

# *The First Bible Printed in England: A Little Known Witness from Late Henrician England*

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*The first Bible to be printed in England was produced in 1535 by the royal printer, and with Henry VIII's initial support. It has attracted little scholarly attention. This first extensive examination traces its creation and early reception as witness to the uncertain course of the English Reformation. Its origins reveal a dependency on continental models, which were then modified to create a book carefully placed between conservatism and reform. Priests, scholars, children and crooks left their marks on the Bible, and advanced digital technology exposes unique evidence for the merging of Latin and English in late Henrician liturgy.*

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**T**he year 1535 marks a watershed in the history of the English Bible. William Tyndale was arrested in Antwerp, to be executed in the following year, while, probably in Cologne, Miles Coverdale published the first full Bible in English (*RSTC* 2063). Since Henry VIII's 1530 injunctions were still in force and prohibited the printing or import of any English Bible or theological work, it had to be printed abroad.<sup>1</sup> In England, however, the mood was gradually changing. Following Henry's engagement with the 'Great Matter', his marriage to Anne Boleyn in January 1533 and the Act of Supremacy of November 1534, reformers felt that the time was ripe for the publication of an English Bible. In August 1535 James Nicolson, a Netherlandish printer in London, wrote to Thomas Cromwell in support of printing the English Bible. Anticipating approval, the title page to Coverdale's Bible, which is ascribed to Holbein, depicted

In the course of writing this article I benefited from the invaluable advice of colleagues. I wish to thank Julia Boffey, Paul Cavill, Ceri Law, Qona Wright, James Carley, Ian Green, Miri Rubin, and the anonymous reader for their assistance. Graham Davis's digital analysis made possible the vital research that underpins this article.

<sup>1</sup> *Tudor royal proclamations, I: the early Tudors, 1485–1553*, ed. Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, New Haven 1964, 193–7.

the enthroned Henry distributing Bibles. When the importation of Bibles became possible later that year, the Bible's preliminary materials were reprinted, omitting the more contentious 'out of Douche and Latyn' from the title page, and adding a dedication to Henry and Anne.

The first Bible printed in English has captured the imagination of reformers and historians. It was reproduced in a 1975 facsimile edition, and its style, appearance, printers and impact have been analysed at length.<sup>2</sup> Yet, another Bible was printed in England that very same year, which is far less well-known. That first 'English' Bible was printed in Latin, in London, in July 1535: the *Sacrae Bibliae tomus primus in quo continentur, Quinque libri Moysi, Libri Iosue, et Iudicum, Liber Psalmorum, Prouerbia Salomonis, Liber Sapientie, et Nouum Testamentum Iesu Christi* (RSTC 2055). It has attracted almost no scholarly attention, receiving only passing mention in Bible catalogues, a brief note in the *Times Literary Supplement*, and several pages in the history of the Stationers' Company.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, both A. S. Herbert's catalogue of the English Bible and David Daniel's survey seem to be unaware of its existence, as is also the recent *Oxford handbook of the Bible in England*.<sup>4</sup> The reason for such lack of interest is the Bible's language. Vernacular Bibles, from the Wycliffite Bibles to the King James Bible, were celebrated for their Englishness, as national cultural artefacts that manifest religious changes in England. In the study of the early modern Bible, 'English' is a language as much as a place-name. A Bible printed on the Continent is therefore seen much more as a national treasure than its Latin contemporary, printed in London.

<sup>2</sup> James Frederic Mozley, *Coverdale and his Bibles*, London 1953; S. L. Greenslade, *The Coverdale Bible, 1535*, Folkestone 1975; Guido Latré, 'The 1535 Bible and its Antwerp origins', in Orlaith O'Sullivan and Ellen N. Herron (eds), *The Bible as book: the Reformation*, London 2000, 89–102; Gwendolyn Verbraak, 'William Coverdale and the clandestine book trade: bibliographical quest for the printers of Tyndale's New Testament', in W. Francois and A. A. den Hollander (eds), *Infant milk or hardy nourishment? The Bible for lay people and theologians in the early modern period*, Leuven 2009, 167–89; Naomi Tadmor, 'People of the covenant and the English Bible', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* xxii (2012), 95–110. See also Peter Blayney's recent re-evaluation, *The Stationers' Company and the printers of London, 1501–1557*, Cambridge 2013, i. 342–51.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Arthur Copinger, *The Bible and its transmission: being an historical and bibliographical view of the Hebrew and Greek texts, and the Greek, Latin and other versions of the Bible (both MS. and printed) prior to the Reformation*, London 1897, 242; T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule (eds), *Historical catalogue of the printed editions of Holy Scripture in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, London 1903, ii/2, 929; Arthur Freeman, 'To guard his words: the selectivity, conservatism and startlingly personal nature of a Bible designed by Henry VIII', *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 Dec. 2007, 13–14, followed by Freeman's letter of 8 Feb. 2008; Blayney, *Stationers' Company*, 352–6.

<sup>4</sup> A. S. Herbert (ed.), *Historical catalogue of printed editions of the English Bible, 1525–1961*, London 1968, 17; David Daniell, *The Bible in English: its history and influence*, New Haven 2003, 245 (identified by Blayney, *Stationers' Company*, 342–3); Kevin Killeen, Helen Smith and Rachel Willie (eds), *The Oxford handbook of the Bible in England, c. 1530–1700*, Oxford 2015.

This article is the first to provide a fuller exploration of this Bible. Its unique position as a Latin text in a religious world gradually becoming English renders it the perfect witness to the uncertain course of change in mid sixteenth-century England. Two aspects currently debated by Reformation historians<sup>5</sup> – the link between England and the rest of Europe, and the nature of religious transformation – are addressed here, through an analysis of the compilation of the Bible and through its reception. The first part of the article traces the printing of this Bible. It identifies models and shows it to be a traditional book carefully positioned between conservatism and reform. A comprehensive survey of the book's text and paratext shows its deficiencies to be not signs of an aborted project (as suggested by Arthur Freeman<sup>6</sup>), but a testimony to the dependence of English printing on the importation of techniques, models and books. This bibliographical analysis corroborates Diarmaid MacCulloch's warning against dissociating the English Reformation from the rest of Europe.<sup>7</sup> The second part mines readers' marks and annotations to reveal how the Bible was employed by priests, scholars, children and crooks. It shows the Latin Bible in the hands of Catholic recusants and monastic houses shortly before the Dissolution. Hidden annotations in one copy also reveal a unique testimony to the merging of Latin and English in the liturgy at the end of Henry's reign, unearthing a lack of clear boundaries of faith and language in early modern England.

### *Creation*

There is no evidence about the printing of the Latin Bible apart from the information embedded in it. The Bible's provenance is asserted by a colophon at the end ('Londoni excudebat Thomas Bertheletus regius impressor, anno M.D.XXV. mense Jul.: fo. 303r), followed by an image of Lucretia holding a dagger to her chest.<sup>8</sup> The device is that of Thomas Berthelet (or Berthelot, †1555), a London-based printer of French origins.<sup>9</sup> Berthelet began printing in London on September 1524. In 1526 he was summoned before the Vicar-General, the senior church

<sup>5</sup> For a summary of research on the Reformation see Peter Marshall, '(Re)defining the English Reformation', *Journal of British Studies* xlvi/3 (2009), 564–86.

