

The Domestic Bible: William Tyndale's Vernacular Translation

by

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## Abstract

This translation study of William Tyndale's revised New Testament of 1534 identifies the translator's motivations and strategies then explores the effect of the translation on the King James Version of the Bible (KJV) and Shakespeare's plays. Tyndale's primary motivation was to create a text for his would-be congregants during the Reformation and his strategy was largely one of domestication. However, his unique concern for his mother-tongue coupled with an insistence on his preferential theological material extends his domestication activity into an idiosyncratic attention to his *lingua mater* (English), resulting in a personalized translation project, a Tyndalian effect that influenced the production and literary use of biblical material for the next century. This kind of translation variegates biblical material so that its application in later literary traditions, like future Bible translations and Shakespeare's biblical references, can take on a wide range of expressions not beholden to cultural stigmas associated with altering the Bible. The KJV, though often considered to have borrowed 85% of Tyndale, based on this study, only borrowed 55% of Tyndale's Bible. Tyndale's Bible is then used to explicate Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, demonstrating how literary uses of the Bible can take on extensive and varied forms of expression.

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## Introduction

Trusting of his fellow and chummy Englishman, William Tyndale (c. 1494-1536) happily followed Henry Phillips down the narrow alleys of Antwerp in 1535. A refurbished citadel for the emerging capitalist societies springing up in Europe, Antwerp hadn't had much of a chance to transform its infrastructure from the medieval design of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup> This meant that Tyndale and Phillips had to clomp through what were essentially sludge-raked chutes.

Halfway through one bilgy alleyway, a pair of imperial guards turned into their path. Phillips, in the lead, halted their traverse and urged Tyndale to go ahead of him in the other direction, whispering encouraging terms to his friend about the escape they were about to attempt. Tyndale, a fugitive, steeled his inward panic and carefully turned back the other way. He knew he was far enough from the troopers to get out of the alley before they could catch him. But, after he had gone about a dozen paces, two more pike-yielding soldiers appeared at the other end of the alley. Tyndale turned back around. Sadly, for him, he found that his friend had fallen back toward the soldiers, walking with them, grimly sneering.

Finally arrested for heresy, Tyndale was tried, convicted, strangled, then burned. All he wanted to do, since he began preaching in Gloucestershire in 1519, was to continue a pastoral

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<sup>1</sup> The dramatized version of Tyndale's betrayal in these first few paragraphs is drawn from the exhaustive and creative work of Bragg, Melvyn. *William Tyndale: A Very Brief History*, 2017; Juhász, Gergely. *Translating Resurrection: The Debate between William Tyndale and George Joye in Its Historical and Theological Context*, 2014; Stabel, Peter, B Blondé, and Anke Greve. *International Trade in the Low Countries (14th-16th Centuries): Merchants, Organisation, Infrastructure : Proceedings of the International Conference, Ghent-Antwerp, 12-13th January, 1997*. Leuven: Garant, 2000; Marnef, Guido. *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis, 1550-1577*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996; and Daniell, David. *William Tyndale: A Biography*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

role among English churches, a role that fit his personality as a biblical interpreter. But English speakers didn't have an authoritative resource for establishing that kind of religious identity, and the authoritarian King, Henry VIII, didn't want any of his subjects to leave the Catholic Church, at least not at this point in time (1517-1534), in favor of another. In reaction to the opposition in his homeland, Tyndale left England to translate the Bible into English as an anti-Catholic document carrying the weight of sacred authority.

The vernacular Bible printed from William Tyndale's translation during the 1520s-30s disseminated scriptural material to English readers and initiated socio-linguistic arguments about its meaning during a tumultuous age of reformation in England. Though costly, those arguments seeded a decades-long proliferation of hermeneutical variety evident in the abundance of sixteenth-century Bible editions and new biblical conceptualizations found in imaginative literature. Tyndale's polemical treatises, his exchanges with Thomas More, and most significantly, a final revised New Testament in 1534 maintained a presence for decades, directly traceable to the King James Bible of 1611 and clearly present within Shakespeare's inventive expressions of bible-based characters, narratives, and themes. This dissertation addresses how a close study of Tyndale's translation gave the English Bible its distinct cultural resonance, which Tyndale largely infused through a carefully managed translation agenda that was motivated by his skills as a linguist and his aspirations to be a reformed preacher in England.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For the role of preaching in early modern England and Tyndale's perception of himself as a preacher, see Marshall, Peter. *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation*. London: Arnold, 2017; Vasilev, Georgi. *Heresy and the English Reformation: Bogomil-cathar Influence on Wycliffe, Langland, Tyndale and Milton*. Jefferson, N.C: McFarland, 2008; Wabuda, Susan. *Preaching During the English Reformation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002; Pettegree, Andrew. *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Print; Jones, Norman L. *The English Reformation: Religion and Cultural Adaptation*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002.; Marshall,

This introduction follows a principle derived from the Latin prefix to the word “translate.” Any word prefixed with “trans” carries complicated connotations associated with “movement.” The *OED* identifies “trans” as carrying “the sense” of “across, through, over, to or on the other side of, beyond, outside of, from one place, person, thing, or state to another.” To translate, like the diverse definitions for “trans” indicate, is to create a variety of movements. One language being transferred to another, for instance, rarely works with a direct transposition, or literal translation. Translators must, at places, move words “from one place,” “across” a line, even “outside of” a text. Making decisions about the kind of “trans” activity required to render a source text (SL, the original language) into a target text (TL, the desired language for a new version of the original language’s expression) demands that translators choose which action works best for their interpretation of the material. No one movement can ever be fully satisfactory, but the movement can, nonetheless, provide new insights into the transfer. This is what Susan Bassnett labels “loss and gain” in translation (33). A text cannot simply lose its meaning in a successful translation, but it may lose some impact, either culturally or linguistically, once in the TL. Like any kind of movement where energy is expelled or substances are moved about, the state of the moved object is fundamentally changed. Whether considered better or worse, a “trans” item takes on a new existence. An example is the typical translations of greetings among languages. The word “Howdy,” for instance, is often translated into the Spanish word “Hola.” “Howdy” carries the ethos of the American frontier cowboy, a sentiment that “Hola” cannot evince. No greeting may be able to literally translate from or into

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Peter. *The Impact of the English Reformation, 1500-1640*. London: Arnold, 1997; and Jan James Martin (2013) Cuthbert Tunstal, Thomas More, John Fisher, and the Burning of William Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament, *Reformation*, 18:1, 84-105.



“Howdy.” The word is resistant to translation, so most movements from “Howdy” to any TL translation generally lose the impact of the word.

“Trans” also represents a static position. To claim, geographically, for instance, that a location is “trans”-another location (e.g., Transjordan, in reference to the Jordan River), means that the locations are both fixed in relation to one another. The Bible translator Eugene Nida espoused a “formal” theory of translation, which stood in contrast to his dynamic conception of translation. The formal is concerned with “correspondences” between forms and contents, an attempt to station a TL in direct correlation to its SL. Attempts at line-by-line translations, for instance, are formal, as are literal, word-for-word translations. A dynamic translation aims at capturing the sense of the original reception in the SL. In this case, as Nida points out, “greeting with a holy kiss” in Romans 16:6 is captured by J.B. Phillips, “give one another a hearty handshake all round.” For Nida, the TL takes precedent because it needs a relevant point of reference in order for it to stand in relation to the SL. The loose and seemingly absurd dynamic translation, if formal, would require an explanation in modern contexts, where our Freudian minds might wince at the notion of handing out kisses in church. The placement of texts and their conjunctive relationships with cultural norms and turns of phrase create a static translation that requires comparative measures for any understanding to emerge.

Though the isolated field of translation studies began properly in the latter half of the twentieth century, early modern translators were certainly involved in a discourse about the nature of their programs. Susan Bassnett, speaking of Bible translation in general, identifies the highly meaningful translation that applies to the individual kind of effort that Tyndale embarked upon: “The wealth of studies on Bible translation and the documentation of the way in which individual translators of the Bible attempt to solve their problems through ingenious solutions is

a particularly rich source of semiotic transformation” (33). In large part due to Tyndale, the English language began a self-scrutiny and linguistic experimentation in semiotic transformations (i.e., transporting exact words in the SL to a notion in the TL) that placed it among the learned languages of sixteenth-century Europe, even though English may not have had direct or literal words available for the transfer. It is no surprise that early modern translators played such a role. F.O. Matthiessen famously remarked upon the movement of an entire cultural phenomenon into the realm of a linguistic reality by suggesting that “a study of Elizabethan translation is a study of the means by which the Renaissance came to England” (1). Before and during the sixteenth century, translators didn’t have manuals or guidelines, except those that they created as a metadiscourse alongside their own efforts. Any Elizabethan translator derived much of his or her knowledge from similar discourses, often borrowing from the parergon of large translation projects, like Tyndale’s *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* (itself a translation of Erasmus’ work by the same name), biblical prefaces, *Pathway into the Scripture*, and *Obedience of a Christian Man*. Tyndale and his contemporaries transported their theoretical space into future generations, which started an intellectual trajectory for the English Bible and the English language to flourish.

The translation of *The Aeneid*, for instance, was completed by William Caxton (1490) and Gavin Douglas (1513, printed 1553), and both included prologues to set out their translational agendas for the classical text par excellence. Their concerns are largely about who will receive their translations. For Caxton, the printer, his translation was a matter of marketability. He explains how eager he was to translate the “pleasant” and “well-ordered” words of the original into English, and upon seeing the “fair and strange terms therein,” he “fain[ed]” to “satisfy ever man” (i.e., of every rank). Caxton contemplates that which can and

cannot “be understood of the common man” in reference to what might be “over-curious” (too lofty/elaborate). His thoughts turn to wonderment about the ways in which languages flux over time and within communities. For Caxton, as a translator, “it is hard to please every man, by cause of diversity and change of language.” English, he explains, is made of “common terms that be daily used are lighter to be understood,” but it is also made of terms meant “only for a clerk and a nobleman that feeleth and understandeth in feats of arms in love and in noble chivalry.” His constant use of “understand” points to the effect he hopes to have as a translator, and it reveals the role he plays as a salesman. Instead of choosing an English for just one of those readers, he claims to find a “mean between both.” Caxton pitches the sale of his translation by appealing to its range of possible readers, both vernacular and learned. Douglas, a dedicated Scottish noble, believes, on the other hand, that a translation should narrow its audience. He draws out his concern, with the traditional and condescending mixture of Socratic humility and Platonic irony, to indicate his unworthiness to translate the tale of Aeneas: “But sair I dreid for to distain thee quite/through my corrupt cadence imperfite.” But there is much more than feigned imperfection here. Douglas purposefully draws attention to his language, which will be his source for criticizing Caxton, who “shamefully that story did pervert” with, in Douglas’s estimate, too base a translation. For Douglas, Caxton “spilt” and “chop[ped]” the “golden verses” of Virgil. In a bit of a flair, Douglas expresses a personal affront at such a terrible translation, further intensifying the failures of Caxton’s strategy: “I read his work with harms at my heart.” Caxton’s translation is “sick,” “out of tune,” “prolix,” “tedious,” because it placates to a “vulgar style.” Douglas vows not to “follow” Caxton “foot-het” (hot-footed) but instead chooses to follow “fixed sentence or matter,” accepting any charges of having overly complicated the text’s meaning with a challenging vocabulary and syntax. By producing a “sang intricate” meant to

elevate his readers, Douglas calls on “worthy nobles” to “read my works forthly” as a means of “touching Virgil’s honour and reverence.” Finally, in a last jab, Douglas remonstrates the vernacular translation efforts of William Caxton by imagining a translator “attached unto a stake” upon which he can only “wrele” (writhe) and “go no further.” For Douglas, the common language doesn’t translate well enough to capture the quality of *The Aeneid*, so it should be abandoned in favor of an English that adheres to the original Latin, thus making it accessible, primarily to the learned. Douglas is not in the business of selling his book to a wide audience, and as a nobleman, he conjures the image of this staked translator to highlight the desperate conditions for the vernacular-minded transfer of languages.

The image of a translator bound to the heretic’s vehicle of execution represents the dire circumstances of literary translation into early modern English. For a secular text, like the *Aeneid*, the stake is metaphorical. Their translational crux resides in the ability of an entire culture and its language to adequately and eloquently take a transfer from the elite textual material of its time. But for a sacred text, the stake is quite literal. Tyndale was the only English translator who ended up on an actual stake—strangled and then burned (October 1536), the proper execution for a scholar and a heretic. He wrestled with the same dilemma as his predecessors in the trade: Can English signify the original language? Participants in this debate considered the appropriate weight for a vernacular and a learned English, and whether either or both could render a translation meaningfully. Invariably their commentary came in the form of a preface or tract, rationalizing the existence of their translations, often criticizing contemporaries as Douglas did to Caxton.

Their debate is largely one of “trans” properties: How much of the SL should be maintained and how much of it should be reshaped? What should be moved and what should be

statically placed in relation to another linguistic fact? The translation theorist Lawrence Venuti realized this concept as the difference between foreignizing a text or domesticating a text. Domestication, often referred to as “acculturation,” attempts to render the translation as something that was never transferred at all, the translation giving the impression that the TL was always really the SL. In *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*, Venuti defines “domestication” as “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, [which] brings the author back home (20). Caxton and Douglas are essentially concerned with the same matter: How foreign should the TL seem to one reader versus how familiar it should appear to all readers. Early modern translators, for instance, would practice a grammar school technique of *imitatio*, whereby they must rely on implicit value judgements about which Latin-based terms could maintain their Latin form and still be understood and which ones required an English transplant. The very root “trans” would represent such a dilemma. Essentially, Douglas, Caxton, Tyndale, and any other translator throughout the first decades of the sixteenth century used their translations to join an intellectual discourse about translation theories in early modern English. A careful examination of the specific decisions that they made, based on the theories they espoused, is warranted and reveals a deeply personalized kind of English that was meant to transfer an openness to the TL.

Studies of Tyndale’s Bible are traditionally organized around Tyndale’s translation efforts and his influence on later literary traditions, but this dissertation emphasizes how Tyndale transfers semantic content from the SL, koine Greek, to the referential system of the TL, early modern English. For the sake of clarity moving forward, a distinction between a translation theory and a translation study is in order. A translation theory represents the techniques used by a translator during the translation process, and it also refers to the techniques a translator claims to

use during his or her translation. In the case of Tyndale, his theory of translation is based on his understanding of what a good translation entails for a sixteenth-century linguist and religionist, similar to the conversations of Caxton and Douglas. A translation study analyzes a translation. It identifies the contextual circumstances that influence the decisions made during the production of a translation, including the translation theory but not limited to any translator's proposed theoretical apparatus. Indeed, a translation study may find that a particular translation theory was not closely followed by a translator and conclude that a different theory applies to that translator. A translation study also characterizes the effects of a translation, which can range from the affective delivery of a single utterance or the historical impact of an entire text. In the case of Tyndale's New Testament, this translation study concludes that Tyndale's translation, considering the detailed Anglicized utterances in the Bible he created, aligns with the features of a "domestication" theory as defined by Venuti, which is the actual theory Tyndale describes when claiming to have maneuvered between a literal and sense-for-sense translation theory. Tyndale's domestication theory is coupled with his personal motivations as a Protestant reformer seeking an English Bible to aid his pastoral aspirations, adding a personalized, even idiosyncratically pastoral feature to his theoretical approach. But this translation study also identifies the far-reaching implications of Tyndale's Bible, which can be seen in later Renaissance texts, like the KJV and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The following chapters, therefore, are arranged as a translation study of Tyndale's Bible.

In Chapter 1, I argue that Tyndale's translation theory stemmed from his motivation to become a leading congregationalist preacher among early English reformers. He needed a vernacular Bible to establish his pastoral authority, and he realized such a Bible would have to be accessible and agreeable to Anglophones (the range of English speakers) during the sixteenth

century. Chapter 1 primarily accounts for the contextual framework of Tyndale's aspirations, labeling his translation theory with the theoretical elements of a translation study.

Instead of a traditional translation study that differentiates between word-for-word and sense-for-sense equivalences, I underscore Tyndale's syncretized translational techniques that arose from geo-political trends that corresponded with a rising prestige of the English language. The English language's growing alignment with the humanist's new learning created a demand for vernacular renderings of the significant texts of continental learnedness, the Bible especially. Such a demand made the facts of Anglophones' everyday life and language relevant to the transmission of theological and philosophical information. Picking up on those trends in English, Tyndale positioned his domestic knowledge as the rhetorical machinery for producing his translation. I primarily derive my theory of domestic motivation from Tyndale's apologetic tracts and translation prefaces, in which he commented extensively on his linguistic and theological alignments.

Eventually, Tyndale placed a priority on the literal domestic sphere of the English language to garner favor with would-be congregants emerging from the ranks of anti-ecclesial sects. Sectarianism, however, meant that Tyndale would have to discover a way for his transfer of ideas to gain mass appeal among English speakers, to be both domestic and domesticated. The final portion of chapter one, therefore, pinpoints several of Tyndale's pastoral idiosyncrasies. Many of Tyndale's translation efforts were designated for indoctrinating readers with his religious preferences. Such translation decisions were typically lauded but often caused controversies and sparring with rival pastors. For instance, Tyndale insisted on "resurrection" in some places of the Bible and "life after death" in others, even though they are translations of the same Greek term. Apparently, Tyndale felt this established a kind of homiletic discourse, one

that some of Tyndale's contemporaries, George Joye in particular, would consider a theological inconsistency. Tyndale defended his use of this term based on the effect it had on the reader, not necessarily on the grounds that his decision was a perfectly sound translational equivalence or a consistent application. Such blatant preferencing would be Tyndale's attitude for several significant translations, emphasizing a philosophical, ideological, and theological motivation to give a TL the impression that it never had a foreign origin. Chapter one concludes that Tyndale's New Testament of 1534 is domestic because his theoretical approach to translating aligns with the sentiments of English life during the reformation, but it is also domestic because Tyndale fashioned it for readers who would, he hoped, follow the pastoral hermeneutics of his Englished Bible.

Having outlined Tyndale's translation theory in chapter one, in the second chapter I analyze several of Tyndale's specific applications of this domestication theory to his revised New Testament of 1534. His influences for the first translation in 1525 came from the wave of humanist philology that produced Erasmus's *Nouvm Testamentum*. But it was the challenges Tyndale faced from the English humanist, Thomas More, that inspired a robust reconsideration of his translation, resulting in the revised New Testament that Tyndale would print in 1534. That edition would become the exemplar text for future translations throughout the sixteenth century and for the King James Bible of 1611.

The first portion of this chapter reinterprets the effects of Tyndale's domestication efforts on the three most studied translations he rendered: the Greek's ἐκκλησία, πρεσβύτερος, and ἀγάπη or the Vulgate's *congregatio, seniore* (or presbyter), and *caritas*. Instead of the traditional "church," "priest," and "charity," Tyndale uniformly applied the translations "congregation," "elder," and "love" to these original terms. Alongside the scholarship labeling these expressions



as theologically motivated, I suggest that Tyndale viewed these three terms as preferable to English readers.

Secondly, chapter two divides Tyndale's colloquial expressions and coinages that appear in his Bible into three categories: Polemical, Rhetorical, and Poetical. These arenas of thought represent the major intellectual concerns of Reformation-era cultural dynamics. Tyndale's contribution to the English language is well-established, but virtually none of his coinages come from the Bible. Instead, for his translation, he relied on a common lexicon, familiar to everyday life in England and, in some cases, familiar to the continental debates about emerging cultural shifts. These specific turns of phrases and how they were appropriated by Tyndale for sacred inscription indicate a translation interested in fostering biblical devotion within the home. In this sense, Tyndale quite literally wanted his reader to feel close at home with his translation.

Chapter three begins the shift toward Tyndale's effect on future texts, and here focuses on the King James Version of the Bible. After Tyndale's New Testament, many other translations were produced, all of them retaining a closeness to Tyndale's translation, especially the KJV. The KJV had the unique privilege of being the final biblical translation of any import since Tyndale. It carefully followed Tyndale's 1534 revised edition along with the original languages. As a result, attempts to underscore Tyndale's influence on the literary quality of the KJV have inspired three major comparative studies. In this chapter, I offer a data-analysis in reaction to those studies. Most of my analysis contends with the most recent study conducted by Nielsen and Skousen, which was published in the journal *Reformation* over twenty years ago.

That study lacked some of the more powerful tools for collating and comparing these Bibles, which is a complication that I propose to remedy. Nielsen and Skousen were only able to use 18 sample passages and a single collation strategy. Though their methodology was sound,

they were limited by the technological tools available for their analysis. They also made concessions for matching material in the KJV with Tyndale based on their perception that such concessions were made over negligible textual matters. My previous two chapters, however, indicate that those concessions are inconsistent with Tyndale's domestication technique, and should be reinterpreted.

I update the textual comparisons by presenting data from hundreds of samples, collated by three separate programs, and I place those comparisons within the context of Tyndale's domestic Bible. The results, instead of an 85% match that Nielsen and Skousen find, tell a more complicated story about the effects of domestication, indicating a range of interpretations, from 20% - 90% matches. The data I produce validates my analysis of Tyndale's domestication efforts. Tyndale was motivated to create a translation that English readers could negotiate with hermeneutical variety, applying their interpretations to the realities they experienced as early modern thinking subjects.

In the fourth and final chapter I consider how Tyndale set the stage for the English Bible as we know it, and how his translation literally gave the Bible an imaginative revisioning for the English literary mind. The allowances that his translations afforded his readers licensed liberal recreations of specific Biblical material. To demonstrate how this effect took hold, I survey biblical representations in Shakespeare, specifically *Macbeth*.

Shakespeare took full advantage of the Bible that had been passed down to him, and his aptness with biblical information appears in the form of hundreds of allusions and, more relevantly, narrative moments individually naturalized into the language and dramatis personae of his plays. Many of his allusions can be traced directly to Tyndale, but almost all of

Shakespeare's biblical usages are indebted to Tyndale's domestication efforts that made biblical adaptations more accessible to the recipients of biblical texts.

To trace this effect in fuller detail, I argue that the character of Judas helps an audience explicate *Macbeth* and more fully understand how the character Macbeth could be so intensely committed to evil deeds. Alongside Judas, I consider how Shakespeare uses Biblical material in scenes from *Macbeth* to emphasize a Judas-like evil commitment. In *Macbeth*'s invocation of Judas, Shakespeare's characters reimagine and relive biblical narratives. Shakespeare's characters embody and reconceptualize biblical messages by voicing the internal complexities of the early-modern domestic self.

In a final thought, I also express the importance of this study beyond early modern literature, which can also be briefly considered here. Translations hope to unify languages, and once expressive about their craft, translators can realize the fully transitive nature of language. The hope of this project is to transfer Tyndale's thoughts about translation to an understandable machinery, which associates his translation with a contemplation of the imaginative landscape of literary production. If the translator at the stake symbolizes a devotion to one's mother tongue, then few translations could be as fully impactful or symbolic of English than William Tyndale's Bible.

That there are false teachers and blind leaders in every place, and in order that you not be deceived by any man, I believed it very necessary to prepare a Pathway into the scripture for you” (William Tyndale, “Pathway Into the Scripture,” 145).

## Chapter One: Why Tyndale

Apparently, William Tyndale was prone to religious brawling, a development that occurred early in his adult life, after his education at Oxford and Cambridge was complete. Foxe’s notorious record of Tyndale chiding a priest for his ignorance at the dinner table of his patrons, John and Anne Walsh, may be one of the livelier examples. In the moment he actually tells the priest, “If God spare my life, before very long I shall cause a plough boy to know the scriptures better than you do!” (Foxe 131). For those patrons, Tyndale had translated Erasmus’s *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* (The Manual of the Christian Soldier), a telling sign of his protestant pugilistic tendencies. He was charged with "spreading heresy" for preaching to crowds outside Bristol cathedral, and reprimanded by the chancellor of the diocese of Worcester (presided by acting-Bishop, Italian Giulio de Medici, soon to become Pope Clement VII). While Tyndale prepared his scriptural manuscripts with a fellow reformer, John Frith, he got word that his underground practices had prompted an imminent arrest, so he exiled himself to Germany and later Antwerp, where his translation of the New Testament resulted in a propaganda war with English elites. A softer version of this report could claim that William Tyndale preached and tutored at St. Adeline parish church for several years (c. 1517-1523), where he concluded that he needed an English New Testament. But all along he had been defiant.

His realization for a New Testament emerged partially, no doubt, from formative influences lurking furtively in his mind. However, there in Gloucestershire County, he developed

a popular following as a preacher, drawing crowds from the countryside of the Severn River and the Forest of Dean and quaint towns like Berkeley and Wotton-under-edge, vulgar multitudes with deep domestic ties to the culture of their mother tongue. Much of the adoration he developed likely came from his relatable, non-Latinate sermonizing. The thrill of hearing one of Tyndale's famous biblical originals must have moved listeners, who possibly heard themselves called "the salt of the earth" after years of priests droning out an incomprehensible "sal terrae." Since none of his sermons are extant, one can only speculate that Tyndale and his parishioners likely relished their interactions, joining the growing personality cults that preachers were generating all across Europe during these early stages of the Reformation. Yet fame coupled with flame has its complications. Tyndale drew the attention of several other parsons, and his authority to continue preaching was diminished through the contentious engagements mentioned above. Church officials rejected his colloquial divergences from rote, liturgical preachments. Sensing he could supplement his popular homiletics and simultaneously aid his case to the "unlearned" clergy who opposed him, Tyndale, in 1523, began the process for commissioning a translation of scripture. He wanted an English Bible because he wanted to be an English preacher.

In the defenses Tyndale offers for his English Bible a heavy pastoral instinct marks the motivation for his action. In *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, his first concern sets the tone for most of his theoretical rationale in the form of a question: "How can we whet God's word (that is put it in practice, use, and exercise) upon our children and household when we are violently kept from it and know it not?" (74). Tyndale creates an apprehension regarding the domestic serviceability of the Bible, the kind of worry in the mind of a pastor. But it is not just the household inculcation that concerns him. More worrisome to him is the possibility that sermon

auditors might be misled by biblical interpretations because they cannot follow along with the scripture as they hear the sermon. Tyndale's concern is an important emphasis. He does not worry about misunderstandings of vernacular Bibles; he worries that preachers will be able to claim scriptural truths that the laity cannot verify. That worry and his desire to get the Bible into English households is exactly why "the scripture ought to be in the mother tongue." Without it, the priests, prelates, and preachers will be able to "fear thee from the light, that thou mightiest follow them blindfold and be their captive" (74). Tyndale wants to give English speakers a tool for evaluating the veracity of what they hear. His mission and translation theory outlined below demonstrates how he hoped to bring the Bible into the home and into pew so that a hermeneutically motivated congregation could follow sermons and apply its teachings by cross-referencing a preacher's words with the scripture.

His ambition, however, was dismissed, for when William Tyndale translated the New Testament in 1525 from Cologne, Germany, its printed edition arrived in England against the will of formidable forces, far more daunting than the rabble of parish priests who had plotted against him in, as he claimed, alehouses—King Henry VIII, Sir Thomas More, and the Roman Catholic Church represented by Cuthbert Tunstal, the bishop of London.<sup>3</sup> These opponents were no fools. Tunstal, a celebrated linguist and mathematician, who had risen in ranks from lower origins, dismissed Tyndale's initial request to produce an authorized Bible after evaluating Tyndale's translation of Isocrates.<sup>4</sup> More, a leading English humanist and intellect of his time,

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<sup>3</sup> Tyndale's preface to *The First Book of Moses Called Genesis* claims that the parish preachers would gather in alehouses "which is their preaching place," and "affirm my sayings as heresy... and add two of their own heads which I never spoke" (82).

<sup>4</sup> Though More and Henry are well-known for their contributions to sixteenth-century English interests, Tunstal's roles are often overlooked due to his prudence (no heretics were executed during his tenure as

argued with Tyndale more vigorously than any other figure of his day and had a global reputation for defending Catholicism and humanism with the highest degree of literary quality. Henry VIII shrewdly wielded the power of the state like a medieval authoritarian, positioning others to centralize his government, earning the title Defender of the Faith and eventually transforming the religious history of England. Both Tunstal and More were collegial and friendly interlocutors with Desiderus Erasmus, Europe's leading humanist scholar, who published the very tool, the *Novum Instrumentum* (Tunstal was a heavy contributor), a Greek and Latin Bible, that allowed Tyndale to complete his translation.<sup>5</sup> To gain a license for translating the Bible, Tyndale needed to get an official approval from the leadership in his diocese. In 1523, he moved to London, hoping that Tunstal's level-headedness would agree to a translation. To establish his *bone fides*, Tyndale showed Bishop Tunstal his personal translation of a dialogue of Isocrates. Tunstal denied the license, and Tyndale, resolved to create an English Bible exiled himself, significantly compounding his troubles to an international level. Soon after the *New Testament*

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Bishop of Durham and London) and a lack of source material. For more on Tunstal see Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal: Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator*. London: Longmans, 1938; David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, 193. Meale, "John Colyns, Mercer Bookseller of London and Cuthbert Tunstal's Second Monition of 1526, 192-206; Bernard, *The King's Reformation*, 64-85; Newcombe, "Tunstal, Cuthbert (1474-1559)," *Oxford National Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>5</sup> More's *Confutation* alone is over 100,00 words of response in a single volume, which, added to his other responses to Tyndale, may total nearly 500,000 words of debate. For More's role also see John N. King, "Thomas More, William Tyndale, and the Printing of Religious Propaganda," In *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature, 1485-1603* (Oxford, Oxford UP, 2011), 105-120; Though Erasmus is linked to almost all European humanists, for Tyndale see William E. Campbell, *Erasmus, Tyndale and More* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1949) and David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its history and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 113-151.

arrived in England, these titular heads of English learnedness and authority, in a barrage of criticisms commissioned by Henry, including More's infamous *Dialogues Against Heresies* and Tunstal's sermon at St. Paul's Cross (complete with a Bible pyre as a prop), lambasted Tyndale and his translation. He was up against, in all respects, superior forces.

Still, Tyndale, finding refuge within the commercial printing district of Antwerp, continued to produce versions of the Bible, and in most respects, prevailed. He eventually issued an *Answer to Sir Thomas More*, several Protestant-leaning tracts, and finally, a revised *New Testament* in 1534 that responded to many of the translational objections made by his detractors. More offered a final, seemingly desperate, attempt to discredit this newer edition of the Bible with his verbose *Confutations*, but it appears that Tyndale's Bible won the day. Despite Tyndale's eventual execution in 1536, his New Testament (and the portions of the Old Testament that he was able to translate) became the nearly verbatim exemplar text for the succession of authorized Bibles that were produced in England, starting with the Mathews Bible in 1536 up through the King James Version in 1611.<sup>6</sup>

Tyndale's endurance in the face of significant opposition has been recognized with fondness over the centuries, earning him the title "Father of the English Bible" and generating a reverence among scholarly and popular reactions that mimic, perhaps rightfully, the religious adoration of hagiographies. But a moniker like "Father of the English Bible," has unsurprisingly landed within critical traditions with serious trepidations. Since Tyndale profoundly contributed to the history of the English language and the Reformation in England, his contemporary critics

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<sup>6</sup> The likeness of Tyndale's New Testament with subsequent translations has been noted for centuries, and its influence upon the KJV and Shakespeare are the subjects of chapters three and four, respectively.



are often brushed aside when evaluating the motivations behind Tyndale's translation.<sup>7</sup> What gave him the edge that allowed his Bible to endure? Was it truly his incredible skill as a translator, or was there an enterprising feature that afforded his translation the prominence that it eventually achieved? Essentially two strains of thought have developed in Tyndale scholarship ever since David Daniell, the late professor of English at University College London, revived an interest in Tyndale studies during the last two decades of the twentieth century. On the one hand, scholars revere Tyndale as a linguist and champion of Reformation theology to the point of near sainthood. On the other hand, skeptical scholars have found veneration a dubious approach to Tyndale, based on a close examination of the social-historical context of his corpus and through a re-consideration of the intellectual reception of his contemporaries. On the Tyndalian scholarly continuum, I side with the skeptics. Even though the value of Tyndale's work seems immeasurable, I will, nonetheless, attempt to measure it throughout the following dissertation.

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<sup>7</sup> Primarily, I use *The New Testament Translated by William Tyndale 1534*. Ed. N. Hardy Wallis, (1938, Reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013). As discussed below, despite its date, it is the most viable starting point for this project, yet I still have to construct a digitized version with a newer apparatus to complete several stages of my research. Though the origin of this term of endearment remains elusive, it became a common refrain among Tyndale scholarship and popular histories starting in the early twentieth century and lasting to this day. Tyndale retains this distinction in contrast to John Wycliffe, whose first English Bible (a translation from the Vulgate) earned him the title, "Morning Star of the Reformation." These three texts may speak to the range, both in date and scholarliness of the usage: Henry William Hamilton-Hoare, *The Evolution of the English Bible; A Historical Sketch of the Successive Versions From 1382 to 1885*. London: J. Murray, 1902, 119; David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994; S. Michael Wilcox, *Fire in the Bones: William Tyndale, Martyr, Father of the English Bible*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 2004.

