned with Thorns. The head of Christ is now visible to the naked eye, upside down in the table. X-rays indicate that the bottom layer of paint shows an artist at his easel (possibly a self-portrait). The layering of compositions may be the result of the young artist’s poverty, forcing him to reuse the canvas of apparently unsuccessful paintings.”



Valentine de Boulogne (?)
 Saint Paul Writing His Epistles
 Houston, Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, no. 1991.4
 Oil on canvas
 Rome, ca. 1618-1620

Courtesy of the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, The
 Museum of Fine Arts, Houston







Inspiration Secularized

Images of inspired evangelists and biblical scholars were transformed in the Early Modern period into images of general inspiration by focusing light on the faces of scholars at the moment of inspiration. Their separation from daily life is highlighted by their cluttered work spaces. Scholars continue to find inspiration outside of themselves.

The geographer is bent over his work table, surrounded by the tools of his trade. He is withdrawn, alone, in his housecoat, with his papers scattered about. Yet somehow he is frozen in recognition, his hand pauses in midair, and all light focuses on his work.

Johannes Vermeer
The Geographer
Frankfurt, Städel Kunstmuseum
Oil on canvas
Delft, 1668-1699

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=Johannes+Vermeer++The+Geographer&title=Special%3ASearch&go=Go&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:1669_Vermeer_De_geograaf_anagoria.JPG



In this engraving of a scholar in his study, the inspiration is external, though its source questionable.

Rembrandt van Rijn
A Scholar in His Study ("Faust")
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Drawings and Prints, no. 17.37.197
Etching, drypoint, and burin, ca. 1652

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and the Metropolitan Museum's open access program
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_Scholar_in_His_Study_\(%27Faust%27\)_MET_DP814791.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_Scholar_in_His_Study_(%27Faust%27)_MET_DP814791.jpg)



In this painting entitled 'Inspiration', the writer, perhaps a poet, is posed exactly as if he were in an evangelist portrait, with pen frozen in hand and eyes looking upward and outward for inspiration (whose source is now is beyond the frame).

Right: Jean-Honoré Fragonard
Inspiration
Paris, Louvre Museum
Oil on canvas, 1769

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c1/Jean-Honor%C3%A9_Fragonard_-_Inspiration.jpg

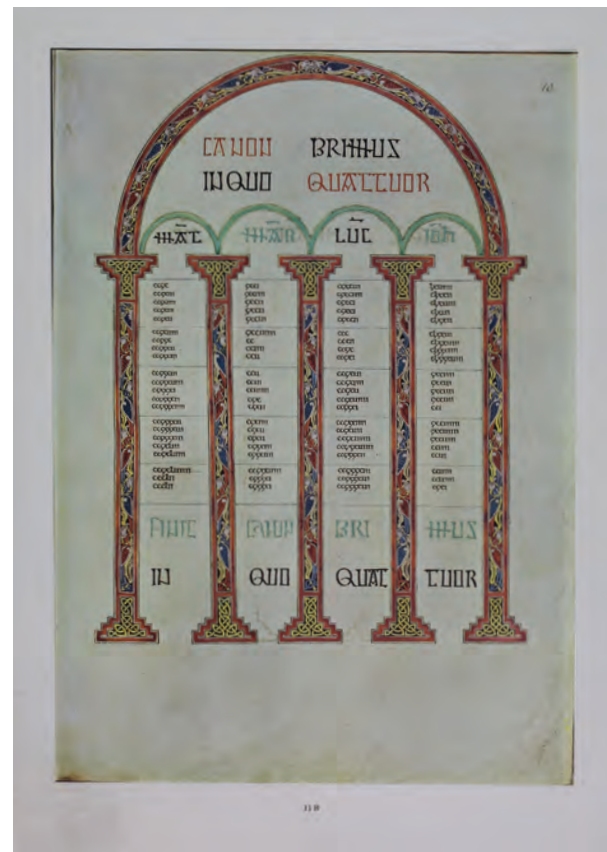


Biblical Scholars at Work

Canon Tables are a sort of “spreadsheet” display, invented by Eusebius of Caesarea about 300 CE, designed to reveal which Gospel passages are shared in which Gospels. A Canon Table contains four interior columns of text dedicated to the four evangelists. The text includes section numbers which, when read horizontally, identify parallel passages among the Gospels. The architectural framework is symbolic as well as functional, inasmuch as it suggests a sacred temple that contains within it the mysteries of Christ. A full set of tables, including their introductory letter, can run as long as sixteen pages.

Almost all early medieval Greek and Latin Gospel manuscripts include Canon Tables. During the High Middle Ages, they fell out of use when pocket Bibles became more popular and standardized chapter numbers replaced earlier divisions.

Canon Tables



Elegantly simple canon tables in a Gospel Book written by Irish monks on the Island of Lindisfarne.

Canon Tables
Lindisfarne Gospels
 London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero D.IV, fols. 2v-3r
 Northumbria, Abbey of Lindisfarne, ca. 700
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries

The ornate canon tables in this German Gospel book are typical of eighth- and ninth-century Gospel books produced for Emperor Charlemagne (d. 814) and his successors. These examples are written in the more readable Carolingian minuscule hand.



Right: Canon Tables
 Freising Gospel Book
 Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W. 4, fols. 24r and 31r
 Freising, Germany, ca. 875

Images courtesy of the Digital Walters
 Fol. 24r: <https://art.thewalters.org/detail/21091/canon-table-26/>
 Fol. 31r: <https://art.thewalters.org/detail/34365/canon-table-50/>



Above: Canon Tables
 Helmarshausen Gospel Book
 Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig II 3, fols. 2r and 7v
 Helmarshausen, Germany, ca. 1120–1140

Images courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program
 Fol. 2r: [http://search.getty.edu/gateway/search?q=Helmarshausen%20Gospel%20book&cat=place&f=%22Helmarshausen%22&types=%22Manuscripts\\$-Paintings%22&highlights=%22Open%20Content%20Images%22&rows=10&srt=&dir=s&dsp=0&img=0&pg=1](http://search.getty.edu/gateway/search?q=Helmarshausen%20Gospel%20book&cat=place&f=%22Helmarshausen%22&types=%22Manuscripts$-Paintings%22&highlights=%22Open%20Content%20Images%22&rows=10&srt=&dir=s&dsp=0&img=0&pg=1)

Fol. 7v: [http://search.getty.edu/gateway/search?q=Helmarshausen%20Gospel%20book&cat=place&f=%22Helmarshausen%22&types=%22Manuscripts\\$-Paintings%22&highlights=%22Open%20Content%20Images%22&rows=10&srt=&dir=s&dsp=0&img=0&pg=1](http://search.getty.edu/gateway/search?q=Helmarshausen%20Gospel%20book&cat=place&f=%22Helmarshausen%22&types=%22Manuscripts$-Paintings%22&highlights=%22Open%20Content%20Images%22&rows=10&srt=&dir=s&dsp=0&img=0&pg=1)

German Gospel books continued to feature canon tables well into the twelfth century, such as this one from the *Helmarshausen Gospel Book*.

Initials & Decorative Elements



Illuminated initials seem fanciful but are actually very practical. A complete medieval Bible contained almost a million words, divided into about 46 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books. It also often included some prefaces written by Jerome (d. 420), the official translator of the Latin *Vulgate*. Later scholars could add new prefaces, genealogies, lists of Hebrew words, and other paratexts (aids for readers). Someone seeking a particular story might know approximately where to look, but not precisely because, up until the thirteenth century, the order of the books and paratexts often varied.

Fancy initials offer visual cues to mark the places where individual books start. Books today separate their different sections by using “white space,” leaving the rest of the page blank after a chapter concludes and then adding an inch or two of space on the top of the page where a new chapter begins. Today paper is cheap, but in the Middle Ages parchment pages were costly and blank space uneconomical. Therefore, biblical books were usually written with no space in between. A large, flowery initial letter could showcase a book break; unique and memorable ones allowed readers to find their places quickly. This process might be facilitated by historiated or inhabited initials that contained within themselves images related to their books, such as biblical scenes or author portraits, respectively.



Book of Micah, Inhabited Initial V ("Verbum") containing an image of the prophet
 Single Bible leaf (detail)
 Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS 38
 France, ca. 1131-1165

Image courtesy of Getty's Open Content Program
<http://search.getty.edu/gateway/search?q=MS%2038&cat=place&f=%22France%22&types=%22Manuscripts%22&highlights=%22Open%20Content%20Images%22&rows=10&srt=&dir=s&dsp=0&img=0&pg=1>

Biblical Glosses

Each manuscript book is to some extent unique, unlike modern printed books which are nearly identical in thousands or even millions of copies. Writing each word down individually invites not only chance errors, but also amendments, additions, and even drastic revisions. But changes were not supposed to be made to normative texts such as law codes and the Bible. Human writers had no wish to try to second-guess the Word of God. How then could scholars cross-reference traditional interpretations, incorporate new insights, and present relevant new information?

Glosses were the solution. Etymologically, “gloss” vaguely refers to “language” (“*glossa*” in Latin, from the Greek “*γλῶσσα*”). Glosses were simply explanatory notations added to a text. Interlinear glosses are words written between the lines, a crutch to help define or explain obscurities. Marginal glosses exploit the space in manuscript margins to provide broader commentary. Both these forms of glossing can merge in texts that look quite messy to us.

Glossa Ordinaria

Ameliorating messy glosses required a more functional format and a more standardized content. In biblical studies the “*glossa ordinaria*” emerged in the twelfth century. A relatively standard commentary began to appear in the margins and between the lines of new Bible manuscripts, much of it linked to Anselm of Laon (d. 1117) and his pupils, though other sections still remain

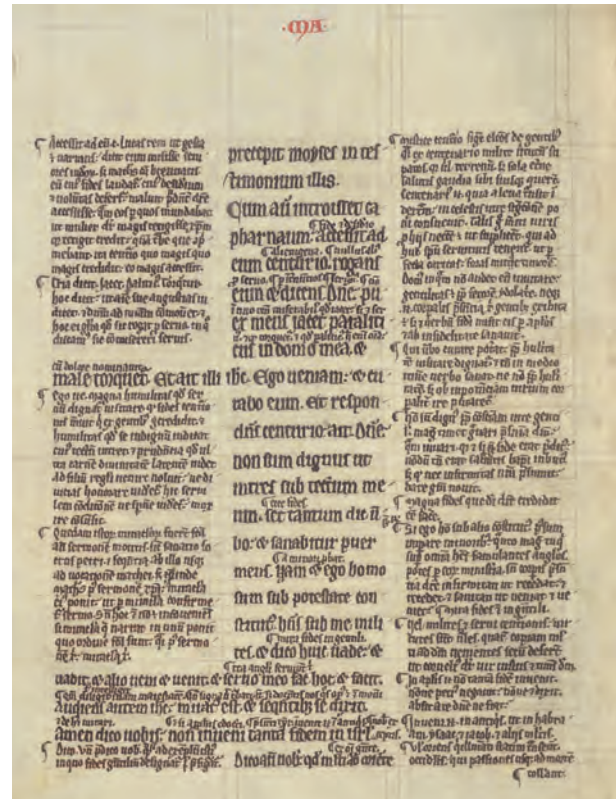
anonymous. In its early mixed forms, the standard gloss was still relatively messy.

Eventually it received more systematic treatment and a more aesthetic format. Each page of Biblical text was printed in the upper center of the page, embedded in a surrounding commentary.



Gallic Palter with commentary
St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 27, p. 21
St. Gallen, ca. 850-860

Image courtesy of Virtual Manuscript Library of Switzerland
<https://www.e-codices.ch/en/csg/0027/21>



Glossed Gospels, with marginal commentaries by Hrabanus Maurus and John Chrysostom
Baltimore, Walters MS 15, fol. 27v
Oxford(?), 12th - 13th century

Image Courtesy of the Digital Walters
<http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W15/>

Nicholas of Lyra (d.1349), a Franciscan teacher at the University of Paris, was an immensely important biblical exegete whose *Postillae Perpetuae in Universam S. Scripturam* became the standard glossed version of Scripture, the first printed version of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, and a great influence on scholars during the Reformation, including Martin Luther.