<sup>6</sup> Freeman's suggestion that this is also indicative in the small number of extant copies was refuted by Blayney, *Stationers' Company*, 353–4.

<sup>7</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Protestantism in mainland Europe: new directions', *Renaissance Quarterly* lix (2006), 698–706.

<sup>8</sup> For the device see R. B. McKerrow and F. S. Ferguson, *Title-page borders used in England & Scotland, 1485–1640*, London 1932, 16–18, §19.

<sup>9</sup> Clair Colin, 'Thomas Berthelet, Royal Printer', *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (1966), 177–81; K. F. Pantzer, 'Berthelet, Thomas (d. 1555)', *ODNB*.

officer in the diocese of London, for printing Erasmus' treatise on the *Pater noster* (RSTC 10477). In 1530 Berthelet became the King's Printer, a position that he held until the end of Henry VIII's reign. In this role he printed royal proclamations (including the prohibition on printing or importing English Bibles), as well as religious books endorsed by the Crown, such as the Bishops' Book (1537) and the King's Book (1543).

The most celebrated feature of Berthelet's Bible has been the 'Epistle to the reader'. This short introduction (*Pio lectori*, fo. [2]r-v) explains the appearance of the Bible, from the choice of font<sup>10</sup> to the selection of books, before moving on to discuss the link between the Bible and the Crown. It presents an image of the king disseminating Bibles, not dissimilar to the visual images on the title pages of both Coverdale's and the Great Bible. The king, it is said, like the sun in the sky and the soul in the body, is the ultimate ruler, whose authority derives directly from the Bible.<sup>11</sup> And the king, whose ultimate responsibility was for the education of his people, was aided by the production of this Bible.<sup>12</sup> The ideal of a biblical monarch underpins much of Henry's attitude to the Bible, and is as a lynchpin uniting king, Scripture and people. The Epistle uses the 'royal we' when referring to the Crown. In line with nineteenth-century scholarship, Freeman has suggested that its author was none other than Henry himself, although it is perhaps more likely to have been Peter Vannes (Pietro Vanni, †1563), Henry's Latin secretary. This can thus be seen as an example of Richard Rex's 'positive censorship', when 'censorship was accompanied by the deliberate use of [the] king's name or authority to promote literature acceptable to the regime. A dedication to the king was already an accepted method of establishing the credentials of a book'.<sup>13</sup> Royal authorship is indeed a most efficient form of such censorship. Yet a closer look reveals a very hesitant deployment of this Bible's

<sup>10</sup> Which indeed drew on a new font: Blayney, *Stationers' Company*, 354–6.

<sup>11</sup> 'We therefore, considering it to be our duty to God, have undertaken this task [publishing the Bible], so that we should be within our realm like the soul in the body, and the sun in the universe, and exercise judgment as God's representative in our kingdom' ('Nos itaque consyderantes id erga deum officii nostri, quo suscepisse cognoscimur ut in regno simus sicut Anima in corpore et Sol in mundo, utque loco dei iudicium exerceamus in regno nostro'). The translation, as well as the one that follows, is based on Freeman, 'To guard his words'.

<sup>12</sup> 'yet we have judged it our own concern to cherish the law of God in our own bosom, whence we shall constantly ascertain that both the people, and their spiritual fathers, faithfully and observantly execute their duties' ('nostra tamen nihilominus interesse iudicavimus, ut ipsam dei legem ipsi tanquam in sinu gestemus qua continue pervisuri simus uti tam plebs ipsa quam spirituales patres eius utrique quod debeant fideliter ac vigilanter adimpleant').

<sup>13</sup> Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, 2nd edn, Basingstoke 2006, 94.

royal connection. The ‘Epistle to the reader’ is unsigned, and Henry’s name was not attached to the Bible as a whole.

Berthelet’s Bible is a surprisingly modest book, especially for one with a royal connection. It is a quarto volume (page size of 200 × 136 mm) written in two columns of Black Letter, with sparse marginal materials and notes in Roman type. Its iconography is highly simplistic, based not on the biblical text, but rather on fonts and woodblocks readily available to Berthelet. The seven-line illuminated initials at the beginning of each book do not correspond to the contents; rather, they are either floral or depict classical figures. A comparison with books printed in England in the 1530s reveals that these initials appeared in other books printed by Berthelet, as well as in books produced by other printers.<sup>14</sup> The recycling of materials is most evident in the Bible’s title page (see [fig. 1](#)), which has nothing to do with biblical themes. It portrays a medallion of a laureled head facing left between two sphinxes (top) and naked boys in procession (bottom). This generic title page was used extensively by Berthelet and other printers, both before and after 1535. It was first employed for Edward Fox’s *Gravissimae, atque exactissimae illustrissimarum totius Italiae, et Galliae academiaram censurae*, printed in 1530 (*RSTC* 14286); over the next twenty years it was re-used twenty-nine times, until John Bale’s *The ymage of both Churches* (an English commentary on Revelation, printed by John Wyer in 1550, *RSTC* 1299).<sup>15</sup>

The Bible includes some obvious errors. Marginal references point to books not included in the volume.<sup>16</sup> Some of the pages are mis-numbered, as, for example, 146 replaces 149 and 148 replaces 151. The lack of attention to detail, a mark of a hasty job or the lack of printing expertise, is evident in the printing on wrinkled paper, which caused some lines to be illegible.<sup>17</sup> This is accompanied by the lack of a collation formula and of a list of

<sup>14</sup> The ‘B’ of the Psalms (295r) appears also in *Diuino implorato praesidio*, London 1532 (*RSTC* 21310); *The addicions of Salem and Byzance*, London 1534 (*RSTC* 21585); and *The determinations of the moste famous and mooste excellent vniuersities*, London 1531 (*RSTC* 14287). The ‘D’ of Wisdom (172r) appears in *Diuino implorato praesidio*, London 1532 (*RSTC* 21310), and *Kotser codicis R. Vvakfeldi*, London 1533 (*RSTC* 24943), which uses the same title page as the Bible, as well as the ‘P’ of Judges [114r] and Proverbs [161v] or the ‘V’ of Leviticus [49r]. The ‘I’ of Genesis (1r) appears also in *Howe one may take profite*, London 1531 (*RSTC* 20052); *A dialogue betwene a knyght and a clerke*, London 1533? (*RSTC* 12511a); and in several books of Robert Redman, such as *A proclamacyon of the hygh emperour Jesu Christ*, London 1534? (*RSTC* 14561), and *The boke of Magna Carta*, London 1534 (*RSTC* 9272). The ‘I’ of Mark (196r), John (222v) and Jude (294v) appears in *On charity*, London 1535 (*RSTC* 16940). The ‘S’ of 3 John (294r) appears also in *The addicions of Salem and Byzance* and *Kotser codicis R. Vvakfeldi*.

<sup>15</sup> McKerrow and Ferguson, *Title-page borders*.  
<sup>16</sup> For example, in fo. 19r, the notes to Genesis xxxvi refer to 1 Paralipomenon; in fo. 22r, the notes to Genesis xli refer to 1 Maccabees, Judith, Nehemiah and Esdras.

