Introduction

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All of the research in this volume has its origin in an international conference hosted by Union Theological College, Belfast, in September 2022 – 'Martin Luther. Bible Translator, Illustrator and Publisher: 500 Years'. The occasion for the conference was the quincentennial of Luther's September Testament, first put on sale at the Leipzig autumn fair in 1522. The 500th anniversary of this early-modern publishing sensation presented a valuable opportunity to commemorate the event and to probe both its early influence and more enduring effects. An international group of scholars with an interest in the venture gathered to examine these matters, while accompanying exhibitions and activities made the conference themes accessible to a broader constituency both locally and remotely.

In the run-up to the conference, a series of online exhibitions, curated by the College Librarian, Joy Conkey, explored key themes associated with the forthcoming conference and physical exhibition, featuring Bibles and other publications from the Gamble Library's special collections. The following subjects were documented: Luther and Bible Translation; The Bible in English up to the Geneva Bible; The King James Bible; The Bible in Gaelic; The Bible in Scots and Ulster-Scots; and Books which Explain the Bible.

To coincide with the conference, a physical exhibition was also mounted in the Gamble Library and included important artefacts on loan from other libraries as well as rare items from the Gamble's special collections (see Figure 0.1).

Figure 0.1: 1579 *Bassandyne Bible*, the Gamble Library's oldest Geneva Bible.[1]

The conference itself began by considering how Bible humanism, in the early decades of the sixteenth century, established a favourable context and provided relevant stimuli for Luther's Bible publishing endeavours in Wittenberg. The nature and significance of Luther's efforts were then explored, from their inauguration in 1521-22 with the September Testament and follow-up December Testament and throughout an ensuing quarter-century of Bible production which would occupy the Reformer until his death in 1546. Important repercussions of Luther's work in Europe more widely, across both space and time, were also investigated, with the present volume offering assessments of developments in Bible publishing in English, French or Irish, during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. All of these contributions reflect upon ways that Luther's success had an impact, whether directly or indirectly, upon parallel undertakings in other vernacular languages. As for the trajectory from translation

1. The *Bassandyne Bible* (named for the printer) was licensed in 1579 for printing in Scotland and reproduced the 1560 Geneva Bible text throughout. It included a 1576 prior printing of the New Testament (as shown).

to theology, the volume concludes with one example, in English, where Luther's approach was initially followed but later declined.

For all its momentous importance, the September Testament did not arise spontaneously but emerged from a specific text-historical context. Therefore the conference's foundational paper explored the contemporary East-Central German context, with the completed research constituting the opening chapter of the present volume: 'Erasmus as the Initiator of East-Central German Vernacular Bible Translations of the Sixteenth Century'. In this study, Dr Christine Ganslmayer (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Erlangen/Nürnberg) sets Martin Luther's milestone publication firmly within its context of origin, where immediate contemporaries of Luther were undertaking other humanistically influenced translations. The most important of these were partial translations produced, in 1521-22, by Johannes Lang and Nikolaus Krumpach, basing their work on the very same Greek texts and Latin versions as Luther himself. The fact that all three scholars used similar textual resources – principally those published by Desiderius Erasmus, in 1516 and 1519 – makes feasible a detailed comparison between their efforts and Luther's. Since prior scholarship has concentrated, instead, on the relationship between Luther and earlier mediaeval translations in German, there is a significant deficit here that Dr Ganslmayer is able to address through her contrastive linguistic study. The accomplishments of Luther's immediate precursors, although somewhat limited in scope, confirm that Luther's particular achievement was not unique in kind. Nevertheless, by collating the three sets of linguistic materials, and then comparing and evaluating them in detail, Dr Ganslmayer establishes the superior quality of Luther's work, with Luther's distinctive profile as a Bible translator thereby enhanced rather than diminished.