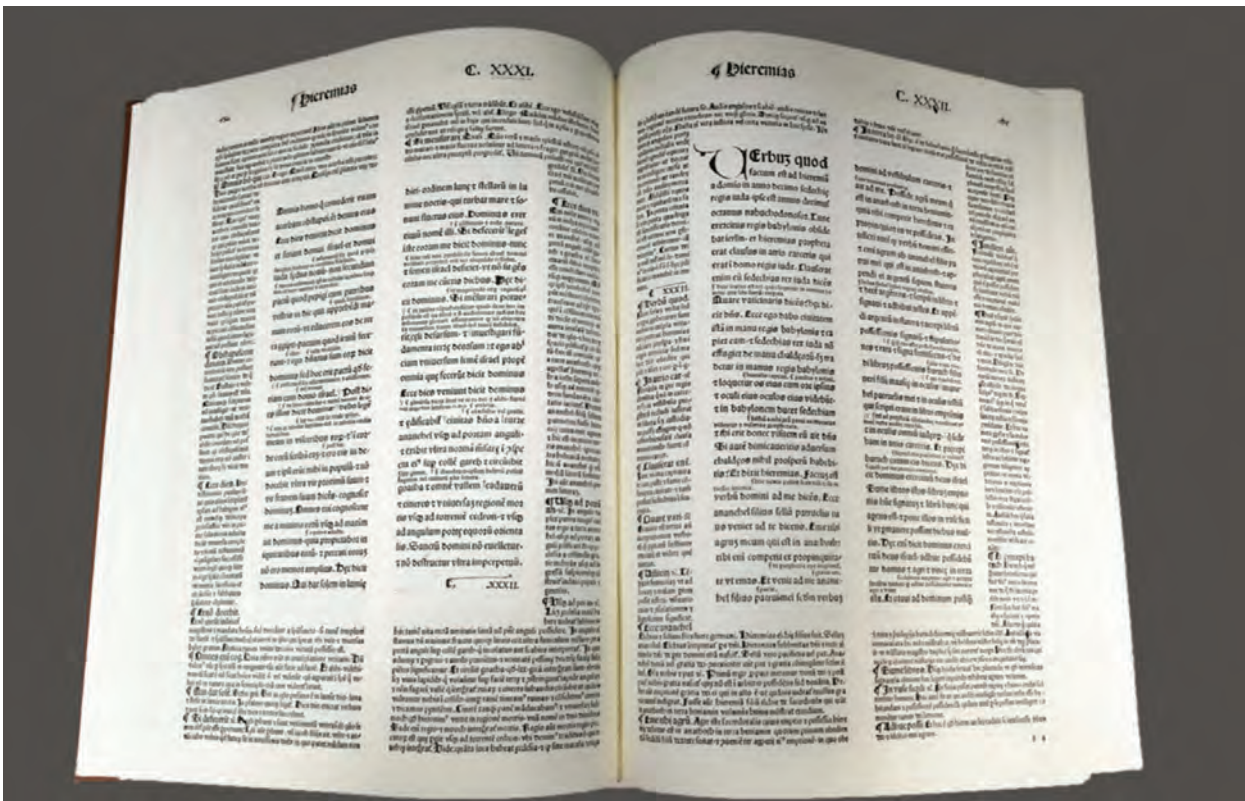
Nicholas of Lyra at his desk
Stained glass
Library of the Troyes Cathedral Chapter, 1479

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nicolas_de_Lyre_08539_C%26H_Piqueret1479.JPG



Nicholas of Lyra
Multi-volume *Biblia Latina cum Glossa Ordinaria*
Facsimile Reprint (1992) of the *editio princeps* of Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480/81

Image courtesy of Jenna Domeischel



Nicholas of Lyra
Historia Biblica cum Glossa Ordinaria
Facsimile Reprint (1992) of the *editio princeps* of Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480/81

Image courtesy Jenna Domeischel

Christian Hebrew Scholarship

Christian scholars intermittently checked Latin biblical readings against Hebrew versions. Although Charlemagne’s attempts to produce a more correct Bible primarily sought a better edition of Jerome’s fifth-century *Vulgate*, Theodulf of Orleans (d. 821) commissioned a version of the Bible that resolved some problematic passages with the help of a converted Jew. The twelfth century, however, witnessed the most successful collaborations. The monks of the Abbey of St.-Victor near Paris produced widely-read biblical commentaries, emphasizing the literal meaning of Scripture as the foundation upon which more spiritual exegesis should be based. Andrew of St.-Victor consulted regularly with Jews on the books of Kings, concluding that apparent contradictions resulted from textual corruptions that good philology could help resolve. His careful attention to the literal details of the text led him to make frequent use of Jewish expertise, in a region where Jewish scholarship itself was increasingly moving toward simple and direct readings.

Petrus Comestor (d. ca. 1178) exemplifies the vitality of this Jewish-Christian dialogue. His name literally means “Peter the Eater,” presumably because he was an extraordinary consumer of knowledge. Although, as a twelfth-century teacher at Troyes and at Paris, he produced many biblical commentaries and sermons, he is remembered above all for his *Historia Scholastica*, a best-selling sacred history written for students. It proceeds from the creation in Genesis through the Acts of the Apostles, abbreviating and explaining all the historical texts of the Bible in twenty books. His literal historical approach reflects both direct contact with Jewish scholarship (Troyes was a center of Jewish learning) and his knowledge of similarly inspired works by Andrew of St.-Victor and other Parisian scholars.



A special Hebrew scribe (*sofer*) wrote Jewish holy texts on parchment using a unique “beautiful script.” The high quality and meticulous care manifest respect for the Hebrew Scriptures.

Above: *Esther Scroll in Hebrew*
Houston, Lanier Theological Library
Later Middle Ages

Courtesy of the Lanier Theological Library

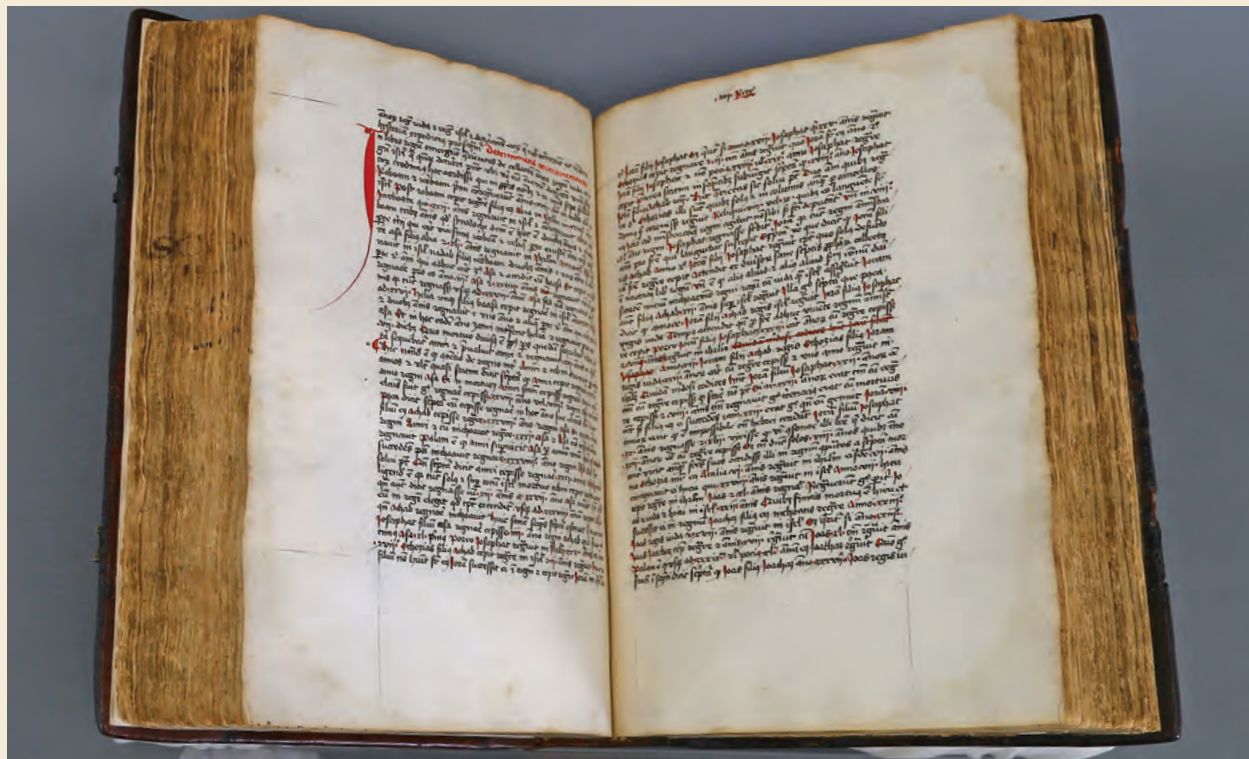


Hebrew Study Aids for Christians

This book was created as a tool for Christian scholars. The Hebrew text is copied so as to read, like Latin, from left to right, not the reverse as in normal Hebrew texts. A Latin translation appears in the margins, and there are some interlinear glosses above the Hebrew. These follow the order of the Hebrew, making it easier to match Hebrew and Latin words and to reveal the grammatical structures.

Left: Book of Ezekiel 30:13–18, in Hebrew with Latin glosses
Old Testament Study Tool for Christian Scholars
 Oxford, MS. Bodleian Or. 62, fol. 59r
 England, 1201-1225

Image Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/57/Book_of_Ezekiel.jpg



Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica* was written in Paris around 1173 as a textbook of sacred history. It became part of the theology curriculum of the University, and was a significant source of popular Biblical knowledge up through the fifteenth century. It became one of the first printed texts, appearing about 1470 in both Strasbourg and Reutlingen. Peter makes clear his debt to Jewish scholars, which he explicitly expresses in phrases such as "Hebrai tradunt..." and "Hebraeus ait ..."

new faith. Much of this activity was in Spain, which still had large Jewish communities. But Jews were expelled from England and France, the areas where Jewish and Christian biblical studies had had the most fruitful points of tangency. In general, throughout Europe during the later Middle Ages, legal discrimination increased and respectful scholarly dialogue diminished.

After the mid thirteenth century, as western society became more legalistic and less tolerant, this cooperation faltered. Some mendicant friars mastered Hebrew in order to convert Jews, aided by *conversos* dedicated to their

Above: Peter Comestor
Historia Scholastica
 Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 0727
 Paris, ca. 1450

Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.



Visualizing the Bible

Christianity is a religion of the book. But most people in the pre-modern world were illiterate, incapable of reading sacred texts in Latin or in their contemporary languages. Learned preachers, even as they expounded biblical texts, still recognized that illiterate people responded enthusiastically to imagery. Christian missionaries carried crosses, picture books, and icons. Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604) endorsed the presence of pictures in churches on the grounds that those “who are ignorant of letters may at least read by seeing on the walls what they cannot read in books.” At a minimum this doctrine justifies art as a way to convey biblical texts visually.

Yet sometimes art went further. Christian scholars believed that the incarnation of Christ and many events recorded in the New Testament fulfilled prophecies found in the Old Testament. History was viewed as God’s plan. Typology (a study of types) seeks to interpret figures or events from the Old Testament as type predictors of later events. In its fullest form, the Old Testament is viewed as foreshadowing Christ in many ways. Biblical illustrations were one way to suggest those typological connections.

Psalters

Some of the earliest biblical illustrations are associated with psalters. A psalter is the Old Testament book of the psalms of David. It might also include other common prayers such as songs of worship derived from other parts of the Bible (called Canticles), the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, or other ceremonial prayers. Psalters were so common on their own that some Bibles omitted the book of Psalms. They were omnipresent because monks and nuns were expected to recite all 150 psalms each week as part of the canonical hours of prayer (called the Divine Office).

Psalters became the gateway to literacy for young monks and nuns and for many pious lay people in general. Because people knew some psalms by heart, it was easy to use those prayers to introduce their written forms. Illustrations could facilitate this. Many psalters had decorated initial letters to introduce each psalm, with a less elaborate (often red) letter to begin each verse. These cues could be supplemented by images.

Since the Psalms are generally allegorical, they do not lend themselves well to narrative illustration. Psalter illustrations most often consist of single scenes or vignettes in the margins or between sections of text. The images are often quite literal interpretations of those sections of the text, not connected in any narrative sequence. Some are typological images, applying the psalms to Christ. Such images in the margins served as memory cues to assist novice monks and nuns as they learned to read by reciting the psalter.



Right: Exhibition view of medieval psalters

Utrecht Psalter

The *Utrecht Psalter* is filled with exuberant line drawings. Illustrations appear between blocks of text, which themselves are laid out in three columns in rustic capitals in deliberate imitation of ancient Roman manuscripts. The frenzied sketchy drawing style, full of motion, suggests the spiritual excitement associated with the conversion of northern Europe to Christianity.



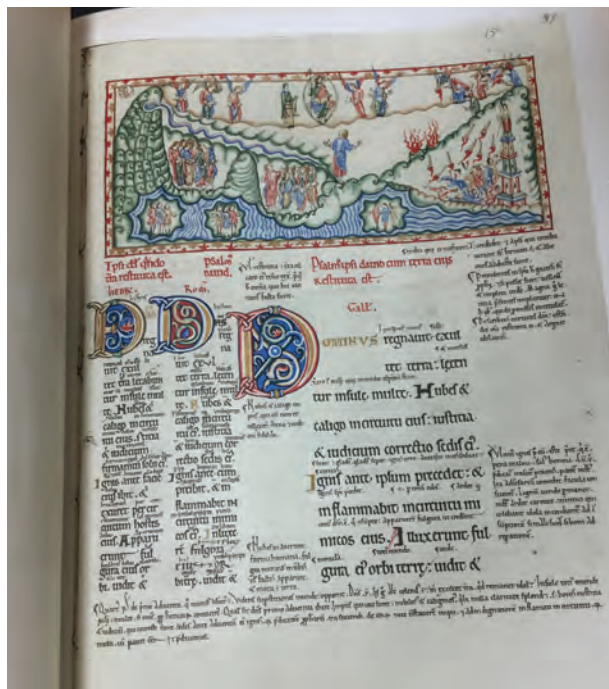
Psalms 149-150 and Canticle of Isaiah 12
Utrecht Psalter
 Utrecht, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Cat. Cod. MS Bibl. Rhen. 1 [no. 32], fols. 83r-83v
 Hautvillers, France, 816–835, 12”x 15 1/2” (open)
 Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries



Psalms 149
Utrecht Psalter
 Utrecht, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Cat. Cod. MS Bibl. Rhen. 1 [no. 32], fol. 83r
 Hautvillers, France, 816–835, 12” x 7 3/4”
 Facsimile

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Utrecht_173.jpg



Eadwine's Canterbury Psalter

A descendant of the *Utrecht Psalter* is the *Eadwine Psalter*. After the tenth-century Viking raids decimated the libraries of Britain, the *Utrecht Psalter* was brought to Canterbury around 1000 where it was copied three times over the next 150 years. The *Eadwine Psalter* was the third known copy. It displays lively drawings in the Utrecht Style, embellished with colors and patterns that harken back to earlier Anglo-Saxon art. The *Eadwine Psalter* is also notable for its inclusion of three parallel columns of text with marginal and interlinear glosses, each column a separate translation of the Psalms into Latin by Saint Jerome from Hebrew (left), from Roman (center), and from Gallican (right). Glossed psalters, like glossed bibles, were intended for scholarly study.