<sup>17</sup> As in fo. 270 in the British Library copy, or fo. 38 in Lambeth Palace Library, Sion ARC 80 / A12.2/1535.



Figure 1. Title page, *Sacrae Bibliae tomus primus in quo continentur...* (Berthelet: London, July 1535) © Lambeth Palace Library, London

corrections. Two corrections were nevertheless made by hand: in all extant copies, at the end of the Epistle to the Reader (fo. [2]v) ‘fortasse’ was altered to ‘fortassi’ by crossing through the ‘e’ and adding ‘i’ in the margins; the word ‘honor’ in the sentence ‘honor et comes erit individuus’ was crossed over by a single line. This was done in a similar hand and ink across all copies, suggesting a centralised correction, most probably in Berthelet’s shop. This correction, apart from indicating a short print-run and rudimentary technique, reveals special attention to this opening section, which corroborates the hypothesis of a royal connection.

Berthelet’s Bible stands in sharp contrast with continental Bibles. The Coverdale Bible – its clandestine contemporary – is a much more impressive book despite the circumstances of its creation: a folio volume, whose elaborate title page depicts the enthroned Henry alongside diverse biblical scenes, and whose illuminated initials portray scenes from the biblical books that they preface. Latin Bibles printed on the Continent are likewise indicative of a much higher production level than Berthelet’s, with a variety of Bible-specific illuminations, marginal annotations and reading aids.<sup>18</sup> By 1535 Bibles had been printed on the Continent for nearly a century, and significant innovations were constantly being made to appearance and paratext. Bible-printing arrived late to England, and, as its first manifestation shows, it lagged behind continental practices. English printers, many from the Low Countries, lacked the knowledge, tools and technology to print long and elaborate books. Berthelet’s book is the result. It is in quarto, as English presses were unsuitable for printing lengthy books in folio; its choice of partial contents may have stemmed from the need to keep its length (and the necessary investment in type, paper and man-hours) under control.

The Bible’s contents, as well as its appearance, engage in dialogue with continental models. By 1535 the Vulgate was not the only Latin Bible in circulation. In 1516 Erasmus provided a new Latin translation of the New Testament from the original Greek, revealing important discrepancies between the Greek text and the wording of the Vulgate. This was followed by numerous other translations, such as Osiander the Elder’s 1522 revision

<sup>18</sup> For the high-level production of incunabula Bibles, of Dutch and of French Bibles see Paul Needham, ‘The changing shape of the Vulgate Bible in fifteenth-century printing shops’, in Paul Henry Saenger and Kimberly Van Kampen (eds), *The Bible as book: the first printed editions*, London 1999, 53–70; August den Hollander, ‘Illustrations in early printed Latin Bibles in the Low Countries (1477–1553)’, in Bruce Gordon and Matthew McLean (eds), *Shaping the Bible in the Reformation: books, scholars, and their readers in the sixteenth century*, Leiden 2012, 41–61; Bettye Chambers, ‘What ever happened to sola scriptura? Text and paratext in sixteenth-century French Bibles’, in Francois and den Hollander, *Infant milk or hardy nourishment?*, 141–66; and Bettye Thomas Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles: fifteenth and sixteenth century French language editions of the Scriptures*, Geneva 1983.

of the Vulgate, Pagninus' 1528 Latin literal translation or Sebastian Münster's 1534–5 new translation from the Hebrew.<sup>19</sup> Berthelet's Bible preserved the traditional Latin of the Vulgate. This was not a question of technology, nor of a lack of knowledge, as these Bibles were well known in England. Nor was it a clear confessional matter. Although Münster was of the Swiss Reform tradition, Pagninus was a Dominican, and the costs of his Bible were underwritten by Leo x, the dedicatee of Erasmus' New Testament (the fifth and last edition of which also appeared in 1535). More important, the Vulgate was not ignored in strongholds of Reform. As has been shown by Bruce Gordon, the Vulgate was revised in Swiss cities, but still remained authoritative.<sup>20</sup> New translations were not seen to replace the Vulgate: the former were used for scholarship by an educated elite, while the latter was still employed in the liturgy and by the less-educated. Gordon even traces plans to prepare a new reformed Latin translation in England during the reign of Edward vi, an attempt curbed, as 'England possessed neither the depth of scholarship nor the printing resources adequate to such a gargantuan endeavour'.<sup>21</sup> The choice of the Vulgate for Berthelet's Bible reveals its affiliation and intended use: it could appeal to both reformed<sup>22</sup> and conservative audiences; it was not meant to facilitate advanced biblical exegesis, but was rather created with a more liturgical use in mind, a use which in 1535 England still relied solely on the text of the Vulgate.

The Bible's reading aids are also inferior when compared to continental models, and would have inhibited more sophisticated exegetical use. On the Continent biblical summaries, concordances and reading aids became the norm. Our Bible, on the other hand, provides only one table, the *Tabula historiarum*, which occupies eight folios (signatures A1–A4, B1–B4). The truncated title makes its identification difficult, but a comparison with other Bibles reveals it to be the *Tabula alphabetica historiarum Bible* of Gabriele Bruno Veneto. Printed for the first time in Venice in 1490, it became popular in editions of the Vulgate well into the sixteenth century. A comparison between the table from its creation to 1535 reveals something of Berthelet's intentions. Each version of the table that I was

<sup>19</sup> Bruce Gordon, 'The authority of antiquity: England and the Protestant Latin Bible', in Polly Ha and Patrick Collinson (eds), *The reception of continental Reformation in Britain*, Oxford 2010, 1–22; Josef Eskhult, 'Latin Bible versions in the age of Reformation and post-Reformation: on the development of new Latin versions of the Old Testament in Hebrew and on the Vulgate as revised and evaluated among the Protestants', *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift* cvi/1 (2006), 31–67.

<sup>20</sup> Gordon, 'The authority of antiquity'.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 4.

<sup>22</sup> In this respect it is interesting to look at Josef Eskhult's measuring stick for reformed Vulgates, which often replace the 'ipsa' of Genesis iii.15 with 'ipse' or 'ipsum'. Berthelet's Bible indeed reads 'ipsum', but this is most likely the result of a close reliance on his models (such as the 1526 Antwerp or the Venice 1533 editions).



able to inspect (Basle 1491; Venice 1492, 1494, 1496, 1497, 1498; Lyon 1497, 1519; Paris 1504, 1507, 1512, 1520, 1534; Nuremberg 1516) preserves the table's rubric, which identifies its author, scope and methodology ('A reverendo in sacra scriptura magistro Gabriele bruno veneto ordinis minorum. Ministro prouincie terre sancte'). On its own, the table appears to be a tool for navigating the biblical text. Its rubric, however, links it to the very core of Catholic practice, the Franciscans and their role as custodians of the Holy Land. By removing the rubric, the table – much like the Bible as a whole – was detached from its Catholic roots.<sup>23</sup>

The table was further modified in Berthelet's Bible. It was truncated, omitting entries from books that do not appear in the Berthelet Bible (thus narrowing its scope, as, for example, the entries for 'A' came down from 130 to 90). An analysis of the table's entries reveals blind copying, and assists in establishing the Bible's model. It is unlikely that Berthelet had used any of the early Venetian incunabula Bibles, which were the first to incorporate Veneto's table. These provided a slightly abbreviated version of table that omits some of its entries and begins with *Abel*.<sup>24</sup> French Vulgates printed in the 1520s and 1530s contain a slightly more elaborate table which begins with *Aaron* and thus constitute an obvious model for Berthelet's table.<sup>25</sup>