Daniell's authoritative *William Tyndale: A Biography* clearly represents the former type of Tyndale scholarship, in which he lavishes enormous praise on Tyndale and, at times, editorializes receptions of the translator. Note how he introduces readers to Tyndale:

His unsurpassed ability was to work as a translator with the sounds and rhythms as well as the senses of English, to create unforgettable words, phrases, paragraphs and chapters, and to do so in a way that, again unusually for the time, is still, even today, direct and living: newspaper headlines still quote Tyndale, though unknowingly, and he has reached more people than even Shakespeare. At the centre of it all for him was his root in the deepest heart of New Testament theology, a faith of the sort that can, and did, move mountains. (2)

Daniell continues the rigorous work of laying out Tyndale's life in these fawning terms, maintaining a tone always on the verge of granting Tyndale miraculous powers, of the moving-mountains variety. Those who follow in Daniell's tradition, for instance popularizers of Tyndale's work, take greater liberties with their praise for Tyndale.<sup>8</sup> In the general estimate of scholarly consensus, Tyndale is rightly celebrated for providing an accessible vernacular rendering of the Bible, and any criticisms of his text are largely concerned with the pressure of Protestant theology (both in the sixteenth century and today) to preference the translations of individual words like "congregation," "elder," and "love" over Catholic insistence on "church,"

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<sup>8</sup> Popular among protestant lore, Tyndale receives regular adulation. Note the titles of some recent publications on Tyndale: Teems et al., *William Tyndale: The Man Who Gave God and English Voice*; Tew, *God's Outlaw: The Story of William Tyndale*; Wilcox, *Fire in the Bones: William Tyndale--Martyr, Father of the English Bible*; Moynahan, *God's Bestseller: William Tyndale, Thomas More, and the Writing of the English Bible---A Story of Martyrdom and Betrayal*.

“priest,” and “charity,” respectively.<sup>9</sup> From there, most of these congenial studies comment on the qualities of his translation that extend beyond theological debates, noting his poetic and linguistic contributions.<sup>10</sup>

As for the latter critical tradition of Tyndale, the scholarship that approaches Tyndale’s genius with skepticism, though newer and less developed, attempts to place Tyndale more squarely within a realistic cultural context. Unquestionably, Tyndale has been celebrated for Englishing the Bible in a way that aligns with the Protestant transformations in England during the sixteenth century. But the Reformation was not just a matter of synods, princes, and popes, vying for authority. It also took place within the narrow alleys behind illegal presses, stationed in places like Worms and Antwerp, where Tyndale’s Bibles were printed for smuggling expeditions.<sup>11</sup> Since Tyndale had exiled himself to these cities, permanently stationed in Antwerp from 1526-1536, researchers have begun skimming the surface and surveying the periphery of Tyndale’s circumstance, hoping to pinpoint the context embedded in the piecemeal dictum of the English Bible’s history. Such studies often look for Tyndale’s intended audience or, as will be

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<sup>9</sup> Essentially, any study on Tyndale’s translation, including this present project, necessarily reacts to Tyndale’s problematic translations. So, the potentially long list is here several of the most recent studies and authoritative scholarship: Flood, John L. "Luther and Tyndale as Bible Translators: Achievement and Legacy." In *Landmarks in the History of the German Language*, 35-56. Oxford, England: Peter Lang, 2009; Gurney, Evan. "Thomas More and the Problem of Charity." *Renaissance Studies: Journal of The Society For Renaissance Studies* 26, no. 2 (April 2012): 197-217;

<sup>10</sup> Snare, Gerald. "Translation and Transmutation in William Tyndale and Thomas Watson." *Translation & Literature* 12, no. 2 (Autumn 2003): 189-204; Jackson, Gordon. "The Poetics of Tyndale's Translation." *Reformation* 1, (January 1996): 52-71.

<sup>11</sup> For a robust social history of Antwerp, see Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis, 1550-1577*.

discussed in this chapter, a consideration of the social history that eventually funneled his translation into a specific and pastoral kind of English for that audience.

The most recent, extended version of this approach comes from Gergely Juhász's *Translating Resurrection: The Debate Between William Tyndale and George Joye in Its Historical and Theological Context*. Juhász's title indicates the extent of his monograph's overarching aims. He exposes a tiff between Tyndale and Joye (an apprentice translator and Reformation sympathizer) over the translation of a single word, and *Translating Resurrection's* hundreds of meticulously documented pages demonstrate the extent to which one might need to go to reveal the true nature of Tyndale's motivations as a translator. Eventually, Juhász concludes that Tyndale wrongly perceived of Joye's reprinting of his Bible, with an occasional swap between "resurrection" and "life after this," as an overt theological intrusion upon his carefully orchestrated translation. Juhász avoids a total reassessment of Tyndale's entire work but instead tempers this single debate by proffering Tyndale's possessive tendencies concerning "resurrection." Tyndale clearly obsessed over one term in his Bible. Perhaps Tyndale's obsessions extend to many more of his choices as a translator.

Studying Tyndale, therefore, leaves scholarship with a crux: How should one analyze Tyndale's translation? Is he a saint? A hothead? Is his translation the product of supreme intellect or the fortuitous management of a popular commodity?<sup>12</sup> To avoid overreaching speculation, studies like those of Juhász and *Reformation* do still caution toward Daniell's laudatory approach, giving some latitude to Tyndale's abilities and place of honor. Regardless of

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<sup>12</sup> The popularity of his Bible, like his octavos from Merten de Guyes derived from both its accessible translation and its easily smuggled size. See King, "Thomas More, William Tyndale, and The Printing of Religious Propaganda,"

what factors may have given Tyndale an edge over his critics, he certainly had a rationale for his specific interaction with the original Greek text and a cultural reckoning for his translation decisions. In other words, he had a translation strategy, which invariably derives from cultural circumstances. Susan Bassnett applies a medical metaphor to describe the intricacies of cultural influences upon translations in her textbook *Translations*: “In the same way that the surgeon, operating on the heart cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture at his peril” (23). Bassnett’s extensive work on translations more prominently emphasizes this cultural point than any other, and Tyndale, like modern translation theorists, made decisions as a translator, envisioning a culturally specific, or domestic, kind of English as his target language.

A translational study of Tyndale also has a clear starting point, based on a belief he espoused more firmly than any other (perhaps even more so than his actual religious beliefs): the Bible needed to be in English. Another defense of his translation, “Pathway Into the Holy Scripture,” pits the existence of his Bible against its critics (Henry, More, and Tunstal) with a logical and biblical disjunctive: chose either light (his English Bible) or darkness (opposition to his English Bible). He “marvels” that anyone would “be so blind as to ask why light [the light of the Word of God] should be shown to those who walk in darkness” (145). By framing his “pathway” as the vernacular light of God’s word, Tyndale conjures the linguistic and cultural core of his translation: If the English language can signify the Bible’s message satisfactorily, then should it not be rendered, at all costs, for English readers?

His opponents are not, however, purely obstinate censors. Several cultural layers have placed them within Tyndale’s “darkness” framework, perhaps unfairly. In 1380, John Wycliffe, a medieval theologian known colloquially as the morning star of the Reformation, encouraged

his followers to translate the Bible into English. Access to his Bible caused schisms within the Church, along with challenges to authority and social upheavals. As a result, “The Constitutions of Oxford” instituted by Archbishop Thomas Arundel in 1409 eventually forbade unauthorized translations of the Bible within English law. This way, the Church could leverage state powers over any organized attempts to reshape biblical material by vulgar standards. The hope, undoubtedly, was to quell rebellious attitudes drawn from re-interpretations of religious material, limiting the influence of local preachers. The meaning of the Bible, not the Bible itself, caused a stale-mate in English translations. Wycliffe’s translators were routinely linked with heretical preaching, which replaced the theological authority from the Church with the personal hermeneutics of readers drawing conclusions from a vernacular Bible that they heard from Wycliffite preachers. Both Church and individual could use the Bible, but the Church’s conclusions about biblical material were authorized by the institution of Roman Catholicism and the Pope. Pulpit hermeneutics did not have any claim to authority other than personal interpretation of biblical material. Not until Martin Luther introduces his *sola scriptura* principal in 1520 will personal interpretation have an intellectual justification for its role among theological and social institutions.

When Tyndale uses his light versus dark motif, therefore, he comments on the cultural significance of the Bible’s meaning, which carried enormous weight in the early decades of the sixteenth century. Perceiving of the cultural dearth left by inaccessible English Bibles, Tyndale chose to appeal to popular demands rather than official authorization.<sup>13</sup> When his Bible was received, he felt vindicated: “seeing that it has pleased God to send to our English people (as

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<sup>13</sup> In his *Answer* to Thomas More, Tyndale identifies Wycliffe’s Bible, and other old Bibles as inaccessible, primarily because they had not been printed. However,

many as sincerely desire it) the scripture in their mother tongue,” Tyndale gloats, English readers should then use his personally crafted scripture as a torch to “light the pathway to truth” amidst those who oppose the reception of this translation (146). For Tyndale, English can adequately represent scripture, but only if one is careful to avoid those who might mislead readers toward darkness, which he will help them avoid by interpreting the meaning of the Bible through his translation and exegesis: “That there are false teachers and blind leaders in every place, and in order that you not be deceived by any man, I believed it very necessary to prepare a Pathway into the scripture for you” (145). Tyndale, like a pastor, insists on serving as the hermeneutical light-bearer to the readers traversing his own words. He not only provides the translation, but he will serve as the mechanism for understanding it. Tyndale’s aspirations extend beyond a simple and direct translation, he wants to share the meaning of the text with fellow scripture readers.

The common language, not the lofty registers of Latinate homiletics, would provide the pathway toward understanding the Bible. Again, in *Obedience*, Tyndale emphasizes the importance of his readers’ capabilities, this time anticipating objections to the perceived inadequacy of a “layman’s” ability to encounter scripture with a “pure mind and a quiet mind” (75). “Prelates,” Tyndale argued, “understand not the scriptures themselves. For no layman is so tangled with the worldly business as they are” (75). The striking counter suggests that the learnedness of a prelate, along with his duties, would make him less capable than the layperson. The more common the laity, perhaps the better the Bible-user. Tyndale continues to address hypothetical objections, like the charge that a vernacular Bible would cause “laypeople [to] understand it [the Bible] everyman after his own ways,” a fear of the possible heresies that a vernacular Bible could produce, the source of the Oxford Constitutions of 1409. His answer to

this concern is pastoral: “teach them the right way,” which is the duty of the “curate” (75). “If ye would teach,” Tyndale argues, “how could ye do it so well and with so great profit, as when the laypeople have the Scripture before them in their mother tongue?” (75). Giving sacred scripture a local, domesticated voice, penned and tamed by the linguistic and hermeneutical decisions of a pastor, would improve biblical understanding. The following examination of Tyndale’s translation, therefore, is organized around the characteristics that gave the Bible Tyndale’s congregational voice: English, Pastoral, and Domestic.

### **The English Bible**

By producing a vernacular Bible, Tyndale followed a common pattern for Church reformers. Most basically, a typical reformer would garner popular support (usually within a small community) for an anti-clerical religious view by drawing on the Bible as the philologically sound alternative to Church authority. Martin Luther, the exemplar reformer, famously cast this mold of Protestantism by challenging the selling of indulgences to poor German believers.<sup>14</sup> Luther’s quarrel was far more local in its historical context, and by questioning a practice sanctioned by the Pope, Luther indicated that the Pope’s spiritual powers (over purgatory, anyway) were limited and, for his fellow poverty-stricken Germans, abusive. Caught up in the ensuing debates, diets, ex-communications, and edicts, Luther set out to prove his point by relying on the authority of scripture rather than that of the Church. Unsurprisingly, Luther translated the Bible into German (1522), accompanied with a heavy apparatus and dozens of secondary tracts for illuminating his interpretive stance. Nourished by these texts, Lutheran congregations cropped up throughout Germany, with Luther serving as the lead preacher, his German translation and interpretive framework in-hand. From that position, using his

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<sup>14</sup> in order to fund the Pope’s construction of St. Peter’s Cathedral



interpretation of the Bible as evidence for the truth of his claims, Luther maintained his leadership. The danger of this approach, replacing Church authority with the Bible rather than circumventing it with ecclesial appeals, meant that Luther and his fellow congregants were heretics and outlaws. Tyndale seems to be seeking a similar sequence of events that would place him into the leadership among congregational pockets in England, so an English Bible is a necessary step.

The philological strategy that Luther labeled as the *sola scriptura* principle (“scripture alone,” which placed the primacy of the Bible’s spiritual authority over clerical mediation) also depended on the humanist’s *ad fontes* principle, by which a scholar’s argument is best when using the most original and accurate source material for his evidence.<sup>15</sup> Though Luther disavowed humanism, he nonetheless had to defend his translation and interpretation. His stance would eventually indicate that he has the right tools for interpretation (early manuscripts), and his staunch dedication to anti-Catholic authority derived from his simple claim that, based on the Bible, Roman Catholicism got indulgences (as well as the sacraments) wrong. As represented in Acts and Epistles, the primitive Church, by Luther’s estimate, clearly formed as an amalgamation of local groups with specific cultural expressions of Christianity. Rome’s institutionalized dogma is, according to Luther, nowhere seen in these earlier, purer (*ad fontes*-derived) versions of the church, and by employing his *sola scriptura* principle, there is no reason to think that they should be. Encouraged by the strategy of discovering truth from an accessible sacred text rather than an institutional force, Protestant sects emerged all over Europe during the sixteenth century following Luther’s lead. Each group needed a vernacular Bible that would call

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<sup>15</sup> In 1520, Luther discusses *sola scriptura* in three documents: *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, *Address to the German Nobility*, and *The Freedom of a Christian*.

upon local leaders' interpretive insights for building anti-Catholic congregations. To Anglicize the Bible, Tyndale turned to contemporary intellectual traditions and laid out his hermeneutical dedication to English in a series of tracts and prefaces that, like "Pathways," coincided with his Bible project.

### *Erasmus and the Vernacular*

As one of the earliest adopters of Protestantism's intellectual practices, Tyndale's aspirations depended on his authority to institute the reforms that Roman Catholic actors within his community of English speakers and throughout Europe adamantly rejected. To make a stand, Tyndale insisted on the superiority of an English Bible accessible to, if not necessarily read by, the laity. Such a Bible would popularize scripture and provide an understandable pathway for readers to prefer one meaning over another within the context of certain close cultural bonds, such as a congregation or a family. European religious leaders busily made the Bible accessible to more people thanks to Desiderius Erasmus's *Novum Instrumentum* (later *Novum Testamentum*, 1516-1522), which provided a new Latin New Testament, side-by-side with the original Greek version taken from the best available manuscripts. Erasmus's text paved the way for many vernacular translations of the Bible, including Francysk Skaryna's in Old Belarusian, (1517-1519), Martin Luther's in German, (1522), Santes Pagninus's in Latin, (1523-28), Jacob Van Liesvelt;s in Dutch, (1526), Ulrich Zwingli's in Zurich German, (1526), Lefèvre d'Etaples's in French (1528-1530), among others.<sup>16</sup> Though all from different ideologies and nations and most

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<sup>16</sup> Many older Latin translations of the Bible were circulating all over Europe before Jerome's translation, as were several other vernacular translations. Even though Latin was the language of learning and disseminating knowledge, even for biblical knowledge, during the Middle Ages, there was not one definitive version of the Latin translation established or official. Jerome's Vulgate did not receive authoritative status until the council of Trent (1545-1563). The experiences of the Bible, then, were

of these reformers were tried as heretics and as translators shared a zeal for garnering new Bible readers. Erasmus, though a Catholic sympathizer, recognized this shared value with the anti-ecclesial reformers: the vernacular Bible was necessary. As the leading humanist and scholar of his time, Erasmus induced the importance of a popularized, vernacular Bible with a pastoral icon in the “Paracelsus ad lectorem pium”: “Atque utinam haec in omnes omnium linguas essent transfusa (I only wish that they [the Gospels and Letters of Paul] be translated into the languages of all people.) so that “ad stivam aliquid [Evangelii] decantet agricola” (The farmer would sing these [Gospels and Letters of Paul] at the plow.) (LB 6-1, 3).<sup>17</sup> Erasmus’s plowboy became the rallying image of Renaissance Bible translators.<sup>18</sup> Foxe’s account of Tyndale channeling the

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multiple and diverse, but the preference for the vulgar seems to always win out. See Metzger 25-54. Metzger highlights the Syriac, Vetus Latina, Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian and many other ancient vernacular translations as “intended chiefly for Christians,” which in this ancient context is to say for a common readership rather than an official, clerical or scribal readership (25). For Reformation Bibles, and the prolific output of vernacular translations during the sixteenth century, see Erie, 138, 245, 248-286; Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible* 3-47; and Williams *Radical Reformation*. For English Bibles, see Metzger 51-185; Eirie, 320-359. For Latin Bibles see the exquisite research in Eskholt’s “Latin Bibles.”

<sup>17</sup> Erasmus also invokes carpenters and learned individuals. His philological program privileged vernacular versions of the Bible, and undoubtedly, his *Novum Instrumentum* (renamed as *Novum Testamentum* in 1519) offered one of the first steps, a Greek New Testament with a Latin translation beside it to rival Jerome’s *Vulgate*. Translators who desired an *ad fontes* approach to the New Testament could use his work as a starting point and instructional tool. See especially the Letters to Dorp (1515), to the University of Oxford (1519), to Edward Lee (1519), and to a Monk (1519) in Kinney, *In Defense of Humanism*. Tyndale would eventually have Erasmus’s *Novum Testamentum* at his disposal (Greek side-by-side with Erasmus’s Latin), along with Luther’s German Bible and the *Vulgate*. See Westcott, 131-61, Mozley, 83-89, Daniell, 111-15, 134-42, and *Tyndale’s New Testament*, xx-xxiii.

<sup>18</sup> Each reformer, based on their own needs, apparently invoked this plowboy. Luther has several mentions, in his Christmas sermons and table talks, usually echoing this translation by Lenker: “The Pope ought to humble his eminence below the position of the plow-boy.” Many apocryphal tales surround uses of the plowboy imagery by reformers, but many of them do make similar references to various craftsmen

same image was likely based on this passage in “Paracelsus,” either originally by Tyndale or by Foxe’s flourish.<sup>19</sup> Other such expressions of delivering the scripture to the lowliest, commonest domestic characters echo throughout the stories of these translators. Yet this, generally, is where their agreements end, for translating required culture-specific translation theories, because reading the Bible correctly was viewed differently by the various traditions.

In *De libero arbitrio*, Erasmus, responding to Luther’s *sola scriptura* principle clarifies that “the debate here is not about Scripture itself ... the quarrel is over its meaning” (16). What kind of gospel would that ploughboy sing, after he has the scripture in-hand, is the dilemma facing these translators. The answer to this matter, articulated in detail during that exchange between Erasmus and Luther, pitted the traditional Roman Catholic’s ecclesiastical interpretive tradition (Erasmus) against Luther’s new principle of *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone delivers meaning to the reader.). Whereas Erasmus, and later Thomas More in English, will maintain that scripture is too complicated a text for readers to intuit the meaning it communicates, Luther and those following his reforming notions would demand that the words of the Bible speak for themselves and need no external guidance. Contentiousness in this matter was unavoidable, especially after reformers like Luther would continue to provide external guidance anyway. Renaissance humanist scholar, Marjorie O’Rourke Boyle describes the reformer’s interpretive framework: “Luther’s hermeneutics was anti-hermeneutical: not the private interpretation of Scripture... but rather no interpretation of Scripture” (“Evangelism and Erasmus” 50). The criticism of ludicrousness concerning a self-interpreting Bible does not seem to have bothered

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and yeomen when indicating the potential for biblical literacy in their tracts. Erasmus was likely the first to suggest that the Bible could be used by more than just the educated.

<sup>19</sup> Tyndale never uses the “ploughboy” example in his published work.

Martin Luther. In *De servo arbitrio*, he brushes it off: “Si uno loco obscura sunt verba, at alio sunt clara” (“If the words are obscure in one place, yet in another they are clear”) [606].

But still, obscure words exist, and *sola scriptura* was not convincing when the Bible’s meaning required a careful, scholarly analysis. Lutheran theologian, Gerhard Ebeling, admits to the frustration of Luther’s looseness while describing the insistence on *sola scriptura*: “the real hermeneutic concern is not directed towards throwing light on the difficulty and obscurity of the text, but springs from the illuminating and dominating power of the contents of the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God” (131). Hearing the Gospel, a famous Lutheran trope, meant knowing the truth because scripture was the Word of God delivered to human ears, a direct line to sacred knowledge that could rival the declarations of an authorized churchman. Erasmus challenged the validity of the Vulgate (the Catholics’ most commonly used Bible) with *his Novum Instrumentum*, and he summoned the vernacular translations from the ranks of humanistic linguists throughout Europe, but the meaning of scripture evaded his influence. Boyle points out a “curious contradiction” demonstrated in Erasmus’s attitudes in “Paracelsus” and *Apologia de ‘In principio erat sermo.’* Erasmus, for instance, substituted *sermo* for *verbum* at John 1:1, and the pulpits throughout Europe opposed his interpretive switching. In *Apologia*, he responds to his critics: “Nunc evulgant, quod erat inter eruditos disputandum (“Now they vulgarize what was supposed to be disputed among the erudite), and “Nos illa doctis scripsimus, non populo” (“I wrote these for the scholars, not the people.”) [7]. Boyle, in another text, comments that Erasmus’s revised perspective “reflect[s] alarm at how easily common man, docile in his ignorance, may be beguiled by the authority of the pulpit rather than persuaded by that of the book” (*Erasmus* 7). Erasmus clearly did not have sedition in mind. Yet vernacular translations, coupled with *sola scriptura*, threatened Roman Catholic authority and therefore

unleashed Rome's protestations. Reformers, who could easily abandon criticisms of a self-interpreting Bible, could just as easily abandon *Apologia* in favor of "Paraclesis." In 1522, William Roye did just that when he translated the "Paraclesis" into English as "An exhortation to the diligent study of scripture." According to A. L. Schuster in "Thomas More's Polemical Career, 1523-33," this translation "exploit[ed] the powerful pen of Erasmus in the protestant cause," so that encountering "'Paraclesis' anew in the climate created by the distribution and destruction of Tyndale's *New Testament* invites an excess of striking ironies and reverberations unforeseen by its author in 1516" (1192).<sup>20</sup> The reforming preachers, within their unique cultural zones, took Erasmus's ploughboy seriously, and they each, like Tyndale, hoped to meet the ploughboy in the field by establishing translational strategies that suited, as they interpreted it, the song of his linguistic needs.

### *Renaissance Translation*

Feeling commissioned and justified by Erasmus, Tyndale initiated a program for his translation, one that would react to (perhaps against) the scholarship regarding translation but also produce the meaning that he derived from the Bible. The liberties taken by Tyndale are, in a sense, those taken by almost any translator, whether in the sixth, sixteenth, or twenty-first century. How translations are evaluated and how Tyndale perceived of his specific agenda will be covered in subsequent sections. But what kind of tradition had been handed to Tyndale from ancient, medieval, and contemporary translations necessarily illuminate the kind of strategy he would eventually employ and, therefore, warrants consideration.

The leading voice of Renaissance humanism encouraged vernacular, maybe even the demotic, translations of the Bible. By doing so, Erasmus created a host of considerations that a

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<sup>20</sup> See also Parker's introduction to Roye's translation (Roye 28-36)

translator must make regarding political and institutional pressures, evidenced by Tyndale's formidable critics, More, Henry VIII, and Tunstal. Contemplating whether a translation is good, a translator almost certainly must take into consideration whether or not the translation is authorized by the state based on its conformity with Church doctrine. Deliberating on matters of authority, like state and church, harken back to Erasmus's distinctions between vernacular readers and learned interpreters. Renaissance translators, like so many before and after, had to balance multiple perspectives, carefully negotiating the meaning of a text with *ad fontes* integrity so that, above all, the translation could be labeled as sound. That is, the translator should be able to provide a translation but carefully trace that translation to a philological, or purely logical, rationale of establishing equivalencies. In this way, the translator demonstrates his or her fidelity to the source language's core intentions or its representative version in the target language.<sup>21</sup>

Protestants wanted to relegate Christian meaning to *sola scriptura*, their source of authority and personal identity.<sup>22</sup> And reformer preachers could exploit this authority to establish

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<sup>21</sup> For the discussion of reformation, Renaissance, and the English culture see Wainwright, Robert J. D. "William Tyndale on Covenant and Justification." *Reformation & Renaissance Review: Journal of the Society for Reformation Studies*, vol. 13, no. 3, Dec. 2011, pp. 353–372; Crocker, Holly A. "Communal Conscience in William Tyndale's Obedience of a Christian Man." *Exemplaria*, vol. 24, no. 1-2, 2012, pp. 143-160; Haigh, Christopher. *The English Reformation Revised*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1987; Gunther, Karl. *Reformation Unbound: Protestant Visions of Reform in England, 1525-1590*; Gray, Jonathan. *Oaths and the English Reformation*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013; Rodda, Joshua. *Public Religious Disputation in England, 1558-1626*; Whiting, Robert. *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989; Ryrie, Alec. *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stewart Realms, 1485-1603*. Harlow, England: Pearson Longman, 2009.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Pincombe and Cathy Shrank, *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature, 1485-1603* (Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2009); Peter France, *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English*

their congregations. However, as Reformation translators discovered, the system of symbols used within a particular language determines what kind of meaning can actually be channeled through Scripture. The dire circumstance created by this problem (does everyone hear God appropriately?) renewed a contemplation of language, which led many translators to an acceptance of “received” meaning through Catholic magisterium. Finding a solid initial premise, whether based on “inspired” or “received” meanings, would give a translator the necessary directive for determining sound theory for transferring meaning from one text to another. The concept of equivalence, discovering the best target-language expression for a source-language expression, then takes precedent. It matters how well the language captures the original text, if it can at all.

If, as Erasmus urged, the quarrel of translation is over meaning, then the Bible’s message relies on “the spirit of the age” (a popular consensus) as much as it relies on the spirit of the Holy Father.<sup>23</sup> Luther’s *sola scriptura*, however, ascribes an intrinsic hermeneutical power to the Bible, making it an absolutist authority over the traditions of interpretation that belonged to the

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*Translation*(Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2000). Virginia Cox, *The Renaissance Dialogue : Literary Dialogue in Its Social and Political Contexts, Castiglione to Galileo* (Cambridge [England]; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1992).

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Kenneth Lloyd-Jones, "Erasmus and Dolet on the Ethics of Imitation and the Hermeneutic Imperative," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 2, no. 1 (1995). *Ciceronianus or A Dialogue*, 16 Intellectually, the “debate” over meaning can be established through the interaction between Erasmus’s *De libero arbitrio διατριβή sive collatio* (1524) and *Hyperaspistes* (1526/1527) and Luther’s *De servo arbitrio* (1526). Cf. McConica, “Erasmus and the Grammar of Consent,” 86, and 82-89 *passim*. As will become clear in Chapter One below, it is not true to say that “preoccupation with the notion of *consensus*” is “peculiar” to Erasmus (89): Thomas More advocated the same view. See Chapter One, below, and Marius, “Thomas More’s View of the Church,” 1296 *Ciceronianus or A Dialogue*, 67



Church.<sup>24</sup> For Luther, the “spirit” is the indwelling of the Holy Ghost that delivers meaning to the reader. One type of translation is theoretically sound by its adherence to Roman Catholicism and another is sound by its ability to be interpreted by readers, which presents the translator with a psychological dilemma: Are linguistic choices drawn from an inherited tradition or an inherent understanding? As mentioned above, Erasmus’s sympathy for Protestant translators unwittingly exposed this problem for the process of biblical translation. Hence, the matter establishing a personal translation theory in Renaissance Europe depended entirely upon the religious affiliation and culture of the translator, which, in turn, determined how extensively a final product would defer to an “inspired” personal decision or a “received” directive from the Church.

Sixteenth-century English translations, however, do carry one other distinguishing marker: the pedagogical function of Latin in English grammar schools. As Humanists recovered classical texts and transferred them into vernaculars, the process of interacting with ancient Latin initiated a significant linguistic transformation. Sixteenth-century Latin clearly differed from Cicero’s Latin, and this was recognizable regionally. Some argued that Cicero’s Latin should be idealized and imitated, such as Lorenzo Valla in his *Elegantiae linguae latinae* (1441-48). A wave of so-called “Ciceronians” (Paolo Cortesi, Ermolao Barbaro, Pietro Bembo, and Etienne Dolet) eponymously harkened to a sounder, more stable and elegant Latin that they believed contemporaries should attempt to restore and practice, replacing the Latin that had evolved into

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<sup>24</sup> *De servo arbitrio*, 606. Luther’s sentence is a less elegant restatement of Augustine’s exegetical rule in the *De doctrina christiana*: “Ubi autem apertius [sententiae] ponuntur, ibi discendum est quomodo in locis intellegantur obscuris” (“Where, however, [these meanings] are expressed more

their current vulgar usages.<sup>25</sup> Erasmus and several of his supporters (Angelo Poliziano, Pico della Mirandola, and Gian Francesco Pico) believed that historical circumstances inevitably dictated linguistic flux, so returning to a golden age would prove impossible.<sup>26</sup> In *Dialogus Ciceronianus sive de optimo dicendi genere* (“The Perfect Ciceronian, or on the Best Manner of Speech,” 1528), Erasmus forcefully and humorously repudiates the Ciceronians as anachronistic rather than lofty. He points out that Cicero, for instance, would have no concept of the Christian God and would have been forced to call him Jupiter Maximus, and that is just one expression of the many thousands that would have changed over the centuries. The soundness of linguistic usage resides, for Erasmus and the trend of Renaissance translation technique, in historicism, “the spirit of the age.”<sup>27</sup>

English translation theory, though never formally systematized until centuries after Erasmus and Tyndale, certainly began with rhetorical and literary training in Latin, and borrowed a process from both the Ciceronians and the Anti-Ciceronians. Learning English required pupils to understand, even translate Latin texts, initially, in Ciceronian style—direct imitation. An English grammar school, like Tyndale’s in Gloucestershire as well as his university training at Oxford, would have taught translation in tandem with Greek and Latin through Virgil and Cicero who were identified as gifted imitators and translators of Homer and Demosthenes.

But the process of imitation made way for a more complex system, whereby advanced students strived to accomplish three main tasks with their translations. First, they would “copy” the source text into a target language, moving from one text to the other, giving as direct a

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<sup>25</sup> Documents relevant to the Italian polemical writings preceding Erasmus’s *Ciceronianus* are reprinted in Garin and translated in Scott and Breen; McLaughlin provides a critical overview.

<sup>26</sup> For a skeptical view on the influence of Erasmus’s historicism in the *Ciceronianus*, see Pigman

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Greene 175

version of the source text as possible, almost a word-for-word, literal translation.<sup>28</sup> Second, a pupil would display his (women were rarely afforded this education) inculcation of Latin principles, by isolating the virtues or themes as primary objects of study, rather than displaying a dedication to the original author's personality. In this case, the translator generates equivalence by reducing the author's creation to a form of "commonweal" (an expression of the common good). From here, the translator is faced with a dilemma, best formulated by Warren Boucher's question concerning this crucial moment of translation: "What point is the translator making by using the rhetorical resources at his disposal in the source text?" (47). In other words, does the translator know enough about the complicated techniques used in the source text to "copy" the "commonweal" in the most impactful way, soundly representing the original? To answer this question, when rendering an English text, a translator must pull from "stocks" or "commonplaces" for equivalence. In this case, the translator will have to draw from a repertoire of rhetorical items and likely "from existing idiomatic and aural resources in English (proverbs, onomatopoeia, alliteration), to regional and...where these resources fail...the borrowing of the form of the foreign word, idiom or figure as a necessary addition to the stock of English literary words and figures" (Boucher 47). This act of naturalizing stock expressions made the English translator both an imitator and a creator. For a translator to make an "impression" of, say, Cicero, he or she transferred a term like "conscientious," for instance, into an English sentence before such a word was even considered an English term. The alternative, which is a more modern approach, would be to use personal allusions or generic language where a foreign word lacked an equivalent. Tudor English translators preferred a transliteration, imitating (quite often with direct

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<sup>28</sup> Thomas O. Sloane, "Schoolbooks and Rhetoric: Erasmus's *Copia*," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 9, no. 2 (1991)

force) the source text rather than demoting Cicero to a rough, paraphrased estimate. By this strategy, English translations could be literally faithful to an original text, and they could build a new vocabulary for English users. Tyndale's "resurrection," for example, came to the language this way, which is one of the reasons Tyndale insisted upon it.

When foreign texts began to make their way into Europe during the sixteenth century, especially the Graeco-Latin resources, England became the largest importer of new books, ushering with it a sense of English's inadequacy for properly rendering such texts into an appropriate expression.<sup>29</sup> As Boucher explains, "access to this new world of the continental printed book brings with it the overwhelming sense of marginalization, of alienation from a vast body of European textual learning" (49). As a result, efforts were largely redirected into a "free vernacular naturalization of the foreign products" since they would require immense cultural assimilation that had already taken place throughout much of the rest of Europe. Instead of dedicating centuries to the new learning, English could receive it via imitation translation. Was English so inadequate that the entire translation would come in the form of transliterations, or did English possess a quality worthy of the God's Word? The Bible, unlike other ancient texts, is considered sacred scripture, so its *ad fontes* treatment meant that dogmatic social constructs (such as the Roman Church and its sacraments) that had arisen from its linguistic reception (largely in Latin) were now open for interpretation through new translations. Each vernacular, as indicated with the English process of translating, would present a unique kind of Bible, so whatever the translation actually said mattered because it would reflect "the spirit of the age" just as much as it would reflect the cultural identity of whomever translated it.