Against this broader canvas of humanist scholarship's work on vernacular Bible translation in Germany, Professor Gordon Campbell (Union Theological College, Belfast) examines Martin Luther's project in depth, presenting and assessing the main developments in Luther's production of German New Testaments and Bibles between 1522 and 1546. Under the topic 'Martin Luther's 1522 September Testament as the Epoch-Making Foundation for a Quarter-Century of Wittenberg Bible Publication', he is able to bring together disparate elements of his own recent research into Luther's 25-year enterprise as a Bible translator, illustrator and publisher. A cumulative picture is painted of Luther's interpretative contribution, in both translation

and commentary. Four key stages that set the parameters for the early evolution of Wittenberg Bible production, during the first half of this period, are explored in turn: the inaugural September and December Testaments in 1522; the Revised New Testament in 1530; and the complete German Bible in 1534. Further growth of the Luther Bible in the second period, from 1534 to 1546, is also briefly outlined in a short postscript. Professor Campbell identifies various factors that facilitated the initial launch of Luther's efforts in Bible publishing and also ensured that they could be maintained in the longer term. One of these was Luther's decision, in a nod to previous tradition, to illustrate the Book of Revelation and for this task to enlist the help of no less a figure than the German Reformation's inaugural artist, Lucas Cranach. Although illustrations accompanied the text of Revelation from the very start, the significance of such a move has been underestimated by scholarship and merits particular attention. By helping mould the peritextual apparatus supplied by Luther, to aid interpretation, visual exegesis through illustration proved to be an interpretative strategy with far-reaching consequences generally for Luther's evolving offer to readers, ultimately shaping understanding of the Bible text itself. Professor Campbell documents these outworkings for the four featured New Testaments and Bibles, suggesting some important implications for subsequent Bible production.

The bearing of Martin Luther's translation on vernacular New Testaments or Bibles in other languages, in his own century or the next, is exemplified first of all by the Bible in English. Exactly as Martin Luther was determinative for the advancement of the Bible in German, the work of William Tyndale proved to be seminal for the evolution of the Bible in English. More precisely, however, a Luther effect is detectable in the progress of the English Bible in the sixteenth century, and on closer examination this influence turns out to be a matter less of parallel development and more of a genuinely organic connexion. In his chapter devoted principally to investigating this very relationship – 'The Influence of Luther's September Testament on Tyndale's New Testament and on the Irish New Testament of 1602' – Dr Fearghus Ó Fearghail (Dublin City University) shows the degree to which, and illustrates the ways in which, Tyndale's New Testament may properly be considered derivative of Luther's. In substantial detail, Dr Ó Fearghail evaluates variegated evidence from the surviving 1525 Cologne fragment and 1526 Worms New Testament, dialoguing with prior scholarship's assessment of the data. He concludes that,

for Tyndale's work, a major influence alongside the Greek text and Latin or English versions is Luther's New Testament: indeed, Luther is a go-to resource that Tyndale honours as much in the breach as in the observance, freely manifesting both close reliance on Luther at many points and yet frequent independence of him at others. As for the New Testament in Irish, the translators had Theodore Beza's polyglot edition to hand, combining the Greek text with both the Vulgate and his own Latin version. In their own bilingual context, a range of available English versions also proved decisive, such that echoes of Luther demonstrable from the Irish translation are likely to be indirect resonances or even coincidental occurrences.

In French, excerpted Historical Bibles translated from the Vulgate, and incorporating other historical materials, were in print by 1500. The whole Bible first appeared in the language amid the flux accompanying the arrival of Lutheran ideas in the kingdom of France. In the first of two chapters focussed on developments in Bible production in Geneva – 'The Road to the Landmark 1588 Geneva Bible in French and its Reception in Jean Daillé's sermons on Calvin's Catechism' – Reverend Éric Kayayan (Foi et Vie Réformées) carefully chronicles and unfolds key stages in evolving production of the French Bible that eventually culminated in the acclaimed 1588 Geneva Bible. Its beginnings were Franco-Swiss, associated first with Meaux, near Paris, and with the New Testament (1524) and whole Bible (1530) of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, and soon with Neuchâtel, and the Bible of Pierre Robert Olivétan (1535). However, further progress in France beyond the 1530s became impossible and so, from the 1540s and throughout the half-century of innovation and improvement that followed, a new hub would become synonymous with Bible translation and publication in French: John Calvin's Geneva. The crowning 1588 version soon established itself as a *de facto* authorised version for the francophone Reformed Churches and their ministers – a fact corroborated by Rev Kayayan, who establishes its use and influence in the preaching of one prominent seventeenth-century French Reformed minister: Jean Daillé.