Subdivisions and marginal references further assist in establishing the model for Berthelet's Bible. While the 'modern' chapter division was introduced in the early thirteenth century, verse division was not integrated into Bibles before the second half of the sixteenth century. In their stead, a subdivision – indicated by marginal letters A-D/A-G – facilitated navigation. Unlike the later uniform system of verses, subdivisions differed across Bibles and fluctuated across editions. Often printers did not seek to modify marginal cross-references, preferring to blind-copy them from their models, even when such copying had inhibited accuracy. These minute elements can therefore assist in the identification of Berthelet's model. Printed Bibles, either in quarto or folio from Basle, Paris, Venice and Antwerp present subdivisions and marginal references that are

<sup>23</sup> The process of blurring confessional boundaries by removing or modifying biblical addenda can also be seen elsewhere in the history of the English Bible, as, for example, in the omission of the general prologue from most Wycliffite Bibles: Eyal Poleg, 'Wycliffite Bibles as orthodoxy', in Sabrina Corbellini (ed.), *Instructing the soul, feeding the spirit and awakening the passion: cultures of religious reading in the late Middle Ages*, Turnhout 2013, 71–91.

<sup>24</sup> This is evident in Bibles such as the *Biblia cum tabula noviter edita*, Venice 1494, or the *Biblia cum summaris concordantiis: diuisionibus: quattuor repertoriis ppositis*, Lyons 1497.

<sup>25</sup> Berthelet's references to subdivision of the Psalms further limit the possible models, as these were not ubiquitous in editions of Bruni's table. A possible model is *Biblia sacra*, Paris: I. Preuel, 20 June 1528.

markedly different from the ones employed by Berthelet.<sup>26</sup> Marginal references and subdivisions identical to Berthelet's are found in an unexpected place. Among the variety of Latin Bibles printed on the Continent, there is a discernible group of small duodecimo Bibles in multiple volumes, printed in Roman type in Venice, Paris and Antwerp. These tiny Bibles (the smallest in their time) constitute a unique and identifiable group, with their own distinct paratextual devices. And it is the marginal references and subdivisions of this group which are identical to the ones used by Berthelet.<sup>27</sup> Much like Berthelet's Bibles, these duodecimo Bibles contain little additional material, typically Jerome's general prologues and a table of readings for the New Testament. This was clearly a question of size. Small Bibles were bound in multiple volumes, and cross-Bible aids would have therefore been ill-employed. Such books were not foreign to England at the time. The record of 13 January 1535 for parcels delivered to Henry VIII's court at Westminster by Mr Norres indicates 'Eight little books of the Bible', perfectly matching the type of continental books in question.<sup>28</sup>

A reliance on duodecimo volumes helps to explain another of the Bible's features. The most uncommon facet of Berthelet's Bible is its contents. It holds only some of the books of the Bible: the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, the Psalms, Proverbs, Wisdom and the entire New Testament. While divisions of Bibles were common throughout the Middle Ages and early modernity, these have followed biblical or thematic sequences, which are lacking from Berthelet's Bible. I have yet to find a single Bible which replicates Berthelet's sequence of books.<sup>29</sup> A comparison with the duodecimo volumes helps to explain part of this choice. It relies heavily on specific volumes, while omitting others altogether. This is evident in a comparison with the Parisian 1525–9 Bible: the Pentateuch, Joshua and Judges comprise volume i almost in its entirety (omitting Ruth); the Psalms are volume iii; the works of Solomon volume iv; and the New Testament volumes vii–viii. Thus, Berthelet's Bible omits volumes ii

<sup>26</sup> Generally, incunabula often omit marginal references, while some Parisian larger Bibles display a very full array of notes, references, summaries and etymologies.

<sup>27</sup> This has been corroborated through the examination of sample chapters across duodecimo Bibles, commonly catalogued as, for example, *Pentateuchus Moysi ... Apocalypsis beati Ioannis*, Venice: L. Iunte, 1533–8; Paris: S. Colinaei, 1525–9; Paris: S. Colinaei, 1531–5.

<sup>28</sup> *Letters and papers, foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII: preserved in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, and elsewhere in England*, ed. James Gairdner, VIII: January–July 1535, London 1885, §44. This could be British Library copy 219.a.15–20 (printed in Paris, 1525–9), which was part of the royal collection in the eighteenth century.

<sup>29</sup> This has been corroborated by examination of works and catalogues of continental Bibles such as Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles*, or the websites of *Biblia sacra*, [www.bibliasacra.nl](http://www.bibliasacra.nl); the British Library Catalogue, <http://explore.bl.uk>; or the Incunabula Short Title Catalogue, <http://istc.bl.uk>.

(History), v and vi (Prophets and Maccabees) altogether, while employing all or most of the remaining volumes.

The details of the Bible's order can be explained by its continental model. The sequence of its books was unique even for its creators, who had anticipated objections. The 'Epistle to the reader' addresses this explicitly by raising – and then confronting – an objection:

We are anxious lest this alteration of the order of the books shall insufficiently please you, pious reader (who perhaps is religious), as it shall withdraw from the order of books (both sacred or traditional ones), or a little from ancient appearance if not from the customary form. If you shall look into our mind in this issue and at the cause of this change, you shall think without doubt that this is laudable and made by right.<sup>30</sup>

The reader is assured of the orthodox nature of the Bible and is informed of the printer's desire to publish the remaining books ('And we do not disregard other parts, lest anyone may rightly estimate that we have neglected or made [these] insignificant, but we have also put together these in another rightful volume: so that in that place it shall demand that we shall inquire into that accusation.').<sup>31</sup> This intention was implicitly made on the Bible's title page, which presents the book as a first volume ('*Sacrae Bibliae tomus primus in quo continentur*'), an assertion replicated in modern catalogues, albeit often with the addition – as in the British Library's catalogue record – of 'General note: No more published'.

A second volume of the Latin Bible was never published, and a closer analysis reveals that it had not been planned. The order of books and the structure of quires does not support the later integration of additional materials. Non-sequential books appear in the same quire, and the transition between Wisdom and the New Testament occurs on the same folio. This would have made it impossible to re-bind any new materials with the existing first volume while preserving the order of biblical books. Adding a second volume would have been cumbersome and illogical, necessarily breaking away from historical and doctrinal sequence (for example, presenting parts of the Old Testament after the New, detaching Ruth from Judges or the Song of Songs from the writings of Solomon). It would have also made redundant both the 'Epistle to the reader' and the prefatory Table, as they allude to an incomplete Bible. It is more

<sup>30</sup> 'Subveremur autem ut ordinis librorum isthec immutatio pie lector tibi minus arideat, cui fortasse religio est, ut in literis, saltem sacris aut earundem etiam ordine vel tantillum ab antiqua facie seu usitata forma recedat. Qui si mentem in hac re nostram et causam immutationis huius introspexeris, non dubium quin probabilem et iure factam esse censueris.'