### *The Converted-Self of the English Bible*

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<sup>29</sup> See Higman 1993 and Kelly 2010, Bolgar 1954 and Norgaard 1958

Culturally interlingual relationships within a specific community, like those between a parish preacher and his church, generate epistemological sources of sound translation theory. Tyndale's self-instituted translational activity, whether is it labeled "inspired," "Anti-Ciceronian," "imitation," or "domestic," required that he perceive of English, or any language for that matter, as a guide to social reality. His English version of the Bible would have to rhetorically resonate with his audience the way his sermons did. There is not much evidence that Tyndale was actively attempting to elevate or demote English, and there is still even less evidence that Tyndale abandoned his rhetorical training in order to complete his translation. Most distinctly, Tyndale interacted with the tradition of biblical reception that English identity had fostered throughout the centuries. He mingled the historical tradition of biblical reception with his proselytizing efforts to convert congregants into his flock, drawing what it meant, historically, for the English Bible to play a role in the Christian conversion of the English.

From the seventh until the late fourteenth century, English Bibles resided in few places and in various mediums. Scattered, difficult to find, and linguistically inaccessible to most English readers (usually in the form of word-for-word glosses), these Bibles did not represent much of the religious lifestyles of medieval English subjects. As the institutions of Christianity came to prominence in English settings so too did the English language set out on a trajectory to serve a people making their mark on a global scale. Suffice it to say that the demand for an English Bible grew proportionate to the demand for the English language. Tyndale's story of unifying English readers with the Bible requires a look at the significant English Bibles that came before him and the difficulty that translation posed for English readers. Tyndale's carefully calculated translation theory that consulted a wide range of English influences did not discount

the effect of earlier biblical texts, and his Bible possesses a sense of how those texts came to be passed down along cultural lines.

The Bible, of course, did not start in English. Like most culturally significant documents throughout Europe in the middle ages, Rome and the Latin language carried the right level of prestige to lend credibility to textual material. Tracing anything back to its italic roots established a quality and refinement that demonstrated a worthiness of international import. The Bible had the same requirement, and its most significant translation, from Hebrew and Greek, was undoubtedly the translation into vulgar Latin produced by Jerome during the late fourth and early fifth centuries. Though competing among many other, older Latin versions, collectively known as the *Vetus Latina*, Jerome's Vulgate became the standard biblical text used by Christendom and the Catholic clergy for the next 1,100 years.<sup>30</sup> Its prominence throughout the Middle Ages made it the last major Latin translation effort from the original languages.

Britannia and Ireland had experienced Christianity and biblical material before the arrival of Roman missionaries. However, the dates of Jerome's translation coincide with the dates of Anglo-Saxon migrations to Britannia, so English had not emerged as a stable language during Britannia's earliest Christian influences. Biblical commands to convert peoples and cultures certainly were the sources for these pre-Christian stages, but they were not articulated in any language resembling English. As early as 200 CE, Tertullian and Origen mentioned Britannia in reference to Christ's command in Matthew to go to the "ends of the earth." St. Patrick arrived in Ireland approximately two hundred years before St. Augustine of Canterbury arrived in Kent. The Bible was not a necessary tool for conversion. In fact, when St. Augustine of Canterbury

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<sup>30</sup> Again, see Metzger 25-54.

began his conversion exercises in 597 CE, he did not necessarily use the Bible. Æthelbeht of Kent converted because of the proselytizer's sermons and teachings. The conversions and missionary efforts that followed were met, in the middle of the seventh century, by Irish Christians who had made their way into Western and northern portions of England. As they converged on Kent, there was, according to Mackie's *History of Scotland*, a clash over liturgical practice, which pitted the stricter and more luxurious practices of the Kentish Christians (influenced by Rome) against the more folkish and relaxed practices of the Celtic traditions. The Kentish tradition eventually emerged, by popularity and decree, as the dominant and accepted practice at the Synod of Whitby. But after that moment, where a confusion over Christian identity surfaced, English Christians began to generate bibles as sources of authority, the impetus being that a tribe of Angles and a tribe of Saxons and a tribe of Britons, all converted but in disagreement, wanted grounds upon which to win any liturgical or theological debate. Their dialects were different enough to indicate distinctly different interpretations of the Bible, but their growing interconnectedness indicates a willingness (out of animus and necessity) to settle conflicts over doctrinal material. It also indicated the gradual emergence of the English language that would be recognizable as Old English.

The Bibles originally produced in England, however, were Latin, copied directly from the Vulgate. Many were elaborately decorated, by no means new to England or the newly subdued Celtic Christians. Before the synod, the Irish monk Aidan had established a monastery and its scriptorium at Lindisfarne, where the highly ornate Lindisfarne gospels would be generated. This gospel in the Lindisfarne text would eventually receive an English gloss, translating, word-for-word, the Latin text. But even before the convergence of these traditions, as Didre O'sullivan argues in her study on early Britain, the Christian iconography from before St. Augustine of

Canterbury, emphasized the themes of luxury and glory in presentation and demonstrated a power associated with Christian identity. Old English has myriad ways of expressing “glory,” and this emphasis on the gloriousness of a text or Christian item is one of the first types of matching English identity with a converted English-self. Old Irish Latin texts, like the *Book of Kells* and the *Book of Durrow* were also heavily illuminated. The converted cultures maintained the Bible so that it aligned with expressions of identity that coincided closely with their own. As the Bible served for a nexus for multiple converted denizens to establish an ultimate power-base for beliefs, it lent room for English identities to emerge through that authority or, more precisely, power. Relatively soon after the synod, other cultural transformations took place, based on textual material. An interest in improving the converted self through biblical learning led to an influx of books from newly arrived European scholars. From them a new relationship with the text began to form, opening opportunities for English to become textually integrated with a Christian identity that is more philosophically linked to Rome and less resistant to schism.

If any English writer were dedicated to conversion through textual representations, it was the Venerable Bede. Though he wrote in Latin, the nature of his language and the means by which he incorporated Biblical material into his *Ecclesiastical History*, hoped to place English identity alongside Christian identity as it explores biblical topics. In his famous account of Caedmon, the stable hand who was too shy to participate in an Anglo-Saxon musical game, by petitioning God for courage, Caedmon was given the natural ability to produce beautiful music, and Bede records his hymn, the earliest extant English poem. It is a celebration of God’s creation, reflecting on God’s glory from Genesis. Bede (d. 735) instigates a flourishing English culture, which, like Caedmon, is interested in being placed within the history of experiencing God’s glory through a creative, even personally stylized interaction with biblical material. Bede,



in other words, represents the conduit of biblical translations and literary expressions throughout the Old English period. After the major conversions of Angle and Saxon royalty, Bede's textual influence encourages future English identities to maintain their sense of conversion by supporting their unique experiences of ultimate power with biblical material.

The first attempts at translating the Bible were generally glosses, though some scholars would argue that glosses are not true translations. However, these word-for-word reactions to the Latin Bibles certainly were extensions of the converted English identities' first attempt at learning and assimilating the Bible as a Christian experience. The Bible arguably becomes English in relation to how it is translated into English, and the translators are practicing a form of learning through the gloss, just as much as they are existing as native English-speaking Christians. The need to learn may have trumped what might be called an equivalent translation; however, the first instance of Old English glosses that came with the Vespasian Psalter in the ninth century emphasize the importance of the Psalter to the converted self. Liturgical strategies drawn from the Psalms, which, more than any other biblical text, discuss the personality of both God and Humans as they relate to one another. So, for the first translations of any kind to be concerned with personal responses to Christian doctrine, indicates an interest in establishing a close identity with the biblical material. The gospel glosses, which come later, like the Lindisfarne gospel in the tenth century and the Royal gospel in the twelfth, match the emphasis of the converted identity and its need to maintain that identity through language and learning.

As Christianity permeated England and its culture, the emphasis on identity transitions to a maintenance of such identity through instruction. Biblical identity, therefore, made translation efforts a didactic matter for versions appearing during the high middle ages. In his work on Aelfric (fl. Late 10<sup>th</sup> early 11<sup>th</sup> cen.), Cleomes points out the instructional motivations of

Aelfric's homilies, which were mainly based on Biblical material and almost entirely dedicated to teaching worshipers. In one homily he tells of Adam and Eve transforming into "mortals," in another he reflects on the "old fashion" ways of bronze age Hebrews in Exodus, and in a homily using Esther, he warns against violence and vengeance. Such didactic tendencies begin to transform into a need to make the material knowable, understandable, and if that means heretical, such may be the consequences of establishing a distinctly biblical identity through translation. Identifying with the texts made them understandable.

By the end of the ninth century, King Alfred uses the biblical residue of conversion to generate his idea of the English Bible in relation to national reform and identity. Alfred's reforms were nationalist, but his codes and the kings' codes that will come with his progeny were finely filtered through a biblical perspective. He insisted on translating the most important texts for his subjects to know, using as his example, in his Preface to *Pastoral Care*, the Bible, which he points out came to Latin through two other languages. He then, along with translating Boethius, translates portions of Bible, especially those portions identifiable as reflections of the converted self. The Decalogue introduces his codes and he even offers a paraphrase of other portions of laws from Exodus. Eventually, Alfred translated the psalter, which probably comes to us in the form of the *Paris Psalter*. During his translation, he is meticulous, often providing extensions that provide further explanation. When the psalmist says, (to use a modern translation, not Alfred's) that the Lord "restoreth my soul," Alfred (or rather his committee of translators) adds "of unrottnesse on gefean" (from dejectedness to joy). The Bible message, then, teaches that the Lord restores souls, and Alfred's addendum emphasizes a personal temperament about the need for restoration rather than a general abstraction. The English perception of biblical material requires scaffolding for attempted equivalences. As translations grew out of the instituted

reforms and systems of learning, by the tenth and eleventh century, the English culture began to develop generically distinct expressions of biblical materials. The literary changes of this period represent serious psychological explorations of a Christian identity, which still engages with the tension between a solidly Christian identity and one that is in a conversion-flux. *Beowulf* is a perfect example. Though based on an older epic, the clearly Anglo-Saxon personalities in the text channel Christian identities throughout, like Hrothgar's minstrel singing of creation and the frequent invocations of "God," singular.

By the time Wycliffe (1303-1384) challenges his followers to translate the Bible, the English interaction with the Bible is well established. David Danneill, in his historical account of *The English Bible*, refers to the time after the Norman invasion as one of inactivity for translating biblical material. He does, however, point out that a "stream" of English biblical expression extends from the mid-eleventh century to Wycliffe, which, in Wycliffe's Bible, according to Danniell, becomes a "pool" of "common" memory for biblical material in English. Capitalizing on that history, Wycliffites, and Lollard agents, translated a complete Bible into Middle English from Jerome's Latin. It became the first full, stand-alone translation of the Bible into English, and it represented a culmination of self-possessed English identity outside of the top-down conversionary and didactic representations from Church and Crown. Though it still followed the pattern of the Vulgate, Wycliffe encouraged a nuanced approach to the Bible: make it accessible to any English speaker, to the realm of English speakers, so that it could serve as a tool for self-examination rather than direct ideology. That meant, however, that it also served as a tool for challenging any other kind of authority outside of its literary boundaries. What ensued from Wycliffe's Bible for "folks" were unavoidable and violent political reactions that were equally a steady stream of English readers identifying commonly with biblical material and a royally

sanctioned dedication to stomping out all forms of unauthorized Bibles. As Mary Dove claims in her full study of the Wycliffe translation, the effects of this Bible, rather than emphasizing Lollardy, emphasized disciples of a vernacular Bible, England's true converts to Christianity (at least in the minds of the Lollards). If one can use personal identity to translate, interpret, and convert, then what use is the authority of Church and Crown?

All English renderings of biblical texts, including the complete Wycliffe Bible, were based upon direct word-for-word glosses of the Vulgate. These translations developed from progressive stages of translational motivation. What were early missional efforts to evangelize pagans transitioned into a need for religious didactic tools, which then opened the way for a greater interest in a more systematic effort at a language-based expression.<sup>31</sup> Wycliffe's fourteenth-century, literal version of the Latin, though noble and nuanced for his time, when evaluated in relation to Tyndale's translation, reveals the glaring issue that could be said of all the medieval English renderings: the reliance on the Latin source stifled an accurate and accessible English translation.<sup>32</sup>

However, Wycliffe's translation more distinctly presents a demarcation between medieval and early modern translations because of Wycliffite politics. Wycliffe's followers, the ones who most likely translated the Bible into Middle English, were the Lollard reformers whose radical views led to the criminalization of an unauthorized English Bible. They also represent the last efforts at Englishing the Bible for over a century. Whatever a Lollard or a Wycliffite may be, the populism surrounding the English Bible persisted, vigorously and geo-idiosyncratically, for

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<sup>31</sup> Vincent Ghosh and Kantik Gillespie, editors, "Foreword," *After Arundel : Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England* (Turnhout, Belgium : Brepols, 2011)

<sup>32</sup> Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1995)

more than a century. Tyndale, well-aware of former English translations, picks up the energy or draws from the “pool” of this identity and re-initiates the dual effects wrought through the power of the crowd and the wrath of the crown.<sup>33</sup>

After the reactions to Wycliffe’s Bible throughout the fourteenth century, Tyndale continues the tradition of biblical self-awareness but is able to do so as a translator with a more philologically sound source and the tools of modern printing. As a boy, Tyndale read John Trevisa’s translation of Hidgen’s *Polychronicon*, which meant he had some connection to English translation early on, which flavored what it means to render another language in English.

Tyndale also had some interaction with the Lollard Sermons (EETS, OS 294) and since those sermons came in manuscripts from the South Central Midlands with a South-West Midlands dialectical flare, they can be historically placed within the proximity of Tyndale’s hometown and of the gentry within the influence of the Tyndale family, that of William Tracy. Tracy is clearly linked to Wycliffites in his will, as Tyndale and others have pointed out. And as Douglas Parker argues, Tyndale was specifically influenced by Tracy’s ideology through the text, “The Praier and complaynte of the plowman unto Christ.” Tyndale also read *The Lantern of Light* and had some knowledge, perhaps even some leanings towards Walter Brut’s views on permitting women to, in certain circumstances, join the priesthood, perhaps one of the more radical ideological associations that Tyndale would have had. Whatever a Lollard was, and that question is still largely unanswered, as Patrick Hornbeck’s *What is a Lollard?* explains, Tyndale carried the translator’s zeal with him from his own humble English roots, roots richly nourished

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<sup>33</sup> David Ryrie Charles Caldwell Price, *Let It Go among Our People : An Illustrated History of the English Bible from John Wyclif to the King James Version*(Cambridge, Eng. : Lutterworth Press, 2004), 104-89

by reforming sentiments. His English Bible was illegal, after all, because of theology, and theological arguments were not confined to the continent. Whatever “stream” flows from the mentality of earlier English Bibles, many English reformers who inclined toward reformation, seemed to have a bit of that in their DNA, Tyndale was no exception. Ann Hudson articulates this circumstance:

Studies of men such as Tyndale, Frith, Roy, or Barnes assumed that their reforming zeal came solely from their continental inheritance and that, even if they were aware of earlier dissent in England, they knew little and cared less about its details... Attention has been drawn to the proximity between the heretical views expressed in the alt 1520s and 1530s and those outlined by earlier Lollards, and conversely to the paucity in those later cases of ideas that are distinctively Lutheran or continental in origin. Investigations of Tyndale’s language and terminology have pointed to the possibility of his inheritance from Lollard writings both in the ideas put forward and the expressions used. (56)

To what extent Tyndale borrowed the “ideas put forward” by Lollards remains mysterious, but their sentiment of self-righteous conviction over an aesthetic movement to vulgarize the Bible impacted Tyndale. Directed philosophically by the emergent philological principles of humanism and the nationalistic linguistic shift into early modern English, Tyndale’s Bible would reflect the sense of the English converted self.

### **The Pastoral Bible**

From the prompting of Erasmus’s *ad fontes* humanism, the training of sixteenth-century translation techniques, and the heritage of English biblical inheritance, Tyndale asserted himself as the singular translator to render the Bible correctly. The first line of his preface to the 1534

edition reads, “Here you have (most dear reader) the new testament or covenant made with us of God in Christ's blood. Which I have looked over again (now at last) with all diligence” (i). In just these few words, Tyndale exhibits what will be some defining features of his translation strategy. First, he adoringly gifts the Bible to his “most dear reader.” Reaching the English remains his highest priority. Secondly, he emphasizes God’s Christological “testament or covenant.” This early on establishes the evangelist as the dominant voice for this translation, distinguishing his role as a preacher rather than a partisan theologian who espouses nationalist or ecclesiastical polemics. Finally, he emphasizes his “diligence” while translating. English, Christ, and self—these function as a trilateral craft by which Tyndale grafted his version of the Bible onto the English public consciousness. The zeal with which he executed this task, certainly distinguishes him among translators like Lindisfarne monks, King Alfred’s reforms, Wycliffite clerks, and continental reformers. He made the Bible English in his own image, and an examination of his interaction with biblical material reveals an eagerness to produce a Bible idiosyncratically dictated by the English voice disclosed through his own pastoral persuasions, a domestic Bible. Tyndale exposes his motivation for this kind of Bible within his prefaces and prologues to the scripture as well as his defensive tracts about scripture, especially those leveled in response to Thomas More.<sup>34</sup>

*Prefacing God’s Word: The (Most Dear) English Reader*

Tyndale’s four undisputed versions of the New Testament (1525, 1526, 1530, and 1534) made every preface “to the reader,” his English audience. Parsing specific sections of his translation, the project of Chapter Two, verifies the extent to which Tyndale invented biblical

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<sup>34</sup> Gerald Snare, "Translation and Transmutation in William Tyndale and Thomas Watson," *Translation and Literature* 12, no. 2 (2003), 195-196

English, but his translational strategy meant that delivering the Bible in English takes priority over virtually anything else. Though the 1525 New Testament only exists in fragments, its preface remains extant, and in it Tyndale expresses a loving kinship with his English readers: “I have here translated (brethren and sisters most dear and tenderly beloved in Christ) the new Testament for your spiritual edifying, consolation and solace.” His interest is to provide them with something practical, something to be applied to their lives as English subjects, “as members,” he adds, “of a community of believers united by their dedication to undertake the same spiritual journey” that he undertook while translating. And finally, before laying out the spiritual intent of his Bible, he requests of the readers, where he has “not given the right English word,” that they “put to their hands to amend it, remembering that so is their duty to do.” As a community of English speakers, this translation belongs, in Tyndale’s estimate, to the spirit of Anglicization.

In the rushed reprinted, 1526 edition, Tyndale’s shorter preface places the role of English alongside the Renaissance debate over meaning and translation techniques. Strikingly, his tone turns, first, toward an imperative: “Mark the plain and manifest places of the Scriptures, and in doubtful places see thou add no interpretation contrary to them.” Tyndale uses “interpretation” as interchangeable with “translation,” not an uncommon practice in the sixteenth century.<sup>35</sup> But he does so to highlight the thin line between meaning and equivalence. He warns the reader that he has provided a plain English translation and that expounding upon that English may render the text incorrectly. The change in attitude toward his English readership, where formerly he indicated some license to aid his translation but now cautions against too much license, certainly

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<sup>35</sup> Burke, Peter, et al. *Early Modern Cultures of Translation*. Folger Shakespeare Library, 2015 discuss this matter extensively, 13-15, and 119-188.



stands out. To defend this change, Tyndale uses the soundness principle and appeals to his process of imitation. He tells his reader to “note the difference between the Law and the Gospel,” intimating that his translation will match with the “inspired” take on the matter, whereby the logic behind his words match with the logos inherent to the New Testament based on the importance of the gospel. Alongside the sound logic traced to meaning, his translation follows a pattern of transliterating certain terms to be added to English. This will, Tyndale claims, “give it his full shape,” and later, in another edition he might, “put out [non-English transliterations] if ought be added superfluously, and add [non-English transliterations] to if ought be overseen through negligence.” His skills at imitation, in other words, are at work with his dedication to English. But, to aid his reader, he promises, in a later edition, to “to bring to compendiousness that which is now translated at the length, and to give light where it is required, and to seek in certain places more proper English, and with a table to expound the words which are not commonly use.” Though reading may, in places seem foreign, Tyndale promises to continue lighting the pathway for his English readers.

The edition of 1530 contained several books from the Old Testament, minor revisions to the New Testament, and Tyndale’s reminder that his English Bible suffered great opposition by “malicious and wily hypocrites,” only proving its validity. Perhaps Tyndale was score-settling, but in this preface, he clearly identifies those who oppose an English Bible as “so stubborn and hard hearted in their wicked abominations that it is not possible for them to amend anything at all (as we see by daily experience, when both their livings and doings are rebuked with the truth).” No doubt, by this time, Tyndale, experiencing intensified reactions against his translation, feels a need to lash out. His frustration makes the preface into the story of his zeal for seeking an English Bible met with the opposition of those whose obstinance within the status quo of state

and church, rebuffed Tyndale's desire to translate for the people. As he regales his reader with the tale, he concludes, famously, that based on the "darkness" he saw during his petitioning in London, "there was no place to do it [translate the Bible] in all England." So, he was compelled to find refuge in Germany and finally Antwerp. The point he makes, however, is that his sole driving force was an English Bible.

The preface to Tyndale's 1534 revised New Testament, which would become his final and most widely regarded solo translation, takes for granted his dedication to English. He addresses his "most dear reader," in the first line, obviously an English audience, and he returns to remarks on the language only in two other places. First, he reminds the reader, once again, of his skills for imitation in critical and technical terms. If anything seems wrong with the translation, "let the finder of the fault consider" Tyndale suggests, "the Hebrew phrase or manner of speech left in the Greek words. Whose preterperfect tense and present tense is oft both one, and the future tense is the optative mode also, and the future tense is oft the imperative mode in the active voice, and in the passive ever" (Tyndale's New Testament, 2). A further look into his linguistic abilities are expounded in Chapter Two, but here, suffice it to say, Tyndale takes a position on his ability as a translator. He continues with a few more examples, but he wants the reader to understand his imitation of the Greek is aligned with an expertise. Then Tyndale completes the preface with "a warning to the reader" in the spirit of providing a mechanism for detecting the soundness of his translation: If the printer's mistakes or any other feature of his Bible seems inaccurate, "compare the English to the other books that are already printed, and so shalt thou perceive the truth of the English." In the end, for Tyndale, the English project is the core objective.

*Prefacing God's Word: Christ (Sola Christus)*

While introducing his Bible and its various sections, Tyndale omits a surprising amount of theological exposition. Compared to Luther's preface to his German translation in 1522, which explicitly declares a theological intention, Tyndale avoids the matter almost completely. The possible exception to this is his iteration of a Christological soteriology. Despite the extensive efforts to pinpoint Tyndale's theology by critical examinations of his work, whether he was Lutheran or Lollard or radical, Tyndale only signifies that he wanted nothing to do with the extensive theological wrangling of Protestant reformers except those that go hand-in-hand with a preacher's duty to evangelism. That is, he wanted to convince believers to follow Christ and live Christian lives. He does not, for instance, commit, one way or the other, to Luther's other *sola* principle (*sola fide*, faith alone). Perhaps he would have developed a mature doctrine had he not been executed, but a dearth of religious ideology remains for Tyndale. What he left for readers of his Bible were two theological imperatives openly identifiable in his prefaces: 1) Read the English Bible carefully; and 2) Be an English Christian righteously. For Tyndale, good English Christians accepted the gospel and amended their lives.

Tyndale conceptualizes those two imperatives within the scope of his English Bible. Tyndale's translation will eventually share this theology as a starting point, a conduit, through which all of his translation can be passed. It also serves a useful pedagogical method. If, as a translator, he could reduce everything to a single doctrine through which everything else is permissible, then Tyndale would eventually be able to, in many ways, avoid so many of the charges against him regarding heresies, a useful quality for a preacher to possess. He does not express concern with a robust systematic theology because that, in his view, was insignificant to producing an English Bible. He cannot, however, avoid some theology, so he stations his views within the context of "right believers." In other words, if one believes in the significance of

Christ's blood as a salvific, which makes them Christians, then all other understanding about the faith will be available to that believer if they are able to read the Bible. Naturally, (and circularly), for Tyndale, the way to know about Christ is by reading the Bible.

Ralph Werrell, based on James Clarke's *Theology of William Tyndale*, offers a run-down of Tyndale's theological beliefs in relation to the Bible:

Tyndale believed that the Old and New Testaments are a single book dealing with the restoration of creation, damaged through Adam's sin, and the restoration of man. Following the Scriptures, his theology starts with God creating everything good. Through the Fall, man learnt evil which led to his spiritual death. God's work of forgiveness, and the restoration of creation through man being restored to life, comes through the sprinkling of the sacrificial blood of the Old Testament, which points to the blood of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, which allows God's work of forgiveness to take place. Then through Christ's sacrifice God restored his creation to its pristine goodness. (*Roots* 20)

"Pristine goodness," for Tyndale, is then fulfilled through reading about this story and discovering that Christ is the point of it all. That is, the blood of Christ opens that conduit, what comes after it is a completely free flow of scripture that, for Tyndale, should clearly be as wide open as possible for those discovering meaning within the vast linguistic equivalences that a translation makes.

If the theological differences among the many continental reformers removed the possibility of any united reformed church, then Tyndale clearly picked up on this reality, and he seems to have placed his own doctrinal preference on the Bible. In this case, it may be worthwhile to think of Tyndale as providing a textbook for a scientific study. One must read and

learn to develop a basic knowledge. After mastering the knowledge, personalized experiments can be conducted. Though Tyndale never outright condemns reformers' inability to come to any shared conclusions, his silence is certainly meaningful. Theology, for Tyndale, was as wide and available to anyone interested in and capable of reading the Bible.

Centering his theology on Christology also allowed him to easily straddle the Catholic and Protestant divide. Neither side would deny the pivotal importance of Christ's "obligation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world," as a later amalgamation of liturgical function and church protestation would attest (*Book of Common Prayer* 45). Tyndale's emphasis on the whole world, not only is biblical, it is a direct reflection on the international discussion that he will allow his Bible to continue, rather than theological entanglements that would confound readers.

Indeed, the only procession of systematic theology that Tyndale generates with his biblical material are his outlines of the gospel of Christ. These are carefully organized around the principle of εὐαγγέλιον, the Greek term transmitted into English as "gospel," meaning "good news." As Tyndale explains in his preface to the 1534 edition,

The gospel is glad tidings of mercy and grace and that our corrupt nature shall be healed again for Christ's sake and for the merits of his deservings only: Yet on the condition that we will turn to God, to learn to keep his laws spiritually, that is to say, of love for his sake, and will also suffer the curing of our infirmities.

Originally, εὐαγγέλιον was used vocatively for heraldry. "Good News" announcing a text indicated that it was an important, perhaps necessary message. Though that connotation persisted as it was transmitted through the Bible, it also took on a more distinct meaning that Tyndale describes here. One must hear the "glad tidings" of Christ, "turn to God," and experience the "curing of... infirmities [read sins or erroneous behavior]." Though Tyndale does outline some

terms associated with this theological principle, like “grace,” “law,” “covenant,” “nature,” “deeds” and “faith,” he does so to demonstrate how the entire Bible represents a unified message concerned solely with the gospel (see his Preface to 1525 and 1534). His actual explanations of those terms, outside of their role in the gospel narrative, are so ambiguous that on their own, they fail to solidify a definitive theological stance. The most singularly important feature of Christianity for Tyndale rests on the ability for an audience to hear (or preferably read) an understandable (vernacular) version of the gospel. From there, the individual experience of hearing it depends on the reader’s assimilation.

Tyndale’s *Prologue to Romans* is often analyzed in relation to Luther’s “Prologue to Romans” as a bad translation, and in many cases that is demonstrable. But as the work of Leonard Trinterud points out, Tyndale’s translation likely is not a translation at all. It is most likely a primer for his thoughts. And where exactly do his thoughts lie? Though *Romans* is arguably the most theologically rich text of the New Testament, Tyndale expends a good deal of his efforts defending the need for a reader to delve into a translation rather than exegeting the meaning of the text’s infamous soteriological implications:

Faith is not man's opinion and dream, as some imagine and feign, when they hear the story of the gospel; but when they see that there follow no good works, nor amendment of living, though they hear, yea, and can babble many things of faith, then they fall from the right way, and say, Faith only justifieth not; a man must have good works also, if he will be righteous and safe.

Any Christian apologist looking for Tyndale’s carefully extracted religious implications is disappointed by the seemingly confused back-and-forth concerning faith, good works, and righteousness. Is salvation a matter of having faith or is it a matter of doing good deeds?

Both are suggested in the Bible, so perhaps both offer salvation? However, is one more important than the other, more dire? Tyndale does not seem to have an answer regarding the machinations of salvation. He offers a more practical, subjunctive theology. A good Christian hears the gospel (presumably because it is translated into the vernacular), believes it, and does “good works.” Tyndale returns to solascripturalism for this message: “right faith is a thing wrought by the holy ghost in us, which changeth us, turneth us into a new nature, and begetteth us anew in God, and maketh us the sons of God, as thou readest...” Hence, access to the English Bible, with a careful reading, will activate the inherent meaning of the Bible and “right faith” makes a good Christian.

Tyndale insists that the “right faith” and the “good works” that come from reading the Bible lead to an “amendment of living,” and a further comparison of the prologues to Romans demonstrates this simple formulation of Tyndale’s “Christian.” Tyndale omits or so severely rewords Luther, that any claims at a direct translation must be met with some skepticism. Luther writes, “they [Christians] must be justified without merit of their own through faith in Christ, who has merited this for use by his blood” (*Babylonian Exile 22*). Tyndale’s translation is “without their own deserving, be made righteous through faith in Christ; who has deserved such righteousness for us.” The difference may seem like minutia, but the subtlety of translation rears its head here and demonstrates the dire consequences of a translator’s decisions, decisions that, as Chapter Two and Three indicate, reveal a completely different and distinctly English Bible. Luther’s “merited” singularly directs the salvific quality of faith as a tool to be used for justification. Tyndale’s reinterpretation of these notions into a distinctly English transitive Christ “deserv[ing] such righteousness for us” confounds the matter, in English, to Christ earning the

right of righteous “for us.” Tyndale once again appeals to “the people” by inserting his emphasis on the English readers, even if it muddles the theology.

Lutherans and Protestants would quibble over faith, whether it is an act or a gift, but Tyndale introduces a new line of inquiry about the consequences of Christ’s actions by insisting on the Anglicized “deserved.” In a criticism of Tyndale leveled by More, who had detected Tyndale’s maneuver, cleverly plays on the term “deserved” in a rebuttal of Tyndale’s renegotiation of justification through faith: “never deserved we unto him that he should so much do for us” (*Dialogues* 268). In another portion of the preface, Luther claims that the “Faith... brings... the Holy Spirit,” whereas Tyndale will claim that “right faith,” activates that Christian function. In fact, though we may be able to deduce a modicum of theological leaning, Tyndale emphasizing “right” faith and preferencing the Holy Spirit indicates that he diverged from Luther in some significant ways. The translation, or interpretation, makes all the difference. To say “faith” Luther indicates that God provides the faith. Tyndale’s “right faith” places all of the agency on the English reader. Tyndale neglects prevailing reformed theology in favor of his readers’ ability to enact their own theologies. Eventually, Tyndale underscores his reader’s-preference technique when responding to critics concerned about maintaining the integrity of scriptural context:

And when I allege any scripture, look though on the text whether I interpret it right: which though shalt easily perceive by the circumstance and process of them, ... and findeth also that the exposition agreeth unto the common articles of the faith and open scriptures. (Preface, *New Testament*, 1534)

The open scriptures, above all else serves as the source of knowledge, not theology or any other external resource. An English Bible would permit Tyndale’s “most dear reader” to variously



intuit how the “right faith” (righteousness) in Christ leads to an “amendment in living,” thus instituting their role as a Christian.

*Prefacing God’s English: Self*

During the Reformation, two hermeneutical processes vied for supremacy over biblical meaning: Roman Catholic dogma derived from the traditions of the Church and intrinsic revelation derived from dynamic leaders. For those aligned with Roman Catholicism, the Church’s ample supply of clergy and received, canonized law sufficed. For those not aligned with Roman Catholicism, the Bible that they had translated into the vernacular was all that was needed based on the *sola scriptura* principle. Catholic translations would necessarily adhere to Church doctrine—words, phrases, interpretive mindsets, and all the hermeneutical tools possible would point toward the traditional interpretations of the Church, maintaining the sacraments and papal authority. For the others, Protestants who believed numinous revelation could deliver the right meaning, the Bible widened options regarding doctrine, as the previous section indicates for Tyndale. The humanists’ *ad fontes* philology of preferencing original sources was now coupled with Luther’s *sola scriptura* for determining the truth in the Bible. An English Bible, therefore, would give readers the hermeneutical frame of mind that Tyndale’s, not the Catholic’s or the Lutheran’s or the radical’s, understanding of scripture. He realized such a Bible would have to be accessible and agreeable to sixteenth-century English-users. In order to accomplish this goal, Tyndale capitalized his affinity and knowledge of English as a native speaker.