Left: Psalm 107
Canterbury Psalter (Eadwine Psalter)
 Cambridge, Trinity College, MS. R. 17.1, fol. 172
 Canterbury, ca. 1155–1160, 13” x 10” x 2 1/4”
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Moody Memorial Library, Baylor University

Personal Psalters

In the later Middle Ages wealthy lay persons who wished to emulate monastic observance of the daily canonical hours of prayer commissioned psalters as private devotional books. Surprisingly, even as literacy spread in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, luxury manuscripts often highlighted images and reduced text. Why? Was some social status achieved by being able to read a book through its iconography rather than through its words? Or was it that people of status already owned portable Paris Bibles that had the full text but no images?

In the study of historical Bibles, the shift towards more imagery and less text began with the psalter, the book of choice to teach people to read. There was a shift in the prominence of the images, from marginal vignettes to full-page miniatures that precede the Psalms.



The *Psalter of Blanche of Castile and Saint Louis* was produced in Paris around 1230. Blanche of Castile (d. 1252) ruled France as regent until her son Louis reached maturity (1226-ca. 1234). Their collaboration on rulership and art patronage continued until her death. This magnificent psalter belonged to both of them. In this manuscript the intersecting roundels make reference to the patterns of newly-installed stained glass windows in the Gothic churches of Paris. With the illustrations and their short captions (cropped in this image), Blanche would recognize the iconography suggesting a particular typology and its associated biblical text. According to a medieval tradition, Blanche taught her son, the future King/Saint Louis of France, to read from this very psalter.

Left: Crucifixion and Deposition of Christ
Psalter of Blanche of Castile and Saint Louis
Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS Franc. 1186, fol.24r
Paris, 1230

Image courtesy of Gallica Digital Library of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF Gallica)
<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b7100723j/f55.item.r=psalterium.langEN>



The *Psalter of Saint Louis* was made for King Louis IX sometime after his mother's death. In addition to all 150 psalms and a calendar of feast days, the manuscript begins with 78 full-page miniatures of the Old Testament, scenes that emphasize a typology—the virtues of the Old Testament kings prefigure those of King Louis himself. The backgrounds of many of the miniature illustrations are filled with the tracery of rayonnant style windows, the style of Gothic associated exclusively with the court of Louis IX.

Sodom and Gomorrah (left) and the Sacrifice of Abraham (right)
Psalter of Saint Louis
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Lat. 10525, fols. 9v-10r
Paris, ca. 1250–1270, 5 ½" x 8" (open)
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries.

The *Psalter of Robert de Lisle*, probably produced in Westminster, is named for its owner, the Baron Robert de Lisle of Bedfordshire. Its text pages have been removed, probably when it was rebound in the sixteenth century. The surviving biblical images and calendar pages contain moralizing poems and diagrams.



As personal psalters became more common in the thirteenth century, they became more elaborate, sophisticated, and customized. Typological illustrations showing connections between Old and New Testament events were often found at the beginning of psalters, while more devotional offices were added at the end. Over time these new sections became distinct texts. The front section of psalter illustrations became the “moralized bibles,” while the final section became the “books of hours” that were used for private devotions centering on the Hours of the Virgin.

Tree of Life (left) and the Twelve Properties of the Human Condition (right)
Psalter of Robert de Lisle
 London, British Library, Arundel 83 II, Opening 126
 England, ca. 1330s, 13 1/4" x 18" (open)
 Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries.

Books of Hours

Books of hours contain versions of the official set of prayers for a day's eight canonical hours (prayer times). Although these books were customized for each owner, the main feature was the Hours of the Virgin Mary, a specific devotion in imitation of, if not in addition to, the Divine Office. A book of hours includes special prayers and stories of personal saints venerated by the intended owner, as well as moralizing passages that served as rules of conduct, generally for women.

Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux



King Charles IV of France (d. 1328) commissioned an elaborate book of hours in 1324 for his fourteen-year old bride, Jeanne d'Évreux. It was intended to serve as an instructional manual for her transition into public royal life, to teach her Christian piety and guide her through her roles as a wife, mother, and queen. Her book of hours also contained a cycle of the Life of Saint Louis, her great-grandfather, to serve as an example to her of her future life as queen. The images are arranged so that each opening includes a sorrowful scene on the left and a joyful scene on the right—another example of biblical typology.

The Capture of Christ and the Annunciation
Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux

New York, Metropolitan Museum, Cloisters Collection, 54.1.2., fols. 15v-16r.
Paris, 1324-1328, 3 1/2" x 2 1/2" (with binding ca. 4" x 2 3/4" x 1 1/2")
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries.

Other Books of Hours



Nativity of Christ
 Book of Hours
 Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts Collection, University of Texas at Austin, HRC 10, fol. 92r-93v
 France/Flanders, mid-15th century, 3 1/2" x 2 1/2"
 Parchment

Courtesy of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin



Boucicault Master (French, active 1390-1430)
 Crucifixion, single folio from a book of hours
 Houston, Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, no. 1991.3.2
 Tempera and gilding on vellum
 France, ca. 1410, 6 1/2" x 5"

Courtesy of the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation



Leaf from a Book of Hours
 Northern France, 15th century, 7" x 5"

Courtesy of the Collection of John & Catharine McDonald

Bibles Moralisées

The *Bible moralisée*, or moralized bible, evolved from the large-format illustrations of psalters. These manuscripts are lavishly-illustrated, gold-leafed books containing biblical excerpts along with commentaries that stress typologies and moral interpretations of the Bible. The illuminations are on every second opening, that is, on only one side of the parchment, and each page is lavished with gold and exquisitely painted—a very opulent and expensive production.

Some extraordinary examples of the *Bible moralisée* survive from the thirteenth century, most designed for the personal use of the French royal family. These Parisian manuscripts share an interesting lay-out with usually eight circles or roundels to a page, arranged in pairs with images of biblical scenes opposite images of moralizing glosses or interpretations of the biblical stories, to be used as guidelines for the daily life of royal courtiers. The text boxes that flank the roundels contain brief biblical excerpts and moralizing glosses. As such, it requires the reader to know not only the text of the Bible, but also the contemporary moral code of thirteenth-century Paris.

Right: Exhibition view of the case displaying Moralized Bibles



The *Vienna Moralized Bible* is the earliest surviving moralized bible, possibly commissioned by King Philip Augustus or his son Louis VIII for Louis' bride, Blanche of Castile. The text is in French and contains only the books of Genesis through Kings. The roundels painted in bright colors and burnished gold leaf emulate the stained-glass windows of the Gothic architecture of the time.

Old Testament scenes
Vienna Moralized Bible
 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 2554, fols. 38-39
 Paris, 1208-1214
 Facsimile

Courtesy of Janis Elliott



Apocalypse scenes and Dedication page
Bible of Saint Louis (Toledo Bible)
 New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.240, fols. 7v-8r
 Paris, 1226–1234, 15" x 10 ½" x 3/8"
 Facsimile

Courtesy of the Moody Memorial Library, Baylor University
 Image courtesy of the Morgan Library & Museum

The Morgan Library's *Bible of Saint Louis* (also known as the *Toledo Bible*) is a small part, removed in the 15th century, of the third volume of a three-volume moralized bible which resides in Toledo, Spain. This was commissioned by Blanche of Castile, Queen of France, ca. 1226–1234, for her son the future King Louis IX (d. 1270). Although similar in layout, each of the four moralized bibles associated with the French royal family was different in content and message. This manuscript with its moralizing, instructional glosses, may have contributed to Louis' piety and thus his eventual canonization in 1297. He continues to be the patron saint of France.

This detail of the dedication page (folio 8r) shows the four people intricately involved in the production of this manuscript. Shown here from the top register are the patrons, a queen and a prince, presumably Blanche of Castile and her son Louis IX. Below are the scribe and illuminator of the manuscript. Luxury Bible manuscripts have survived not only because of their spiritual value but also for their value as works of art and as fine examples of elite patronage. They were passed down through families and given as diplomatic gifts. This manuscript was later gifted to King Alfonso X of Spain (r. 1252–1284).



The *Naples Moralized Bible* (at left), like those made in Paris a century before, is extravagantly decorated with gold and dominated by the images. However, the page layout is different. The first 128 pages are painted with Old Testament scenes on the upper half of the page and moralizing interpretations on the lower half. The text appears above and below the images, rather than beside the schematic roundels of the earlier versions. The New Testament portion of the Bible is represented with full-page images. In the opening shown here, depicting scenes from Christ's Passion, the very brief text appears below the images.

Passion Scenes
Naples Moralized Bible
 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Fr. 9561, fols. 175-176.
 Naples, ca. 1340s, 12.2" x 8.3"

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries.

Biblia Pauperum

Typology remained popular and led to the expansion of Christian iconography in another new type of book, the *Biblia Pauperum* ("poor-man's bible"). The name implies a simple book for poor people or for children learning to read. In reality, the *Biblia Pauperum* is a highly sophisticated typological commentary on the Bible that combines text and image in an innovative pattern.

The earliest surviving examples of *Biblia Pauperum* are from Germany and Austria ca. 1300. The typological design may have originated in a Dominican monastery scriptorium in that region. Each intricate design combined Old and New Testament scenes and texts in an elaborate typology. The Old Testament prophecies refer to the New Testament scenes which are being fulfilled in the central pictures. The standard formula of a fourteenth-century *Biblia Pauperum* consists of forty pictures arranged two to a page, one above the other. In the fifteenth century this transitioned to twenty double openings with a full-page picture on each side.



Miniaturists from the Benedictine Abbey of Saints Peter and Paul in Erfurt produced an elaborate *Biblia Pauperum et Apocalypsis* that pairs a *Biblia Pauperum* with a cycle of apocalyptic images. Although the Apocalypse had faded from popularity across most of Europe by 1300, this manuscript shows that in Germany the Apocalypse tradition continued.

Apocalyptic scenes from the Revelation of Saint John the Divine
Biblia Pauperum et Apocalypsis
Weimar, Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Cod. Fol. Max. 4, Opening 14
Erfurt, Germany, ca. 1340, 20" x 14" x 1"
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries



The Master of the *Book of Hours of Margaret of Cleves* illustrated this Dutch version of the *Biblia Pauperum*. In this fifteenth-century arrangement, most of the text has been eliminated and full-color miniatures and gold take the place of earlier drawings with a diagram format.

Left: *Biblia Pauperum* in Dutch
London, British Library, Kings MS 5, Opening 17
Netherlands, ca. 1405, 7" x 15"
Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries.



Above: *Biblia Pauperum*
 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Pal. Lat. 871, Opening 14
 Germany, ca. 1425–1450, 14 1/4" x 10 3/4"
 Facsimile

Courtesy of Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special
 Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries.

This opening of a fifteenth-century German *Biblia Pauperum* from the Vatican Library demonstrates the typology of the Crucifixion scene. On the left page, in the central roundel, God sacrifices his son Christ who is being nailed to the cross. The typology is evident in comparison with the Old Testament scenes flanking the roundel. To the left Abraham raises his sword to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22:1-9). To the right, Moses pins the brazen serpent to the pole (Numbers 21:8). Both acts are in obedience to God. Typologically, the OT episodes prefigure the events of the New Testament.

On the right page, a later moment in the Crucifixion is depicted in the central roundel. While one soldier pierces Christ's side, another applies vinegar to his wounds. On this page, the emphasis is on Christ's suffering as the path to salvation. To the left of the roundel, Christ is shown as God the Father in the act of creating life in Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:4-3:24). To the right, Moses strikes the rock to bring forth life-giving water for his people (Isaiah 43:19; 48:21). Christ's death and resurrection fulfills the promise of the Old Testament.

With the advent of print, the *Biblia Pauperum* became a popular, and less expensive book than a manuscript for private devotion. In manuscripts of the *Biblia Pauperum*, the typological diagrams and figures are more colorful than the monochromatic printed versions from the same period.



Printing the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*

Why were Bibles not printed sooner?

Printing seems simple. Every worker who uses stamps and punches recognizes that the same tool can make multiple identical impressions. Minters stamp coins. Ceramicists impress decorations with blocks. The Chinese, who long led the world in print technology, had employed ink rubbings from texts carved on stone tables since the third century BCE, and mechanical woodblock printing on paper since at least the seventh century CE. So why were late medieval scribes still laboriously copying Bibles by hand?

In fact, printing involved many complex technological problems. If each element to be impressed had to be hand carved, a process that might occupy a skilled craftsperson for hours, printing would only be practical with a very limited character set. The Chinese, despite their early lead in printing, probably failed to make the jump to moveable type on their own because they had to deal with more than 50,000 calligraphic characters. Even the Latin West's much more economical set of characters still required the printers of the *Gutenberg Bible* to create about 290 different pieces of type. The print face had to be durable, and wood blocks wore out too quickly. The ink that had been developed for quill pens and parchment had to be reformulated to adhere to type, requiring printer's ink closer to varnish or to the new renaissance oil paints. But, most importantly, because of the labor that would have been involved in carving the same characters over and over again, printing was impractical until each piece of type could somehow clone itself, a problem ultimately solved by developing many-celled iron matrix molds into which molten alloys of lead, tin, and antimony could be poured to produce identical pieces of type that were both malleable and durable.