<sup>31</sup> 'Neque enim alias partes ita seposuimus, ut neglexisse vel minoris fecisse quis recte debeat estimare, sed & ipsas in aliud iustum volumen compegimus: ut ubi locus id postularit, quod querendum sit illic inquiramus.'

likely that a second volume was a vague intention from the outset, without any concrete attempts at publication.<sup>32</sup> This accords with the choice of books, comprising the ‘best of’ the Bible and avoiding more contentious biblical books.<sup>33</sup> It encompasses all the key components of the biblical text: from the historical events of the Pentateuch, through the omnipresence of the Psalms, to the salvation history and doctrine of the New Testament. As the Psalms and the New Testament constitute the backbone of the liturgy – the former in chant, the latter in biblical lessons – such an abbreviated volume was ideal for non-scholarly readers. It also accords with other indicators of Berthelet’s production, which differed from continental Bibles. Much like the printing in quarto (the only size, alongside octavo, for books printed by Berthelet at the time<sup>34</sup>) or the recycling of title page and illuminated initials, the brevity of the book supports Berthelet’s limited abilities, suggesting that he was not capable of printing a fuller, and more elaborate, Bible. The physical features of the Bible are thus indicative of English printing at the time. The English Reformation depended on mainland Europe for spreading its ideas through a constant stream of imported books.<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile, the contents and language of the Bible are indicative of a turbulent year in the reign of Henry VIII and in the course of the English Reformation.

### *Context and reception*

The production of Berthelet’s Bible was marked by limitations and uncertainties. The result is a Bible that is neither one thing nor the other. It is not a reformed Bible, nor is it a definitively Catholic one, as is indicated in the dissociation of its table from its Franciscan origins. The choice of translation and books suggests a liturgical use, rather than an exegetical one, but it lacks any clear liturgical addenda such as table of lections or hymns. Despite Henry’s supposed authorship of the ‘Epistle to the reader’, it is not clearly attributed to him. The reasons for Henry’s wavering

<sup>32</sup> This inability becomes clearer when compared to the 1477 Delft Bible, where five independent composition units gave readers a degree of flexibility in compiling their Bibles. See Mart van Duijn, ‘Printing, public, and power: shaping the first printed Bible in Dutch (1477)’, *Church History & Religious Culture* xciii/2 (2013), 275–99.

<sup>33</sup> On the question of the biblical canon in early modern England see Ariel Hessayon, ‘The Apocrypha in early modern England’, in Killeen, Smith and Willie, *The Oxford handbook of the Bible in England*, 131–48.

<sup>34</sup> The only exception is royal proclamations, which were printed in folio, but were limited in their number of leaves and technique of printing.

<sup>35</sup> See, mainly for the later period, Julian Roberts, ‘The Latin trade’, in John Barnard and Donald Francis McKenzie (eds), *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain*, IV: 1557–1695, Cambridge 2002, 141–73.

attitudes towards this Bible, whose production is described in the ‘Epistle’ as a delight (‘deliciis’), become clear when we compare it with other Bibles linked to Henry. Coverdale’s Bible, regardless of the clandestine circumstances of its production, was more suitable as a royal book with its large format, higher quality of production, and – most important – its illustrated title page and visual manifestation of the benevolent monarch, reflecting the words of the ‘Epistle to the reader’. This approach is also evident in the title page of the Great Bible of 1539 (*RSTC* 2068), which portrays the enthroned Henry in all his magnificence, distributing Bibles to laymen and clerics. As demonstrated by Tatiana String, Henry employed this image to further the royal cause, and fully understood the intricacies of visual propaganda.<sup>36</sup> With such awareness of the value of the Bible as a symbolic object, it is of little wonder that Henry hesitated to endorse Berthelet’s Bible fully, especially when Coverdale’s Bible manifested – in image and object, more than language and text – the possibilities open to him.

The indecisiveness evident in Berthelet’s Bible mirrors the time of its production. In the course of the English Reformation, 1535 marks a move away from traditional religion. The previous year had seen the royal mandate for visiting religious houses, alongside the Act of Supremacy, which clarified the authority of Henry VIII over religious matters in England. Early in 1535 Cromwell was appointed royal vicegerent, or vicar-general. He initiated the visitations of religious houses that eventually led to the suppression of small monasteries the following year. Opposition was met with vehement response, employing oaths in support of the Act of Succession as a litmus test. The refusal of John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Thomas More, formerly lord chancellor, to take the oath had led to their execution in the summer of 1535.

Berthelet was not oblivious to this religious turmoil. As Royal Printer he printed in 1535 *A proclamation concerninge heresie* (*RSTC* 7785) in which Henry attacked Reformers who re-baptised, denied transubstantiation and ‘holde and teche other dyuers and sondry pestilent heresies agaynste god and his holy scriptures ... The kynge’s mooste royall maiestie, beyng Supreme heed in erthe under god of the churche of Englande’, requiring them to leave the realm within twelve days on pain of death. Nevertheless, the year before the printing of the Bible saw a greater demand for Bibles in England. In December 1534 the English higher clergy in the Synod of Canterbury, under Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, petitioned Henry for an

<sup>36</sup> Tatiana String, ‘Henry VIII’s illuminated “Great Bible”’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* lix (1996), 315–24. For the title page and its illuminator see Myra Dickman Orth, ‘The English Great Bible of 1539 and the French connection’, in J. J. G. Alexander, Susan L’Engle and Gerald B. Guest (eds), *Tributes to Jonathan J. G. Alexander: the making and meaning of illuminated medieval & Renaissance manuscripts, art & architecture*, London 2006, 171–84.

English Bible, and an early attempt at producing one followed.<sup>37</sup> Berthelet's Bible partially answered this call by producing the best Bible that he could, one appropriate to Henry's wavering attitude towards Reform. Injunctions made in 1535, as in those for all religious houses now under the authority of Henry, still specified the need to read the Bible, inevitably in Latin.<sup>38</sup> Even when Henry began to accept the arguments for a Bible in English, this was to stand alongside a Latin counterpart. In Cromwell's injunctions of August 1536 it was explicitly stated 'that every parson, or proprietary of any parish church within this realm, shall on this side the feast of St. Peter ad Vincula next coming, provide a book of the whole Bible, both in Latin, and also in English'.<sup>39</sup> When these injunctions were reissued in 1538 only an English Bible was required.<sup>40</sup> Still, the Latin spirit lingered. Cranmer's 1538 injunctions for his diocese ordered each church to have 'a whole Bible in Latin and English, or at the least a New Testament of both the same languages'.<sup>41</sup> Such injunctions accord with Berthelet's Bible and its fitness for public worship in late Henrician England. This impression is supported by patterns of usage evident in extant copies.

Berthelet's Bible survives in seven copies, three of which lack preliminary materials.<sup>42</sup> Their marks and marginal annotations reveal the world of sixteenth-century readers, who reacted to the hesitant nature of this Bible. The book's lack of any clear religious affiliation allowed it to be used by a variety of readers across the religious spectrum, which accords with Christopher Haigh's view of multiple reformations, especially as subsequent scholars employed this concept in their investigation of boundaries of

<sup>37</sup> Alfred W. Pollard, *Records of the English Bible: the documents relating to the translation and publication of the Bible in English, 1525-1611*, London 1911, 175-7.