The English language’s growing alignment with the humanist’s new learning created a demand for vernacular renderings of significant texts from continental learnedness, the Bible especially. Such a demand made the facts of Anglophones’ everyday life and language relevant to the transmission of theological and philosophical information. Picking up on those trends in

English, Tyndale positioned his domestic knowledge as the rhetorical machinery for producing his translation. As many English translators during sixteenth century, Tyndale negotiated equivalences by determining when a word-for-word rendering should supersede a sense-for-sense rendering, and vice versa. Also like so many translators before and after him, Tyndale's own native-language intuitiveness would select his target language as much as any established translation theory might dictate, this is the process of imitation and its reliance on the translator's repertoire of rhetorical knowledge. When he introduces his 1534 New Testament, which he had translated for his "most dear reader...with much diligence," he indicates how carefully he has "weeded out of it many faults, which lack of help at the beginning, and oversight, did sow therein." The gentle beckoning to his "most dear reader" assures the reader of Tyndale's personal, domestic aims. Moreover, Tyndale reinforces his authority by emphasizing his duty to preserving the source languages with the "manner of speech left in the Greek words." He asserts expertise, garnering credibility in the absence of an official license to produce this English translation, carefully turning the significance of his translation onto himself.

Then he takes further steps to ensure his arbitration of scripture, whereby his version of soundness resides in his ability to understand the Bible and challenge competing interpretations based on his expertise:

I have also in many places set light in the margin to understand the text by. If any man find faults either with the translation or ought beside (which is easier for many to do, than so well to have translated it themselves of their own pregnant wits, at the beginning without fore-ensample) to the same it shall be lawful to translate it themselves and to put what they lust thereto.

In fact, Tyndale's resolution brings him to the point of indignation, in the form of his "of their own pregnant wits" taunt. The tone of incredulity over competing interpretations permits Tyndale to, in dictum, consider himself in contrast to others. By playing with the terms "lawful" and "lust" he simultaneously indicates the risk (the "lawfulness" to "translate it") and diligence (lust=zealous dedication) of his work compared to the inability (its unlawfulness) and incompetence (lust=base affectations) of any critic r competitor's translation.

Furthermore, Tyndale conveniently offers marginalia as a way of preserving the contextual fluidity of scripture: "Howbeit in many places, me thinketh it better to put a declaration in the margin." This is a personalized version of the text that helps readers avoid "[running] too far from the text... where the text seemeth at the first chop hard to be understood, yet the circumstances before and after, and often reading together, maketh it plain enough etc." To "maketh it plain enough" to his English readers, Tyndale indicates that he is offering them, at face-value, the actual scripture in their language. Then, after the "first chop" they will be able to either follow his translation through context clues or, thanks to his diligence, his interpretive apparatus. Either way, Tyndale claims to understand English in a fresh, contemporary sense, leaving solascripturalism in play for some readers but serving as a mediator for others. Either way, he claims that his Bible has, thanks to his own diligence, rendered meaning plainly.

Eventually, Tyndale's style as a writer often makes it difficult to differentiate his personality from his proposed translation strategy. In some instances, that is his goal. His language was often confrontational, even combative in places, challenging readers and critics acerbically as he infused an indelible sense of his passion for English into the

claims he made about his translation. The aggressiveness of Tyndale's justification for his translation demonstrates his preacherly drive to serve as the English voice of the protestant pulpit.

He continues his preface in homiletic style, laying out propositions in early modern reformer code: "Moreover, because the kingdom of heaven, which is the scripture and word of God, may be so locked up, that he which readeth or heareth it, cannot understand it." Tyndale mimics Christ's "the kingdom of God is like" parable motif, as well as the "hidden secrets" motif of Christ's revelatory moments with his disciples. This is also reminiscent of the "secret books" trend making its way into English homes. Tyndale knows the audience to whom he is preaching and continues by aligning his critics with biblical villains, much the way Luther regularly referred to the Pope as an anti-Christ: "Christ testifieth how that the scribes and Pharisees had so shut it up [Matt. Xxiiij] and had taken away the key of knowledge [Luke xj]. ...that they can understand no sentence of the scripture unto their salvation" (2). Tyndale renames these pharisees with a contemporary, alliterative flare as "the popish doctors of dunce's dark learning, which with their sophistry, served us, as the Pharisees did the Jews" (2). They attempt to hide scripture while Tyndale claims to provide scripture as a right and as a form of nourishment, "due and necessary food." Tyndale not only claims to feed his flock, but also to prepare the food precisely, "dressing it and seasoning it, that the weak stomachs may receive it also, and be the better for it" (3).

And, like a pastor lost in his own subject matter, he reels on, piling metaphor upon metaphor to drive home a point he no doubt finds prescient. Those pharisees, Tyndale continues, "leaven the scripture with glosses, and there to lock it up where it should save

thy soul, and to make us shoot at a wrong mark, to put our trust in those things that profit their bellies only and slay our souls” (4). Note that early in his preface to the New Testament, he equates the loci of salvation, “the kingdom of heaven,” to the Bible. And that Bible, the true source of the church, has been “locked up” by the priests’ “sophistry” (2). Tyndale is careful to use “the church of Christ.” In fact, Tyndale only uses the word “church” twice in his preface, and he does so in the “church of Christ” formula, an attempt to distance his vision of the “brethren and fellows of one faith” from Catholicism. For Tyndale, the church is a congregation of believers, closely bound by the communal banquet that will “profit their bellies” (“grow fat” or “increase”). Mixed but not muddled, Tyndale preaches to the everyday life and language of early modern English speakers and set himself at the doorsteps of English Christianity, “to give [them] the true key to open” a philological self-assuredness rather than a prescribed set of dogmas (5).

*“Quoth I/Quoth He:” Tyndale’s Stance Against More*

When More offers his *Dialogues* (1529) to confute the heresies of Luther, he is charged, by Henry VIII, to include Tyndale’s translation among the unorthodox slanders against the Church. More’s *Dialogues* is one of his masterpieces, both literary and didactic, understandable and judicious. Pitting interlocutors against one another in the tradition of an ancient dialogue, More’s own persona, “the author,” speaks with “the Messenger” of a “a Friend,” all of whom are interested in settling matters of the Protestant heresies with civil discourse. According to “the author,” Tyndale represents “a “the captain of our Englyshe heretics” (12).

*Dialogues* is also historically illuminating because it reveals several instances in which More acknowledges the existence of earlier English versions of the Bible: “Whether the fist copy of his [an anonymous English printer’s] translation was made before Wycliffe’s days or since,”

More argues, “it must be approved before the printing” (91). As indicated here, More uses every occasional mention of earlier translations to remind the reader that they were unauthorized.

Tyndale, like Wycliffe and the writers of manuscripts preceding him, never secured royal permission for translation. Though an outrage to More and his royalist and papist sentiments, Tyndale’s approach fits nicely within the tradition of forgoing authorization for English Bible translation efforts.

Tyndale issues an *Answer to Sir Thomas More*, and challenges the efficacy of the authoritarian institutions that More cherishes. “How happeneth it” Tyndale goads, “that ye defenders translate not one yourselves, to cease the murmur of the people, and put to your own glozes, to prevent heretics” (168). Following this line of thought, Tyndale points out that “Moses delivered all that he had received of God, and that in the mother tongue; in which all that had the heart thereto studied, and not the priest only, as thou mayest see in scripture” (168-169). It is the case, as Tyndale’s marginal points out, “The scripture was first delivered to the people in their vulgar tongue” (169). The points, here, are multifaceted. By using the Bible to prove a point about the Bible, Tyndale bolsters his sola-scripturalism, and he simultaneously indicates that English readers would fit into the history of biblical self-receptors. Those receptors, “the people,” as Tyndale patronizingly calls them, have the heart to study, making them the more authentic authorizers of the Bible.

The full interaction between More and Tyndale initiated by *Dialogues* and ending with More’s *Confutations*, has been documented and detailed with careful precision in many instances. John King refers to their disagreements as propaganda, and based on their motivations and various supportive factions, propaganda is the correct description. Daniell labels More as a significant but outmoded interlocutor with the more nuanced Tyndale as they both negotiated the

Protestant-trending social revolution of the age. Anne O'Donnell portrays the interaction between More and Tyndale as a fight for sainthood and affirmation in zero-sum competition. Mark Rankin argues that both More and Tyndale had differing opinions on the meaning of "meaning." Stephen Greenblatt claims it is a clash over internalized identities, notions of the self. Brian Cummings suggests that both More and Tyndale were speaking past one another, Tyndale confusing himself and More over-exerting himself. It seems clear that More's *Dialogues* began an interaction that lasted for over five years and resulted in a corpus of texts lending to a multiplicity of interpretations.

Instead of re-hashing the intricacies of their entire disagreement, identifying where they agreed might shine some new light on their interaction with relation to Tyndale's motivation to be an English congregationalist. More was suspicious of Tyndale's anti-Catholic defiance of English laws, and Tyndale acknowledged clearly that he was translating the Bible on his own authority, not the crown or the church's. Indeed, that latter fact is the evidence offered, up to this point, of Tyndale's ambitions for the Protestant pulpit. Surprisingly, though noted by the many scholars listed above, More was not opposed to a new English translation, which was a life's work for Tyndale. Suffice it to say that no one was philosophically opposed to a vernacular translation, not even an English translation. Most of the major European languages had a vernacular Bible. Even though England was the only European nation to make an English translation both illegal and a capital offense, the debate over the English Bible was, for the first time, a debate over how it should be translated. Though the debate started with and was most significantly impacted by the Roman Catholic and the Protestant disagreement over the bible's role in religious life, Tyndale's exchanges with More suggests an argument over the linguistic state of English and its sufficiency as a biblical target language. Is the Roman Catholic religious

life equivalent to early modern English domestic life? Any answer reveals the plight of Renaissance humanists: interpretation complicates meaning. Tyndale made a case against More that the need of the English religious community out-stripped any need for papal and royal authorization. Tyndale's translated Bible subsumed its source language, making the English bible *the Bible*, re-imagining the Roman Catholic religious life as a non-English entity.

Of the hundreds of pages devoted to confuting Tyndale, and despite his claim that "there were found and noted wrong & falsely translated above a thousand texts by tale" (285/18, 20-21), More concerned himself primarily with three translations: *presbiteros*, *ecclesia*, and *agape* (*Greek*), traditionally translated as *priest*, *church*, and *charity*, are, by Tyndale's Anglicizing, *senior* (later *elder*), *congregation*, and *love*. More passingly highlights Tyndale's "favor" for "grace," "knowledge" for "confession," "repentance" for "penance," and "troubled heart" for "contrite heart" (290/17-21), and no other errors are accounted for, despite the claim that a possible 1,000 might exist.

Of those three significant terms, none of them bothered More quite as vexingly as "congregation." The implication is that there is no Church to govern all believers, but simply local gatherings that must make do with their faith in their own way. Reformers undoubtedly saw the possibilities of such groups in need of dynamic leadership whose claims to authority the congregants could hold in their hands. Whereas those holding down the belief structures of the Catholic positions, noticed how susceptible to manipulation such a group would become. Tyndale defended his role as that potential leader, and More resented it. Whatever church Tyndale perceived himself as supplying nourishment for, it was no monolithic structure like that created by the Catholic Church. Drawing on his desire for congregational leadership, his linguistic skills, and his inheritance of an emerging English expression, Tyndale made a case



against More that the need of the English religious community out-stripped any need for papal and royal authorization. Tyndale specifically perceived of a closely connected community of people gathering in unity over their faith claims. They would test those claims against scripture, not priestly injunction.

### **The Domestic Bible**

After committing to an English Bible that would be guided by pastorally idiosyncratic ambitions, Tyndale's process of creating a Bible became a matter of inventing the appropriate measure for domesticating the biblical language for English consumption. In translation studies, domestication is a technical term, and its definition and relationship to Tyndale's Bible are outlined below. But to understand how that feature applies to Tyndale's effort, two other features of the term "domestic" warrant a brief examination. For Tyndale, a domestic Bible was also a Bible for the literate English-speaking household, as well as a bible "pertaining to one's own country or nation; not foreign, internal, inland, 'home.'"<sup>36</sup> As a result, Tyndale created a mode of perception for future translators that came with, perhaps unwittingly, intertextual effects, many of which were relegated to the anecdotally idiomatic self-perceptions of a private home-dwelling English speaker. Scholarship on this kind of discussion usually clusters around the term "common," but "domestic" does not carry the complexity (or derogatory tone) that "common" carried for Tyndale's contemporaries. Also, the term "domestic" did not come into the modern, dual usage employed here until the late seventeenth century, distancing it from any confusion with Tyndale's immediate debates on language and the English mother-tongue. That

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<sup>36</sup> "domestic, adj. and n.". OED Online. March 2016. Oxford University Press.  
<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.uta.edu/view/Entry/56663?redirectedFrom=domestic> (accessed March 14, 2016).

distance offers further license to apply the word “domestic” as a critical framework to examine Tyndale’s mindset and translational decisions. Before a description of the translation scholar, Lawrence Venuti’s concept of “domestication,” colloquial understandings of “domestic,” as “home” and “nation,” are in order.

*Domestic: Home*

In *Tudor and Stuart Translations*, Neil Rhodes concludes that Tyndale’s translation aimed at a vernacular that is “central to family life.”<sup>37</sup> Even Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, extols Tyndale for apparently teasing a priest with the idea of a soon-to-be translation for the ploughboy.<sup>38</sup> Early on and even today, the noticeable “home-life” quality of Tyndale’s readers’ surfaces. Tyndale needed a cultural document just as much as he needed a sacred document. His pastoral use of an English-Christ-Self strategy for translation would have to draw from lived experience, and the expressions he needed for his congregation would have to primarily arise from whatever home-life Tyndale knew and spoke of in his mother-tongue.

Aside from “Pathways,” various prefaces, and *Answer*, Tyndale expounded upon his translation theory in several other texts, *Obedience of a Christian Man*, *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, *Of Priests and Prelates*, with a few minor comments in other texts. These

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<sup>37</sup> Neil Rhodes, Introduction to *English Renaissance Prose: History, Language, and Politics* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1997), 12.

<sup>38</sup> It certainly is difficult to find any extended discussion on Tyndale that does not record this scene from his early, pre-translation career. However, Tyndale himself never once mentions a “ploughboy” in any of his works, certainly not in relation to an intended readership. This “ploughboy,” however, does figure in Erasmus, whose “Paraclesis ad lectorem pium,” which prefaces his New Testament (1516), advocates a vernacular translation of scripture so that “ad stivam aliquid [Evangelii] decantet agricola” (“the farmer would sing the Gospels at his plow”). By Foxe’s dates, this story likely coincides with Tyndale’s access to Erasmus, which suggests that Tyndale might have devised his response from Erasmus.

tracts are later publications, and they come from a more mature reflection upon his translation and reformation activity. Their explanations for Tyndale's translation are outlined in more detail throughout Chapter Two, which offers a catalogue of Tyndale's specifically domestic translations. Throughout the texts, however, Tyndale regularly comments on the requirement of the "mother-tongue" for the community of believers that he envisioned. Indeed, delving into the "domestic" reader reveals a far more complex culture than the simple tools and terms of daily life.<sup>39</sup> In *Wicked Mammon*, Tyndale warns against constructing a foundation in Christ with the "doctrines of man's imagination, traditions, and fantasies" since any such structure would inevitably "perish" from scripture's "fiery judgement" (13). The Bible is not, in this case, a singular venture for any reader. It is for the community of readers to whom Tyndale preaches. In *Obedience*, he reminds the reader of his congregationalist aspirations for such a venture:

I would have you to teach them also the properties and manner of speakings of the scripture, and how to expound proverbs and similitudes. And then if they go abroad and walk by the fields and meadows of all manner doctors and philosophers they could catch no harm. They should discern the poison from the honey and bring home nothing but that which is wholesome. (116)

Within the home that Tyndale envisions, quality exegeses await his hermeneutical instruction and apply it to robust conversations, with dire consequences for breaking away from this congregational mode of reading scripture. Tyndale decisively aligns his translation with the "congregation," that More loathed, as a representative of the community Tyndale came from. His home in Gloucestershire will find its way into his translation. As a result, the English reader will

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<sup>39</sup> Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England : Print, Gender, and Literacy*(Cambridge, U.K. ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9-10

literally feel at home while reading Tyndale's translation, solidifying his position as the translator for family devotion.

### *Domestic Nation*

Using "domestic" to refer to the internal affairs of a state, may be a stretch for the sixteenth-century Tudor England. However, the rising prestige of English and England's persistent role in international affairs during these early decades of Henry VIII's reign indicates an emerging status for the Anglo-sphere and its sense as a national identity. In a sense, C.S. Lewis's infamous label for this time as "the drab age," adequately captures its still unrealized rise to the linguistic zenith experienced by the time of Shakespeare. But it misses how dire the circumstances were for Elizabethan precursors. As Pincombe and Shrank put it, "The Tudor texts we read, therefore, were written because something was at stake" (7). That is, English finally, by the sixteenth century, figured prominently as a subject for contemplation rather than simple colloquial use. As David Ginsberg, contemplating Tyndale's argument for English, puts it, "a new breed of the articulate citizen took root in the vernacular soil" when texts like the Bible began to take on English forms.<sup>40</sup> Greenblatt was one of the first attempts to situate this "new breed" in the form of a self-fashioning reader, especially in his treatment of Tyndale's audience. Since Greenblatt, closer examinations of Tyndale's role in the fluctuating linguistic circumstances of the mid-sixteenth century have considered his poetic aesthetic and his English diction as further proof that Tyndale was conceptualizing a reader within the English realm.

For Tyndale, the notion of an English reader will surface in the *copia* of loan words that he will imitate in his translation. For many of those terms, like resurrection, he offers an

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<sup>40</sup> David Ginsberg, "Ploughboys Versus Prelates: Tyndale and More and the Politics of Biblical Translation," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19, no. 1 (1988), 50

extensive defense, which will be taken up in detail in Chapter Two. But consider the defense of the word “repentance,” which he defends as a rhetorical imitation in his preface to the 1534 edition. After tracing its versions in Hebrew and cognates in Greek, he lists its various Latin representations in Jerome (*ago penitenciam, peniteo, habeo penitenciam, among others*) and Erasmus (*resipisco*). This accomplishes two rhetorical tasks for his reader: 1) that his translation can draw upon the rich tradition of ad fontes fidelity to ancient originals; and 2) proof that English has an established, recognizable expression from that tradition. A domestic translation of the Bible, therefore, is also a nationally significant artifact for the English language, a point of pride that Tyndale can leverage into support for the meaningfulness of his project.

### *The Domestic Translation Theory*

The criteria of “domestic” by which Tyndale’s translation is judged, finally, comes from a late twentieth-century translation critic, Lawrence Venuti. In *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*, Venuti defines the translational process of domestication in the following way: “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, [which] bring the author back home” (20). Venuti argues that English translation strategies are, essentially, too “domestic.” Translations into English, in other words, are translated to seem like English originals. He suggests that this primarily Anglo-American preference “decreases the cultural capital of foreign values in English by limiting the number of foreign texts translated and submitting them to domestic revision” (17). The effect of what Venuti calls the “domestication” or “fluency” of a translation is that it preferences a target language and privileges the reader of that target language with a false perception of expertise on the original text. Venuti’s argument centers on the invisibility of the translator. The translator’s presence is eliminated from the final target text when the target language is given priority. The previous

sections demonstrated how Tyndale prioritized English because his pastoral instincts demanded that laypeople could follow along with and critically examine his sermonizing if they had a biblical translation available. By privileging the congregants, Tyndale domesticates the original language because he vests interpretative genius in the English and the English readers who would, by the very nature of their naturally-acquired language and the self-interpreting nature of a vernacular text via *sola scriptura*, serve as expert readers in their own homes and local parishes.

Tyndale makes his populist intentions evident by expressing an insistence on his interpretative conclusions. “Domestication,” rather than invisibility is Tyndale’s primary strategy. The “stream” from the eleventh to the fourteenth and then to the sixteenth century is the English identity demanding a customized vernacular Bible, and Tyndale articulates his English rendering as the best version of biblical English’s identity. Friedrich Schleiermacher describes the perennial dilemma for translators with an impasse: “Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader” (12). But a domestication project may more accurately be seen as one that edges the SL out of existence because the TL is given special privileges for interpretive and equivalent production. As Susan Bassnett and countless other translation experts have pointed out, cultural context largely determines how a translation must be rendered. How much of the reader or writer Tyndale leaves stems from the inherited pressures of English biblical identity that insist on preserving the reader’s roles and the current trends of intellectual identity rather than authoritative structures that oversee a, as Venuti would say, foreignized translation. In reaction to his domestication concept, Venuti recommend the foreignization of translations. As he defines it, foreignization is “an ethnodeviant pressure on

those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad” (20). The Latin-based, Catholic form of *imitatio* that More preferred over Tyndale’s translation, would align more succinctly with Venuti’s foreignization concept.

As an example of how these issues work in translations, a modern translation of John 1:1 (discussed in more detail in Chapter Two) offers some insight when compared to the Vulgate and Tyndale’s translation. Tyndale translates the text “In the beginning was the word and the word was with God: and the word was God.” The term “word,” in the Greek, is *logos*. In the Vulgate, it is translated as *verbo*, and in Erasmus’s *Novum Testamentum*, it is translated as *sermo*. Tyndale, like the Vulgate and Erasmus, domesticates the Greek term for his readers, by rendering a literal “word.” The modern theologian, David Bentley Hart, in his recent translation of the New Testament, leaves the Greek work, transliterated, as *logos*. He believes that “word” is “a curiously bland and impenetrable designation” for such a philosophically rich and culturally specific expression.<sup>41</sup> In fact, his version of John 1:1, begins “In the origin there was the Logos,” which only further foreignizes the effect of the text. Tyndale, following Erasmus, preferred the domestic, not the foreign, and his unique, pastoral way of accomplishing that kind of translation dominates his efforts.

Tyndale takes his translation away from the strictures of the Church, Crown, and a literal treatment of the Latin because he is no longer, as a translator, beholden to the Vulgate. Realizing that his translation efforts would not be authorized, he decides to produce his Bible as a home-sick expatriate. As a result, his domesticated features surfaced in two distinct ways: 1) his zealous quest for “the truth of the English” (the *mater lingua*) and 2) his reader’s ability to “understand what is meant thereby” (idiosyncratically pastoral renderings of the Bible) (Preface

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<sup>41</sup> Hart contemplates his translation in an interview with the *Atlantic*.

to the 1534 New Testament, 1). Tyndale believes in the accuracy of his translation and believes it generates a nearly self-evident meaning through the power of his rendering. Often his response to challenges regarding multiple translational options is to remind the reader that the point of a translation is to offer an understanding, an interpretation rather than an equivalence. In reaction to one such contentious word, πρεσβύτερος, Tyndale says, “Now whether you call them elder or prestes, it is to me all one: so that ye understonde that they by officers and servants of the worde of God.” Tyndale, in nearly paradoxical fashion, suggests that the word the translator chooses is completely insignificant as long as long as it is sufficient enough to produce an “understanding” in the reader. Postcolonial theorist, Homi Bhabha offers a contrasting sense of translation practices to show how domestication works: “a closer look at translation studies whose objective is to consider intercultural interactions” highlights the intersection of cultural frameworks as the “in-betweenness” that struggles with concepts of “familiarity.” Bhabha’s suggestion harkens back to Venuti’s “invisible” translator who eliminates “foreignness” from the text. For Bhabha, the struggle with the familiar in a process of disambiguation may be like the role of the translator integrating some of the “foreign” into the text so that readers experience “in-betweenness.” This contrast to modern notions of de-colonial translations, underscores the extend of Tyndale’s domestication. Tyndale’s accommodations to culture are all in favor of what he perceives biblical English should be if he is to make it accessible to his ploughboy.

Tyndale aspired to be a preacher and fall in line with Luther, Zwingli, and other reformers by conceiving of English as a language used within the home, throughout a nation, and within parsonages. As the language of the household, English is the common mother-tongue that would be, as far as Tyndale is concerned, required for family devotional exercises. What follows from this perspective, then, will be a Bible, domesticated and thereby functioning as Tyndale’s



warrant for emerging as an English preacher during the congregationalist uprising of the Reformation.

“Christ and John the Baptist [...] restored the scripture again unto the true understanding, and had uttered their falsehood, and improved their traditions, and confounded their false interpretations with the clear and evident texts, and with power of the Holy Ghost, and had brought all their [i.e., the Pharisees’] juggling and hypocrisy to light.”  
(*Practice of Prelates*, 240)

## Chapter Two: Juggling Utterances

The humor of a juggler of words certainly does not escape the imagination of either a modern or early-modern reader. William Tyndale’s colorful defenses of his translation pits himself against Thomas More and the Catholic Church, whose opposition to his English Bible seemed, to Tyndale, like bumbling mumpsimus.<sup>42</sup> For Tyndale, any argument to keep the English scripture out of the hands of the English people was ludicrous juggling because he believed it defied the original action of Christ and his followers—to unify the people with a “true understanding” of scripture. William Tyndale promised to unify his native tongue with the Bible by committing to a high-stakes printing task and a humanist’s zeal for the vernacular Bible.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>“Mumpsimus,” a coinage of Tyndale’s from “Prelates,” refers to “A person who obstinately adheres to old ways in spite of clear evidence that they are wrong; an ignorant and bigoted opponent of reform.” The sense he hoped to convey was a sound of oral congestion that bore the resemblance of a Latinate expressions from the mouths of prelates: “doctors mumpsimuses of divinity were called up suddenly to dispute.”

<sup>43</sup> Tyndale’s usages and neologisms have long been recognized as thoughtful innovations, and he figures as one of the top contributors to English words in the Oxford English Dictionary. On Tyndale’s use of language see Westcott, 131-61, Mozley, 83-89, Daniell, 111-15, 134-42, 317, 330-31, *Tyndale’s New Testament*, xx-xxiii, Marius, 148-49, King, *English Reformation*, 105-47, *Cummings*, “The Oral Versus The Written,” Rankin, “John Foxe and the Earliest Readers,” and Jackson, “The Poetics of Tyndale’s Translation.”

Even in less dire circumstances, any translation basically hopes for unity by achieving the equivalences attainable between languages, cultures, and interpretations. The task of establishing equivalence, an action that is perhaps in a perpetual state of juggling, charges a translator with managing the gaps that the translator deems manageable among language differences.<sup>44</sup> For Tyndale, equivalence meant following early-modern strategies of translation, like imitation, and coupling them with his desire to serve as the English voice of pastoral hermeneutics, resulting in his unique domestic Bible.<sup>45</sup>

The quality and effects of Tyndale's equivalences, indeed of any translation, is judged by examining the linguistic units of "utterances," single expressions isolated for study.<sup>46</sup> In translation studies, a target utterance can be compared with a source utterance to trace how it was derived from culturally relevant expressions to complete a unification with an audience's target

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<sup>44</sup> See Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 30-48. Bassnett labels equivalence as the second most significant "central issue" for translation, behind "culture." She describes equivalence as follows: "Translation involves far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages and, as can be seen in the translation of idioms and metaphors, the process may involve 'discarding the basic linguistic elements of the [Source Language] text so as to achieve Popovič's goal of 'expressive identity' between the SL and [Target Language] texts. For "expressive identity," see Popovič, *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*.

<sup>45</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>46</sup> Indeed, studying translations any other way poses serious problems. One may speak of line-by-line, strophe-by-strophe translations, and the preservation of certain formatting features. But the utterance has always taken precedent in translation studies because it is understood as part of larger discursive unit and as a part or a whole of a semantic sentence. In other words, the utterance only exists the way it does when positioned among the other utterances, all of which are derived from the cultural assimilation of a language's semiotic representations. How Tyndale or any translator moves utterances from one language to another depends on how they perceive a series of utterances within the entirety of a text. For more on the isolation of utterances for translation analysis see Sapir, 211-32; Jakobson, 232-9; Mounin, 484; Ludskanov, 5-8, Catford 236ff; and Nida and Taber, 484.

language. As Theo Hermans explains, in “Norms of Translation,” “the category called ‘translation’ consists of the production of utterances which are recognized as communication of a certain kind, and of statements about translation” (I.a.1). Hermans highlights the translator’s socio-linguistic process for rendering a final translation, and that process is literally manifest in the utterance and implicitly demonstrates how the translator arrived at a decision. Singling out specific examples of Tyndale’s translation as they appear within the scope of the larger social history of the Protestant Reformation in England underscore his pastoral motivation.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> On linguistic theory in translation studies, see Emmerich, Karen. *Literary Translation and the Making of Originals*. Bloomsbury Academic, New York, New York, 2017; Strauss, Mark L. "Editorial for the Topical Issue “Bible Translation”." *Open Theology*, 2:1, 2016; Mizin, Kostiantyn, and Liubov Letiucha. "The Linguo-Cultural Concept TORSCHLUSSPANIK as the Representative of Ethno-Specific Psycho-Emotional State of Germans." *Psycholinguistics*, vol. 25, no. 2, 2019, pp. 234-249; Gural, Svetlana K, and Boyko, Stepan A. "Analysis of the Literary Text’s Conceptosphere in the Process of Teaching Literary Translation." *Procedia--Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 154, Elsevier, Oct. 2014, 340–44; Schuklina, Tatyana Y. "Expressive Word Formation as Linguo-Cultural Phenomenon." *Xlinguae*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2016, pp. 44-50; Price, James D. *A Theory for Bible Translation: An Optimal Equivalence Model*. Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, N.Y, 2007; Boerger, Brenda H. . "Freeing Biblical Poetry to Sing" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Bray, Gerald L. *Translating the Bible: From William Tyndale to King James*. London, UK: Latimer Trust, 2010; Robson, James E. . "Translating the Old Testament: Learning from the King James Bible" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Nord, Christiane . "Function + Loyalty: Theology Meets Skopos" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Willett, Elizabeth Ann Remington. "Mary Sidney’s Translation of *ḥeḏeq* as ‘Just’ rather than ‘Righteous’" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Porter, Stanley E. . "Discourse Analysis and Its Possible Contribution to Bible Translation" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Frank, David B. . "Do We Translate the Original Author’s Intended Meaning?" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Palmén, Ritva and Heikki J. Koskinen. "Mediated Recognition and the Quest for a Common Rational Field of Discussion in Three Early Medieval Dialogues" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Koskinen, Heikki J. , Ritva Palmén and Risto Saarinen. "Editorial for the Topical Issue “Religious Recognition”" *Open Theology*, 2.1 (2016); Hart, David B. Preface. *The New Testament: A Translation*. 2017.

Reformation translations may best be summarized as the action of a single preacher using a series of carefully rendered utterances to grant sole authority to his ecclesial organization over that of Rome's. The church historian, Jaroslav Pelikan devotes his volume on the Reformation to diverting around the various denominations, as well as 'comparative symbolics,' which draw the lines of contrast and showcase the affinities between the "several confessions" of those denominations, so that he can more distinctly discuss the entire Christian Tradition (2). Pelikan admits to the difficulty of this task because it is the individualized contexts of Protestant preachers and their confessions that fused and fueled the Reformation. These "confessions" coming from Wycliffe, Hus, Luther, Tyndale, Zwingli, Calvin, and other reformers, for Pelikan, signify direct utterances that are, historically, set in semiotic comparison to the utterances of Roman Catholic confession.<sup>48</sup> The clash, in other words, is linguistic and personal, whereby agents from Protestant sects challenged agents from Catholic sects based on their personalized philologies for scriptural utterances. In England, as John King argues, Tyndale and More were partly engaged in propaganda campaigns over "comparative symbolics" (105). That is, their printed pamphleteering defended their positions for complete control over the interpretative idiom of the age: "Written largely in the vernacular, polemics of this kind represented the chief means of engaging in doctrines debated during...the English Reformation" (105). Each interlocutor's argument mixed doctrine and semantics to maintain their representative positions for an utterance under consideration. King primarily emphasizes the printing presses but does so to clarify the difference between the "evangelically minded" support for Tyndale versus the

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<sup>48</sup> Throughout his volume, Pelikan comments on the difficulty in avoiding this obvious matter. See pp. 1-4, 10-38, and 127-144. On the matter of individualized confessions, also see Williams, *The Radical Reformation*; Lindsay, 401-422; Littell, 460-79; and Gordon, 55-127.

Catholic defenses of More. But even within the context of translation theory, like the works of Bassnett, Boutcher, Rhodes, Kendal, and Wilson, sections on Renaissance Bibles emphasize the mixture of religious polemics, humanist teachings, and the common idiom that controlled attitudes about how utterances should be properly translated.<sup>49</sup>

Since Tyndale's translation became a personal domestication project that arose from the effects of the burgeoning Reformation, Tyndale's utterances can generally be categorized along the lines of three competing confessional factions: Polemical—utterances derived from Protestant and political influence; Rhetorical—utterances based on Tyndale's imitation training as an *ad-fontes*-principled humanist; and Poetical—utterances attuned to the circumstances of English's ascendance to literariness and colloquial expressiveness. In the following chapter, these three categories, Polemical, Rhetorical, and Poetical, serve as headings (However, Rhetorical and Poetical will appear in a combined section.) of representative utterances, each showcasing Tyndale's "clear and evident text" for bringing the jugglers "to light."<sup>50</sup> The goal of this chapter is not to exhaustively discuss every word that Tyndale translated, but to offer a few cases that demonstrate Tyndale's domestication process in action while considering the possible effect that same process might have had on his readers. Bishop Tunstall, when burning Tyndale's

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<sup>49</sup> See Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 53-56; Boutcher, 51-54; and Rhodes, Kendal, and Wilson, 9-28.