Even if the technological challenges could be surmounted, would cultures based upon manuscript books ever accept printed ones? Disruptive technologies are usually unwelcome. What about all the scribes, stationers, and book sellers whose livelihoods depended upon manuscripts? What about devout Christians who treasured their manuscript Bibles?

“All that has been written to me about that marvelous man [Johannes Gutenberg] seen at Frankfurt is true. I have not seen complete Bibles but only a number of quires of various books of the Bible. The script was very neat and legible, not at all difficult to follow—your grace would be able to read it without effort, and indeed without glasses.”

*Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini
(the future pope Pius II), in a letter to Cardinal
Juan Carvajal (d. 1469). March 1455*

The *Gutenberg Bible*

The jump to moveable type is credited to Johannes Gutenberg (d. 1468). Little is known about him. As a blacksmith and goldsmith in Mainz and Strasbourg, he had the requisite metallurgical knowledge. He is thought to have perfected a printing process and performed some early trials in the 1440s in Strasbourg and in his home town of Mainz. He earned money by printing indulgence certificates for the Church.

The decision to print a full Bible was incredibly audacious. It required him to borrow lots of money. He had to convince potential buyers to pay in advance for a Bible to be produced by a new unproven technology.

Exactly how Gutenberg built his printing press can only be inferred from the Bibles he produced and from images of later presses. Either on his own, or aided by broader developments among craftsmen, he managed to solve the technical problems. He brought together new inks, adjustable molds to make type, mechanical moveable type frames, and a wooden press, similar to an agricultural screw press, which could print pages relatively quickly. Basically it must have been a sturdy frame, with a table on which a sheet of paper or vellum

could be imprinted with a page image, composed of pieces of moveable type set into a form, pressed onto an ink pad and then pressed onto the sheet, using some sort of screw to apply pressure. The whole process was slow and labor intensive, but faster than writing out multiple pages by hand.

The *Gutenberg Bible* was an edition of the *Vulgate Bible* with high aesthetic and artistic qualities, using imported Italian paper for most of the run. Gutenberg expanded his print run from about 130 to 180 copies, each of which differed slightly because of reprinting, minor changes in the process and format, and differences between paper or vellum sheets. The purchasers themselves could take charge of binding and decorating.

The *Gutenberg Bible* sold out, with sales as far away as England. Each two-volume set cost about thirty florins—about three years' wages for a clerk in that time. Most were presumably purchased by monasteries, universities, or wealthy individuals. Gutenberg himself, however, remained deeply in debt, and his creditors, taking him to court in 1455, won control over most of the enterprise. For several more years he continued to operate a small printing shop, but without great fame, fortune, or credit. Nevertheless, as “the inventor of printing,” Gutenberg changed the world.



Gutenberg Press Monument
Mainz, 1827

Image courtesy of Thomas Howe



Gutenberg Bible
Lenox Library, Rare Books Division, New York Public Library
Mainz, 1455, 16 ½" x 11 ¾" (16 ½" x 23 ½" open)

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gutenberg_Bible,_Lenox_Copy,_New_York_Public_Library,_2009._Pic_01.jpg

Determinavit eam aper de silva: et singularis fecus depastus est eam. Deus virtutum conuertere: respice de celo et uide et visita vineam istam. Et perfice eam quam plantauit de grege tua: et super filium quem confirmasti tibi. **I**ncensa igni et suffolla: ab increpatione uultus tui peribunt. Fiat manus tua super uirum de grege tue: et super filium hominis quem confirmasti tibi. **E**t non discedim a te: uiuificabis nos et nomen inuocabimus. Domine deus virtutum conuerte nos: et ostende faciem tuam et salu erimus. **In fine pro torcularibus. psalmus ipsi alaph quibus sabbati. LXXX**

Sultate deo adiutori neque: iubilate deo iacob. **S**umite psalmum et date triumphum: psalterium iocundum cum cythara. **S**ucinate in neomenia tuba: in insigni die solemnitatis uetere. **Q**uia preceptum in israel est: et iudicium deo iacob. **T**estimonium in ioseph posuit illud: cum egeret de terra egypti linguam quam non nouerat audiunt. **D**ixerunt ab oneribus dorsum eius: manus eius in cophino fuerunt. **I**n tribulatione inuocasti me et liberaui te: exaudi uocem meam in abscondito tempestantis: probaui te apud aquam contradictionis. **A**udi populus meus et cōtestabor te: israel si audieris me non erit in te deus reus: neque adorabis deum alienum. **E**go enim sum dominus deus tuus qui eduxi te de terra egypti: dilata os tuum et implebo illud. **E**t non audierunt populus meus uocem meam: et israel non intendit michi. **E**t dimisi eos secundum desideria cordis eorum: ibunt in adinuentiombus suis. **S**i populus meus audisset me: israel si in uis meis ambulasset. **P**ro nichilo forsitan inimicos eorum humiliasset:

et super tribulantes eos misissem manum meam. **I**nimici domini mendaci sunt ei: et erit tempus eorum in secula. **E**t tribuauit illos regem adire frumenti: et de pectore melle sacrauit eos. **psalmus alaph. LXXXI**

Deus stetit in synagoga deorum: in medio autem deos diiudicat. **U**quequo iudicaris iniquitatem: et facies peccatorum sumitis. **I**udicare ego et pupillo: humilem et pauperem iustificare. **E**ripere pauperem: et egerum de manu peccatoris liberare. **N**escierunt neque: intellexerunt in tenebris ambulare: mouebunt omnia fundamenta terre. **E**go dixi dii estis: et filii excelsi omnes. **Q**os autem sicut homines moriemini: et sicut unus de principibus cadetis. **S**urge deus iudica terram: quoniam tu hereditabis in omnibus gentibus. **Cantum psalmi alaph. LXXXII**

Deus quis similis erit tibi: ne timeas neque despectaris deus. **Q**uoniam ecce inimici tui sonauerunt: et non odecunt te exculerunt caput. **S**uper populum tuum malignauerunt consilium: cogitauerunt aduersus sanctos tuos. **D**ixerunt uenite et disperdamus eos de gente: et non memoret nomen israel ultra. **Q**uonia cogitauerunt unanimiter: simul aduersum te testamentum deposuerunt tabernacula ydumeorum et israhelice. **N**oab et agareti gebal et amon et amalech: alienigenae cum habitantibus terram. **E**t etiam assur uenit cum illis: facti sunt in adiutorium filijs loth. **F**ac illis sicut madian et hyslar: sicut iabin in torrete yson. **D**isperierunt in endor: facti sunt ut steteret terra. **P**one principes eorum sicut oreb et zeb: et zebce et salmana. **O**mnes principes eorum: qui dixerunt hereditate possideamus sanduarium dei. **D**eus



Buyers often took charge of the binding and rubricating of the printed edition pages. Of the forty-eight substantially complete *Gutenberg Bibles* that survive today, about twenty percent still have their first bindings. Most were formerly owned by religious institutions, but originally they may have been purchased by patrons who later donated them.

Gutenberg Bibles with original covers, vol. 1 (open) and vol. 2 (closed)
Pelplin, Poland, Pelplin Diocesan Museum
Mainz, late 15th century

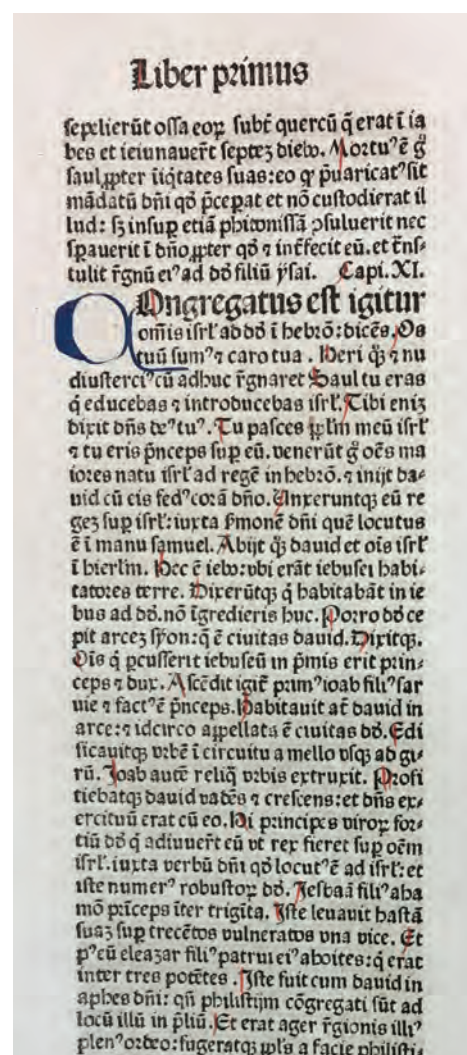
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Gutenberg_Bible_\(Pelplin_copy\)#/media/File:Gutenberg_Bible_\(Pelplin_copy\)_03.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Gutenberg_Bible_(Pelplin_copy)#/media/File:Gutenberg_Bible_(Pelplin_copy)_03.jpg)

Imitating manuscripts

Early printers tried to imitate the handwritten Bibles with which people were familiar. *The Gutenberg Bible*, for example, closely copied the lettering and format of a handwritten *Mainz Bible* that had been commissioned a few years earlier. The Koberger leaf shown here is printed, but it includes red and blue rubrication, the traditional colors used in late medieval Bibles. The red highlights have been artfully applied by hand, although printers were already developing ways to print on the same page twice, using red ink in order to add the rubrics on a second pass. Printers preserved old forms even while they were introducing revolutionary production technologies. Decades would pass before readers got completely comfortable with new features such as monochrome etchings. Manuscript conventions such as incised lines on parchment became obsolete as new formats and features ultimately gained acceptance.

Right: First Chronicles, chapters 11 and 12 (detail)
Single folio from a Latin Bible printed by Anton Koberger
Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
Nuremberg, 1471, 15" x 9 1/2"

Courtesy of the Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries





Cardinal Francisco Jiménez [Ximenes] de Cisneros

and the Universidad de Alcalá de Henares

Felipe Bigarny
Alabaster relief of Cardinal Cisneros
Alcalá de Henares, Spain, ca. 1518

Image courtesy of Wikipedia Commons
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Felipe_Bigarny_\(1502-1518\)_Cardenal_Cisneros,_relieve.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Felipe_Bigarny_(1502-1518)_Cardenal_Cisneros,_relieve.jpg)



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Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros wanted to bring to Biblical scholarship the full potential of the printing press. He envisioned a printed Bible that could simultaneously present all the authoritative versions of Scripture in their original languages. His tactical goal was to verify and amend if necessary the text of the Latin *Vulgate*, but his ultimate goal was to make the true testimony of Scripture available to all the peoples of the Book.

He was uniquely positioned to carry out this project. Although he himself personally lived under a vow of poverty, he had huge streams of income as primate and occasional regent of the new Kingdom of Spain, which was just being formed thanks to the 1469 marriage of King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile. Thus he was able to create a new university of theology in his hometown of Alcalá de Henares, hire the best available scholars, and, at his own expense, produce the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*, whose 500th anniversary this exhibit commemorates.

The early career of Jiménez de Cisneros was not so grand. As the son of a hidalgo tax collector of modest means, he secured a basic education, including legal studies at Salamanca. He went off to Rome to pursue a career as a church administrator. Promised a bishopric back in Spain, a promise not cleared with the archbishop of Toledo, he entered into an extended fight with the archbishop that forced him to live for a half dozen years

under house arrest, time he spent mastering ancient biblical languages. In 1482 a new archbishop of Toledo, impressed by Cisneros's tenacity, made him vicar general of the bishopric of Sigüenza. But in 1484 he suddenly gave up his now promising administrative career to join an ascetic branch of the Franciscans, adopting Francisco as his religious name

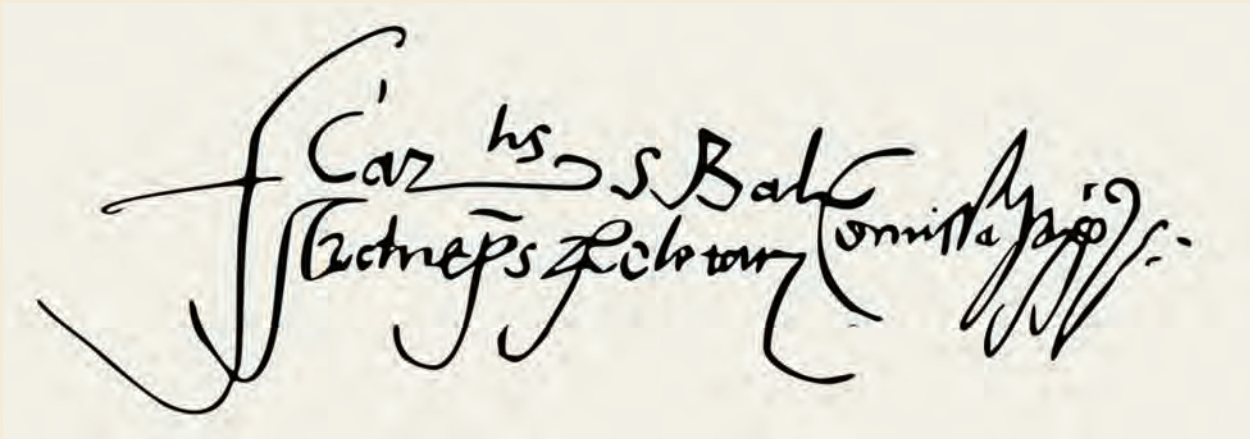
He did not successfully abandon the world. In 1492, Queen Isabella, while completing the conquest of Granada and financing Columbus, suddenly required a new chaplain. Court factions proposed various candidates, and the queen had her own ideas. The impasse was solved when Cisneros's former patron recommended him. He was an inspired choice. He helped the "kings of Spain" reform the religious orders of their gradually merging realms. In 1494 they supported him for archbishop of Toledo. As the primate of all Spain, he had to deal with minority groups within the realm as he tried to promote speedy assimilation and conversion, not always tactfully or effectively. He himself took part in crusading expeditions that conquered two North African cities. Even after the death of Isabella in 1504, he remained close to King Ferdinand, serving as regent when the king was off in Italy. In 1507 he was made cardinal and grand inquisitor. He served again as regent after Ferdinand's death in 1516, and he died while travelling to hand over the realm to Charles (the future Emperor Charles V).