<sup>38</sup> Gilbert Burnet and Edward Nares (eds), *The history of the Reformation of the Church of England*, London 1830, 218.

<sup>39</sup> *Visitation articles and injunctions of the period of the Reformation*, II: 1536-1558, ed. Walter Howard Frere and William McClure Kennedy, London 1910, 9. For a reappraisal of the time of the injunctions, suggesting 1537 for the incorporation of the clause on Bible possession, see Paul Ayriss, 'Reformation in action: the implementation of reform in the dioceses of England', *Reformation & Renaissance Review: Journal of the Society for Reformation Studies* v/1 (2003), 27-53. This is refuted by Richard Rex: *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, 190-1 n. 28.

<sup>40</sup> *Visitation articles and injunctions of the period of the Reformation*, ii. 35.

<sup>41</sup> Burnet and Nares, *The history of the reformation of the Church of England*, 182.

<sup>42</sup> These are British Library C.36.e.19 (full); Lambeth Palace Library, Sion ARC 80 / A12.2/1535 (full); Lambeth Palace Library, SR2 E75 (1535) (full); Cambridge University Library, Sel.5.176) (full); Bodleian Library, Oxford, 4° B 1 Th.BS (lacking preliminaries); Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, BRA2776 (lacking preliminaries and Genesis i-viii); a copy sold in the Harmsworth sale of 8 July 1946 to Quaritch Booksellers, which I can now confirm is at the American Bible Society. I was unable to inspect the two last copies in person.

gender, class, religion and literacy.<sup>43</sup> Two surviving copies of Berthelet's Bible – devoid of readers' annotations – are ascribed to patrons at the heart of religious turmoils. The British Library copy shows little to no signs of use; it has been traced by James Carley to none other than Henry VIII himself.<sup>44</sup> It was described in the 1542 inventory of books in the Upper Library at Westminster (no. 446), as 'Primus tomus Bibliae impressus a Thoma Berthelet', and its identity reaffirmed by the British Museum stamp, indicative of George II's 1757 bequest to the British Museum.<sup>45</sup> This consolidates the link between the Bible and Henry. However, the volume lacks the grandeur evident in presentation Bibles (such as the hand-painted vellum copy of the Great Bible [BL, C.18.d.10]) so that there is some doubt as to whether it was ever officially endorsed by Henry, or formally presented to him. Another renowned patron is allegedly linked to the Sion copy in Lambeth Palace Library. This again is a predominantly unmarked copy, which bears the sign of the seventeenth-century Durdans Library, later given to Sion College. A signature on the title page invokes Bishop Hugh Latimer (†1555), bishop of Worcester and one of the Marian Martyrs. However, a comparison with Latimer's verified autograph reveals this to be spurious.

Further information on less prominent readers is evident in the Bodleian copy. This was bound in early modernity using parchment from a high medieval Psalter (verses from Psalms xxiv and liii are visible near the front pastedown; of Psalms xciii and cii near the back). This suggests access to medieval manuscripts, though not necessarily a break with medieval tradition.<sup>46</sup> The book's annotations reveal signs of early engagement with the Bible. On the back paper pastedown a confident cursive sixteenth-century hand provides a table of contents, with special attention to the Gospels and Epistles. This is preceded by 'Dominus vobiscum et cum spiritu tuo',<sup>47</sup> giving clear evidence of Catholic phraseology, if not affiliation. A religious house, studium or university college are natural hubs for such an engagement with the text and access to earlier manuscripts. This

<sup>43</sup> Christopher Haigh, *English reformations: religion, politics, and society under the Tudors*, Oxford 1993.

<sup>44</sup> James Carley, *The libraries of Henry VIII: corpus of British medieval library catalogues*, London 2000, 95.

<sup>45</sup> This is the typical octagonal blue British Museum stamp on the verso of the first folio: P. R. Harris, 'Appendix 1: identification of printed books acquired by the British Museum, 1753–1836', in Giles Mandelbrote and Barry Taylor (eds), *Libraries within the library: the origins of the British Library's printed collections*, London 2009, 387–423.

<sup>46</sup> Using scrap manuscripts in rebinding, even ones taken from a sacred book, was a common practice throughout the Middle Ages.

<sup>47</sup> The continuation is blurred, but most probably reads 'Sursum corda. Habemus ad Dominum. Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro', the Salutations before the prefaces of the mass.

affiliation and use, however, was short-lived. Later readers have left their marks on this copy of the Bible, providing evidence of a more secular context. Doodles on the back and front pages comprise pen-tests and signatures, noting ‘William Beale is good man’ and ‘John Thomas’ on the last page. The names of Edward and Peregrine Aldryche appear on a few pages in the book. The nature of Edward’s script and its lack of uniformity (fos 152v, 153r, 184v) suggest that these were children practising their signatures, most probably the children of George Aldriche Esq., who were naturalised in June 1604.<sup>48</sup>

Another copy exhibiting early Catholic affiliation is kept in Cambridge University Library. A sixteenth-century reader, in a competent and cursive hand, marked sections of interest, underlining them and writing ‘nota’ in the margins. The knowledge of the reader, and his<sup>49</sup> reliance on the *Glossa ordinaria* are evident in his comment on the cryptic verse of Genesis iv.7 at fo. 2v (‘If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? but if ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door? but the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it.’), stating ‘Nota habet arbitrii’ (‘Note: He has dominion’), a summary of the relevant gloss to the passage.<sup>50</sup> The religious affiliation of this (and of a subsequent) reader, is manifested on the title page. The name of the reader and the Holy Name of Jesus (IHS) were inscribed below the book’s title, crossed out by a later hand.<sup>51</sup> The crossing makes the ownership mark less legible. Its probable reconstruction is ‘Hic liber Thome Atkinson | ex [libris] Magistri Wi[l]hemi White’.<sup>52</sup> Thomas Atkinson and William White are indeed recorded in mid sixteenth-century Cambridge. The former received his BA in 1541/2 and his MA in 1547 from Trinity College, where he was a Fellow from 1546.<sup>53</sup> He displayed a strong Catholic affiliation during Nicholas Ridley’s visitation of the University in June 1549. During that visitation, Atkinson’s colleague and fellow Catholic Thomas Vavasour refuted Ridley’s arguments

<sup>48</sup> ‘House of Lords Journal volume 2: 16 June 1604’, *Journal of the House of Lords*, II: 1578–1614, London 1767–1830, 321–2, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/lords-jrnl/vol2/pp321-322>.

<sup>49</sup> Given the gender-bias of Latin literacy and knowledge of biblical exegesis, it was most probably a male reader.

<sup>50</sup> Interlinear gloss to Gen. iv.7: Karlfried Froehlich and Margaret T. Gibson (eds), *Biblia latina cum glossa ordinaria: facsimile reprint of the editio princeps Adolph Rusch of Strassburg, 1480/81*, Turnhout 1992, i. 31.

<sup>51</sup> On the English pre-Reformation veneration of the Holy Name see Rob Lutton, ‘“Love this Name that is IHC”: vernacular prayers, hymns and lyrics to the Holy Name of Jesus in pre-Reformation England’, in Elisabeth Salter and Helen Wicker (eds), *Vernacularity in England and Wales, c. 1300–1550*, Turnhout 2011, 119–45.