<sup>50</sup> The relevance of these three categories come from a general survey of critical works devoted to Tyndale. The most common approach to Tyndale's translation is based on the arguments between him and More, which falls under "Polemics." For this category see Ferguson, 17-90; King, 105-120; Rankin, *Religious Orthodoxy and Dissent in Early Modern England*, "The Royal Provenance and Tudor Courtly Reading of a Wycliffite Bible," 187-197, "Imagining Henry VIII: Cultural Memory and the Tudor King, 1535-1625," 4-10; Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography*, 35-86. On "Rhetorical" see Cummings, "The Oral," 15-50; O'Donnell, "Classical Rhetoric," 153-154, "Philology, Typology and Rhetoric in Tyndale's," 106-107; DeCoursey, most of "Rhetoric," with special attention to Chapter 1; and Auksi, 1-21. On "Poetical" see Jackson 52-71; Gurney 22-66; Daniell, 318-325, and Teems, 46-78.

translations during his sermon against the translation, claimed to have found over 1,000 errors in the translation. He never documented those supposed errors. However, if Tyndale's charge of "juggling" can also be turned on him, and if his strategy for translating the Bible is the source for those alleged errors, then this chapter might be the first step toward verifying Tunstall. Whether Tyndale erred or prevailed, this chapter completes the careful analysis required of a translation study, a series of close glimpses into the praxis of Tyndale's personal domestication theory.<sup>51</sup>

### **Congregation: A Single Example of the Polemical, Rhetorical, and Poetical**

A demonstration, from a single, previously discussed utterance, "congregation," underscores how these three categories play a role in Tyndale's process. Thomas More's vexation over "congregation" illustrates each category's role in Tyndale's translation strategy, and it marks a linguistic tricomplexity for the utterances that make up Tyndale's hermeneutic project. As argued in chapter one, "congregation" represented a sense of community for Tyndale's readers, a community that directly challenged the institutional setting of the Roman Catholic Church that More ardently defended. The principle verse in this case is Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee thou art Peter: and upon this rock I will build my congregation." Both

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<sup>51</sup> For the religious developments in sixteenth-century England, see Aston, Margaret. *Broken Idols of the English Reformation*. Oxford, Oxford UP, 2016; Peter Marshall (2008) "The Making of the Tudor Judas: Trust and Betrayal in the English Reformation," *Reformation*, 13:1, 77-101; Sylvia Gill (2011) "The Senses and the English Reformation," *Reformation*, 16:1, 216-219; Marshall, Peter, and Alec Ryrie. *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*. Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2002; Duffy, Eamon. *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001; and Patrick Collinson (1996) "William Tyndale and the Course of the English Reformation," *Reformation*, 1:1, 72-97.

the Greek and Latin use *ekklesia*, which is traditionally translated as “church.”<sup>52</sup> Roman Catholicism bases its entire right to apostolic succession from this instance, which every Pope has claimed as Christ’s commissioning of Peter as the first pope of the Church. This moment in Matthew, as Catholic dogma claims, granted the existence of a monolithic institutionalization of Christendom with ecumenical reach.<sup>53</sup> Tyndale’s “congregation” deliberately collocates that biblical term and its organizational representation, diminishing the status of More’s ecclesiastical establishment.

As for the word “congregation,” English, as More pointed out, already had a well-established word for *ekklesia*, “church,” which is far more recognizable than the heavily Latinate “congregation.” Philologically, neither position has sure or shaky footing. “Church” very well may have derived from a degraded cognate of *ekklesia*, through Old Frisian, Old German, and Old English (OED). But the original meaning of *ekklesia*, in the context of the New Testament, seems to be centered around Christian gatherings within individual cities, hence the Pauline epistles to the *ekklesia* in various cities (Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossi, Thessalonica). Tyndale, invoking hermeneutic privilege as the translator, asserts that his significations, “little known among the common people,” will illuminate the “true understanding” that had been lost within the juggling of the Church’s power and corruption (*Answer* 11-13). However, the term “congregation” never carried the sense of “the whole body of the faithful” or “a particular local assembly of believers” (OED) in any religious literature. The Latin verb *congregāre* appears infrequently in the New Testament, referring always to the action

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<sup>52</sup> The Latin is transliterated from the Greek. Such is the case for many Latin terms, especially those relating to Church governance (e.g., *episcopālis* from *episcopus*). The ease of transition from Greek to Latin, linguistically poses a far less significant problem than the cultural relevance of the term in question.

<sup>53</sup> See Pelikan, Vol. 1, 119, 159, and 350-355; and Ehrhardt, 15-34.



of gathering. Tyndale fully sanctions a well-known English term (along with its connotation) to reference the spiritual, public, civic, and political entity that has been “the church” for centuries.<sup>54</sup>

As Tyndale and the Protestants saw it, pockets of reformers in the sixteenth century more closely resembled early city-based churches, so Tyndale had an opportunity to philologically induce a preference for that ecclesial structure. Returning *ad fontes* to the Bible restored the system of the primitive church so that scriptural expressions matched trends of accessibility whereby readers could intuit meaning alongside a translator’s interpretive selections. More believed the Biblical terms should accommodate historical precedent, which included the centralization of Catholic authority and a tradition of preferencing a singular Church. Maintaining the status quo of Catholicism meant that scripture served the Church’s claims, not the other way around as Tyndale and Luther claimed.<sup>55</sup>

Rhetorically, “congregation” fit the training of a propogandist more than a humanist. Tyndale clearly preferred congregation in almost every instance of the word, even when the

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<sup>54</sup> More’s objections to Tyndale reside in the linguistic history of the term more so than the dogmatic pressures of Rome. But the two are necessarily intertwined, so Tyndale brings attention to the religio-linguistic matter that More challenges. See Greenblatt, 95; O’Donnel, 122; and Cummings, *Literary Culture*, 192.

<sup>55</sup> The complicated matter of succession is central to the Reformation. By returning to the original sources, one returns to true intent and meaning of the sources’ contemporary realization. Luther, Tyndale, and other reforming preachers insisted that the constitution of the Church be based upon scriptural inspiration rather than historical succession. Luther would insist that anything added to “the church” should be allowed but only necessary if it possessed biblical attestation. Tyndale’s Obedience indicates a similar claim. Other reformers will outright condemn any additions to the church; hence the iconoclasts of radical German reformers. For an overview of the resistance of “a church” see Pelikan, Vol. 4, 118-119; Hendrix, 347-78; and Williams 65, 315-317, and 802-806.

Greek, Latin, and context indicated something else. For Tyndale, any term that intimated “a group of people” carried the potential for “congregation,” so every ἐκκλησία (ekklesia) would become “congregation” as a rhetorical method of osmosis by repetition. Mark 15:1, for instance, describes the Jewish “council,” made up of priests, elders, and scribes, convening for Jesus’ trial. Erasmus translates the Greek’s summary version of this group, τὸ ὅλον συνέδριον (the whole “synedrion”), as “ac toto consessu,” (consessio, assembly). Tyndale uses “and the whole congregation.” Comparably, where Tyndale’s Ephesians 5:24 reads “Therefore as the congregation is in subjection to Christ,” clearly a reference to a group of Christian believers, the Greek uses ἡ ἐκκλησία and Erasmus merely uses the obvious transliterated cognate, *ecclesia*. In a more crucial example, Acts 19:36, where ἐκκλησία and *ecclesia* refer to a disciplinary body of believers, Tyndale translates, “If ye go about any other thing it may be determined in a lawful congregation.” Of the 114 occurrences of the Greek ἐκκλησία, Tyndale always uses “congregation.” His dedication to this term practices a simple rhetorical strategy: repetition. In homiletic repetition, littering the New Testament with “congregations” at every opportunity, gives the term prominence by purposely integrating it into the entire text, even wrenching it into places where it did not fit the context.<sup>56</sup>

The poetics of “congregation” develop out of Tyndale’s politically motivated need to repeatedly emphasize the word. In this case, the closeness of rhetoric and poetics for a sixteenth-

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<sup>56</sup> The repetition is key here. The preacher’s dependence on sermons required devices that would resonate with “listeners,” who received rather than critically examined the messaging. Many English reforming preachers shared this view, some taking it so far as to, as Standish famously claimed, “Christ never bade go write his gospel or holy word but bade preach it” (Qtd. In Wabuda 77). The preacher’s role is largely rhetorical, so any preacher’s translation will be rhetorically negotiated based on “the available means of persuasion.” For more on the preacher’s duty see Blench, 70-73 and 110-114; and Wabuda, 72-78.

century translator comes to bear. The repetition plus the syntax carry a rhythm, which Tyndale almost necessarily infuses. For example, the definite article in Ephesians 5:24, which Tyndale's Latin-based imitation training does not permit him to neglect, counterpoints the rhythm of English more harshly than a direct interpretation like "a congregation" or "the church." But the choice to force that sound represents more than literal fidelity to the text; it emphasizes the word "congregation" as it stands in place of "church." *The* congregation that is a gathering of believers, subsumes "*the* Church" in the tone of the delivery, and it sonically carries the hermeneutical sentiment of Tyndale's rhetorical emphasis. Tyndale imbues the cadence of English church-life with the polysyllabic reference to "the congregation"—clunky but inescapable poetics for a carefully selective sound.

As a Protestant translator of ἐκκλησία/*ecclesia*, Tyndale took rhetorical and poetical licenses with this heavily polemical translation, but he may not have had a choice. Any utterance of "church" directly signifies the Roman Catholic "Church," which was the chief church of Tyndale's England. Tyndale's vernacular Bible bound him to another term because a Catholic Bible would have bound its translator to "church." Ironically, he recognized this boundedness in More, and even criticized More for overstepping interpretive boundaries: "M. More hath so long used his figures of poetry / that (I suppose) when he erreth most / he now by the reason of a long custom / believeth himself / that he saith most true" (*Answer*, 6-8). More lacks approval because his "figures of poetry" are negotiated by "long custom." Tyndale's utterances, although few as complexly bearing the polemical, rhetorical, and poetical choices of "congregation," bound him to "believeth himself that he saith most true" based on his pastoral domestication of the Bible.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> In the conclusion to this chapter, a line is drawn from the polemical to the rhetorical and then to the poetical. Though not entirely progressive in nature, the historical circumstances of inferencing stages of

## Polemical

Vernacular translations represented a threat to the Roman ecclesiastic establishment because common texts could, based on Luther's *sola scriptura*, assign authority to themselves. From the standpoint of Protestant reformers, translation initiated a debate about meaning, which would require deliberation. From the Catholic position, that matter was completely circular (the bible is the authority because the bible says it is the authority), and deliberation rested solely within the purview of the Pope's magisterium. The organization and representation of biblical material dictated how either side would react to matters concerning the Church's institutional directives. The polemics that ensued from scriptural debates were largely concerned with the utterances that were translated in reaction to two pressing matters regarding the individual Christian's relationship to Catholicism: 1) Church (priests, sacraments, papal authority) and 2) Theology (Christology and Justification). Since biblical utterances were integrated by Protestant preacher-translators, based on localized interpretations, they established the kinds of Christian communities desired by the reformers and derided by Catholics. Tyndale's English translation carried an extra stigma because unauthorized versions had been outlawed specifically to curtail the dissemination of religious expressions from fringe religious factions. Tyndale's specific reactions against the church's activity and theology brought with them dire consequences, and

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influence between these three are not completely unfounded. In a sense, the polemical predominates, which feeds the rhetorical, which in turn influences the poetical. In C.S. Lewis's famous formulation of the sixteenth century as the "drab age," he refers primarily to the poetic output of early Tudor England. Many scholars agree with the assessment that the language (loftier literariness) progressed from the social (polemical and rhetorical) developments of the age. See Pimbroke and Shrank, 1-19; Shrank, 180-89; Lerer 269-274. Pincombe 1-10; and Cartwright i-xxxi.

his stubborn unwillingness to capitulate on specific issues reinforced the entrenched ideological narrowness that his choice of utterances maintained.<sup>58</sup>

*Priest vs. Elder (presbyteros)*

Aside from “congregation,” Tyndale specifically emphasized “elder” as an interpretation of a specific function of the Church in contrast to the official recognition of “priest.” More’s opposition to this term stemmed from its variability: the “names in our English tongue” do not “express the things that be meant by them [i.e., in Greek]” (*Dialogue* 4-6). For More, “presbiteri,” is the “office” of such men (*Dialogue* 21). *Presbiteros* may literally mean “elder men,” but its connotation has nothing to do with human chronology: “neither were all priests chosen old [...] nor every elder man is not a priest” (*Dialogue* 11). And More maintains his resistance by citing his own verse, “nemo iuuentutem tuam contempnat. Let no man contempt thy youth” (*Dialogue* 12-14; 1 Tim. 4:12), which he insists “rather signify their age than their office” (*Dialogue* 20-21). For More, “the name doth in English plainly signify the aldermen of the cities/ and nothing the priests of the church” (*Dialogue* 21-22). In some places, Tyndale used *senior*, but More is not impressed: “this word senior signifyeth no thing at all / but is a French word used in English more than half in mockage / when one will call another my lord in scorn”

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<sup>58</sup> Of the many inheritances from Luther, Tyndale’s tone in polemical debates may be his most distinct. Luther’s famous *Table Talks* expressed disdain for Catholic critics, often taking the form of vulgarities, like admonishments to eat excrement (Vol. 41, “Against Hanswurst,” 187). In his *Practice of Prelates*, which is essentially a score-settling screed against Catholic leaders, Tyndale comments on the possibility of Cardinal Wolsey’s ecclesiastical promotion: “What a fierce wrath of God is upon us, that a misshapen monster should spring out of a dunghill into such a height that, the dread of God and man laid apart, he should be so malapert... threatening damnation... and shed so much blood to exalt and maintain such proud, churlish, and unthankful hypocrites, that he should not care to destroy it [England] utterly for the satisfying of his villainous lusts” (322).

(*Dialogue 17*). “Priest,” for More, “hath always signifyeth an anointed person and with holy orders consecrated unto god” (*Dialogue 5*).

Tyndale’s own reasons for using “elder” do not match what he is actually doing in his translation. Note this dizzying excuse for “elder” in the space of several lines from his *Answer to More*:

In the .v. chapter of the first of peter / thus standeth it in the Latin text. Seniores qui in vobis sunt / obsecro ego consenior / pascite qui in vobis est gregem christi.

(The elders that are among you I beseech which am an elder also that ye feed the flock of Christ / which is among you.) There is presbyteros called an elder.

(*Answer 22*)

Perhaps he means that *presbyteros* is *senior*, *senior* is *elder*, ergo *presbyteros* is *elder*. But a look at his entire translation reveals a more logical strategy based on Erasmus’ translation. In the verse above (1 Peter 5:1), the Vulgate calls Πρεσβυτέρους “seniores,” but Erasmus simply transliterates Πρεσβυτέρους as *Presbuteros*, presumably leaving the translation open since elsewhere he uses *seniores* for Πρεσβυτέρους (1 Timothy 5:1, 1 Peter 5:5, among others). Interestingly, the Greek New Testament has another word that is more easily translated as “priest,” (ἱερέα, Hebrews 10:21, Acts 23:4) and in those instances the referent is always to the Jewish priesthood and Tyndale always uses “priest” while Erasmus uses *sacerdos* where this word exists. Based on Erasmus’ sense of meaning, the Latin and English words for Πρεσβυτέρους point to exactly the same thing and are thus interchangeable. “Seniores” is not quite the English word *elder*, but it does carry a similar signification. The referent matters more here, and Tyndale follows Erasmus’ lead on selective translations. That is, based on the circumstance of the word,

the translation should be syncretic, thus providing the translator with a personalized set of decisions. Tyndale chooses to standardize his English translation, always using “elder” in any instance of Πρεσβυτέρους, just like he did for “congregation” and *ecclesia*.

Erasmus will in places use *seniores* and in others transliterate the Greek, but he never uses *sacerdos* for Πρεσβυτέρους. Tyndale’s translation means that any referent to a bishop or Christian priest, or any church official would take “elder.” In this sense, any English reader would see “elder” where typically a “priest” or “bishop” might exist, and likely connect the term to the function of church leadership.

Speaking of sections in Acts 20, where church leaders are clearly referenced, Tyndale demonstrates how the referential permits his consistency: “There is presbiteros called an elder in birth which same is immediately called a bishop or overseer / to declare what persons are meant” (*Answer 7*). His claim, that it is “immediately” transferred to “bishop or overseer,” indicates a translation technique based on a logical principle and a personal preference: If the Bible would use “presbuteros” to mean “an aged person” but immediately use it again to mean “overseer,” the original writers must have realized that the terms are interchangeable yet approximate in meaning, making “elder” a more appropriate way of negotiating the loss in the translation. It is not a full-proof logic, but it is a Tyndalian domesticating theory in action.

Tyndale may have been sheepish about admitting to following Erasmus’ lead because he did not consider borrowing from Erasmus a legitimate reason for making his decision. In one case, he actually mocked More’s devotion to Erasmus. Tyndale remarks that More hath not contended in likewise with his darling Erasmus” (*Answer 16*). More had retorted that Tyndale again makes “englyshe latin and latin englyshe” (*Confutation*

28). But Tyndale offered several other excuses. In the preface to his 1534 New Testament, Tyndale writes of the word “Elders”: “whether ye call them elders or priests, it is to me all one: so that ye understand that they be officers and servants of the word of God” (2-3). He further argues that: “the truth of god’s word dependeth not of the truth of the congregation” (*Answer* 17-18). Then he claims that his “elders” is derived from the “custom of the Hebrews” despite his clear distinctions between Jewish priesthood and Christian church officers (*Answer* 20). Tyndale’s clear practice of setting a standard translation for the occurrences of Πρεσβυτέρους, slightly following Erasmus’ strategy, must not have been as satisfying an explanation as his references to other considerations suggest.

The polemical nature of justifying translation decisions is likely based on Luther’s ambiguity about the distinctions between temporal and spiritual orders. In *To the Christian Nobility* Luther claims that “there is no true, basic difference between laymen and priests, princes and bishops, between religious and secular, except for the sake of office and work, but not for the sake of status” (14). Luther’s doctrinal attitude naturally leaves open a variety of options for the translator, and that variety is later born out in an array of terms that translators will associate with doctrinal matters. In later decades, for instance, Martin and Fulke will eventually substitute *carcass* and *grave* for *soul* and *hell* from their dialogue on Beza’s New Testament (1576). What appears as capricious philology may derive from an extensive background of personal preferences, political pressures, jealousies, and, in the case of Tyndale, the need for a richer explanation other than “Erasmus did it.” With regard to the words *priest* and *elder*, for example, Fulke believes the Roman Catholics have made an “abusive acception [sic] and sounding of the



English word ‘priest’ and ‘priesthood’” (253). Martin in turn criticizes Protestants for selfishly mishandling biblical material:

Because yourselves have them whom you call bishops, the name ‘bishops’ is in your English bibles; which otherwise by your own rule of translation should be called an “overseer” or “superintendent”... “Priests” must be turned contemptuously out of the text of the holy scriptures, and ‘elders’ put in their place, because you have no priests, nor will none of them, and because that is in controversy between us. (254)

Fulke and Martin pick up on the arbitrary nature of each sect’s subjective leanings: “our Christian forefathers ears were not acquainted with the name of ‘elders,’ it was because the name of priest in their time sounded according to the etymology” (244). However, the dire circumstances of early sixteenth-century polemics, in terms of the Church’s authorities, do place a burden on the translator’s justifications. Since Tyndale pioneers this kind of critical interaction with the Bible, his own justifications for his translation efforts may betray what a critical examination of his utterances can reveal. He is dedicated to a specific program and in the case of the heavily polemical term, “priest,” he follows Erasmus and prefers that his English readers hear “elder” as the true officer of the church, perhaps seeing themselves or Tyndale in that position.

#### *Sacraments (μυστήριον, mysterion)*

Aside from the officers of the Church, reformers challenged the activities that gave the Church its social function, the sacraments ordained by Christ (baptism, eucharist, confirmation, penance, matrimony, holy orders, extreme unction).<sup>59</sup> Performing these rituals were the means

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<sup>59</sup> In Christian parlance, the eucharist is often referred to as holy communion or “The Lord’s Supper.” Penance is practiced after confession. Extreme unction relates to last rites and healing. No single

by which the Church conferred grace and, by extension, social relevance or capital to its adherents. The seven sacraments that developed out of the middle ages were not officially established requirements but traditions that came from rites and oaths dating to early church fathers. Taking the sacraments provided spiritual salvation (baptism and eucharist), ensured cultural membership (confirmation), and established adherence to a social code (penance, matrimony, holy orders, and extreme unction). Since they belonged to the Church's social role and were not tied to any direct, philologically discoverable requirements, reformers like Tyndale explored ways to re-imagine these Church activities.<sup>60</sup>

If, based on the *sola scriptura* principle, the only standard for determining agreement on any matter is "authentic scripture," then the sacraments are difficult to defend, and Protestants demurred all but two of the typical sacraments from the Church, baptism and the eucharist. Most basically, the debate was over two pressing criticisms of the Catholic sacramental tradition : 1) Are there more sacraments other than baptism and the eucharist; and 2) Do any sacraments confer what they propose, or do they symbolize what has been conferred by some other means (presumably spiritually)? Generally, Protestants dedicated to *sola scriptura* inferred sacraments as commands from Christ, which required careful interpretive measures. Usually each Protestant leader found a personal niche for sacramental interpretation and translated a corresponding biblical representation. Tyndale, as with other biblical material, made his own decisions for the

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formulation of these specific sacraments were creedally mandated until after Tyndale and the Effects of the Reformation at the Council of Trent. See Irwin, 19-25; and Schanz, various sections on each sacrament.

<sup>60</sup> On the development of the sacramental system, see Lehmann, 10-45; Jenson, Robert W, and Carl E. Braaten, "Part Two;" Macy, 106-132; Palmer, *Sacraments and Forgiveness*, 14-88, *Sacraments and Worship; and* .Pelikan, Vols. 1, 3, and 4.

presentation of sacraments in the Bible. Whatever canonized activity a reader discovered in Tyndale's Bible, it would come in the English form that Tyndale domesticated for English sensibilities.<sup>61</sup>

Most basically, Tyndale believed sacraments were best suited for a parish preacher tending to a flock, one that can render the semiotic significance of the sacrament without vesting divine warrant into one person or organization. Making use of sacraments depended, Tyndale argues in *Obedience*, on the "consent and agreement of men:" "Where no signification is / there is no sacrament. A sign is no sign unto him that understandeth naught thereby: as a speech is no speech unto him that understandeth it not" (29). The Bible carries a self-sufficiency against "dumb ceremonies and sacraments" (2), "dumb puppetry" (20), "strange holy gestures" (17), and "darkness of sacraments without signification" (3-4). Semantics determines the action or significance carried by the sacraments, and Tyndale did not simply relegate that action and significance to symbolism. He purposely described them as "signs," evincing a kind of prophetic or subjunctive quality that makes the need for an interpreter/translator all the more significant. Luther's *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* clearly influenced Tyndale on this matter: "in every promise of God two things are presented to us, the word and the sign, so that we are to understand the word to be the testament, but the sign to be the sacrament" (162). For Tyndale,

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<sup>61</sup> Tyndale's reaction to the sacraments occurs early in the reformation, and as a result they are based primarily on their historical reception as well as Luther's interactions with Erasmus and Zwingli. Erasmus insisted on the Catholic position of sacramental conferment of grace (as in the transubstantiation of the eucharistic elements), Zwingli on the symbolic meaningfulness of the "ordinances," as he called them, and Luther's moderate perception, whereby the sacraments have spiritual agency but not so realistically as Erasmus' Catholic position suggests (Luther's consubstantiation does not physically transform the elements, for instance, but grants them a spiritual presence). For comparisons of these views, see Payne, *Erasmus*; and Boersma, 269-573.

“sacramental signs” represent “what I should do or believe or both” (*Obedience* 22-23) – which is in the Bible: “whatsoever we ought to believe or do / that same is written expressly or drawn out of that which is written” (Mark 11:24 qtd in *Obedience* 29-30). Tyndale is not committed solely to a simple, symbolic version of the sacraments, but he is committed to an open discourse for determining their relevance based on scripture. Such a striking attitude about the sacraments features a highly interpretive Bible that renders translations by depending on hermeneutically domesticated variety. Tyndale felt compelled to provide a translation that anticipated future readers who would feel confirmed by the words they encountered.

Tyndale believed, like many reformers, that sacraments which are required by priestly administration to confer certain spiritual elements corroded a reliance on scripture and thus eliminated the opportunity for a pastoral hermeneutic. But he did not contend, like some radical reformers, that the meaning was completely lost. Tyndale’s view of the sacraments and his translations surrounding utterances associated with them, may illuminate, more than most topics, Tyndale’s role as a pastor, whose duty would include the proper administration of the sacraments:

As soon as the prelates had set up such a rabble of ceremonies / they thought it superfluous to preach the plain text any longer and the law of god / faith of Christ / love toward our neighbor and the order of our justifying & salutation / for as much as all such things were played before the peoples faces daily in the ceremonies and every child wist the meaning: but got them into allegories / feigning them every man after his own brain / without rule / almost on every syllable / and from thence unto disputing and wasting their brains about words / not attending the significations until at the last the lay people had lost the

meaning of the ceremonies and the prelates the understanding of the plain text and of the Greek Latin and specially of the Hebrew which is most of need to be known / and of all phrases / the proper manner of speaking and borrowed speech of the Hebrews. (*Answer* 75-76).

In this case, the Church suppresses translation “not that they find just causes in the translation” (*Obedience* 8-9) but because “they have lost their juggling terms. For the doctors and preachers were wont to make many decisions / distinctions and stories of grace” (*Obedience* 12-15). The matter seems counterintuitive. The Church’s insistence on a singular meaning made it impossible for the reader to understand fully the real significance of the sacraments. What is that significance? Tyndale does not say. He merely points out that a hard stance on the matter eliminates the ability to be thoughtful about the sacraments. Tyndale insists that the Church’s reach has caused it to lose touch with its original authority. As a result: the “image serveth not thee / but thou the image / and so art thou an Idolater / that is to say in English / a serve-image” (*Obedience* 31-32); The Church, Tyndale argues, is an idol, and even though More, in the *Dialogue*, turns to a typical Roman retort and actually uses scripture to preserve the tradition of Church authority, (Matt. 28:20 and John 16:13) the *Answer*’s “salutation,” draws on another perspective: “the Holy Ghost shall come and rebuke the world of judgment. That is / he shall rebuke the world for lack of true judgment and discretion to judge / and shall prove [...] that they judge to be the law of god which is but a false imagination of a corrupt judgment” (9-11, 15-17, citing John 16:8). More sees authority as a historical process in which Church leaders can “leave books behind them and go their way” (*Dialogue* 29-30). That is, the succession of priestly orders can build a tradition, outside of the Bible, which will serve sacramentally. Tyndale imagines a

space where elders, who serve as respectable leaders in a congregation, could pass along scripturally interpreted wisdom to a local gathering of believers.

One final statement is necessary for Tyndale's explanation of the sacraments, his "Brief Declaration of the Sacraments." As previously argued, he was not fully committed to a full rejection of the spiritual activity that sacraments "conferred," but he was quite adamant that there are only two sacraments and that they should be considered "signs." In "Sacraments," Tyndale, in pastor-like fashion, homolyzes upon the typology of the root of the sacraments from the Jewish traditions of Pasch (Passover) and Circumcision. For Tyndale, portions of Pasch (easting unleavened bread and drinking wince) represented "The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Savior Jesus Christ" (364). Circumcision was a method of initiation into a sect, which was replaced by baptism. He constantly reminds the reader that Christ "institutes" the sacraments in various verses, further bolstering his dedication to *sola scriptura*. But his main argument is that both sacraments were expressions of a faith that further clarified faith:

If ye ask: Why they may not be known till they be done, and what such prophecy may help? I answer, If men did understand them before they were done, they would endeavor to let the fulfilling of them; and when the signification is fulfilled, then to see how plainly it was described in the scripture doeth exceedingly confirm the faith thereof, and make it better to be understood. (354)

The goal is highly translational, to "signify," the "fulfilling." Tyndale uses the terms "sign" and "sacrament" regularly and interchangeably throughout "Sacraments," and always returns to the importance of the way they operate to "confirm" meaning or produce "understanding." However, he ignores the possibility of the sacraments' action, what they "doeth" and what they "fulfill." He later likens the sacraments to a hen calling her chicks under her wings, replacing the female

chicken with God the Father: “With the sacrament he (as it were) clucketh to them... to gather them under his wing of mercy” (360). The image and gender reversals are striking because they place the sacraments in a liminal space for Tyndale: they are signs that must be understood but they are actions that fulfill a function. Neither committed to the Catholic or the radical view, Tyndale gives himself space as translator, a space that affords him significant leeway in pastoral terms, whereby those receiving the sacraments can do so based on a preacher-adjacent translation.

As for the other sacraments, Tyndale’s translation of their corresponding biblical attestations returns to a harsher, more radical view that they are illegitimate sacraments. The tables below (2.1, 2.2, and 2.3) highlight Tyndale’s utterances that draw attention away from the liturgical effect and emphasizes the symbolic expression. As is typical, he follows the text, word-by-word where possible (each bolded word corresponds, progressively in each language). However, he makes minor adjustments that for an English reader.

In John 20:23 (see Table 2.1), Tyndale translates “remit” literally from Erasmus, but the Greek word is literally “forgive.” In this case, if John 20:23 gives permission for confessional sacraments, but the English reads “remit” instead of “forgive,” the power vested in the priest to forgive sins is lessened. Tyndale will later translate that same word as “forgive” in another context (see Table 2.3), but in that case “the Lord” is the one with the power to forgive. Though remit may be a result of imitation, Tyndale specifically does so to diminish the presence of Catholic sacramentalism.

Table 2.1 Contrition/Confession/ John 20:23

<i>Language</i>	<i>Text</i>
English	Whosoever's sins ye <b>remit</b> they are <b>remitted</b> unto thee. (And whosoever's sins ye retain they are retained.)
Latin	quorum <b>remiseritis</b> peccata <b>remittuntur</b> eis
Greek	ἄν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἀφιένται αὐτοῖς

In relation to the sacrament of confirmation, the specific choice of “received” (Table 2.2) counters the Latin term for “accept” though it aligns more closely with the Greek meaning. This verse usually verifies the sacrament of confirmation, in which the Church accepts a believer’s confession as true, thus confirming them into the faith. Presented with the two possible options, Tyndale chooses the one that suits his agenda, erasing any hints at confirmation.

Table 2.2 Confirmation/Acts 8:17

<i>Language</i>	<i>Text</i>
English	Then laid they their hands on them and they <b>received</b> the holy Ghost.
Latin	inponabant manus super illos et <b>accipiebant</b> Spiritum Sanctum
Greek	τότε ἐπέτιθουν τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ' αὐτούς καὶ <b>ἐλάβανον</b> πνεῦμα ἅγιον tunc

For extreme unction, or healing, Tyndale slyly transposes certain terms to bowdlerize any association of healing with the magical activity of anointment. In both the Latin and the Greek text, the term for “sick” appears at the beginning of the passage and the term for “beleaguered” or, as Tyndale puts it, “defeated,” appears toward the end. Tyndale flips the order, which changes



the emphasis on the sick being healed by the oil. Instead, the sick are healed by the “prayer of faith.” Virtually all of the other words in these verses that carry significant meaning, “call,” “anoint,” “sins,” “forgive,” are stationed and translated respectively, but the one egregious flip reshapes the message just slightly enough. “Defeated” is also recorded as the first adjectival for the verb “defeat,” adding another indication of Tyndale’s innovations in favor of the English congregation over the Catholic Church.

Table 2.3 Extreme Unction/Healing/James 5:14-15

<i>Language</i>	<i>Text</i>
English	If any be <b>defeated</b> among you let him <b>call</b> for the elders of the congregation and let them pray over him and <b>anoint</b> him with oil in the name of the lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the <b>sick</b> and the lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed <b>sins</b> they shall be <b>forgiven</b> him.
Latin	<b>infirmatur</b> quis inter vos <b>accersat</b> presbyteros ecclesiae et orent super eum <b>unguentes</b> eum oleo in nomine Domini. et obsecratio fidei saluum reddet <b>laborantem</b> , et eriget eum Dominus et si in <b>peccatis</b> fuerit, <b>remittentur</b> ei.
Greek	<b>ἀσθενεῖ</b> τις ἐν ὑμῖν <b>προσκαλεσάσθω</b> τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ προσευξάσθωσαμ ἐπ'αὐτῶν, <b>ἀλείψαντες</b> αὐτὸν ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου. καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν <b>κάμνοντα</b> καὶ ἐγερεῖ αὐτὸν κύριος, καὶ ἡ <b>ἁμαρτίας</b> ἢ πεποιηκώς, <b>ἀφεθήσεται</b> αὐτῷ

Tyndale’s craftiness with the sacraments demonstrates a dedication to his project. He is not radicalized on these matters, but he is not willing to concede everything to Catholicism. His translations indicate a balance that likely would serve a congregational interaction with the sacraments.