The Cardinal's coat of arms reveals his sense of humor. While the heraldic framework employs the hat and elaborate tassels that designate a cardinal, his own simple "checky" shield claims no worldly distinction. The pair of swans, however, turns these into "canting arms": their Spanish name "*cisne*" evokes his own name "Cisneros."

Coat of arms of Cardinal Cisneros (1436-1517)

Image courtesy of Wikipedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Coat_of_arms_of_Cardinal_Cisneros.png



Above: Signature of Cardinal Francisco Jiménez [Ximenes] de Cisneros

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Firma_de_Francisco_Jim%C3%A9nez_de_Cisneros.svg



"NOBODY EXPECTS THE SPANISH INQUISITION!"

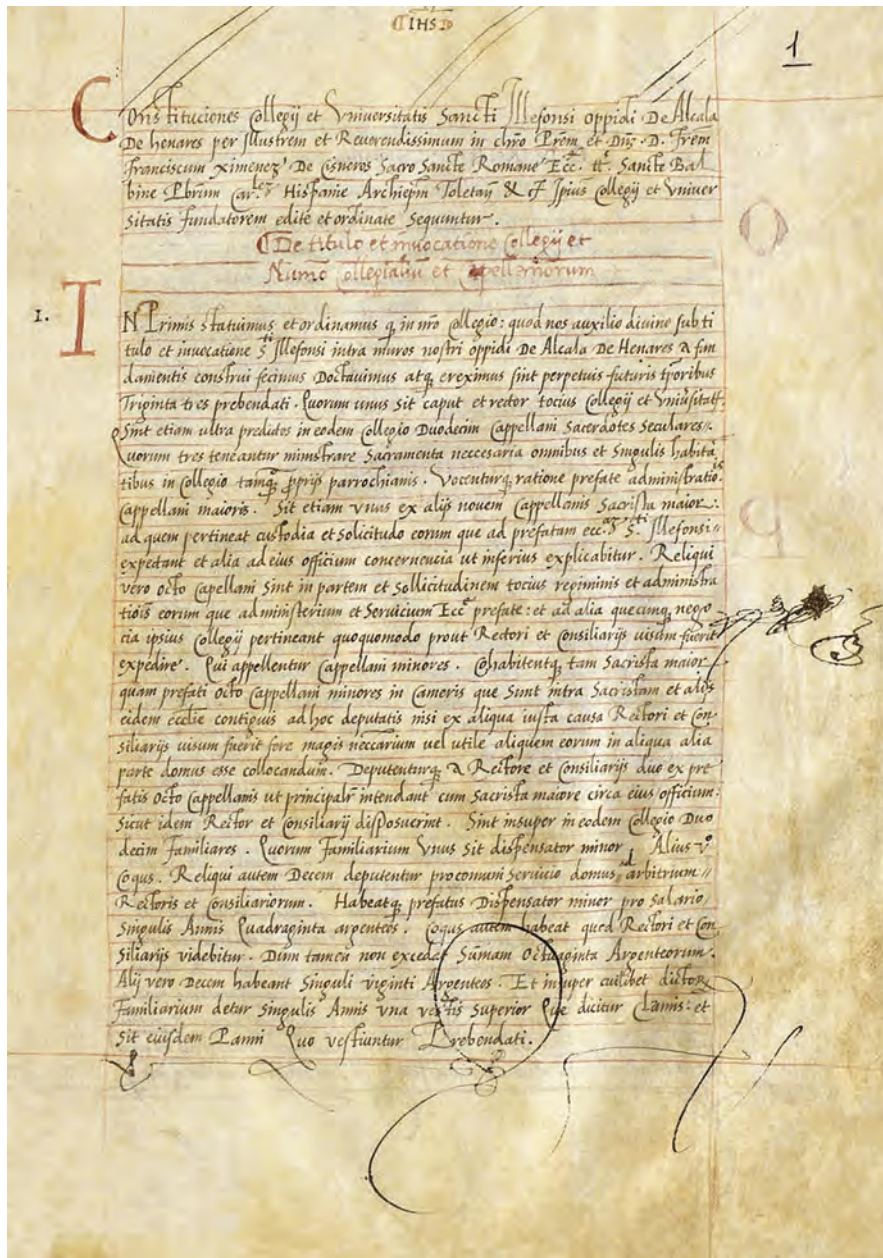
Image courtesy of "Second Life Marketplace"
<https://marketplace.secondlife.com/p/No-One-Expects-the-Spanish-Inquisition-Gesture/10065496>

Cardinal Cisneros acquired unexpected popular fame in today's world. Michael Palin of Monty Python's Flying Circus, playing "Cardinal Ximenes of Spain," inspired a universal audience and an infinity of memes, when, with "(JARRING CHORD)," he and his henchmen burst into rooms, loudly proclaiming that "Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition!"

Alcalá de Henares & Texas Tech: A Surprising Kinship

Cardinal Cisneros needed a base of operations to launch his Bible project. He founded a university at his hometown of Alcalá de Henares, about twenty-two miles northeast of Madrid. Because Alcalá is the generic Arabic term for fort or castle, the “*de Henares*” is required to distinguish it from similarly named strongpoints. Latin-speaking humanists, however, knowing the town was named *Complutum* in Roman times, always spoke of the *Universitas Complutensis*.

In 1498 Cisneros began building the Colegio of San Ildefonso, the first of what would be ten colleges. He ultimately established eight chairs for philosophy, six each for theology, canon law, and grammar, and four each for medicine, Hebrew, Greek, and rhetoric. He added chairs of anatomy, surgery, mathematics, and moral philosophy. There were already thousands of students when Cisneros issued formal constitutions in a charter from 1510.



The speed at which Cisneros built was astonishing. King Francis I of France, who visited during his imprisonment in Spain, grumbled that “Your Franciscan has achieved single-handed what it required a line of kings to achieve in France” (i.e., a university on par with the University of Paris). Although Cisneros never succeeded in his attempts to hire Desiderius Erasmus, the “prince of humanists,” he did locate skilled experts in Oriental languages and a surprisingly diverse group of philosophers. He loved the university. When he was dying, a last act was to dispatch a letter entreating the new king to care for it. In his honor, even today the University still employs a modified version of his coat of arms.

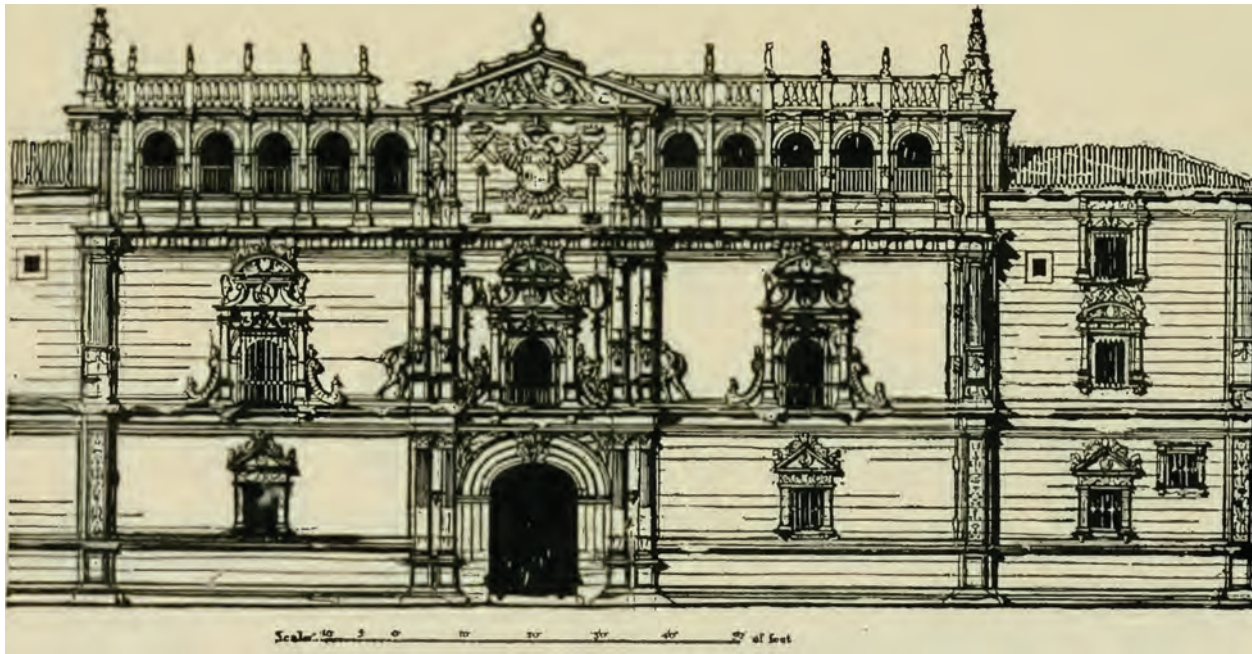
Founding Charter
Constitution of the Colegio Mayor de San Ildefonso y Universidad de Alcalá, signed by Cardinal Cisneros Alcalá de Henares, Spain, 1510

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Francisco_Jim%C3%A9nez_de_Cisneros_\(22-01-1510\)_Constituciones_del_Colegio_Mayor_de_San_Ildefonso.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Francisco_Jim%C3%A9nez_de_Cisneros_(22-01-1510)_Constituciones_del_Colegio_Mayor_de_San_Ildefonso.png)

Universidad de Alcalá de Henares / Universitas Complutensis



Modified version of the Cisneros coat of arms used today by the Universidad de Alcalá



Cisneros's architecture was impressive, though the initial campaign begun in 1498 was modified by Rodrigo Gil de Ontañón in 1553, who moved away from Cisneros's more severe style toward the plateresque (that is, in the manner of a silversmith), with ornate decorative facades festooned with shields and pinnacles. The campus that resulted had elements of late medieval and early renaissance architecture, and just a hint of the Orient.

Rodrigo Gil de Ontañón

Façade of the Colegio Mayor de San Ildefonso at the Universidad de Alcalá

Schematic reconstruction from Arthur Byne, *Spanish Architecture of the Sixteenth Century* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1917), p. 69.

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arthur_Byne_\(1917\)_Universidad_de_Alcal%C3%A1,_fachada_del_Colegio_de_San_Ildefonso.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arthur_Byne_(1917)_Universidad_de_Alcal%C3%A1,_fachada_del_Colegio_de_San_Ildefonso.png)

Texas Technological College / Texas Tech University



Façade of the Colegio Mayor de San Ildefonso at the Universidad de Alcalá
Alcalá de Henares, Spain

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/83/Alcal%C3%A1_de_Henares_-_Colegio_Mayor_de_San_Ildefonso_01.jpg



In 1923 the Legislature of the State of Texas approved the foundation of Texas Technological College in Lubbock. There was an opportunity for creativity – the site was a bare and treeless plain. But what should a college in West Texas look like?

To develop a suitable design, the new regents hired William Ward Watkin (d. 1952), the founder of the School of Architecture at Rice University. He had travelled throughout Europe in the early 1900s, including the High Plains of Spain and its university towns, which inspired him. In his vision:

“Texas Tech is carrying on the traditions of the early architectural history of the State [of Texas] ... the architecture of Spain in the middle of the sixteenth century, as one sees it in such examples as Léon, Alcalá de Henares, Salamanca, and Toledo, car[ries]... simple splendor ... The great table lands of West Texas upon which the buildings of the new college are being built have a likeness in color and character to the table lands of central Spain, and this group of college buildings ... can carry the early traditions, fittingly tying in the bond of tradition, the old history and the new, the past, the present, and the hope for the future.”



Administration Building
Lubbock, Texas Tech University

Image courtesy of John Howe

The results of Watkin's vision can be seen today in a campus that features a coherent Spanish revival architectural style, different from the grey ivy-covered Gothic structures of the universities of America's East Coast but similar to Cardinal Cisneros's Alcalá de Henares. From that Spanish tradition would come the "Matador Song," the "Daily Toreador," and other recognitions of a Spanish heritage important to Texas and beyond.



Right: Administration Building, plateresque architectural details
Lubbock, Texas Tech University

Image courtesy of Jenna Domeischel

The Complutensian Polyglot Bible - 500th Anniversary

The Complutensian Polyglot Bible

In six volumes, Cardinal Francisco de Cisneros's giant polyglot Bible presents sacred Scripture in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, and then adds an interlinear Latin translation of the Greek Old Testament as well as the Aramaic Targum. The editorial work was carried out at Cardinal Cisneros' new university of Alcalá de Henares, where most of its editors taught. Nothing so ambitious had been attempted in biblical scholarship since the *Hexapla* of Origen back in the third century. Here medieval biblical scholarship sought to exploit the new possibilities offered by the printing press.