<sup>52</sup> The reader’s last name is unfortunately the least legible word, with only the last three letters transcribed with full confidence.

<sup>53</sup> ACAD: a Cambridge alumni database, <http://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk>, unique identifier ATKN541T.



using the biblical story of Adam's rib (Genesis ii.21–3), the same chapter that is marked with an underline and a *nota* in this Bible as well.<sup>54</sup> The Magister is possibly William White, whose time in Cambridge spanned nearly thirty years. He was ordained as dean in Cambridge in 1510, and was warden of the Dominican order at the time of the Dissolution in 1538.<sup>55</sup>

It is of little wonder that Catholic sympathisers found a use for a Latin Bible, even a partial one and one weakly linked to Henry VIII. However, hidden annotations in another copy of this Bible move away from a clear Catholic affiliation and into the liturgy of last years of Henry VIII's reign. At first glance, Lambeth Palace's second copy, SR2 E75 (1535), appears to be a 'clean' copy, lacking virtually any marginal annotations. However, a more detailed examination reveals that heavy paper was carefully pasted over blank parts of the book, hiding densely annotated spaces. Backlight and long exposures assisted in bringing the annotations to view, which were then digitally subtracted from the printed text (see fig. 2).<sup>56</sup> Once revealed, the annotations are shown to be in two main hands that can be dated to the mid-sixteenth century. The bulk of the annotation is in a single hand, and appears on the blank verso of the title page and in the empty spaces at the bottom of *Pio lectori*, at the end of the Tabula (sig. B4v) and at the beginning of Genesis (fo. 1r). It consists of a table of liturgical lessons – linking biblical episodes with divine worship. Each entry supplies the two biblical readings for a given liturgical occasion: Epistles (commonly the New Testament Epistles, but at times from other biblical books) and Gospels. It is written continuously, starting with the first Sunday of Lent, and identifies each biblical reading by chapter, subdivision and incipit. A typical entry reads: 'On the iij Sunday [of Lent] | [E]phe. v. a. be ye therfore follo. | Lk. xi. b. and he was casting out', referring to Ephesians v.1 and Luke xi.14.<sup>57</sup>

The table of lessons manifests the affinity between Berthelet's Bible and the performance of the liturgy. The obvious, however, should not be disregarded. While the Bible is in Latin, the table of lessons is in English. It is clearly based on the table of lections in the Great Bible of 1539, the first to promulgate widely such an English table of lessons, following the Use of Sarum. There, the entry for the 3rd Sunday in Lent reads: 'Be ye therefore the Ephe. v.a | And he was castynge out Luke. xi. b'. The table was reprinted in Great Bibles throughout the 1540s, and can assist in dating the

<sup>54</sup> Richard Rex, 'Thomas Vavasour', *Recusant History* xx (1990–1), 436–54.

<sup>55</sup> John R. H. Moorman, *The Grey Friars in Cambridge, 1225–1538*, Cambridge 1952, 222–3.

<sup>56</sup> This was done by Dr Graham Davis, Institute of Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London. A short article on this work will be published in due course.

<sup>57</sup> The verso of the title page (unfoliated). The binding prevents the identification of some letters in the gutter.

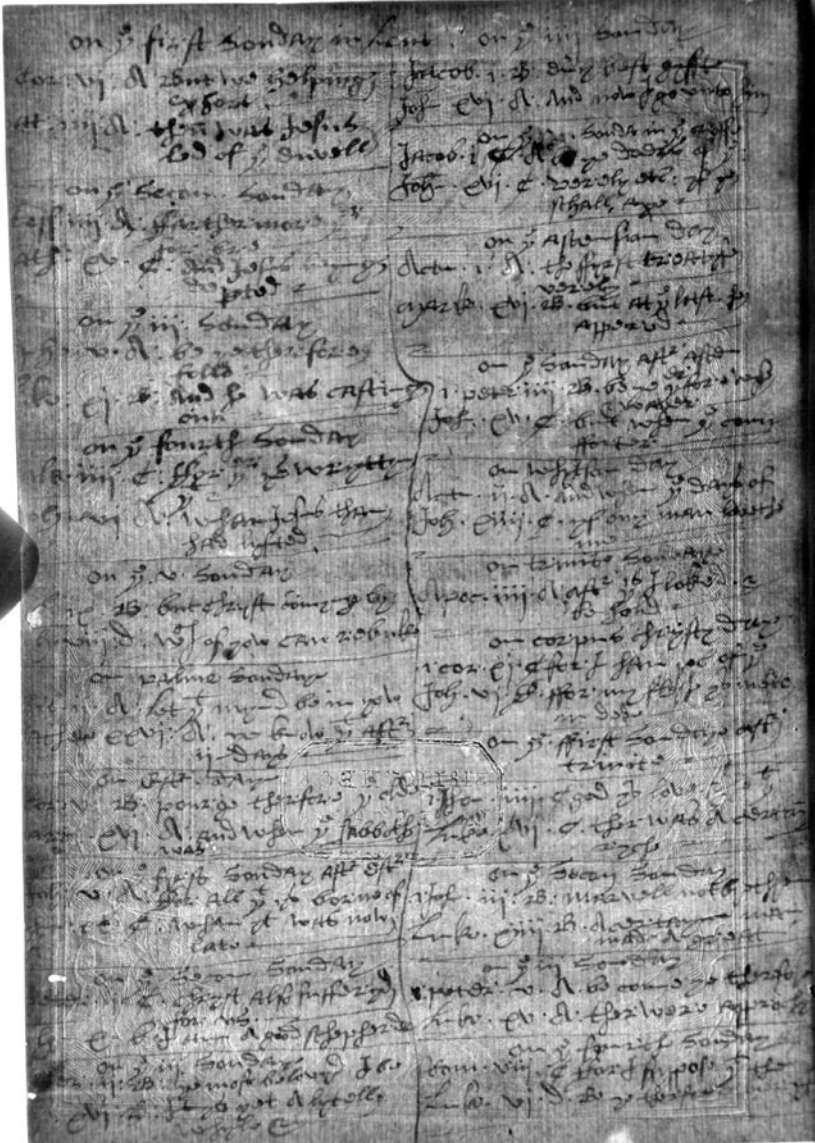


Figure 2. Title page, *Sacrae Bibliae tomus primus in quo continentur...* (Berthelet: London, July 1535), Lambeth Palace Library copy SR2 E75. Digitally restored table of lessons on blank verso © Lambeth Palace Library, London

Lambeth annotations. They cannot have been made before the printing of the Great Bible in 1539.<sup>58</sup> Nor could they have been used after the introduction of the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549, which ushered in a table of lections slightly different from the one preserved in the Lambeth copy of Berthelet's Bible.<sup>59</sup> The later table of lections appeared in subsequent reprints of the English Bible, as, for example, the 1551 printing of the Great Bible (*RSTC* 2088). Thus, while both earlier Bibles refer to 'Palm Sunday', the Book of Common Prayer and subsequent prints refer to 'Sunday before Easter'; while the earlier table has only one communion at Easter, the later has two. As the Great Bible's original table of lections became obsolete with the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549, it is evident that the table in the Lambeth copy was written between 1539 and 1549.