### *Papal Authority*

Though Tyndale uses *Obedience*, *Prelates*, and *Answer* to proclaim his distaste for Rome and the Pope, his Bible only touches on the matter. Like the sacraments, Tyndale can only maneuver

around the topic. Part of the appeal of *sola scriptura* is the obvious exclusion of many Church offices and activities that have developed out of tradition, not scripture. The Bible makes no literal mention of an institution or any sacramental process or a pope. However, Tyndale takes some of the licenses of Church authority to accept the need for sacraments and to recognize their role as spiritual activity initiated by the hands of a parson or congregational delegate. But Tyndale reverses his translation strategy in one instance to paint the pope as an enemy of Christ by including the term “excommunicate” in the Bible where such a directly Catholic term would normally be censored. In his *Defense*, More does not mention Tyndale’s use of the word “excommunicate” (*ekballo*) as in “the Jews had conspired already that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be excommunicated out of the synagogue” (John 9:14; in other instances, “cast out” and “excommunicate” are given for the same verb *ekballo*). However, where excommunication is exacted against Jesus, anyone using that ecclesial tactic seems, in this verse, like an enemy of Christ.

For Tyndale and reformers to establish their congregations, they needed to diminish the authority of the Pope. Tyndale seems to believe that just having a Bible will do that, and though John 9 explicitly condemns papal-like activity, Tyndale does not need to devote much of his translation to that activity. Possessing the translation will demonstrate that the Pope does not even exist as an original member of the congregation of Christ, thus making him a prolix or remnant of older and defunct religious organization, like those associated with priestly orders in Jewish Levitical courts or pagan organizations. Tyndale does not walk such a fine line with the Pope as he does with the sacraments because he views the sacraments as useful activities for Christians that Biblical narratives verify as spiritual practices performed within the mendicant structures of early Christianity. The Pope, for Tyndale’s translation to survive, must be

discounted while other “church” elements can be preserved as long as they fit within the “congregational” framework.

### *Theology*

Tyndale’s reaction to the Church in Rome mirrors typical Protestant movements of his day, and his insistence on elders and the importance of sacraments may indicate that he fit into a more Lutheran, but evangelical sect of reformers. However, Tyndale’s theology never came in the form of a systematic tome or a decades-long debate that Luther enjoyed. The best conclusion to come to is that Tyndale left much of his theology open to the reader. This is not only consistent with the inability to lock down doctrinal absolutes within his tracts, but it comports with Tyndale’s linguistic variety. Opening the scripture to his fellow English speakers meant opening its mysteries up to a multiplicity of uses. The effect would allow Tyndale to give his reader specific instructions for negotiating the Bible, but his short-lived role as a reforming preacher made his theology perpetually open to variety in the way it was linguistically open to English.

Several attempts to pinpoint Tyndale’s specific theology, even through his translation, leaves scholars mystified. Douglas H. Parker complains that "A close reading of Tyndale's scriptural commentaries and his various other tracts that all have the meaning of the Bible at their root demonstrates that, despite what he might say [sic], he [Tyndale] has no unequivocal sense of the need for human mediation between God's word and those for whom it was intended. “Moreover, says Parker, "The fact that so much of his work involves biblical translation of the Scriptures into English is not enough to ensure their comprehension" (87). What Parker understands as “no unequivocal sense” and ensured “comprehension,” also aligns with Tyndale’s project of domesticated English variety. Opening the way for readers to find themselves

pondering theology with the Bible would give a preacher the opportunity to guide any theological contemplations.

Indeed, no single agreement has clearly emerged from scholarly consensus regarding Tyndale's theology. Perhaps the most comprehensive studies on Tyndale's theology are the works of Ralph S. Werrell. His three books, *The Theology of William Tyndale*, *The Roots of William Tyndale's Theology*, and *The Blood of Christ in the Theology of William Tyndale* attempt to align Tyndale's thinking with Lollardy by picking out various sections of his prefaces and treatises that align with Wycliffite leanings. Though it represents thoughtful work, Werrell refuses to commit to a singular set of theological principles because, as he and others have noted, "Tyndale's doesn't offer enough" for a full understanding of his theological allegiances (*Roots* 3).

In a careful and detailed examination of Werrell's conclusions, J. Christopher Warner, in "Ralph S. Werrell and the Theology of William Tyndale," unknowingly bolsters the claim that Tyndale's domestic translation opened up a variety of interpretations that he would eventually use to his advantage as a preacher. Warner's criticism of Werrell highlights the effect that Tyndale's translation has upon a reader: "Tyndale's words are not so much explicated as they are approvingly rehearsed. The consistency of Tyndale's doctrines is therefore but lightly tested by Werrell, and their coherence not at all" (134). Werrell's three books are devoted to what he claims to be a consistent theology throughout the entirety of Tyndale's work. Instead of continuity, Werrell personalizes Tyndale's theology and uses his translation and tracts to provide meaningful explanations for his own religious mysteries: "I had always had some unanswered theological questions that did not seem to have a scriptural answer," he writes; but "Tyndale had found the scriptural answer to those questions...; I wondered why I had not seen it as I read my

Bible' (9). That level of personal investment in Tyndale's theology must put us on our guard" (134). Werrell matches the kind of theological reader that Tyndale envisioned, one seeking guidance.

Suffice it to say, putting Tyndale's theology into alignment with reformers is important and crucial, but the lack of information does present an interesting crux: why did he clearly refuse to expound upon a few theological issues to clarify himself? The answer rests with his domestication agenda for the New Testament. The technique for transforming the original Greek into English, based on a personal aspiration for pastoral leadership, required Tyndale to, instead of quibbling over spiritual machinations, clarify what it meant for a congregant to be Christian. Christian identity takes primacy for Tyndale's translation of key verses. As he determines what the Bible means, he simultaneously determines what it means to be a Christian, in English. The basic features of Renaissance Christianity, according to Gordon Campbell are based on soteriology, the doctrine of salvation (Greek σωτηρι'α), which "in early modern theological treatises always includes the doctrines of atonement and Grace." Though Tyndale's handling of the term "grace" has further implications that will be dealt with separately in another section, "atonement" can be understood by three areas of concern for Protestant Christians: Christology, Justification, and Works. These three are drawn from the formulation of atonement as "man's reconciliation with God through the sacrificial death of Christ" (Cross and Livingstone). Understanding how Tyndale translated the Bible to formulate a theological sense of "Justification" ("man's reconciliation with God"), Works ("through the sacrificial death"), and Christology ("of Christ"), underscores his translation strategies for providing the English reader with a Christian identity (his or her soteriology).

*Christology*

Tyndale borrows much of his understanding of Christology from Luther. In the framework of his understanding of the church, Luther also clarifies the meaning of Christ. Christ is the sole head of the church, and he rules spiritually in the faithful through word and sacrament. Accordingly, the church is spiritually the body of Christ and the communion of saints. Tyndale's 1 Corinthians 12:12 reads: "For as the body is one and hath many members and all the members of one body though they be many yet are but one body: even so is Christ." "Though they be" carries a conversational tone while it simultaneously expounds upon a logical argument. His messaging is meant to deliver the English equivalent of the Latin's "sicunt enim" (as for) construction for an analogy. Inasmuch as Luther centers his Christology in the Crucifixion, he can sum up his theology in the statement "Crux sola est nostra Theologia" (The cross alone is our theology). On the cross Christ suffered in his own person and not in the person of the church, and in solidarity with the tormented conscience of the sinner he effected our redemption from sin, death, and the devil. From 1520 on, Luther begins to ground Christ's work of salvation ever more explicitly in the early church's teaching on the two natures of Christ. Conversely, he reinterprets this ancient teaching from the stand-point of his own teaching on justification grounded in the salvific work of Christ. Just as a happy exchange occurs between the riches of Christ and the shortcomings of the sinful soul through the imputing of Christ's work of salvation to the believer, so Christ's riches have power to overcome sin, death, and the devil in the divine-human person of Jesus Christ.<sup>62</sup> Tyndale concurs throughout most of his tracts and prefaces, that imparting the knowledge of the crucified Christ is the main goal of his entire project. However, the English reader perceives this Christ, though based on Luther, needs to be open to

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<sup>62</sup> Luther outlines his Christology in his interaction with Erasmus through *De servo arbitrio*, and in more detail in *De doctrina christiana*.

interpretation. Tyndale's assertion in *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (1528) that "the scripture giveth record to himself and ever expoundeth itself by another open text [in scripture]" coupled with 847 references to Christ's life, aligns an understanding of Christ with an understanding of Scripture (171).

Tyndale does not explicitly state, however, in any of his commentary, that Christ shared a deistic personhood. For Luther, Christ is both God and man, and is also that person who did not sin, does not die and is not condemned, but also the one who cannot sin, die or be condemned; His righteousness, life and salvation is unconquerable, eternal and all-powerful. Tyndale relies primarily on verses like Romans 5:21 to indicate the significance of Christ's personhood: "That as sin had reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by the help of Jesus Christ." The "help" is important because it indicates Christ doing something where as the Greek term, *dynamos* and the Latin *viribus* indicate power or strength. Tyndale maintains the Lutheran sense of a crucified Christ, but that Christ is more of an aid than an deistic agent proving God's power.

For Luther, Christ simultaneously fulfills his office as king and high priest for the believer, and he does so in such a way that he makes them spiritually kings and priests, but For Tyndale, Christ serves more radically as support staff. Luther continued to demonstrate that the soteriological proclamation he had discovered in scripture was in harmony with the teaching of the ancient church.<sup>63</sup> In the dogma of the early church, Luther found the proper interpretation of the Holy Scriptures and focused his considerations on the Incarnation as the recognition of the

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<sup>63</sup> He comes to these theological conclusions in the years following 1521, particularly in his sermons on the church in a series of Advent and Christmas postils, in postils from the year 1522, and in the Lenten sermons of 1525.

God of faith. God wants to be found through the human nature of Christ. In the incarnate Christ, God has revealed himself in history in a contingent manner. Here the insights of the nominalist-Ockhamist tradition continue to influence Luther. In contrast to direct mystical devotion to Christ, Luther turns unequivocally to the incarnate Christ as the place where God encounters man. Whoever wants to come to God must take God's own path "from below." Tyndale matches this theology in *Obedience* through his constant quotations from Christ, which bolsters his Christ-as-help motif. Of the 848 references to Christ, 502 are direct quotations of Christ's interactions with his disciples or would-be disciples: "Hear what Christ further says: 'The disciple is not greater than his master; nor is the servant greater, or better, than his lord. If they have called the good man of the house 'Beelzebub,' then how much more will they call his household servants so!'" (Matthew 10:25 qtd in *Obedience* iii). And, he backs up this emphasis with his translation of Pauline theology: "Lord said to Paul, 'My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect through weakness.' Look, Christ is never strong in us till we are weak." (2 Corinthians 12:9-10 qtd in *Obedience* 4). Tyndale's "how much more" from the mouth of Christ and "is sufficient for" from the theology of Paul directs the readers' attention to Christ's role as supportive figure, both in his ministry as a human on earth and as a salvific figure in relation to his resurrection powers.

On the point of Christ's servitude, Tyndale aligns with Luther repeatedly and emphatically referred to *Deus incarnatus* ("the incarnate God") and thereby to God's self-definition in the gospel. In accordance with this significance of the incarnate God, Luther emphasized the hypostatic union of the two natures in the divine person of Christ. In a famous summary of *Philippians* 2:5-11, Luther explains that "Although the two natures are distinct, yet there is one person; all that Christ does or suffers, God has certainly done and suffered, even



though only one of Christ's natures is affected" (*Babylonian Captivity of the Church* 152).

Through the hypostatic union, the earthly Christ partakes in the attributes of divine nature, but in accord with *Philippians* 2:5–11, he renounces their use. Christ served us as a servant, which he freely accepted, and, in this form, he bears witness to God's love for us. Luther described Christ's work that is grounded in this love as the reconciliation of humans with God; as liberation and redemption from sin, death, and the devil and from the law as an instrument of God's wrath directed against sin, or, in short, as satisfaction for our sins. Luther did not interpret this satisfaction legalistically as does Anselm of Canterbury.

Tyndale's translation of these verses, however, are worth a closer examination because the detailed choices express Tyndale's Christological leanings. He begins with, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus," emphasizing a mental state whereas the Greek and Latin emphasized "singuli considerante," a single thought (v.5). Then, "Which being in the shape of god and thought it not robbery to be equal with god. Nevertheless he made him self of no reputation and took on him the shape of a servant and became like unto men," uses "shape of god" and "made himself of no reputation" to construct a less divine and more human Christ, whereas the Greek μορφήν (*morphēn*), the term for "form" used by Plato, represents a more distinctly elevated concept (vv. 7-8). Tyndale offers space for his readers as he likens Christ to their condition, opening the scripture to the reader and its meaning available to a variety of thoughts because, for Tyndale, Christ "was found in his apparel as a man. He humbled him self and became obedient unto the death even the death of the cross" (v.9).

Luther's Christology, with its emphasis on the incarnation, also shaped his line of argument against Erasmus in 1525 and the distinction he made between *Deus absconditus* ("God as hidden") and *Deus revelatus* ("God as revealed"), an argument that Tyndale's translation

affirms with one caveat, that “Jesus Christ is the Lord unto the praise of God the father” instead of *in gloria est Dei Patris* (in the praise of God the Father):

**9** Wherefore God hath exalted him and gave him a name above all names:

**10** that in the name of Jesus should every knee bow both of things in heaven and things in earth and things under earth

**11** and that all tongues should confess that Jesus Christ is the lord unto the praise of God the father. (Philippians 2)

With a new distinction, Tyndale parts from Luther’s hidden/manifest self-definition in Jesus Christ and makes Christ a pathway or helper to God rather than “in God.” Unsurprisingly, Tyndale departed with Erasmus’s Latin and prefers the Greek, still with a slight modification (*εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός*, literally “into the glory of God the Father,” where *εἰς* is more commonly translated “into”). A simple change in this instance gives Tyndale immense control over the kind of identity that English Christians would perceive in relation to their Christologically-based salvation.

### *Justification*

Since Christ is less directly involved in the Bible reader’s connectivity with God, as Tyndale’s biblical Christology suggests, his role in justifying believers comes along just as passively. Intense scholarly activity has centered on the matter of justification since Luther. Most basically, the stasis among Catholic and Protestant theologians resides in contentions over the proper translation of single prepositions from the following biblical passages: Romans 3:21-22, Galatians 2:16/20, and Philippians 3:8-9. Each of these sections have distinct utterances that Tyndale shapes to match his translational design.

These sections in Romans were discussed in Chapter one and indicated Tyndale's reluctance to overemphasize either the Catholic or the Protestant view while carefully negotiating Luther's preface to the epistle. Luther famously emphasized that "faith in" Christ would mean that Christians are not justified by their own behavior but by Christ's. It seems counterintuitive because there is still one action taken by the Christian, faith. However, after having "faith in" Christ, then Christ does all of the justifying since, according to Luther's theology, the faithful would have been incapable of devising any kind of reconciliation to God. Tyndale reformulates the theology with his commentary: "without their own [Christians] deserving, [they are] made righteous through faith in Christ; who has deserved such righteousness for us." (Preface to Romans). His translation is equally dizzying:

**21** Now verily is the righteousness that cometh of God declared without the fulfilling of the law having witness yet of the law and of the Prophets.

**22** The righteousness no doubt which is good before God cometh by ye faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe. There is no difference:

**23** for all have sinned and lack the praise that is of valor before God:

**24** but are justified freely by his grace through the redaction that is in Christ Jesus.

Verse twenty-two is the key to Tyndale's loosely defined, quasi-Christological system of justification. To be justified is to be able to be reconciled with God. Reconciliation can only occur for the righteous, who discover their righteousness "by the faith of Jesus Christ." However, that faith comes "unto all and upon all that believe." What is the difference between the faith of Christ coming "unto" someone as opposed to coming "upon" someone? For Tyndale, "There is no difference." because "all have sinned" and "are justified... through.. Christ Jesus." Instead of clearly siding with Luther or Erasmus, Tyndale opens justification up to multiple readings with

many applications. Erasmus translates διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (the masculine generative literally means “faith through Jesus Christ”) as *per fidem Iesu Christi*, which colloquially sides with Luther’s “faith in Jesus Christ.” The various options for translation give Tyndale plenty of room to continue his program of openness. In this case, his concept of justification is so wide open that the only hope for fully conceiving of it coherently would have to come from his own explanation. However, as his preface indicates, he has no intention of settling on any one version like Luther or Erasmus. Whatever the original text may indicate to a Catholic or Lutheran will be open for interpretation by Tyndale’s English readers.

By 1520 Luther has a clear systematic theology of Justification that he provides in *Freiheit einer Christenmensch* (Liberty of a Christian), among other writings, which Tyndale will slightly modify to fit his Bible. Justification comes from faith alone (*sola fides*), which is divinely gifted through the grace of Christ’s work on the cross. According to the Apology for the Augsburg Confession (1530), justification is *per fidem, propter Christum*. However, Luther redefines faith as *fiducia* (trust) in the promises of God, rather than the Augustinian principle of assent. In this formulation, faith unites the soul with Christ and Christ’s righteousness is imputed to sinful believers (rather than the Augustinian notion of “imparted”), which completes salvation.

Third, sinners are justified on the basis of the righteousness of God, which is God’s gracious gift to sinful humanity. Although Augustine had conceived of this righteousness as imparted to sinners and intrinsic to their persons. Overall, Luther’s point is to minimize human agency (as Augustine and the Church did), but as a means of giving believers an assurance of salvation through the justifying work of God. In the Catholic sense, this assurance would only be achieved through sacraments. Luther makes “faith in” a staple of recognizing justification. Tyndale, however, neither views imputation or impartation as relevant as his notion of “help.”

The faith of Christ is an aid for achieving justification, apparently through a variety of perspectives proportionate to the individual believer.

Aside from Romans, Galatians 2:16 further demonstrates Tyndale's deviation from established Protestant and Catholic theologies in favor of a more open and nuanced Anglo Bible reader. Several versions of the justification/faith concept exist in these verses. Galatians 2:16 is the most prolific instance:

know that a man is not justified (non iustificatur/ ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται) by the deeds of the law: but by the faith of Jesus Christ (per fidem Iesu Christi/ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). And therefore we have believed on Jesus Christ (nos in Christo Iesu credidimus/ εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν) that we might be justified (ut iustificemur/ δικαιωθῶμεν) by the faith of Christ (fide Christi/ πίστεως Χριστοῦ) and not by the deeds of the law: because that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified (iustificabitur/ δικαιωθήσεται).

In these instances, Tyndale literally translates each “justify” as present passive, aorist subjunctive passive, and future indicative passive respectively. But he takes a more liberal approach with the instances of “faith,” deferring entirely to “faith of” Christ rather than “faith in,” and even wrenching the Latin *in* and Greek εἰς so that it reads “on.” For “we have believed on Jesus Christ,” the literal English “in” more adequately reflects the sentiment of this utterance, but Tyndale's “on” makes the translation more reflective of a translation conducive to Tyndale's sense of Christ as a helping hand in the matter of justification.

Indeed, his marginalia for this verse denotes a homiletic tone, representing Christ as a recipient of refugees seeking aid for justification:

Deeds of the law justifieth not: but faith justifieth. The law uttereth my sin and damnation and maketh me flee to Christ for mercy and life. AS the law roared unto me that I was damned for my sins: so faith certifieth me that I am forgiven and shall live through Christ. (393)

To “believe on Jesus Christ” is akin to leaning on Jesus Christ for support. In a single word, Tyndale’s translation repurposes the theology. Tyndale stretches the reach of this concept to aid his mapping for English readers. Philippians 3:9 further represents an even more blatant distortion: “that which spryngeth of the faith which is in Christ. I mean the righteousness which cometh of God through faith.” It is impossible to apply the Greek and Latin to these sections directly because Tyndale intentionally added the flair of “springeth” to further emphasize his meaning. Later the KJV would translate this section “that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” Though not necessarily any clearer, the KJV more directly follows the Greek and Latin. In every instance of these crucial theological matters, Tyndale prefers a convoluted link between Christ and justification based on faith rather than the literal and straight-forward “faith in” formula. Whether Erasmus’ Greek and Latin or Luther’s consistent *Glauben an Jesum Christum*, gives the reader enormous latitude for imagining the meaning behind these verses in a more personalized English sentiment.

### **Rhetorical and Poetical**

The nature of Tyndale’s theology, in a sense, depended on the rhetorical effect he hoped to have upon his reader. Reworking utterances so that single words could carry varying degrees of significance for a particular reader comes from a rhetorical mind as much as it comes from a

theological or polemically ideological mind. The art of rhetoric was understood by Tyndale, but not systematized for English education until later in the sixteenth century, as seen in the work of Thomas Wilson's *Art of Rhetoric* (1553/1560). Wilson returns to ancient passages from works like Gellius' *Noctes Atticae* to highlight how constraining imitation can be for usage and how Erasmus' argument for a less Ciceronian style should take precedent where necessary. Wilson criticizes "French English," "English Italianated," and anyone that might "Latin their tongues," or "talk nothing but Chaucer." For Wilson, an over-reliance on arcane, archaic, or artificial language perverted the message to be conveyed. But Wilson also instructs his reader in the ways of Greek and Roman rhetorical techniques, recommending imitation when necessary. In relation to Wilson, Tyndale comes across as forward-thinking. The rhetorical scaffolding of his translation would take on the challenge of rendering an ancient language (one originally closer in time to Aristotle than to Wilson) into a modern vernacular for a local congregation. Though he would often preference Latinate terms, he defended those usages for the effect that they had on the reader. The impression he wanted to leave in his readers was a feeling that they could understand the scripture that had been widely opened to them for their personal enrichment.

This Protestant recontextualization of the Greek New Testament raised a problem, however: if one could return to Greek linguistic conventions prior to and untouched by Roman usage, where was one to find an analogous form of English? An increasing philological recognition of English's dual-parentage in Romance and Germanic tongues offered one response to this problem. John Rainolds characterized the Latin language *per se* as a "language of Poperie" (20/Bii<sup>v</sup>), and Tyndale made efforts to avoid Latinate words in favor of "native" words of Anglo-origin. However, he did, at places, imitate the Latin, and where he did, he usually

justifies his choice within some critical apparatus. Where Tyndale preferences Anglo-based language, he leaves the text as a fully domesticated text, absent of any foreignizing remnants.

For an early modern English translator, rhetorical proficiency is synonymous with domestication. Since English was taught with Latin models, the temptation to rely upon Latinate structures certainly carried some persuasion over Tyndale. The Gospels, The Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse are all literary genres with specific rhetorical standards. Tyndale thoroughly domesticated those features but in places made room to accommodate his audience with received usages from Latin and continental influences. Though these do not necessarily fall into specific categories, several distinct utterances showcase Tyndale's infusion of rhetorical messaging. The key feature for Tyndale will always be the balance he maintains between the utterances he believes to be relatable to the feelings and imaginations of his readers based on their important usage or their imitable traits. By Englishing the Bible, Tyndale made his readers feel smarter and plugged into the realities of the "the times" (as Erasmus would put it), and that would give them a sense of competence (whether warranted or not) as biblical users.

What it meant to be the kind of reader that would relish in his or her own wisdom for competently accessing the word of God was to provide readers with a language that was both familiar and textured with theological seeming sophistication. That meant selecting terms and phrases carefully enough so that readers would have the liberty to interpret them personally but that readers would also need to feel comfortable with the words they were interpreting. Scholars have long noted this phenomenon, evident in the practice of selecting favorite, lasting lines from Tyndale's translations both within trade and popular scholarship concerning Tyndale's specific decisions as a translator. The goal here is to demonstrate just how clearly these expressions



resonate with an English audience. Essentially, Tyndale wanted his readers to be comfortable, to feel at home, and sometimes that meant to literally translate for domestic readers who would use the Bible as a means of family devotion. If Tyndale could secure his translation's presence within the home-life of English readers, then the future authority of his voice would be the rhetorical idiom of biblical interpretation.

The English rhetorical mind also houses its poetic tradition in the early decades of the sixteenth century, and poetry was a dominant entertainment medium that Tyndale rarely expressed any interest in exploring. Much has been emphasized about the dearth of poetic expression during the early Tudor period, but truthfully, much has also been missed. Whatever Tyndale learned as a poet, he gathered from his rhetorical training, and this kind of expression is often overlooked. In grammar school and perhaps in his own reading, he would have imitated Latin poetry, and undoubtedly discovered its employment of rhetorical devices. The movement and rhythm of language structured by rhetorical tropes can create a poetic apparatus that satisfies the conventions of poetry making.

Tyndale likely inherited a tradition of *ars poetica* from early centuries, which emphasized structure and style rather than prosody, figures of speech rather than novel forms. The courtier poets, Sir Thomas Wyatt (c. 1503-1542) and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517-1547) tried some innovations with forms and sound, often borrowing from Petrarch. Surrey is often credited as the first English poet to write in blank verse. However, they were on the fringe of cutting-edge poetic expression and both were polemicists in relation to Henry VIII. A poet like John Skelton better best represent the early Tudor period as it relates to poetic influence on Tyndale. He was also a translator, having completed *Bibliotheca Historica of Diodorus* in the 1480s, a text that regularly envisions the poet as a preserver of the morality and traditions of a society, which

influenced his later work profoundly. His envoys, poems which underwent several editions moving from manuscript to print, as Jane Griffith argues, “exploit differences between manuscript and print to renegotiate his position vis-à-vis his audience” which suggests that Skelton is “more engaged with his readers and more adaptable to change” (70). Undoubtedly, as a humanist scholar, Erasmus and More had some impact on Tyndale, but again, these would be based on the stylistics drawn from classical rhetorical training, like that of More’s *Dialogues*, a form taken directly from ancient Greek philosophy. The poetic tradition that Tyndale experienced reminded him of his duty to his society and directed him toward a reliance on rhetorical techniques.

But the orderliness of a planned, highly figured text brings out a powerful kind of expressionism, and to call this the poetical works of an age makes sense with reference to Tyndale. The New Testament is itself a product of Greek rhetorical style, and any poetry that appears in it will be based on the relationship that an author can build with a reader based on the available means of persuading the reader. Plato, Aristotle, and Virgil as well as other classical literary contributors, figure prominently in the New Testament, if not directly than in sentiment. It is apparent that the writer of John, for instance, constructed much of the gospel around the persuasive appeals, highlighting, much like Aristotle, the importance of Logos (1:1, see below). Paul regularly restates Plato’s concepts of truth and light. The author of Luke-Acts patterns much of the volume after epic narrative. The importance of poetry as a medium of expression during the sixteenth century demands it receive attention because a translator would need to understand how to negotiate for readers. With his translation Tyndale uses rhetorical figures and structures to capture the poetical cadence familiar to his English audience.

### *Feelings and Imagination*

The words “feeling” and “imagination” carried a resonance for Tyndale’s rhetorical maneuvering of his translation because they represent the effects that the reader should experience from his work. In the multiple times he uses these terms in the New Testament and in his defense of his translation, he associates them with his readers’ assimilation of the text. Understanding what Tyndale meant by these terms offers clues into the variety of interpretative options that his translation opened to English readers.

Tyndale created a conception of “feeling” that generates a discourse around the persuasive appeal of *pathos*. Tyndale never specifically translates *pathos* as “feeling.” Where *pathos* appears, Tyndale associates it with unsavory types of emotion: “hearts lusts” (Rom. 1:26); “unnatural lust” (Col. 3:5); “lust of concupiscence” (1 Thess. 4:5). Moreover, the English words “feel” and “feeling” translate various Greek words in Tyndale’s translation. *boirath*, as “feeling” (Romans 5:3-4), whereas other translations might use “experience” or “integrity.” In Romans 12:2, Tyndale translates a related Greek verb, *sokira*, as “feel.” However, discussing Tyndale’s use of “feeling,” Peter Auski suggests is that Tyndale uses his translation to create an actual *pathos* for his text. He hopes to get his readers emotionally involved with the material of the New Testament, and he does it with none other than a term with deep Anglo roots. In his explanation of Romans 5:3, for instance, during a discussion on suffering, Tyndale translates Paul as “‘Tribulation maketh feeling,’ that is, it maketh us feel the goodness of God and his help and the working of his spirit.” The actual translation that appears in the Bible is “tribulation bringeth patience,” but hermeneutically, “feeling” serves as Tyndale’s channel to cathartic release. When afraid of persecution, believers should feel, and the trouble is purged.

As an English-specific term, Tyndale make “feel” a staple of his hermeneutical project. In the *Wicked Mammon*, Tyndale challenges his readers to test his works by Scripture. “If gods

word bear record unto it and thou also feelest in thine heart that it is so be of good comfort and give god thanks” (12). He continues by associating feelings with the Holy Spirit:

So then if the sprite be not in a man/ he worketh not the will of God nether understandeth it though he babble never so much of ye scriptures.... Where the sprite is there is feeling. For the spirit maketh us feel all things. Where the spirit is not there is no feeling/ but a vain opinion or imagination. (17)

The activity of “feeling” or the ability to have “feeling” directs the reader to a personalized engagement with Anglo-infused pathos. Auksi uses this conception to associate Tyndale with “radical reformers who wished to testify to their own prophetic powers and authority in the condemnation of established church practices” (62). The action of “feeling” enabled every worshipper to become, in effect, a self-certified vehicle of the Holy Ghost” (63). Auksi’s critical tone aside, Tyndale clearly maintains his devotion to prioritizing the individual English reader and the cost of ecclesiastical control. The authority of the individual was one of More’s main criticisms of Tyndale’s Bible. With such wide-ranging possibilities for exploring the Bible, More believed it would lead to “every man after his own ways” (*Confutations* 1.23). But Tyndale couples “feeling” with mental illumination whereby the “imagination” engages with pathos, and thus the mind is theologically invigorated rather than led astray: God hath...given them a feeling faith of the mercy that is in Christ Jesus” (*Answer* 12). The meaning, in this sense is “deeply felt or held; heartfelt, acute, intense” (OED), lending and intellectual sincerity to Tyndale’s construction of pathos.

### *Succor*

Tyndale amplified the individual reader’s role as a feeling and imaginative interpreter of the Bible by directly underscoring “feeling” and “imagination” through repetition and emphasis.

Though this has the effect of bolstering a reader's self-assurance, Tyndale's rhetorical task also required him to integrate translations that worked as familiar utterances. Above all, the rhetorical strategies for Tyndale would have to beckon back to that Aristotelian dictum of finding the available means of persuasion. To play on the feelings and imaginations of the reader, Tyndale would need to make decisions that linguistically paired with an Anglophonic ability to understand a text. Referential signification, then, would need to triumph, and Tyndale found ways make that happen with some simple utterances that carried direct English affects through their lasting linguistic import or their current trend in usage. Two cases demonstrate Tyndale's ability to integrate terms in this way, "succor" and "anon."

Succor serves as an interesting choice because Tyndale uses it in place of an obviously Anglo term, "help," which he does not shy from using multiple times throughout the new testament. In the 1526 edition, Tyndale preferred the term four times, and in the 1534 version he replaced one succor with help (Lord I believe help mine unbelief, Mark 9:24). In Mark, the Greek βοήθει and Latin *adiuva* are translated as "succor," but in some other places, the terms do not even appear, and Tyndale assumes it: ("Take nothing to succor you by the way," Luke 9:3, no Greek or Latin term) ("but that there be eagles now at this time that your abundance succor their lack," 2 Corinthians 8:14, no Greek or Latin term) ("he is able to succor them that are tempted," Hebrews 2:18, Greek βοήθει and Latin *auxiliari*). The selection seems haphazard and the rationale hard to come by. Why would Tyndale infer "succor" in two verses, replace it when the Latin is *adiuva* but keep it for the Latin *auxiliari*? Of the thirty-nine uses of help in Tyndale's 1534 version, each is translated directly from a Greek and Latin term of equal meaning, except for the βοήθει/*auxiliari* instance. Only conjecture about Tyndale's perception of the βοήθει/*auxiliari* could explain this phenomenon. However, Tyndale never infers "help." He only

infers “succor.” The rhetorical imitation may be explained by the linguistic concept of “cooperative implicature,” which “marks a frame of mind for a reader, and typically signals a logical reaction to a circumstance, even if that circumstance is an utterance. A pragmatic implication of an utterance, i.e. an implication that arises in a particular situation but is typically not explicitly mentioned in the actual words that are uttered” (Aarts). On the basis that a speaker and listener are cooperating, and aiming to be relevant, a speaker can imply a meaning implicitly, confident that the listener will understand. In the βοήθει/*auxiliary* constructions, Tyndale’s cooperativeness draws out a middle English word with deep roots in Old French and Latin. The implicature with the Latin auxiliari (auxiliary) faintly connotes a weaker form of aid than a direct “help.” Tyndale borrows from the longstanding nature of the expression but demotes it proportionate to its Anglo lineage.