The quincentenary (500th) anniversary of the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible* is not easy to locate precisely. Cardinal Cisneros had already envisioned his new Bible when he began to build his University at Alcalá de Henares in 1498 and to establish its expertise in oriental languages. The six folio volumes, dedicated to the young prince who would be the future Emperor Charles V, were printed from 1502 to 1517. The four volumes of the Old Testament were finished in July 1517, and, in an elaborate ceremony, presented to Cisneros by the printer's son. On that occasion, according to his biographer, he exclaimed that there was nothing for which he was more grateful than for his role in completing this edition of the Bible.

The Scholarship

Cardinal Cisneros spared no expense. He sought out and bought ancient manuscripts, some of which were unfortunately destroyed in the Spanish civil wars of the 1930s. He also borrowed texts from the Vatican. He himself, during his early years under house arrest, had studied Hebrew extensively from a local rabbi and he had acquired some working knowledge of Greek. Although he does not seem to have participated directly as an editor, he had enough knowledge and interest to identify good scholars. Greek contributors came not only from renaissance humanist circles but also from Crete and other Greek areas. Much of the Oriental language work was carried out by *conversos* (converted Jews), including some distinguished scholars with extensive rabbinical training. No university in Europe had better Hebrew Studies. Alfonso de Zamora, who edited much of the Hebrew material, also composed the leading Hebrew grammar of the era.

Some conservative theologians distrusted the project. Cardinal Cisneros himself respected the *Vulgate Bible* and was confident that divine guidance had protected the Bible throughout Christian history. Yet he valued other witnesses and wanted to correct whatever errors might have crept into the *Vulgate*. Critics were quick to denounce the whole enterprise to the Spanish inquisition, claiming that many editors were Jews and heretics. Cisneros had the power to protect his people, and in 1507 these problems completely disappeared when he himself was appointed Grand Inquisitor.



Alfonso de Zamora
Title Page
Introductionis artis Grammaticae hebraica.
Alcalá de Henares, *In aedibus Michaelis de Eguia*, 1526.

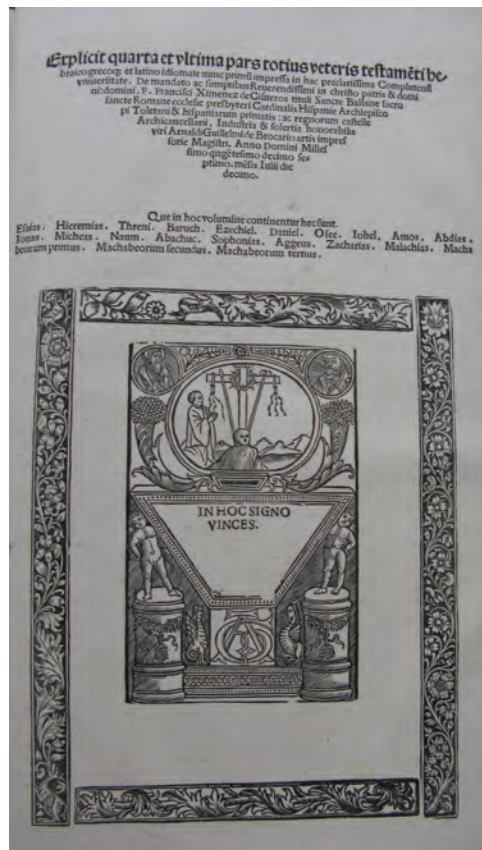
Image courtesy of Wikipedia Commons
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alfonso_de_Zamora_\(1526\)_Introductionis_artis_Grammaticae_hebraica.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alfonso_de_Zamora_(1526)_Introductionis_artis_Grammaticae_hebraica.png)

The *Complutensian Polyglot Bible* was the best printed work of the age. Probably acting on the recommendation of some of his scholars who had worked before with Arnaldo Guillén de Brocar, the cardinal was able to hire the finest printer of his day. He gave him an unlimited budget. Type-faces had to be developed for Greek, which had no previous print tradition, and for Hebrew, where Jewish printers had been active for two generations. The Greek font developed for the New Testament still occasionally appears today as “Complutensian Greek”.

Right: Frontispiece of the Old Testament
Complutensian Polyglot Bible, vol. 1
Alcalá de Henares, Spain, ca. 1514-1517
Facsimile



Courtesy of the Lanier Theological Library
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=Complutensian+Polyglot+Bible&title=Special%3ASearch&profile=advanced&fulltext=1&advancedSearch-current=%7B%7D&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=-1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:Cisneros%27_original_complutensian_polyglot_Bible_-1.jpg



Colophon and Printer's Mark at the end of the Old Testament
Complutensian Polyglot Bible, vol. 4
Alcalá de Henares, Spain, ca. 1514-1517
Facsimile

Courtesy of the Houston, Lanier Theological Library
Image courtesy of European Languages across Borders
https://europeancollections.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/pt2_3.jpg



Spines of a complete set of the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*
Alcalá de Henares, Spain, Arnaldo Guillén de Brocar, ca. 1510-1517

Image courtesy of [https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https://www.christies.com/img/LotImages/2017/NYR/2017_NYR_14998_0206_002\(bible_complutensian_polyglot_in_hebrew_aramaic_greek_and_latin_alcala\).jpg&imgrefurl=https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/bible-complutensian-polyglot-in-hebrew-aramaic-6116431-details.aspx&docid=9L6xDRriC5JVwM&tbnid=L_DyV1YCs3o53M:&vet=10ahUKewi45eKD7NriAhUGCKwKHxhoAikQMwhyKC-MwIw.i&w=3144&h=4200&bih=633&biw=1280&q=Complutensian%20Polyglot%20Bible%20images&ved=0ahUKewi45eKD7NriAhUGCKwKHxhoAikQMwhyKCMwIw&iact=mr&uact=8](https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https://www.christies.com/img/LotImages/2017/NYR/2017_NYR_14998_0206_002(bible_complutensian_polyglot_in_hebrew_aramaic_greek_and_latin_alcala).jpg&imgrefurl=https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/bible-complutensian-polyglot-in-hebrew-aramaic-6116431-details.aspx&docid=9L6xDRriC5JVwM&tbnid=L_DyV1YCs3o53M:&vet=10ahUKewi45eKD7NriAhUGCKwKHxhoAikQMwhyKC-MwIw.i&w=3144&h=4200&bih=633&biw=1280&q=Complutensian%20Polyglot%20Bible%20images&ved=0ahUKewi45eKD7NriAhUGCKwKHxhoAikQMwhyKCMwIw&iact=mr&uact=8)

Influence of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible

The *Complutensian Polyglot Bible* marked the end of an era, more than a beginning. Cardinal Cisneros and his scholars had hoped that printing technology would enable them to create an edition that would allow scholars to resolve apparent textual conflicts, not only within the Latin tradition but also with Eastern Christians and with Jews. They were primarily paying attention to the authoritative traditional languages of the Bible: Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

Final publication, however, did not go smoothly. Cardinal Cisneros died only four months after he had been presented with the last quire. His estate included the actual volumes, which he had wanted to price so low that they would not generate any profit, but, without his living authority, publication decisions got delayed. Another complication was that Desiderius Erasmus, knowing about the Complutensian project, had rushed his own Greek New Testament into print in 1516, and, to forestall competition, had secured an exclusive four-year publishing privilege from Emperor Maximilian and Pope Leo X. The *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*, despite a 600-copy printing, would not be widely distributed until about 1522. Although its Greek New Testament had better textual sources than the fifteenth-century manuscripts used by Erasmus, that version, as the first Greek New Testament to actually appear in print, became the more influential.

Just as the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible* was becoming available, the world of biblical scholarship was radically changing. In 1522 Dr. Martin Luther published his New Testament in German, followed in 1534 by his complete Bible. The future would belong to Bibles translated into local languages, often by reformed theologians who questioned multiple aspects of the medieval Church, abandoned the traditional prologues of Jerome, and dismissed the books not found in the current Hebrew Bibles as “apocryphal.” At the Council of Trent (1543-63) the Catholic Church reacted by officially endorsing, for the first time, the “magisterial authority” of the Latin *Vulgate* and insisting that “no one is to dare or presume to reject it under any pretense whatever.”

Three other polyglot Bibles followed the Complutensian: the *Biblia Regia* or *Antwerp Polyglot* (1569-1572) commissioned by King Philip II of Spain, which added the Syriac New Testament; the *Paris Polyglot* (1645) in seven languages including Samaritan and Arabic; and the *London Polyglot*, also known as *Londinesis* or *Waltonian* (1654-1657), in nine languages including Ethiopic and Persian. Despite these later attempts to continue intercultural linguistic collaboration on the text of the Bible, early modern biblical scholars tended to abandon the relatively irenic approach of the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*.



Early Modern Printed Bibles

In the years after the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*, printers produced Bibles in all the major European languages. These translations were affected by the religious controversies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not only in their new prefaces and prologues but also in their choices of terms and vocabulary. Different translators struggled to embrace or reject renderings that they thought were too “Protestant” or “Papist,” reflecting the debates between the traditional Catholic Church and the new Protestant churches. Nevertheless, the best of these efforts presented the Bible in elevated popular language that still possessed some of the dignified resonances of a sacred language.

Vernacular Bibles in the Middle Ages

In contrast to learned Latin, the language of ordinary people was pejoratively dubbed the “vernacular”—from the Latin word *vernaculus*, meaning a domestic, native, home-born servant. Vernacular Bibles did not appear until the end of the Early Middle Ages. However, people unable to read anything in any language were unlikely to be especially troubled by their inability to read the Bible in Latin. It was a mysterious sacred language, so powerful that the Latin *Evangelia* became known as “Gospels” (that is, “God’s Spells”). The ability of religious professionals to read and explicate the Bible gave them great prestige.

Vernacular glosses were originally created to help clergymen read the Latin Bible. When popular literacy became more widespread during the High Middle Ages (ca. 1000–1250), then vernacular translations of parts of the Bible sporadically began to appear. By the late fifteenth century—the end of the Middle Ages—Church officials were becoming increasingly troubled by vernacular Bibles. The Church had a duty to bring the Word of God to the faithful while at the same time preserving the orthodox teaching that was embodied in Latin Scripture and theological discourse. The most frequent response to this dilemma was to promote the use of approved vernacular biblical paraphrases and meditations while simultaneously discouraging or even prohibiting literal vernacular biblical translations.



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A German Psalter and commentary was created by Notker of St. Gall (d. 1028), a “*translatio barbarica*” intended to aid students whose Latin was weak. The image on the left is of the sole surviving copy, from the twelfth century. Notker also translated many other basic school texts. His goal was not to replace Latin but to help students, often would-be clergymen, become better Latin scholars.

Notker of St. Gall
Old High German *Translation and Commentary on the Psalms*
St. Gallen Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 21, fols. 8-9
Germany, ca. 1150, 12 ¼” x 9 ½”

Image courtesy of e-codices: Virtual Manuscript Library of Switzerland
Top Left: <https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/csg/0021/8>
Bottom Right: <https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/csg/0021/9>



A French translation of the Bible (the Bible of King Charles V) was found in the huge library of French texts assembled in the Louvre by King Charles V (d. 1380). An early southern French copy is shown here. His French Bible became the predominant medieval French translation, a high-end product that did not provoke any significant ecclesiastical opposition.

Ecclesiastes
Old French Bible, 2 vols.
Bern, Burgerbibliothek Cod. 17 and 28, vol. 2, fol. 18v
France, late 13th-century, 13 ¾” x 10”

Image courtesy of e-codices: Virtual Manuscript Library of Switzerland
<https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/bbb/0028/18v>

The English Bible that had belonged to Thomas Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester (1355-97), the youngest son of King Edward III, is the earliest securely dated complete Bible in the English language. English translations of the Bible became flashpoints of religious controversy, because, associated with the circle of Oxford Professor John Wycliffe (d. 1384), they were thought to be used by heretics and political dissidents. Harsh penalties were legislated for anyone found in possession of an unlicensed vernacular Bible. But the effectiveness of these bans might be questioned inasmuch as more than 250 full or fragmentary manuscripts still survive, more copies than for any other Middle English text.