The Lambeth copy sheds light on late Henrician liturgy. It reveals the practice that followed legislation, and shows how the Latin Bible was chanted in accordance with the new English liturgy. It cannot reflect the letter of Cromwell's legislation, which may have been linked to the production of Berthelet's book. Cromwell's original injunction for a Latin and English Bible to be used together was modified in his legislation of 1538 (later reaffirmed in a royal injunction of 5 May 1541), for all parish churches to possess a copy of (solely) an English Bible.<sup>60</sup> However, the removal of Latin from the injunctions did not necessarily reflect its removal from living liturgy. This was surely the case for cathedrals and collegiate churches, where the liturgy was still chanted in Latin, as is evident from Cranmer's 1538 injunctions.<sup>61</sup> The inclusion of an English table of lections in a Latin Bible reveals how the Latin Bible was made to accommodate the new religious environment, moving away from a dichotomous view of Latin and English, conservatism and reform. Even where the liturgy was chanted in Latin it did not simply continue old devotions. Rather, it adhered to the most updated liturgical order, preserving language but reforming practice.

The subsequent life of the book can be reconstructed with some accuracy. Shortly after the table of lections was written, the Bible had left its ecclesiastical abode. Another mid sixteenth-century hand on the last folio

<sup>58</sup> The slightly earlier lists of biblical readings known as 'Pistles and Gospels' (incorporated into primers from 1537) differ from this table in both form and language. These lists provide full biblical text, rather than reference and incipit; they rely on Tyndale's New Testament, whose wording deviates from that of the Great Bible and the Lambeth copy. For a study of the 'Pistles and Gospels' see Charles C. Butterworth, *The English primers, 1529–1545: their publication and connection with the English Bible and the Reformation in England*, Philadelphia 1953.

<sup>59</sup> *The booke of the common praier and administracion of the Sacramentes, and other rites and ceremonies of the Church: after the use of the Church of Englande*, London 1549.

<sup>60</sup> *Tudor royal proclamations*, i. 296–8.

<sup>61</sup> See n. 41 above.

noted a transaction between two laymen. It was not possible to trace the first person – one William Cheffyn(?) of Bolengate (Calais). The other, however, had a more peculiar name – James Elys of London Cutpurse – which proved to be an accurate description. James Elys was indeed hanged at Tyborne on 11 July 1552. He was described in Henry Machyn's diary as 'the great pykke-purs that ever was, and cutt-purs'.<sup>62</sup> The death of 'Mr Cutpurse' provides a *terminus ad quem* for the annotation, confirming that it was written before 1552, a mere seventeen years after the printing of the Bible, and three years after the table of lections had become redundant. The use of Latin within the English liturgy was indeed short-lived. The last reader to leave his mark on the Bible attempted to wipe the slate clean by pasting heavy paper over all the annotations. This, much like the crossing out of Atkinson's name in the Cambridge copy, demonstrates how a later reader thought to transform the book once more in testimony to modified religious and cultural sensitivities. In comparison with the crossing-out of Atkinson's name and affiliation, the pasted paper is simultaneously a more and a less efficient way of obliterating the memory of previous readers. It gives the appearance of a 'clean' copy, and without the digital technology would have succeeded in hiding the annotation. However, the new technology allows a more complete and accurate view of the annotations. Unlike the crossing out of names, paper could be analysed and dated. It is possible to view two parts of a watermark on the pasted paper, on the verso of the first and last folios of the biblical text (fos 1v, 303v). The watermark is of a single-handed pot with flowers on top, inscribed with 'PD | B', similar to watermarks found in paper used in England between 1580 and 1610.<sup>63</sup> This created a window of opportunities lasting some sixty years from print to pasting, for readers to leave their marks in the book.

The study of Berthelet's Bible reveals something of the less well-known Latin facet of the English Reformation. History is written by the victors, and the Englishness of the early modern Bible has left little space for much else. This direction was far from evident in 1535. A well-informed royal printer employed his best, though limited, efforts to produce a Latin Bible, initially supported by Henry himself. The end-product was a

<sup>62</sup> *The diary of Henry Machyn, citizen and merchant-taylor of London, from A. D. 1550 to A. D. 1563*, ed. John Gough Nichols (Camden O.S. xlii, 1848), 21–2.

<sup>63</sup> Although I was unable to find an exact match, the watermark is very similar to the ones used in 1583–99: C. M. Briquet and Allan Stevenson, *Les Filigranes: dictionnaire historique des marques du papier dâes leur apparition vers 1282 jusqu'en 1600*, facsimile of 1907 edn, Amsterdam 1968, §12793; in 1590: Folger Shakespeare Library L.a. 432; or c. 1607: Edward Heawood, *Watermarks mainly of the 17th and 18th centuries*, Hilversum 1950, §3576. This coincides with the possible dating of the Lambeth Palace Library copy, suggesting that the paper was pasted in the early seventeenth century by the librarian of Lambeth Palace. I thank James Carley for this suggestion.

book devoid of a clear religious affiliation. Its existence accorded with early legislation, which explicitly stated the need for both Latin and English Bibles in churches. Such a harmonious use was not merely theoretical, nor limited to the 1530s. As the digital analysis of one copy reveals, an English table of lections facilitated Latin chant according to the new English order in the 1540s. Some aspects of the English Reformation defy the dichotomies of Latin-English and Catholic-Protestant, as is evident in this unique merging of Latin and English. However, as the Bible was used by Catholic recusants, or passed from religious houses to lay hands, it serves also as a testimony to religious controversies and change. With the ascent of Edward VI, and in full vigour during the reign of Elizabeth, little space was left for a Latin Bible. It was employed by Catholic recusants, but also found its way into the hands of children, laymen and criminals. Its past was crossed-out or pasted over, so that it could adjust to a new religious environment and its sensitivities.

1535 marks a watershed in the history of the English Bible. At first glance, Berthelet's Bible seems removed from any transformation, an archaic remnant washed aside in the surge of the English Reformation. However, as the comparison with continental Bibles reveal, Reform and the Vulgate were not necessarily opposing forces. The volume of Vulgates printed in Zurich or Basle reveals that different Bibles were devised to fill different aims, and that a gap was created between educated and laity, between liturgy and study, even among those opposed to the Catholic Church. The reception of Berthelet's Bible reveals that at the end of Henry's reign reform was anything but a singular movement. In 1535 English was far from the only language for disseminating the Word of God. The hidden table of lessons in the Lambeth copy testifies that this did not change radically until the death of Henry. English and Latin liturgies converged in the 1540s, and we now have unique evidence demonstrating how this was done. This plurality proved to be temporary. As English became of prime importance, the Latin Bible found its way into the hands of Catholic recusants, crooks and children. It was thus that the other 1535 Bible took prominence. But these two contemporary Bibles do not stand in opposition to one another. They both aimed to answer the desire for the greater circulation of Bibles in England; they both promulgate the link between Crown and Bible; and they both testify to the state of English printing. The limited capacities of the King's Printer suggest that Coverdale's reasons for printing his Bible abroad were not only theological. The modesty and language of Berthelet's Bible have kept the first Bible printed in England out of sight.