#### *Domestic Utterances*

Tyndale also actively avoided imitation when observing the relevance of various terms with distinct Anglo roots, specifically preferencing utterances that were emerging usage trends. A few examples follow (Table 2.4), each representing early adoptions and sometimes first recorded usages of various terms. Above all, these indicate ways in which Tyndale domesticated the Bible idiosyncratically based, not on theology or the rhetorical negotiation of imitation, but on the rhetorical situation of linguistic flux and the demands such a flux puts on creative extractions from cultural phenomenon.

Table 2.4 Tyndale’s Innovations for English Readers

Verse	Word in bold	Greek/Latin	Literal Translation
John 18:2	For he knew his <b>betray</b> er.	o’ paradidous/qui tradebat eum	One who would give him up
1 Peter 4:15	Se that none of you suffer, as a <b>busybody</b> in other men’s matters	alлотриepiskopos/alienorum appetitor	Intruder on other’s matters
1 Corinthians 13:11	I put away all <b>childishness</b> .	Ta tous nepiou/quae erant parvuli	The things of a child
Titus 2:5	To be of honest behavior, chaste, <b>housewifely</b> .	oikourgous/castas domus	Like keepers of the home
Acts 7:51	Ye <b>stiff-necked</b> and of uncircumcised hearts and ears.	Sklērotrachēloi/dura cervice	Stiff-necked
Revelation 11:14	The second woe is past and behold the third woe will come <b>anon</b>	Taxu/cito	quickly

In places, Tyndale took great strides to flavor the Bible with his specific versions of colloquial English. Upon the reader’s ear, the familiarity of the sound resonates with the feelings and imagination of the English mind. Rather than discovering elevations for English, Tyndale found staples for his interpretive framework. At places, it was easy, like the literal “stiff-necked,” and in others, like “anon” as “quickly” are newly trending utterances that glide off the English tongue in demotic speech.<sup>64</sup> Whatever Tyndale portrayed, he did so to lend comfort to English readers as they grappled with his biblical messaging.

<sup>64</sup> *OED*: “Gradually misused (like *presently*, *immediately*, *by and by*, *directly*, *in a moment*) to express: Soon, in a short time, in a little while... by and by, for a little.”

## II. Rhetorical and Poetical. D. Love

Perhaps Tyndale's most significantly comforting translation was "love" in place of "charity." When Tyndale attempts to prove the sequence of the divine work in a person's heart, once again he uses proverbs from Scripture and from the world of everyday life to make a difficult point easily understood. When he tries to show that love for one's neighbor precedes deeds of charity, which are built upon that love, Tyndale makes the point: "We say also, He that loveth not my dog. loveth not me. Not that a man should love my dog first: but if a man loved me. the love wherewith he loved me would compel him to love my dog though the dog deserved it not. [...] Such speakings find we in scripture." Though "love" is labeled "Rhetorical" here in the context of Tyndale's translation, this term was certainly a point of contention for Thomas More, who preferred the catholic-laden "charity" instead of "love." But More's opposition, though associated with Reformation polemics, does not precisely matter for Tyndale's rendering, which was to deliver an appeasing term for an English audience, serving his interests as their biblical interpreter.

In every instance of the Greek term that could be translated into charity, Tyndale translated as "love." The principle of charity was central to Catholic sacramental activity, whereby penance could be requested of confessors. Augustine's exegesis of *caritas* actually matches Tyndale's concern over the word: "tam diu versetur diligenti consideratione quod legitur donec ad regnum caritatis interpretatio perducatur" ("that which is read should be turned over in the mind with careful consideration until an interpretation conforming to the rule of *caritas* is brought to the fore"). If *caritas* is the Latin version of heartfelt contemplation of a matter, then it may be the case that Tyndale and other reformers would have a problem with the term. But it had

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come to represent a ritual that was deemed “external” to *ad fontes* Christianity, the act of charity in relation to penance. To better represent a mentality, feeling, or spiritual state rather than an action, Tyndale used “love.” No translation exemplifies the distinction as clearly as 1 Corinthians 13:13: “Now abideth faith hope and love even these three: but the chief of these is love.” If “charity” were the chief of the three among the three communal attributes of the church, then the entire function of the institution changes. For Tyndale, the rhetorical power of the word “love” re-directs the thoughts and actions of congregations who read and internalized rather than read and acted.

More rejected broad connotations, especially if every instance would be rendered as “love:” “For though charity be always love/ yet is not... love always charity” (*Dialogues* 123). More further points out that erotic love could be inferred in a section, a notion Tyndale dismisses as silly. Tyndale, it must be recalled, believed that *sola scriptura* provided a gauge for the reader, one that would be negotiated by the Holy Spirit. Tyndale’s role as the preacher served as further protection from gross misunderstandings, and once again leaves proper reading in the hands of individual readers, representing the rhetorical boundaries for Tyndale’s use of love. Essentially, the reader will be able to feel his or her way around the word, but “charity” would only burden that negotiation with reflections on catholic practices rather than the fuller meaning of the word.

In some instances, “love” was obviously necessary. For instance, in Luke 6:27, when Christ commands his disciples to “love your enemies.” Verbs, generally speaking, were not objectionable to More. In the Luke passage, the verb *Ἀγαπᾶτε/diligite* always translates into “love” easily. But in cases like 1 Corinthians 13, the noun version of “love,” *ἀγάπη/caritas*. Both Augustine and More may have a point. The best way to conceive of these terms should require contemplation. But Tyndale, maintaining his wide berth on interpretive options, prefers the word

“love,” possibly out of theological polemics, but certainly, also, out of the rhetorical concern for textual continuity. Indeed, Tyndale rarely commented on his fondness for love, but in places indicates that, it is, in fact, synonymous with charity: “In my book, the Justifying of Faith, I have written abundantly about prayer and good deeds, and of the order of love, or charity” (Obedience 64). But for his Bible, if all the readers have is “love,” then all the “loves” are linked, and a common theme can be surmised by the reader, offering a hermeneutical thread woven throughout the entire text. Tyndale’s insistence on sola Scriptura

### *Memorable Expressions*

Beyond the religious polemics and the rhetorical shifts that followed them, Tyndale provided some poetically calculated utterances to match the rhythm and form of the New Testament. Though Tyndale was not a professional poet, his command of the language did culminate, in places, into enduring cadences and powerful expressions. Some of the more memorable phrases that come from Tyndale have been preserved even in modern translations or in the allusive mind of English literary consciousness:

'The salt of the earth' (Matthew 5)

'The signs of the times' (Matthew 16)

'Where two or three are gathered together' (Matthew 18)

'The burden and heat of the day' (Matthew 20)

'They made light of it' (Matthew 22)

'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak' (Matthew 26)

'Eat, drink, and be merry' (Luke 12)

'Clothed and in his right mind' (Luke 18)

'Scales fell from his eyes' (Acts 9)

'Full of good works' (Acts 9)

'A law unto themselves' (Romans 2)

'The powers that be' (Romans 13)

'Filthy lucre' (I Timothy 3)

'Let brotherly love continue' (Hebrews 13)

'The patience of Job' (James 5)

Tyndale's poetry, however, does not solely reside in singular phrases, nor does it always resonate so keenly with readers. A brief glimpse into some of Tyndale's renderings of phrases, rhythms, and meters reveal a struggling translator, attempting to capture the power of an expression from its SL, but, in an attempt at a personalized domestication, creates a mixture of effects. Some of them lasted and some of them may have been too Tyndalian to persist beyond his interpretive demands.

Some of the poetry comes directly from New Testament writers who are borrowing from cultural texts, and Tyndale largely dismisses the poetic expressions within them. Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus, for instance, is invoked in Acts 17:28: "For in him we live move and have our being as certain of your own poets said. For we are also his generation." Tyndale misses the polysyndeton, καὶ/and, in-between the series of verbs, live, move, and have. Also, the term "generation" literally translated from γένος/genos, fails to capture the linguistic play associated with "being." Most translators prefer "offspring." When Menander (likely borrowing from others) appears in 1 Corinthians 15:33, Tyndale translates it as "Be not deceived: malicious speakings corrupt good manners." Paul's writing likely hoped to highlight the nature of "speech" and "behavior," whereas Menander's is best rendered "bad company corrupts good morals." Again, beholden to the literal version of this verse, Tyndale removes attention that could be

placed on the poet and redirects the utterance to Paul’s agenda. The plural form of the gerund “speaking,” wrenches the poetry.

Another area of poetic expression in the New Testament forms around Christian hymnology as is seen in Ephesians 5:14 and 1 Timothy 3:16. Tyndale renders them more poetically than the classical allusions:

Table 2.5 Tyndale’s Hymnology

<i>Verse</i>	<i>Tyndale</i>
Ephesians 5:14	Wherefore he sayth: awake thou that sleepest and stand up from death and Christ shall give thee light.
1 Timothy 3:16	And with out nay great is that mystery of godliness: God was shewed in the flesh was justified in the spirit was seen of angels was preached unto the gentiles was believed on in earth and received up in glory.

In these two verses, Tyndale maintains the polysyndetons, as well as the parallelisms of verbs and prepositions, whereby God’s actions are emphasized in relation to human praise. As songs of Christian doctrine, Tyndale appears more interested in carrying over the sonic qualities of these poetic expressions.

Romans 8:31-37 has long been recognized as a Pauline poetic expression of theology, and like the Hymns, Tyndale attempts to transmit the expressiveness in Paul. These verses are largely made up of hypophoras, as in the first verse: “What shall we then say unto these things? if god be on our side: who can be against vs?” (31), which Paul follows with nominative forms of God acting in present participial form. So, verse 33, literally translated, says “God one justifying.” Tyndale renders it, “it is god that justifieth.” The next three series of hypophoras are answered with “it is” constructions that provide a refrain for the reader. The rich quality of the

SL is maintained by Tyndale’s Hypophora/”it is” pattern, resonating the message of the verses’ poetic effect.

The way that Tyndale translates the words of Christ, which are regularly delivered with poetic significance, show a mixed kind of poetic quality:

Table 2.6 Jesus’s Poetry

<i>Verse</i>	<i>Tyndale</i>
Matthew 6:7	And when ye pray babble not much as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much babblings sake.
Matthew 10:24	The disciple is not above his master: nor yet the servant above his Lord.
Luke 6:41	Why seest thou a mote in thy brothers eye considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?
Luke 9:23	And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

The synonymous parallels, polysyndetons, hyperbole, antithetic and synthetic constructions clearly present throughout these verses, succeed in the rhythm of Matthew 10:24 and Luke 6:41, but the other two verses do not carry the rhythm conducive to Jesus’ words. Though it seems as though Tyndale’s poetical expressions are more prominent when theological implications arise, his translation does not always accomplish the goal of highlighting doctrine with a more carefully fulfilled poetry.

No verse may carry as much significance theologically, philosophically, rhetorically, or poetically as Tyndale’s translation of John 1:1. Table 2.6 showcases the literal translation that

Tyndale provides. With “word,” Tyndale reshapes the rhetorical implications of “logos” for his reader, giving discourse prominence over category. Yet he also imbues the translation with the original rhythm, extracted from the repetition of “word” and “God,” the parallelism of “was,” and the polysyndetonic effect of mounting multiplicity. Tyndale’s version of John 1:1 is preserved in almost every translation that follows his, even modern editions like *The Oxford New Revised Standard Version*, generally preferred by biblical scholars.

Table 2.7. Tyndale’s John 1:1

<i>Language</i>	<i>John 1:1</i>
English	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
Latin	in principio erat Sermo et Sermo erat apud Deum et Deus erat ille sermo
Greek	Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος

Not much work has been devoted to Tyndale’s poetic ability outside of its rhetorical circumstance because Tyndale was a product of his age and committed to his domestication efforts. Interestingly, Jaimie Ferguson’s dissertation, “Faith in the Language: Reformation Biblical Translation and Vernacular Poetics” devotes an entire chapter to Tyndale’s translation as a precursor to future poetic advances, but only to largely leave him out of the conversation about Coverdale’s Psalms and Shakespeare’s Sonnets. That is, Tyndale clearly had some impact on literary achievement, but no direct line is forthcoming for the poetic innovations and the prosodic flourishing of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Most studies, like this one, eventually relegate Tyndale’s poetry to the few lasting utterances, his impact on the KJV, and, most importantly, his groundbreaking individualism in the face of immense political pressure.

Tyndale enthusiasts have calculated the 94 per cent of the New Testament in the King James Bible is exactly as Tyndale left it. Therefore, the argument goes, the Jacobean Translators were in some ways little better than plagiarists, promoting as their own work a translation that belonged essentially to another man, a Protestant martyr, who died a horrible death, attacked repeatedly and mercilessly by Thomas More. (Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* 222)

Yet for all that, as nothing is begun and perfected at the same time, and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser: so, if we building upon their foundation that went before us, and being helped by their labors, do endeavor to make that better which they left so good; no man, we are sure, hath cause to mislike us; they, we persuade ourselves, if they were alive, would thank us. ("The Translators to the Readers," The King James Version of the Bible, 1611)

### Chapter 3: Opening the King's Eyes

According to John Foxe, Tyndale's final words supplicated God: "Lord open the king of England's eyes" (184). Then he was strangled and burned at the stake. That last prayer, as so many prayers do, preached to its listeners just as much as it petitioned God. For Tyndale, those who had ears to hear were gawking papists, and the homiletic thesis they received was a message he wanted delivered back home in England: authorize my English Bible, King Henry. Henry VIII never did authorize Tyndale's Bible, not wittingly anyway. But the Bibles he commissioned soon after the translators execution were so clearly Tyndale's that he had to make injunctions in 1538, reminding the clergy to provide a Bible in the churches that they could read along with parishioners, presumably to avoid any misgivings about what the Bible was actually saying. The result was the Great Bible (1539), which had taken steps to eradicate signs of Tyndale's influence that Myles Coverdale (1535) and John Rogers (The "Matthew's Bible of 1537) had not done with their Bibles. Still, neither the Great Bible nor those following it could escape Tyndale's open English project, and up until the King James Bible of 1611, debates about his influence have flourished. No study of Tyndale's Bible fails to mention, at least fleetingly, how the KJV came out of Tyndale's efforts.

The previous chapters re-interpreted Tyndale's motivation for translating the Bible and identified how his ambition marked the Bible with a domestication of scripture. Because of his momentous translational task and the parergon of supplemental analysis that he produced, Tyndale has become a notable influencer on English history and literature. Most studies of his work attempt to align his efforts with future literary productions, even if they simply pinpoint the coinages that he lent authors. But the commonest iterations of his influence consider his direct contribution to the most significant literary activity that followed Tyndale, namely that of Spenser, The King James Bible, and Shakespeare. In this chapter I am concerned with the medial activity, and I will use several methods for collating Tyndale's translation with the KJV as a measure for providing the best textual analysis possible. Based on the following analysis, compared with former studies on the same topic, 55 percent of the KJV could be considered Tyndale's direct influence. However, that claim comes with some trepidation since the newer methodologies consider the theological and social motivations that directed Tyndale's domestic Bible. Previous studies have not done that, to their disadvantage, and previous studies have not had access to advanced collating software, since a nearly twenty-year-old study is the most recent. The 55 percent that I find relates primarily to a mean between 12, 48, and 79 per cent.

### **Why Should Tyndale's 1534 Matter to the KJV?**

This type of study is common since a cursory reading of Tyndale's revised 1534 New Testament alongside all the Bibles that were printed after his strike readers as virtually the same texts. Indeed, the first Bibles printed under Henry VIII's authorization, the Matthew Bible of 1537, was pure Tyndale, including most of the Old Testament portions that Tyndale had finished. Despite Henry's vehement opposition to Tyndale and Tyndale's execution just under a year prior to the Matthew Bible, no other translations were as readily accessible or complete.



Even after Henry’s insistence on a less objectionable Bible, Coverdale’s version in 1539 so closely resembled Tyndale’s that a charge of direct copying could be levied against him. Since Coverdale was not as capable a linguist, Bibles that followed his, like the Bishop’s Bible, attempted to interact with the original languages and maintain the High-Church sentiments that the Latin afforded. The Geneva Bible (1559) also hoped to stay true to the original languages but was not concerned with imbuing the Bible with a sense of ecclesiastical authority, hence its popularity among lay protestants and radical Calvinists.

None of these Bibles, however, could avoid the domestication efforts of Tyndale, and they remained beholden to his decisions as a translator. A small example demonstrates the highly similar passages from various versions of Matthew 6:21 (See Table 3.1):

Table 3.1 *Matthew 6:21 Translations*

<b>Bible Version</b>	<b>Translation of Matthew 6:21</b>
<b>Tyndale (1534)</b>	For wheresoever your treasure is there will your hearts be also.
<b>Matthew’s Bible (1537)</b>	For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
<b>Coverdale (1539)</b>	For wheresoever your treasure is, there will your hearts be also.
<b>Geneva (1559)</b>	For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
<b>Bishop’s (1568)</b>	For, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
<b>KJV (1611)</b>	For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

For one of the many infamous dictums delivered by Jesus, Tyndale sets the tone for this verse. It only receives a few modifications later, largely from a change in number (Erasmus’ *Novum Testamentum* has a plural “your” and the *Textus Receptus*, which the KJV is based on uses a singular “you”), which based on better textual witnesses available to later translators. Yet, that

may not be all there is to the changes. In the analysis, exactly how important is the actual word “wheresoever.” Is the use of that term out of style in 1611? How important of a role should mechanical issues, like commas, play? Though seemingly pedantic matters, Tyndale’s translation process, outlined in chapters one and two, indicate that his New Testament gave these matters serious attention because the biblical and the English languages required it.

The matter of determining exactly how much of Tyndale’s work was directly responsible for these later versions is a complicated but important one. Immediately after Tyndale’s death, Bible publication became far less dangerous, so many versions of the Bible were soon printed, presumably following Tyndale’s original. But of those that experienced a continued and endearing use, the KJV is the most removed from Tyndale and offers readers a chance to see if Tyndale’s motivations stood the test of time. Because of that gap in time, the flux of language adds another gauge by which Tyndale’s influence can be measured. Does he withstand the dramatic changes that come from the literary flourishing of the late sixteenth century and the Shakespearean moments of the early seventeenth century? Furthermore, the KJV was translated by a committee of scholars who applied a formal expertise in Biblical languages to their translation with a peer-review process, which could serve as another check to Tyndale’s endurance. Do they defer to the unauthorized Translator working nearly eighty years ago? And perhaps most consequentially, the KJV has become the most influential literary expression of the Bible since its gradual popularization throughout the seventeenth century, which would make the discovery of direct influences significant, especially if Tyndale’s domestication efforts outlined in the previous chapters find expression in this text. If Tyndale’s idiosyncrasies found a voice in the polemical, rhetorical, and poetical effects of the Reformation, then it may be the case that a single word makes a difference, in almost any circumstance. In one of the most challenging

verses of Protestant and Catholic theology, Galatians 2:20, the very mechanics of salvation, as they relate to Christ, are at stake. The primary question, in this verse, as discussed in chapter two, depends on the translation of a single preposition (underlined): *ἐν* πίσται ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ /*in fide vivo Filii Dei* (Greek/Latin). Is this verse properly translated as “faith *in* the Son of God” or “faith *of* the Son of God?” The comparison of Tyndale, the Geneva, and the KJV show that Tyndale and the KJV share “faith of” while the radicalized Geneva Bible, translated for Calvinist Christian sects, prefers “faith in” (See Table 3.2):

The scholarly consensus, today, prefers “in” over “of” because the syntactical construction and literal meaning of *ἐν* and *in*, require “in.” The difference determines the agent in faith. If one has faith in Christ, then one has activated salvation through that action. If one has the faith of Christ, then one has received salvific merit. The closer aligned a theology is to Catholicism or Lutheranism, the more likely “of” is preferred. Preferencing “in” aligns one more closely with radical reformers like Calvinist Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Lollards, Hussites, and Huguenots. The difference is consequential, and, surprisingly, Tyndale’s preposition carries the more conservative, Catholic preference, which gives more authority to church officials who would confer grace to others rather than permit individuals to activate grace by performing the activity of faith.

Still, lurking furtively in Tyndale’s translation, a few differences may suggest a richer process for comparison. To choose “I live verily” instead of “nevertheless I live,”

Table 3.2 *Galatians 2:20*

<b>Bible Version</b>	<b>Translation of Matthew 6:21</b>
<b>Tyndale (1534)</b>	I am crucified with Christ. I live verily:
<b>Geneva (1560)</b>	I am crucified with Christ, but I live,

<b>KJV (1611)</b>	I am <a href="#">crucified</a> with <a href="#">Christ: nevertheless I live</a>
<b>Tyndale (1534)</b>	yet now not I but Christ liveth in me.
<b>Geneva (1560)</b>	yet not I any more, but Christ liveth in me:
<b>KJV (1611)</b>	yet <a href="#">not I, but Christ liveth in me:</a>
<b>Tyndale (1534)</b>	For the life which I now live in the flesh
<b>Geneva (1560)</b>	and in that that I now live in the flesh,
<b>KJV (1611)</b>	<a href="#">and</a> the life <a href="#">which I now live in</a> the <a href="#">flesh</a>
<b>Tyndale (1534)</b>	I live by the faith of the son of God
<b>Geneva (1560)</b>	I live by the faith in the Son of God,
<b>KJV (1611)</b>	I <a href="#">live by</a> the <a href="#">faith</a> of the <a href="#">Son</a> of <a href="#">God</a> ,
<b>Tyndale (1534)</b>	which loved me and gave him self for me.
<b>Geneva (1560)</b>	who hath loved me, and given him self for me.
<b>KJV (1611)</b>	<a href="#">who loved me, and gave himself for me.</a>

Tyndale is playing rhetorically and poetically with the Greek  $\delta\epsilon$ , which carries a multiplicity of possible translations, and Latin *autem*, which is almost always translated as “however.” In this case, Tyndale, once again, playing on the linguistic trend of his age, utilizes the dual function of a word, in this case “verily,” and adapts it for a sharper contrast, perhaps overemphasizing where the Pauline Greek, likely was not as intensely emphasizing the contrast between being crucified and still living. Though the distinction between experiencing an execution yet still living indicates an astonishing dissimilarity, the text does not call for a gripping translation. Tyndale provides one, however, by utilizing the terminal position of “verily” as an intensifier for negative

attestations while simultaneously taking advantage of word's ability to strongly signal the severity of an expression.

In this verse, Tyndale makes three more decisions that the KJV does not accept: 1) "yet now not I" instead of "yet not I,;" 2) "For the life" instead of "and the life;" and 3) "which loved me" instead of ",who loved me,." The first example carries some weight because the addition of the word "now," *vōv/nunc* is clearly present in the source text, so Tyndale makes a specifically literal translation that the KJV completely skips. "Now" reinforces a sense of exuberant emphasis that Tyndale is integrating throughout the text. The KJV is downplaying that emphasis. The second example may be highly consequential because the coordinating conjunctions, "for" and "and" have very different meanings, especially when "for" is used to subordinate an idea in support of an assertion, as Tyndale does. The KJV uses "and" to connect two ideas coordinately. Tyndale's "life" serves as proof whereas the KJV's serves as an effect. Theological implications abound, especially those concerned with notions of Christology, justification, and works. In the final example, the difference is tamer, virtually irrelevant. Certainly, commas and relative pronouns could represent significant differences, but in this case, they do not. The commas in the KJV are clearly added to encourage rhythm because they do not syntactically follow a nonrestrictive rule. Tyndale's "which" could suggest that the antecedent is "faith," but that becomes impossible with the closing phrase "and gave himself for me," which points back to the person Christ, not faith. Tyndale could have been personifying faith, but the context makes such a reading disingenuous.

In a single verse that gives the appearance of a near-exact copy, many possible problems arise in the comparison. If a comparison counts the differences in characters or words, then the highly insignificant differences at the end of the verse would carry more weight than necessary.

However, the differences are there, and they should matter. Some smaller, less quantitative differences, such as a terminal “verily” instead of an initial “nevertheless” would potentially represent one single difference, but the rhetorical impact suggests a difference in the text that is far weightier than the simple replacement and re-ordering of a word. These issues provide a collative crux: How should Tyndale and the KJV be compared?

### **Previous Literature**

The most recent study, by Nielsen and Skousen, indicated that 83% of Tyndale’s New Testament appears in the KJV. However, that study, conducted 20 years ago, only used a few verses to render a sampling representation of the full effect of Tyndale’s endurance. With newer technologies available, the possibility of conducting a comparison of the entire text of the New Testament, and a refreshed interpretation of the translations’ specifically English decisions, a re-examination of their comparison is in order.

Before Nielson and Skousen, two attempts to calculate the percentage of Tyndale preserved in the KJV appeared in print during the first half of the twentieth century. Brooke Foss Westcott estimated “nine-tenths” (90 percent) for 1 John and “five-sixths” (83 per cent) for Ephesians. In 1941, Charles C. Butterworth offered an analysis that attempted to quantify 40 sections from different areas of the Bible, counting successive translators’ contributions in a kind of sequential alignment. Butterworth describes his method as follows:

Let us look for example at the nineteenth chapter of 1 Kings specifically, at the first twelve verses... These verses contain exactly 400 words in the Authorized Version. Whence have they come? In the first place, only sixteen of them prove to be peculiar to the King James text alone.

As Nielson and Skousen discover, the highest proportion of the 400 to be found in any one version is in the Bishops' Bible, which contains 352. Yet not one of these, significantly, is contributed by the Bishops' version itself; for 347 of them are taken directly from the Cranmer Bible, and the remaining five agree from the Geneva version. Curiously enough, the particular words borrowed from this latter version are likewise not original with it but are found also in one of Tyndale's Old Testament 'Epistles.' Nevertheless, the Geneva Bible does contribute five other words to the total sum. Turning now to the Great Bible (1539), which employs 346 out of the final 400 words, Nielson and Skousen find again that only three of these are novel contributions from this source; the rest are the result of a judicious combination of the Matthew and Coverdale Bibles.

Butterworth considers Tyndale a key contributor to the KJV, but he assigns the highest level of contribution to the Matthew and Coverdale Bibles. However, he fails to provide a robust strategy or description of his methods, leaving an unmanageable and unreproducible project for further analysis. Butterworth identifies the exact number of identical words from each version, but he fails to identify the specific words and their contexts, a problem he clearly understood: "It should be borne in mind that these figures refer only to the words, not the literary quality." This point is justified because a simple word count will not necessarily show the differences in translation. Consider, for example, Tyndale's phrase from Romans 9:7, 'Neither are they all children straightway, because they are the seed of Abraham', and compare it to the KJV's 'Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children'. A separate listing for each word in both renditions shows that only the word *straightway* from Tyndale is different. Certainly; a simple word count does nothing to show the literary effect achieved by the KJV's placing the subordinate clause first. Butterworth's answer to this problem was to count the

literary units, or, in his words, 'The measurement is by phrases or by clauses-what might be considered literary units'. What this notion means, in practical terms, is that Butterworth jumped from the mistake of counting only the words to the even bigger mistake of counting only the phrases and clauses. In other words, if Nielson and Skousen take the first verse of the same chapter used above (Romans 9), they find that Tyndale wrote, "I say the truth in Christ and lie not;" whereas, the KJV translators have, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not." Practically, there is a difference in only one word (*and* versus *I*), and only a significant literary difference of that one word. Both passages contain nine words, but one word is changed, a similarity of 89 per cent. However, Butterworth's analysis would, according to his description, count at the most only two phrases, giving one to Tyndale (50 per cent) and the other to the KJV (50 per cent). Using this method, Butterworth arrives at the conclusion that the KJV is 18% of Tyndale.

Butterworth's count of phrases and clauses instead of words has a significant effect on his results. A change of only one word would, in Butterworth's analysis, negate the count of all identical words in an otherwise identical passage. Nielson and Skousen react to Butterworth skeptically: "As a result, the contribution of Tyndale appears rather small, yet mere cursory comparison of any page in Tyndale's New Testament with that of the KJV suggests that Tyndale is responsible for much more than just 18 percent. Butterworth's analysis certainly contradicts Daniell's assertion that Tyndale's translation was the main source for the text of the KJV" (124).

Surely, Nielson and Skousen conclude, a better method of counting is needed to ascertain the true contributions of the various translators to the KJV. Neither the simple word count nor a phrasal count can suffice to show who is really responsible for the wording of the KJV. In order to determine whether Tyndale is responsible for a much greater percentage of the KJV, Nielson and Skousen analyzed the early English versions of the Bible. To quantify the contributions of



the various translations, they collated 18 selections of eight versions of the Bible, beginning with Tyndale's 1526 and 1534 New Testaments and ending with the 16th edition of the KJV. By means of this collation Nielson and Skousen labeled each word in the KJV selections to determine in which version of the Bible those words first appeared. Then, extracting those words according to each version in which they appeared, they were able to calculate a percentage for each version's contribution to the KJV. The greatest contributor turns out to be William Tyndale and by a substantial margin.

As a control to their study, Nielson and Skousen also compared the correspondences of an independent translation (that of Wycliffe) to both the KJV and Tyndale's 1534 New Testament to show that even though two independent translations of the same basic work, striving for literalness, will result in a great deal of correspondence, the amount of that correspondence does not come close to equaling the amount of correspondence between the KJV and Tyndale's translation. Of the 18 selections that Nielson and Skousen chose (9 from the Old Testament and 9 from the New), they indicate that “some were chosen for their familiarity and some were chosen at random (marked with an asterisk):”

*Old Testament Selections*

1. Genesis 3
2. Exodus 20
- \*3. Deuteronomy 20
4. I Samuel 17:38-54
- \*5. I Samuel 18:I-II
6. Esther I
7. Psalm 23

8. Isaiah 2

\*9. Jeremiah 10

*New Testament Selections*

1. Matthew 5:17-48

\*2. Mark 5:1-13

3. Luke 10:25-37

4. John 19:16-37

\*5. Acts 19:14-22

6. 1Corinthians 13

7. 2 Timothy 4

\*8. Hebrews 7:1-13

9. Revelation 12

The categories for these selections (as they appear in the KJV) are theologically significant biblical passages: The Fall of Man, The Ten Commandments, David and Goliath, Ahasuerus' Feast, The Lord is my Shepherd, Idol Worship, The Sermon on the Mount, The Good Samaritan, The Crucifixion, Charity, Paul's Last Words, and The War in Heaven. In their research, Nielson and Skousen were limited to the copies of the Bible they could find in print (often in facsimile), particularly in the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, and through interlibrary loan. Unfortunately, not all of the versions were available to them. Nielson and Skousen could not find any copies of Matthew's Bible, Taverner's Bible, or early versions of the Great Bible, but they were able to find copies or facsimiles of four versions of the Old Testament, and eight versions of the New Testament.

After Nielson and Skousen placed the selections into the computer, a concern arose over the variations in the English language from varying translations, but they eventually concluded that these differences did not constitute significant issues because they represented conventions of printing houses or scribal preferences. The variants were eliminated, including all punctuation and capitalization. Words that have come to be associated with biblical language (such as *thee*, *thou*, *thine*, *hath*, etc.) were left in their original form. Furthermore, Nielson and Skousen did not translate the Middle English words from Wycliffe into modern English, though they did change the Middle English suffixes their modern forms. For example, below is a comparison of Wycliffe's Matthew 5:17 to their adaptations of the same verse:

nyle ye deme that I carn to vndo the lawe or the profetis/

nyle ye deem that I carne to undo the law or the prophets

I carn not to vndo the lawe but to fulfille/

I carne not to undo the law but to fulfill

forsothe I saey to you til heuene & erthe passe,

forsooth I say to you till heaven and earth pass

no letter or no titil, schal not passe from the lawe

no letter or no tittle shall not pass from the law

til alle thingis ben doon/

till all things be done

therefore he that brekith oon of thes leest maundementis,

therefore he that breaketh one of these least maundementis

& techith thus men,

and teacheth thus men

schal be clepid leest in the rewme of heuenes/

shall be clepid leest in the realm of heavens

Nielson and Skousen wanted to quantify the match, so all of the selections were entered into the computer using the Royal Skousen's collation program. The program allows the operator to line up all identical texts by advancing or delaying any given line. The program automatically assigns a one-character label to each segment of text, according to each version in which that segment is found. In this way, the operator can identify who first used a variant. Nielson and Skousen would then compare the number of words originally written by Tyndale that remain extant in the KJV to the final number of words remaining in the KJV. That would generate a percentage for each verse analyzed, and those percentages were average for a final percentage that Nielson and Skousen believed to be 83%. However, they caution that their work is not fully representative, comes largely from an estimate, and would require further research on the matter.

What follows is an attempt to answer Nielson and Skousen's call for more research on this matter. However, it must be understood that any qualitative activity like this will largely be based on estimations, as Nielson and Skousen indicate. That is not to discredit Nielson and Skousen, whose work is admirable and whose methods will largely be adopted below. It also is not to say that an accurate percentage cannot be ascertained. However, based on the two previous chapters, Tyndale's translation is much more than a literal word-for-word translation. Almost all of his decisions mattered in one way or another, and a simple sequential arrangement of the two texts is not enough to render a proper analysis. It also should be part of the analysis because the KJV certainly made translational decisions that differed from Tyndale, and those differences very well may be visible with a line-by-line comparison. Whereas Nielson and Skousen used two general techniques and 18 passages for determining their percentage, the following study will use

five techniques for measuring a percentage, based on three collation programs that compare the entire KJV New Testament with the 1534 Tyndale New Testament.