Moving from French back to English but remaining in Geneva, the next chapter documents the influence of Tyndale's New Testament upon production of the Geneva Bible in English and constitutes Professor Campbell's second essay in this volume. 'The Geneva Bible's Expansion of Luther's Innovative Approach to Reading and Interpreting the Book of Revelation in the Vernacular', enables him to

lay bare the considerable profit that accumulated, for this Reformed, English-language project, from two main sources. The first was capital being simultaneously invested in Genevan Bible publishing in French (as already mentioned), with its resources readily and directly accessible for efforts in other languages being undertaken in the city. The second, more indirect benefit drew on translational and exegetical elements originally pioneered by Luther and then mediated by Tyndale for the English tradition. Professor Campbell demonstrates how the Marian exiles in Geneva made good on both investments by means of expansion or further invention. They initiated a ground-breaking New Testament (1557) and soon a whole Bible (1560) in English that refiners would go on to revise and reshape, in 1576 and in the 1590s respectively. Like Luther before them, but with greater conviction, early Reformed exegetes – working in several vernacular languages – found the Book of Revelation to possess a marked contemporary-historical significance: accordingly, their exposition of Revelation may rightly be considered, in part at least, as an enthusiastic reworking of Luther's legacy. In his earlier chapter, Professor Campbell highlighted how translation and explanation of Revelation helped shape the Luther Bible. Here, he uses Revelation as a lens to bring two things into sharp focus: the stability of the Geneva Bible's text; and the development of ever more sophisticated aids to reading (see e.g. Figure 0.2), found in the prefatory, marginal and commentative materials that accompany the text itself.

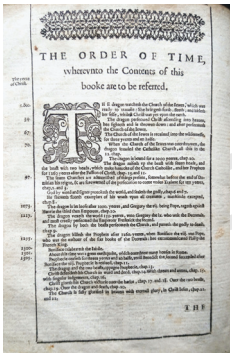
THE ORDER OF TIME,
whereunto the Contents of this
booke are to be referred,

Figure 0.2: An aid to reading Revelation in the Gamble Library's 1599 Geneva Bible[2]

The summary presentation of several contributions to this volume has already shown how ripples of Luther's legacy, as a theologian-translator, would continue to wash up on more distant shores. In a concluding piece – 'Martin Luther's New Testament and the Anointing of the Holy Spirit in English-Speaking Theologies' – Dr Shawn Langley (Kirby Laing Centre, Cambridge) returns to Luther and Tyndale.

2. This particular help for reading Revelation summarises an historicist approach to happenings recounted in the book. It correlates what are deemed the principal past events with known history up to the fourteenth century.

This time, interest centres upon their conjoined impact on both the wording, in translation, and the unfolding theology of one doctrine that rests on one scriptural text and is usually conveyed by one word: anointing. Dr Langley begins by surveying how the relevant theology and language are articulated in the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, before working back upstream towards the contexts of Luther and Tyndale, whose translations had shaped the language or theology in question. Close examination of the respective translation strategies that Luther and Tyndale employed reveals an element of commonality in how they render, in German or English, the language of salving or anointing found in both the Greek text and the Vulgate version of in 1 John 2:20 and 2:27. Both Reformers seek a certain congruity between linguistic and theological factors, in each case consciously rejecting the preceding mediaeval theology and language of unction. Luther, for his part, differentiates the salve (*die Salbung*) of the Spirit from the unction of the Church. Following a broadly similar path, Tyndale nonetheless exercises a certain flexibility by resorting to dual terminology for salving that alternates between anointing and ointment. Disconcertingly, whatever linguistic or theological gain might have accrued for the English Bible, from this shared approach, was later lost: the King James Bible would opt to follow the Catholic Douay-Rheims version, completed in 1610, on this point by reverting in 1 John 2 to the language of unction – and the consequences, for Pentecostal or charismatic terminology or theology, are still felt even in our own day.