Prologue to Jeremiah
 Bible, in Middle English, in the early Wycliffite version. Proverbs to Maccabees
 London, British Library, Egerton MS 617, fol. 81r
 Southern England, ca. 1390-1397, 17 1/4" x 11 1/2"

Image courtesy of the British Library, Medieval Collection
<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/wycliffite-bible>



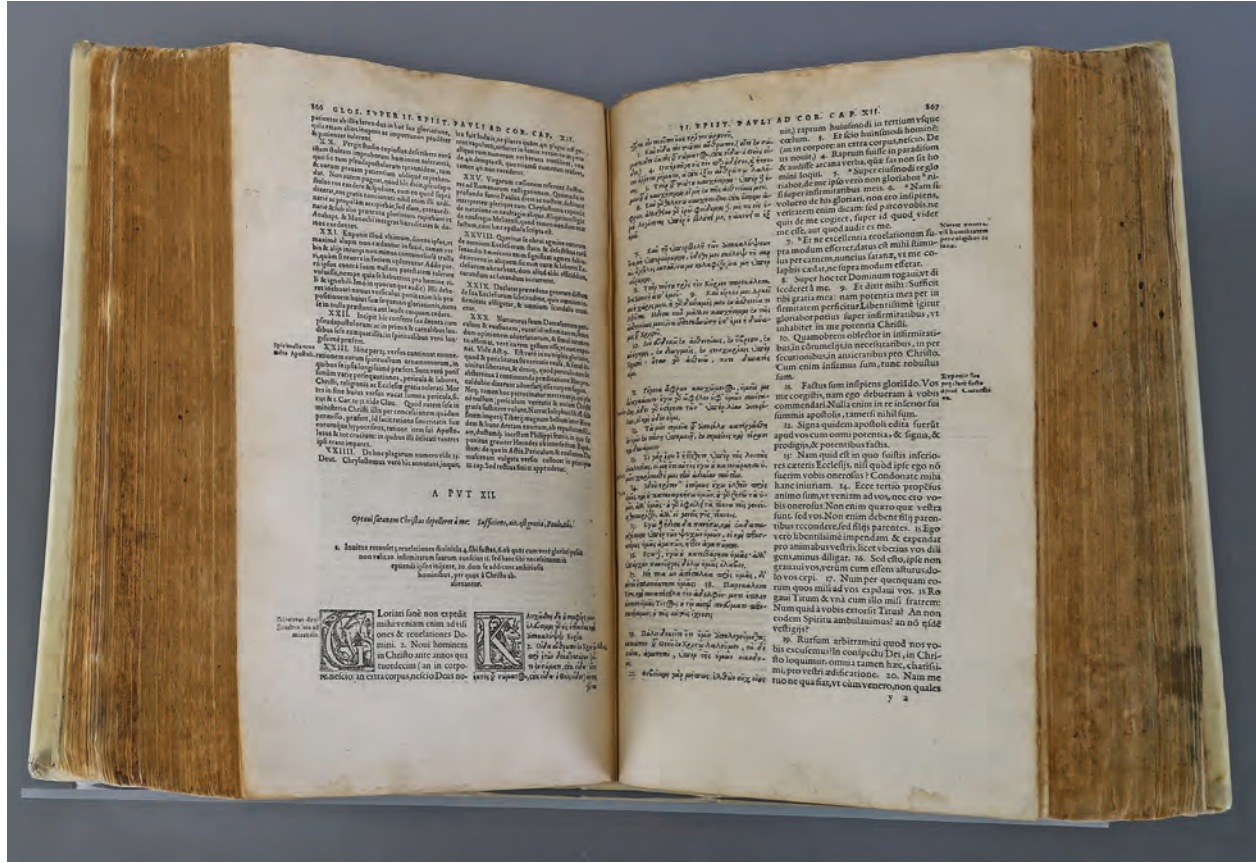
The *Bundle of Myrrh* (*Fasciculus Mirre*) is a German devotional book focusing on the life of Christ, first compiled by a Franciscan in Cologne in the fifteenth century and soon translated into a multitude of vernacular languages, including the Middle Dutch version exhibited here. Church officials encouraged vernacular biblical paraphrases like this one because they interpreted biblical texts in the light of Church tradition. From them, literate lay folk acquired much of their biblical knowledge.

Fasciculus Mirre ("Bundle of Myrrh")
 Middle Dutch leaf from a printed devotional pocketbook
 Lubbock, Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest
 Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
 Roelant Bollaert printer
 Delft, late 15th century

Courtesy of the Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries

Printing Biblical Sources

The *Complutensian Polyglot Bible* was part of a wave of publications that used the printing press to disseminate Biblical source texts. The *Glossa Ordinaria* was printed, followed by Erasmus' Greek New Testament and subsequent Greek bibles. The fierce theological debates of the Reformation period were waged by sophisticated scholars who were informed by printed editions that gave them unprecedented access to Biblical sources and commentaries.



Desiderius Erasmus
Novum Instrumentum Omne (1516)
Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 0756
1570 edition, 12" x 7 1/2"

Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.

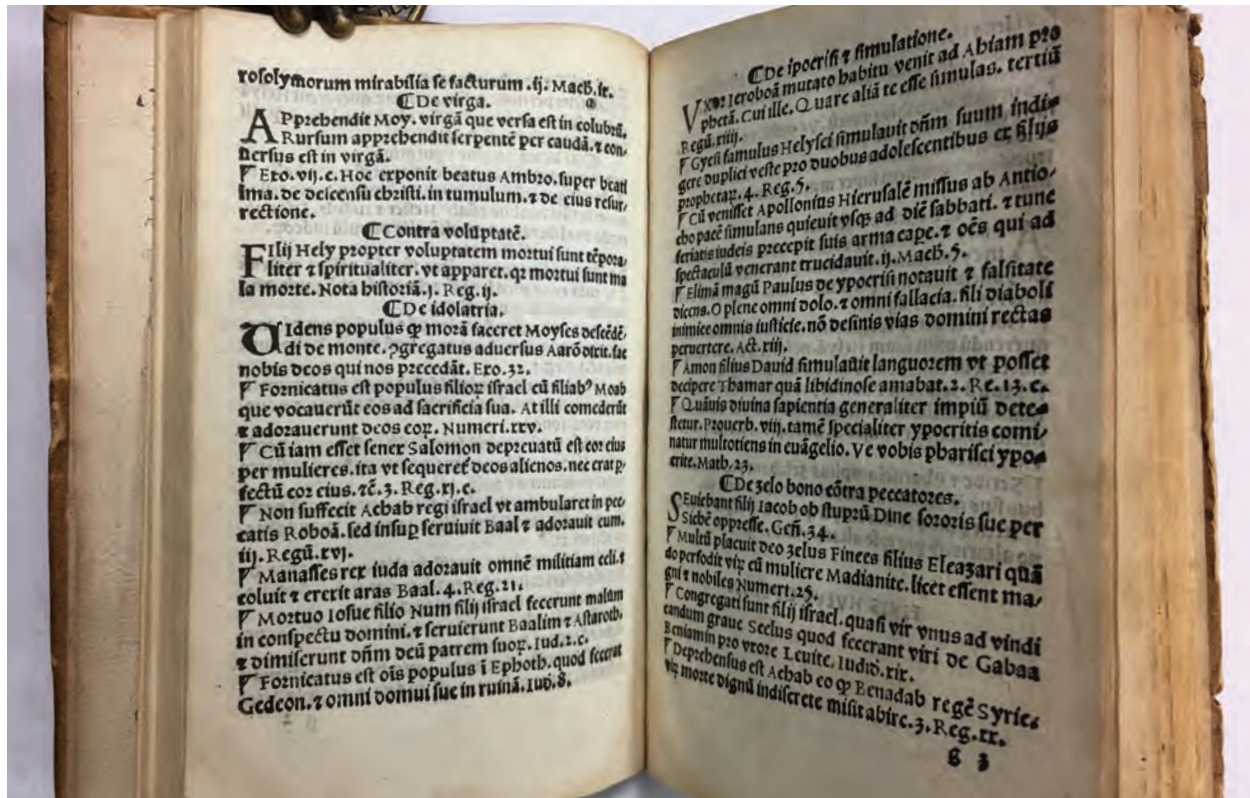
Erasmus presented an original Greek text of the New Testament and a translation of this Greek text into classical Latin, formatting it in parallel columns along with annotations on the text. This book has a complicated relationship to Cardinal Cisneros's polyglot Bible. Cisneros had attempted to recruit Erasmus to work at his new university at Alcalá de Henares, but Erasmus instead launched his own competing edition of the Greek New Testament and got it into print first. The availability of the Greek text of the New Testament undercut the primacy of the Latin of the *Vulgate Bible*. It would profoundly influence Luther, Tyndale, and other early modern biblical translators.



Erasmus's Greek edition of the Bible had only covered the New Testament. By mid-century Nicholas Brylingerm offered the first parallel Greek and Latin printing of the whole Bible (not just the New Testament) since the one provided by the Complutensian edition.

Left: Nicolaum Brylingerm
Single folio from a Greek and Latin Bible (Nicolaus Brylingerm, *Biblia Graeca et Latina*)
Lubbock, Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
Basel, 1550, 6" x 4"

Courtesy of the Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries



The elaborately illustrated *Biblia Pauperum* of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were later reduced to a small block-book edition, suitable for carrying in a pocket. This one, above, contains a biblical concordance and advice for sermons, probably for the use of Franciscans.

Pseudo-Bonaventure
Biblia Pauperum, pocket version
Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 0933
Germany, 16th century, 5" x 3"

Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.



English Bibles

In medieval England, vernacular Bibles were more important than elsewhere. England temporarily lost most of its Latin culture during Viking attacks, and the new Anglo-Saxon realm of King Alfred (d. 899) used English for many laws and administrative documents, even for some school texts. Its Church embraced English for collections of sermons, saints' lives, and even a translation of the Gospels (of which eight copies still survive). This precocious literary development of Old English was disrupted by the Norman Conquest, which gave Anglo-Norman French a privileged status. But Middle English literature subsequently appeared, and in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the controversial Wycliffite Bibles circulated widely. As soon as Martin Luther produced his German New Testament, English scholars, starting with William Tyndale (d. 1536), began to produce new English translations. After King Henry VIII (d. 1547) had proclaimed himself the head of the Church of England, he ordered that all major churches should own English Bibles.

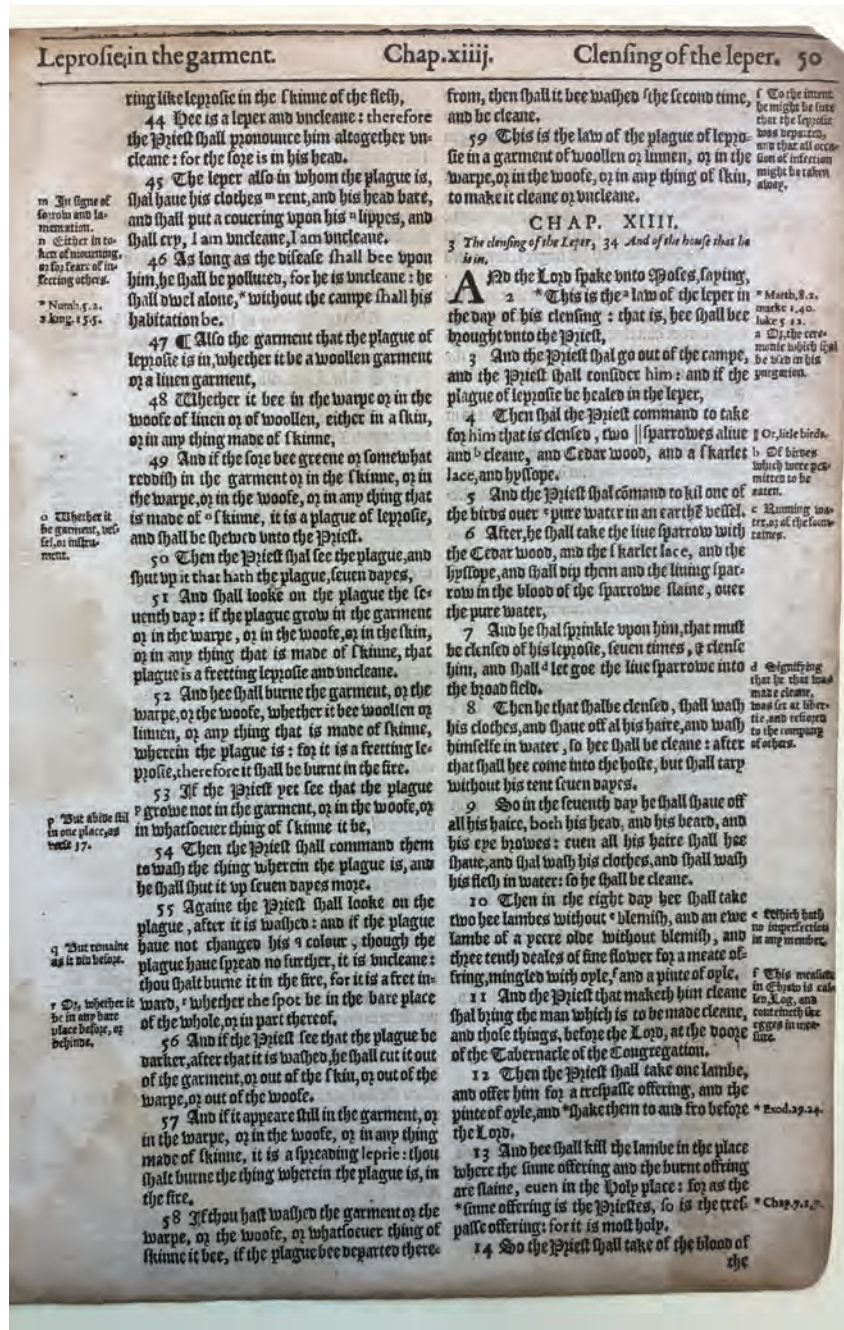
The Geneva Bible

English Protestants exiled by the persecutions of Henry VIII's daughter, "Bloody Mary" (1553-58), published their own English translation in Geneva in 1557 (New Testament) and 1560 (complete Bible). The *Geneva Bible* included elaborate introductions and study guides. When it was printed in England and Scotland in the 1570s, it became the standard affordably priced Bible. A law passed in Scotland in 1579 required every householder of sufficient means to own a copy. While chapter divisions had become standardized back in the thirteenth century, the *Geneva Bible* would be the first English Bible to incorporate verse numbers.



Leviticus 13-14
Single folio from a *Geneva Bible*
Lubbock, Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
Geneva, ca. 1557-1560, 9" x 6 1/2"

Courtesy of the Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries

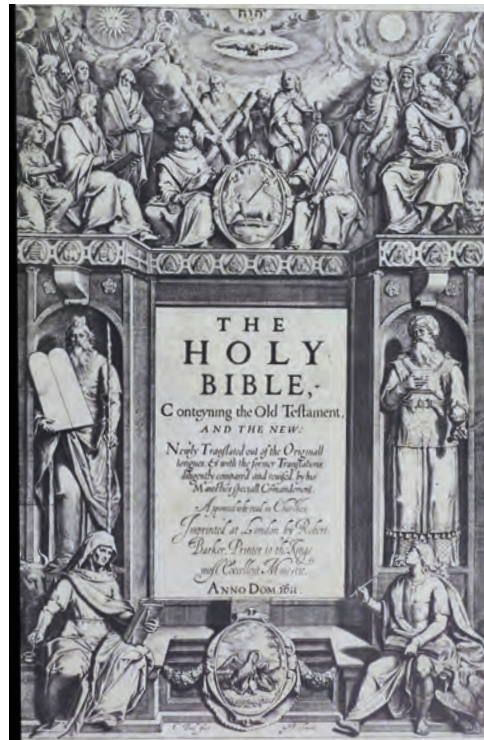
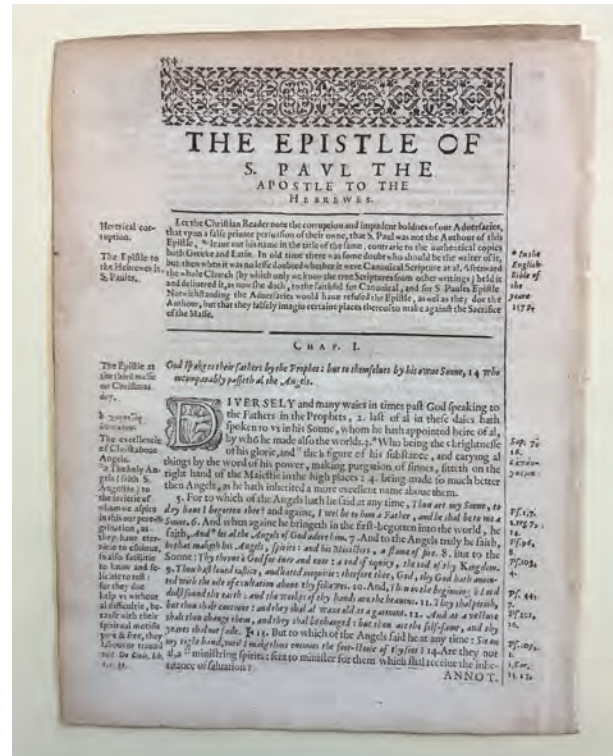


The Douai-Rheims Bible

English Catholics, exiled by Henry VIII's daughter Elizabeth (1558-1603), published their own English translation in response to English Protestant vernacular Bibles. English Catholics ("recusants"), not allowed to have their own seminaries in England or to receive foreign clergy, completed much of the translation work at the English College at Douai, France, though the New Testament was published at Rheims(1582) and the Old Testament at Douai (1609-10). This leaf, from the beginning of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is prefaced by an introduction highly critical of opposing biblical scholars. Unlike Protestant translations, which tended to privilege the Hebrew and Greek traditions, the Catholic Bible was based upon an ameliorated version of the Latin *Vulgate*.

Hebrews 1
 Single folio from a *Douai-Rheims Catholic English Bible*
 Lubbock, Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries
 Rheims, 1582, 9" x 7"

Courtesy of the Idris Traylor Collection, Rare Books Department of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University Libraries



Frontispiece
King James Bible, first edition, first printing
 Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 1063
 London, 1611

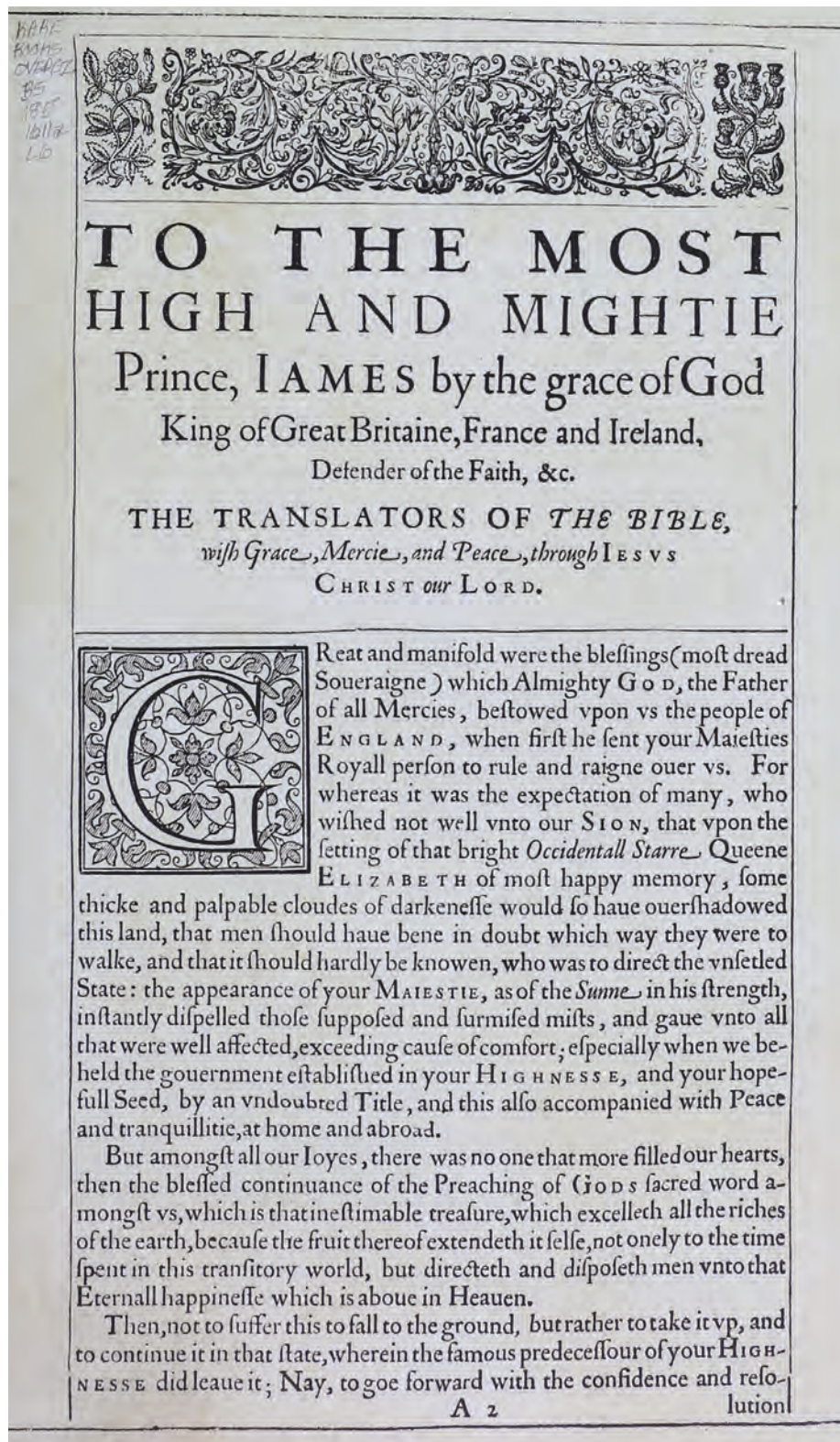
Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.

The King James Bible

The most important English translation of the Bible produced for the Church of England was begun in 1604 and completed in 1611. Here is one of fewer than 200 surviving original prints of this form of the first edition. Puritans had complained about inconsistencies in earlier translations. As a way to promote religious unity and to demonstrate his authority, a proposal to undertake an official edition was happily embraced by King James VII of Scotland, soon after he was crowned King James I of England.

The *King James Bible* was the work of forty-seven scholars, extending over seven years. Their goal was to combine solid scholarship with majesty of style in order to produce an English text based on the original ancient sources but respectful of the beloved language of earlier English translations. For the Old Testament they relied on Hebrew and Aramaic texts, for the Apocrypha on Greek and Latin texts, and for the New Testament upon the Greek. Nevertheless, they were well aware of the competing Catholic translation project, and were not adverse to silently incorporating whatever insights they found helpful. The *Authorized King James Version* was printed in 1611, replacing the *Bishops' Bible* as the official text for liturgical readings in the Church of England. It became the most widely printed book in history, earning acclaim as "the most important book in English religion and culture."





“But amongst all our joys, there was none that more filled our hearts, than the blessed continuance of the Preaching of God’s sacred word amongst us, which is that inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth, because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that Eternal happiness which is above in Heaven.”

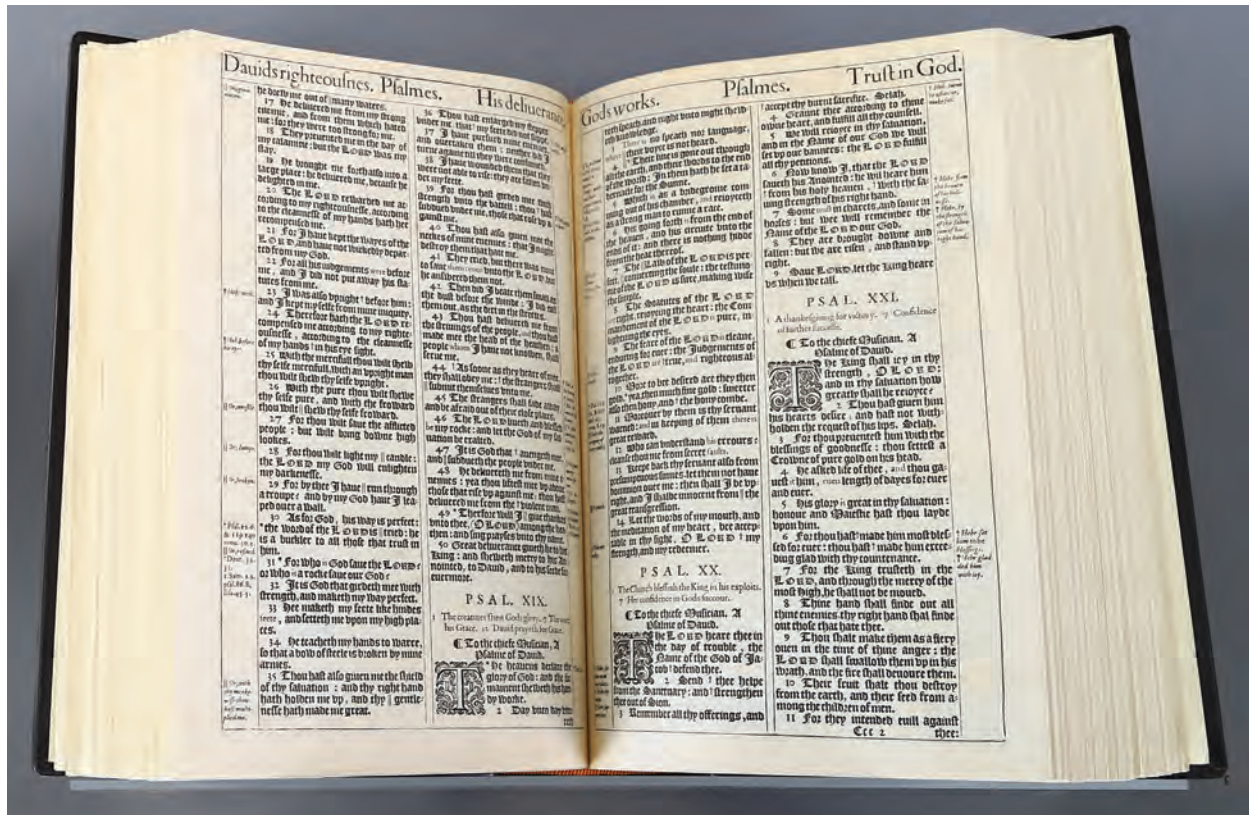
– Dedication page,
King James Bible



From Bible Study to the Modern Intellectual World

The study of the Bible was Western Civilization's major intellectual project during the pre-modern and early modern eras. No book was more read, more analyzed, or more influential. In today's world it is easy to forget that biblical studies--now more marginal, sectarian, and esoteric—helped to create the foundations of modern intellectual life. Scholars of the Bible developed textual editing, glossing, and footnoting. They shaped grammar and linguistics as they attempted to navigate the major Biblical languages of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Artists produced illuminated bibles as spectacular “multi-media” presentations. Jewish and Christian biblical scholars perfected basic technologies of writing and printing. Respect for their “inspired” work still underlies today’s residual conceptions of inspiration and of the prestige of the academic calling.

The *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*, completed about 500 years ago, exemplifies what pre-modern biblical studies could accomplish. This masterpiece of the Spanish Renaissance melded traditional medieval biblical scholarship with the latest in printing press technology to produce a simultaneous presentation of the Scriptures in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and sometimes Aramaic (along with interlinear and marginal aids). A new university, Alcalá de Henares, was designed to accommodate this project, a university that serves as the model for the “Spanish revival” architecture of Texas Tech. The Texas Tech University professors of Medieval and Renaissance Studies continue to use the methods of humanistic inquiry begun by medieval biblical scholars to study the history, languages, and arts of medieval and early modern Europe and the global Middle Ages.



King James Bible, first edition, first printing
Lubbock, The Remnant Trust, Inc., no. 1063
London, 1611, 11" x 16" x 5"

Courtesy of The Remnant Trust, Inc.



Texas Tech's Medieval and Renaissance Studies Center (MRSC) sponsored the exhibition, *Pre-Modern Bibles: from the Dead Sea Scroll to the Complutensian Polyglot Bible*, to commemorate the quincentenary of Cardinal Cisneros' *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*. The exhibition of rare medieval manuscripts, facsimiles, and early printed books that ran from August 18, 2018 through March 3, 2019 is now commemorated in this catalogue. To learn more about the MRSC — which is “dedicated to the advancement of medieval and renaissance studies at Texas Tech, in the State of Texas, and in the lands beyond” — and which offers an interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate, please access its website at http://www.depts.ttu.edu/classic_modern/medieval/.