## **Methodology**

My study adjusts Nielsen and Skousen's methodology in four significant ways, while preserving all of its other strategies. The first change is the software used. Instead of a single, ad hoc software algorithm, I use three programs for collating and comparing the texts: *Collate*, *Juxta*, and *Microsoft Word*. Secondly, because of the newer software options for this study, and their capacity to rapidly compare thousands of lines at a time, this study collates the entire New Testament with each program, from the KJV and Tyndale's 1534 New Testament, but no sections of the Old Testament are included. For the third change, I do not make a comparison to earlier or intermediary texts, the software parameters available from these three programs will control for extra textual material. Furthermore, using the entire New Testament permits the study to avoid such a small sample size, which Nielsen and Skousen, though admirable in their attempts, did not account for by any measurable standard. Finally, my fourth change is to use the original texts of the New Testament from Tyndale and the KJV. For Tyndale's New Testament, the reprinted edition edited by Hardy Wallis, cross-referenced with the edition in the Darlow and Moule edition from the British Library (STC (2nd ed.) / 2826). For the KJV, the edition will be reproduced from one of Robert Barker's 1611 printings (British Library STC (2nd ed.) / 2222).

The preserved strategies from Nielsen and Skousen include some matters of mechanics. The spelling is standardized across all texts to match American usage, abbreviations are expanded, thorns are replaced with "th," and early modern morphology (-eth, -en,, etc.) is preserved. Though Tyndale's spelling possessed a unique orthological signature that has allowed linguists to pinpoint his regional dialect, no single spelling carries any particular meaning that

makes a difference in the texts. For instance, Tyndale's "sucker" and the KJV's "succour" is simply changed to "succor." Early modern printing often made abbreviations necessary, and suspended or contracted terms would receive straight or curved macrons above letters to indicate a full word. I replace all of these scribal marks with fully expanded, modern American spellings. However, maintaining early modern morphology was necessary to preserve time during the preparation of the texts and to maintain a semblance of the texts' rhythm. Where one text suffixes a word with morphological significance and the other does not, the original version of both are preserved. The KJV uses fewer, though not too many fewer, than Tyndale.

The most important feature of my comparison, however, stems from the software, their parameters and the process for weighting different results. In the case of *Juxta*, *Collate* and *Microsoft Word*, all three programs permit a line by line comparison, where each verse of the New Testament is represented by a single line of text. In this mode, all three demonstrate clear areas of divergence both in words and characters. *Microsoft Word* adds a unique feature that *Juxta* and *Collate* cannot adjust for: revisions. In a single line of comparison, *Microsoft Word* interprets the changes in word order, for instance, as a single revision rather than an actual change. The other collating programs cannot be easily adjusted to provide these results, so their texts simply show single changes, much like Butterworth's results.

*CollateX* is used to adjust for theologically and linguistically significant changes in the texts because its algorithms allow comparison sets that are tokenized for quantifying differences and similarities. The specific parameters for these tokens are derived from the developments of Chapters two and three, that pinpoint Tyndale's strategies in domesticating the Bible and his polemical, rhetorical, and poetical decisions. Essentially, *CollateX* counts how many times those decisions led to different translations and how many times they did not differ. Of the total

agreements and disagreements, a mean is determined for each category as well as a ratio. For example, “of Christ” compared to instances of “in Christ” appear in Tyndale two more times than it does in the KJV. The total number of the comparisons is 29. So, the theological agreement is 27:29, which makes the texts 93 per cent in agreement. Since this portion requires the most work, it can only be representative, but it will still consider several important kinds of translations that are unique to Tyndale, as outlined in chapters one and two. *CollateX* collates the texts and isolates the sections of agreement and the variants. Giving a count for the total number of instances, agreements, and variant. The searches programmed into *CollateX* for this study will identify ten specific categories: 1) faith in/faith of; 2) succor/help; 3) unto/into; 4) coinages: childishness, anon, stiff-necked, housewifely, betrayer; 5) love/charity; 6) imagination/thought; 7) but and/but; 8) congregation/church; 9) word order: verily, truly, grace and peace; 10) pronouns: which/that, thou/you (all forms). These will serve a starting point for future studies on this topic, but, as the programmers of *CollateX* put it, these kinds of collation efforts work best “where the assessment of findings is based on interpretation and therefore can be supported by computational means but is not necessarily computable.” *CollateX* helps to render Tyndale’s translation strategy as a preacher more relevant to the Bible’s future impact.

***Juxta* can be adjusted to compute features similar to Word’s identification of** moved/transposed segments, but its ability to produce stemmatical analysis from sequential alignments is used to make a hyper-critical interpretation of character and word differences. Because *Word* does not calculate the number of differences per character and word, omitting transposed and moved segments, *Juxta* provides a standard for checking against that missing element. Though the results of this are more extreme than even Butterworth’s version, the comparison will serve as a robust metric for the more qualitative results that come from

*CollateX*. Essentially, *Juxta* coordinates each verse, starting with the first word of the verse, and calculates the number of times a character fails to line up. Even though the problems of this kind of comparison are discussed above, it is also important to make this comparison because both translations arrive from specific decisions that matter, character by character. Neglecting this or shrugging it off is understandable, but it fails to offer a good faith representation of the arguments outlined concerning biblical translations in previous chapters. See Table 3.2 above and its surrounding conversation for an example of how this technique matters.

*Microsoft Word* provides a unique kind of analytical function called “Compare,” which collates two documents to determine the number of revisions that appeared in the revised version. For this experiment, Tyndale’s translation will serve as the original document and the KJV will serve as the revised edition. When compared, the number of revisions can be calculated by character and by word (which *Microsoft Word* considers a series of letters separated from other characters by a space). Three comparison options come from the Word Compare function: 1) the percentage of differences from the total number of revisions compared to the total number of words; 2) the percentage of differences from the total number of deletions compared to the total number of words; 3) the percentage of differences from the total number of insertions compared to the total number of words. A mean percentage will be determined between these three. This technique most closely resembles Nielsen and Skousen.

Finally, the last adjustment comes in the form of a weighting mechanism that ranks the different comparisons and weights the percentages of their differences for a mean. The best way to utilize all three collation efforts completely is to use an applied statistical model that provides a more representative sense of each category. Since the *Juxta* and *Word* collations are



more heavily represented, the adjustment will be made in favor of the *CollateX* collation results. Based on the analysis of Butterworth's analysis provided by Nielsen and Skousen, the *Juxta* collation will be weighted as .15 of the whole project, since it is overly reported based on the kind of analysis it provides, and it is the least accurate for most translation studies. The *CollateX* collation is the least represented but provides some of the most dynamic perspectives on Tyndale's translation. As a result, it receives the heaviest weight, .45 of the whole and Word, .4. The rationale here is based on Butterworth's 18%, which correlates closely to the .15 weighted expression for *Juxta*, the convincing efforts of Nielsen and Skousen who provide solid evidence for the efficacy of their project, and the new approach to Tyndale's translation that previous chapters indicate are valuable measures for understanding his Bible.

## **Results**

Several figures below (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6) demonstrate how the programs appear once the texts are collated. The difficulty with *Juxta* and *Collate* is the inability to program an automated counting system. *Juxta* results can be identified by manually counting every tick-mark for each line that is collated or by counting the connecting lines and multiplying them by two, and slanted lines should always be counted as a half (per the program's instructions). The count of ticks or lines and slanted lines will identify the total differences in stemmatical word alignment. In *Collate* the utterances of concern are tokenized in the algorithm and displayed as witnesses. Tyndale's text is witness one (W1) and the KJV is witness two (W2). The tokenized utterance, if variant, diverge from the main collation, expressed in a bubble parallel to one another. *Microsoft Word* automatically counts the number of revisions, including deletions and insertions. As a result, no manual counts are necessary. The examples below are from 1 Corinthians 8:1 and Ephesians 2:7.

Figure 3.1 *CollateX* 1 Corinthians 8:1

**Results**

**Variant Graph**

**Alignment Table**

ak of	things	dedicated	unto idols	we	are sure	that we all have knowledge. Knowledge	maketh a man swell	: but	love	edifieth.
touching	things	offered	unto idols	,	we	know	puffeth up	: but	charity	edifieth.

**GraphML**

```
<?xml version="1.0" ?><graphml
xmlns="http://graphml.graphdrawing.org/x
mlns"
xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XM
LS
schema-instance"
xsi:schemaLocation="http://graphml.g
rap
hdrawing.org/xmlns
http://graphml.graphdrawing.org/xmlns/1.
0/graphml.xsd"><key id="d0" for="node"
attr.name="number" attr.type="int"/><key
```

**GraphViz**

```
digraph G {
v0 [label = ""];
v1 [label = "8:1"];
v2 [label = "To speak of "];
v3 [label = "Now as touching "];
v4 [label = "things "];
v5 [label = "offered "];
v6 [label = "dedicated "];
v7 [label = "unto idols"];
v8 [label = ", "];
```

**TEI-P5**

```
<?xml version="1.0" ?><cx:apparatus
xmlns:cx="http://interedition.eu/collate
x/1.0" xmlns="http://www.tei-
c.org/ns/1.0">8:1<app><rdg wit="W1">To
speak of</rdg><rdg wit="W2">Now as
touching</rdg></app><things<app><rdg
wit="W1">dedicated</rdg><rdg
wit="W2">offered</rdg></app>unto
idols<app><rdg wit="W1"/><rdg
wit="W2"></rdg></app>we<app><rdg
```

Figure 3.2 *Juxta* 1 Corinthians 8:1

Juxta - welcome.jxt

File Edit View Collation Help

Comparison Set

- TYN1cor8-1.txt
- kjv1cor8-1.txt

TYN1cor8-1.txt

8:1 To speak of things dedicated unto idols we are sure that we all have knowledge. Knowledge maketh a man swell: but love edifieth.

kjv1cor8-1.txt

8:1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up: but charity edifieth.

Figure 3.3 *Word* 1 Corinthians 8:1

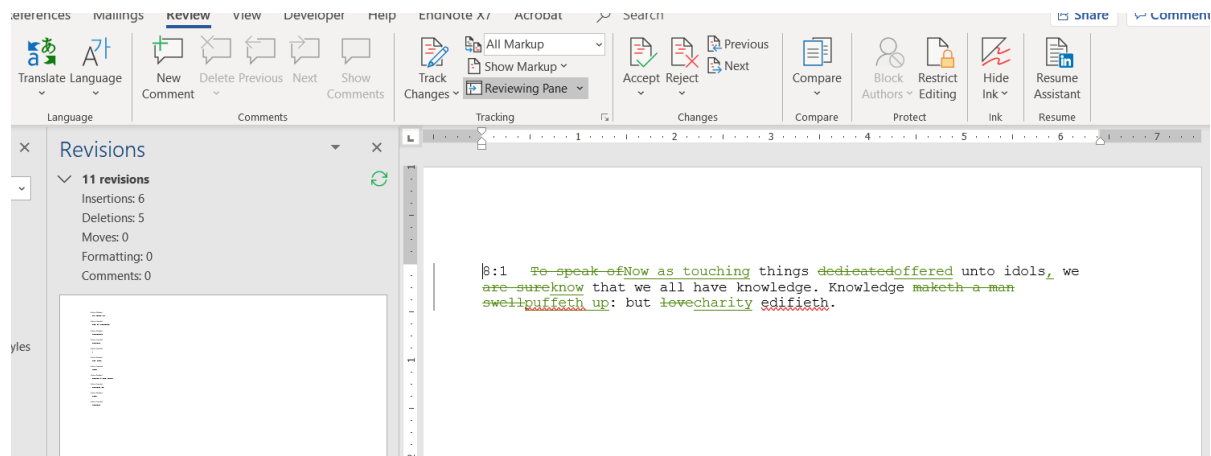


Figure 3.4 *CollateX* Ephesian

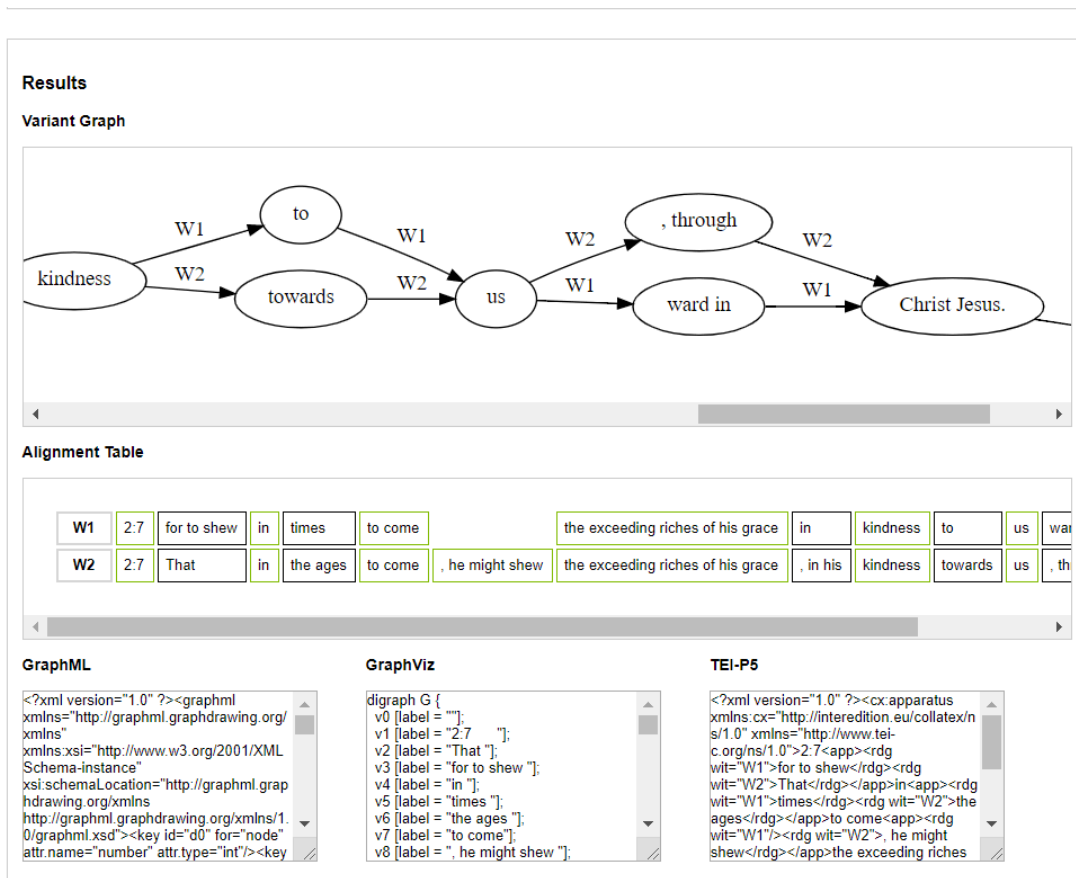


Figure 3.4 *Juxta* Ephesians 2:7

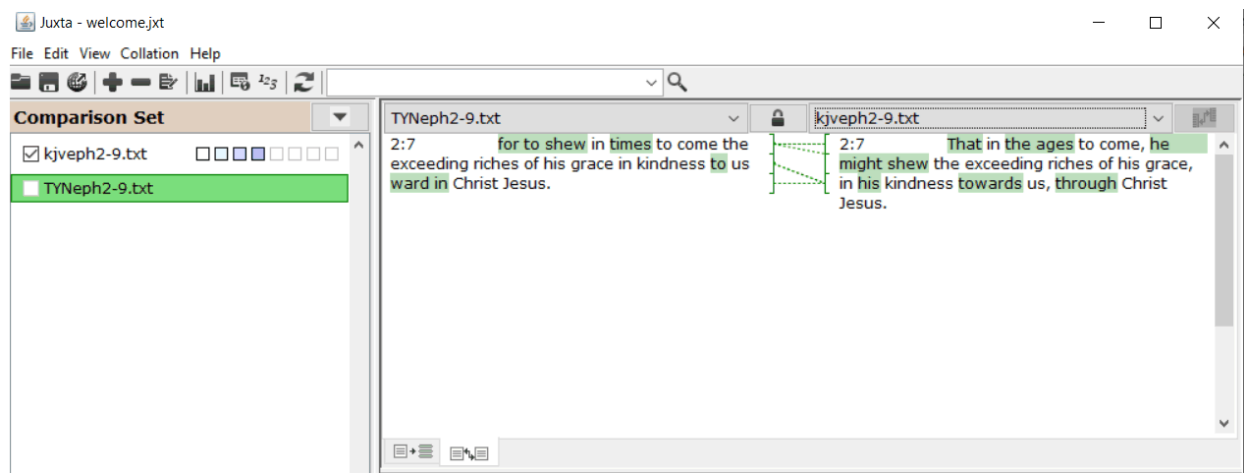
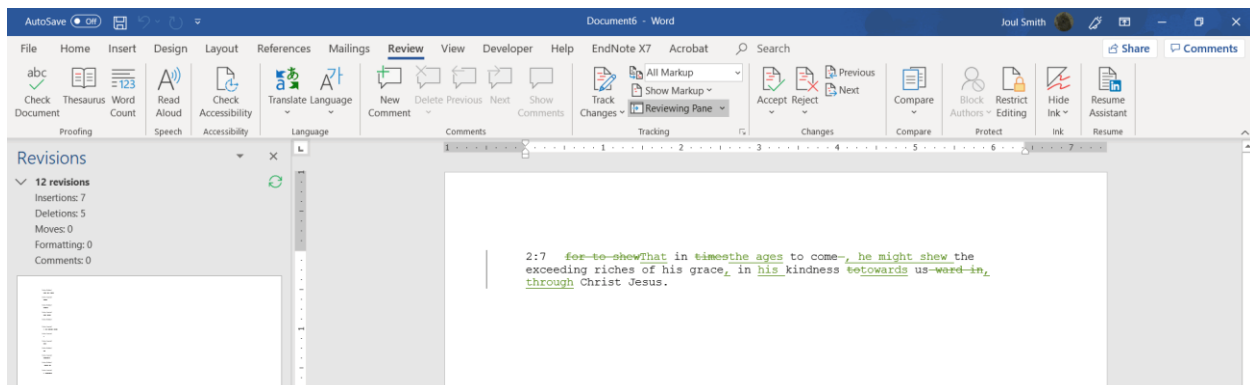


Figure 3.4 *Word* Ephesians 2:7



Each collation effort provided significantly different results, as follows: Under the algorithm of the *CollateX* collation, 2,653 portions were observed, and 1,380 showed variants, which means the collation based on theological and linguistic issues resulted in a 48% similarity. Under the *Juxta* model, 808,316 character in Tyndale were stemmatically aligned with 802,567 characters in the KJV. 705,760 characters showed as variants, which means 12% of the KJV is based on Tyndale, character to character. The *Microsoft Word* comparison identified a final

document of 188,498 words with 62,016 total revisions, which means approximately 32% of the KJV was changed to make the final version, so 68% of the KJV is Tyndale’s work. However, if the revisions are calculated by type of revision, whereby one necessitates another, the percentage changes drastically. If the final number of deletions is 23,562 then the percentage of changes is 12%, which means 88% of the KJV is Tyndale’s work. If the number of insertions is calculated at 34,495, then 18.5% of Tyndale was changed, leaving 82% of Tyndale intact. The mean percentage of these three is 79.3%, which, considering the robust approach to this number, will stand for the *Microsoft Word* percentage. Finally, if the weighted categories are applied, whereby *CollateX* receives the highest weight, *Microsoft Word* the Median Weight, and *Juxta* the lowest weight, the final percentage of the KJV New Testament that came from Tyndale is 55% (See Table 3.6 *Weighted Total of Tyndale in KJV*)

Table 3.6 *Weighted Total of Tyndale in KJV*

	<i>CollateX</i>	<i>Juxta</i>	MS Word	Mean Percentage
<i>Percent of Tyndale used in KJV</i>	48%	12%	79%	46%
<i>Weight of Category</i>	.45	.15	.4	55%

### Conclusion

Like Nielsen and Skousen, some trepidation is in order. No single study will likely ever be able to say with absolute certainty, just how much of Tyndale remains in the KJV. However, no study has measured Tyndale’s translation theories and strategies while comparing his New Testament to the KJV’s New Testament. Nielsen and Skousen seem preoccupied with the claims of Daniell concerning a cursory comparison of the two Bibles. At a glance, they seem similar,

almost verbatim in places. And it is true that by some measures, a nearly 90% match could be calculated. Yet, the previous chapters have demonstrated the extent to which Tyndale's translation techniques acted as a formidable influence upon the Bible that he produced. He made the way for negotiating the Bible as an open text, suitable for various expressions and interpretations, always in need of a hermeneutical guide, like a preacher. Since this study does take those efforts into account, it indicates that the KJV borrowed heavily from Tyndale, and in some cases depended upon him verbatim. However, it also indicates that the KJV took Tyndale's translation strategy to heart. The six companies of dozens of scholars decided to borrow Tyndale's work as is, work anew his benchmark expressions, and follow his translation theory to forge ahead with newly devised utterances for a new generation. Maybe Tyndale would have thanked them as they imagined he would have. Whether 12% or 90% of the KJV is pure-Tyndale, the New Testament from 1534 indelibly imprinted upon future uses of biblical material.

Shakespeare may have echoed Scripture without being aware of it, since the thought had become his own, or he may have completely rephrased a biblical thought or fused it with passages from other sources. (Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Plays*, 68)

The son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe be to that man by whom the son of man shall be betrayed. It had been good for that man if he had never bene born. (Matthew 26:24, Tyndale, 1534)

#### Chapter 4: Macbeth, Betrayer and Man

Tyndale's translation poses a unique problem when considering its impact on future literary productions, like those of Shakespeare. The revised Bible of 1534, over seventy years after its printing, dominated the conscious efforts of the KJV translators from 1604-1611—was Tyndale as clearly noticeable to other Bible users and religious communities in the seventeenth century, or was his influence on the KJV a one-off, eliminating any serious consideration of his direct effect on other biblically-inspired literature? Perhaps the extensive borrowings of the KJV silence any attempts to find Tyndale elsewhere, yet the crux of Tyndale's lasting impression may still rest in the tradition of biblical hermeneutics he inspired for future generations rather than his explicit presence within a text. As Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank suggest of Tudor literature, "the term [Tudor] allows us to look at English writing across the long sixteenth century rather than, as has generally been done, focusing on the later Elizabethan era—a period of literary largess for sure, but one that should not obscure earlier riches, and which was, in any case, the product of what came before" (1). Tyndale seems to have done more than even Pincombe and Shrank imagine; he transported beyond Elizabeth and into the Stuart Age with James I. As a case study to test Tyndale's enduring impact on literary production, this chapter examines the biblical

material of *Macbeth*, a heavily Jacobean expression, rich with the religious material that issued from a long history of the English Bible and its complicated Protestant culture. Shakespeare did not always draw directly from Tyndale's Bible, but he relied on a discursive community of biblically-minded readers whose tradition of generous hermeneutical readings comes from a Tyndalian mode of domesticating scripture. The biblically-minded reader in Shakespeare's Jacobean England could explicate *Macbeth* through a character like Judas, who, as the most famous biblical betrayer, mirrors the complicated psychological commitments of *Macbeth*'s insurgence. *Macbeth*'s Judas-like features give the audience a familiar Protestant dilemma concerning their religious interiority—the tension between free will and determinism, which prompts investigations into the self's mental capacity for damnable action. By patterning *Macbeth* after Judas, Shakespeare invokes the domesticating sentiments of Tyndalian translation, even though Tyndale's words may not be directly present throughout the play. Like a translation, *Macbeth* relies on choices about loss and gain. Like the reading of religious texts in early modern England, *Macbeth* wrestles with spiritual and temporal conflicts. And like the story of Judas, *Macbeth* invites internal reflection upon the nebulous motivating factors that possess one's mind.

Since Tyndale's Bible heavily influenced the succeeding Bibles produced throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and contributed to the religious culture of England that lasted into James's reign, Shakespeare's biblical references and sources demand immediate attention when constructing the biblically-minded reader's awareness of Judas and his explication upon



Macbeth.<sup>65</sup> Direct connections between the actual allusions in some of Shakespeare's plays and Tyndale's specific translation have been spotted, but for the sake of this study, those are rendered immaterial. The matter at hand is the effect that the Tyndalian translational mentality had on the production of a biblically-minded reader during the early seventeenth century. Tyndale's legacy, if it is to be measured here based on the impact it eventually had on Shakespeare, will not emanate from direct allusions to Tyndale's specific words and ideas but from the liberty Shakespeare takes with biblical material, a license afforded him by the Tyndalian tradition.<sup>66</sup> The broad interpretations of Judas, as envisioned by John 13, and his likenesses to Macbeth, stage a hermeneutic process for the quintessential betrayer.<sup>67</sup> Macbeth was Anglicized from Scottish history as a tribute to James VI of Scotland (James I of England, who authorized the Bible, later eponymously associated with him).<sup>68</sup> Shakespeare, with Judas, discovers an imaginative space

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<sup>65</sup> The matter of Shakespeare's sources represents a long tradition of scholarship. The benchmark work for this study is Kenneth Muir's *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays*, which will be used extensively here since it has remained an invaluable resource on the topic and covers the matters of sources for this chapter. However, according to Melissa Walker and Sarah Klann, "new investigations of audience knowledges and experiences, are prompting a rethinking of Shakespearean source study to incorporate 21st century perspectives" (1). So some re-imagining from their examination will be relevant to this chapter, along with Philo, John-Mark, "Shakespeare's Macbeth and Livy's Legendary Rome," 250–274; Parker, John, "Shakespeare and the Geneva Bible: The Story of King Saul as a Source for Macbeth." 6–23; and Weidhorn, Manfred. "Saul and Macbeth, Again." 569–572.

<sup>66</sup> Shaheen's *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Play* is the indispensable work going forward. However, since Shaheen's influence, other approaches to Shakespeare's Biblical material has flourished, and will be highly significant to this study: Valls-Russell, Janice, Agnès Lafont, and Charlotte Coffin, *Interweaving Myths in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*; Marx, Steven, *Shakespeare and the Bible*; Boitani, Piero, and Rachel Jacoff, *The Gospel According to Shakespeare*; Hamlin, Hannibal, *The Bible in Shakespeare*.

<sup>67</sup> See "betrayer" in OED; Tyndale is credited with its first use in John 13, as a means of labeling Judas.

<sup>68</sup> See chapter 3 for Tyndale's influence on the King James Bible.

for his audience to analyze the psyche of Macbeth, offering much more than a mere Bible-based morality play or a rehashed historical figure whose excessive nobility unwittingly unleashes hamartia. Shakespeare discovers, for an English audience, intertextual intricacies that the biblical tale of Judas intimates through a deep examination of human nature's most feared condition: a commitment to unadulterated evil. More precisely, by exploring Macbeth's motivations as a Judas figure, Shakespeare gives his English audience a chance to contemplate the strange ways that persons (the biblical "man") commit themselves to the mentalities and the acts of evil. Macbeth opens a dialogue concerning a the age-old question about Judas: How could he commit to the betrayal of Christ and as a result, humankind?<sup>69</sup> To answer the question, the play and its hero represent domestication projects that rely on the kind of weighty scrutiny that religious translators, like Tyndale, extracted from their cultural make-up.

The progressive layers here demand some reflection. Sheehan makes a claim about the parallels of Macbeth and James I, with reference to the Bible. Though he is cautious about drawing similarities between any possible biblical influences, nonetheless, while introducing the play's biblical references, he clearly notes the alignment of the Bible with James I:

Shakespeare chose the subject of Macbeth to please King James, his company's patron, whose Scottish background made him thoroughly familiar with that story.

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<sup>69</sup> To this day, the story remains intriguing, and continues to receive attempted answers. Meyer, Marvin. *Judas: The Definitive Collection of Gospels and Legends about the Infamous Apostle of Jesus*; Gubar, Susan, *Judas: A Biography*; and Klassen, William, *Judas: Betrayal or Friend of Jesus?* So extensive and intriguing is the topic of Judas' betrayal, that cultural studies make him a regular topic of study, as in Hebron, Carol A. *Judas Iscariot: Damned or Redeemed: A Critical Examination of the Portrayal of Judas in Jesus Films (1902-2014)*; and an interview with *New Yorker* magazine writer, comparing Judas to Malcom X, as an endearing quality. Gopnik considers Judas to be impatient about social justice, hence the betrayal.

Shakespeare incorporated several topics into the play that he knew were of interest to the king, and he may have read several of James's published works before writing the play. The king constantly referred to Scripture for authority in his writings, and some of the biblical references in *Macbeth* may have been inspired by the king's use of the same references in his works. (609)

The closeness of the king's circumstances to *Macbeth* and the king's interest in the Bible suggest deep interconnections that can be linked to Tyndale's translation and his domestication experiment. From Tyndale, whose English Bible could not be royally authorized and therefore led to his execution, successive Bibles emerged, largely copying Tyndale's translation in most sections of the New Testament. Finally, almost eighty years and dozens of Bibles later, the Scottish royalty on the English throne authorizes a new translation that is, in many respects, still borrowed from Tyndale.<sup>70</sup> But before that Bible is printed, England's premier playwright produces a tragedy to honor the translator king's Scottish heritage and draws on Biblical material to represent his (James's) enemies as evil betrayers, primarily symbolizing Judas, the consummate turncoat.<sup>71</sup>

Shakespeare uses his tragedy to dramatize the internalizations of the central betrayer, *Macbeth*, a Scottish noble, who submits to evil powers. This action sets in motion the death of

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<sup>70</sup> Though Metzger, 60-67, identifies eight specific Bibles between Tyndale and the KJV (Coverdale, Matthew's, Taverner's, Great, Geneva, Beck's, Bishop's, and Rheims-Duoay), he and Sheehan, 2-30, both identify many more versions of the Bible were produced in the eighty years between Tyndale and KJV, most of them variants of Tyndale or one of the eight. Sheehan specifically identifies Shugge's revision of Tyndale in 1552.

<sup>71</sup> Shakespeare follows his sources for *Macbeth* quite closely, according to Muir (170), Sheehan (600), Bevington (A50-A51) and the Arden, 2015 edition: Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Buchanan's *Rerum Scotticarum Historia* (1582), and John Leslie's *De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis* (1578).

his previously beloved and doting king, leading to his own calamity that, consequently, restores Scottish rule by unifying Scottish and English forces. Macbeth “has the most pronounced atmosphere of evil of any of [Shakespeare’s] plays, but also contains ‘the most insistent religious language’ (Stachniewski 169 qtd. in Arden 195). That “atmosphere” parallels the tale of Judas’s decisions that led Christ to Golgotha and eventually caused Judas’ own death in the wake of Christ’s triumphal resurrection.<sup>72</sup> From the tradition of openness realized by Tyndale’s hermeneutic, Shakespeare can “memorize another Golgotha” without the limiting fear of blasphemous retribution because he links the new Golgotha to the sentiments of a biblically-minded English audience (1.2.61). Macbeth’s betrayal paves the way for Banquo’s descents, most notably James, to come to power and glory, a notion that plays well with the Stuart ideas of the God-given right of kings.

This kind of case study requires a degree of intrepidity with scripture. The point is not to demonstrate how often Tyndale appears in *Macbeth* or any of Shakespeare’s work for that matter but to demonstrate what a biblically-minded reader might discover as an audience. Largely due to Tyndale’s pioneering, the Bible was, in 1606, so widely available and so variously interpretable that the audience’s potential to recognize the infusion of biblical material would be immense. In a sense, this study works in tandem with Shaheen’s contention that there comes a moment when a reference may echo the Bible but is really derived from some other source (51). Certainly, forcing scripture where it does not belong will not serve as a useful metric for glimpsing Tyndale’s lasting effect, but Shaheen also gives some leeway for looser

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<sup>72</sup> Muir, Bevington, and Greenblatt have all emphasized how the theme of evil has historically attracted critics, but its close association with the Bible is often neglected because the two are often said to be at odds. Being at odds, however is the way evil is both explored and indefinable in *Macbeth*.

interpretations. My strategy is to take that leeway with Macbeth because Tyndale passed along a lenience with Biblical expression that Shakespeare and his audience could exploit. Indeed, Shaheen's praise of Tyndale invites this kind of examination:

It would be difficult to emphasize sufficiently the debt that the English Bible owes to Tyndale. The debt is not because he was the first to translate from the original Hebrew and Greek, but because of his matchless style that has influenced the English language so profoundly... The fact remains that all of the later sixteenth-century English Bibles (with the exception of Rheims New Testament with its highly Latinate diction) were but improvements on Tyndale's basic style. One-third of the text of the King James New Testament is worded exactly as Tyndale left it. In the remaining two-thirds, the underlying sentence structure follows the pattern laid down. (45)<sup>73</sup>

Tyndale's influence upon the KJV is evident, but Shaheen's recognition of Tyndale's impact resonates with the theme of this chapter, as well as the entire project of this dissertation. Finding re-invented scriptural representations in Shakespeare, like a newly explored Judas-psychology in Macbeth, without much fear of stigma, censure, or sanction comes from a sentiment passed along from Tyndale's biblical reception. Being unafraid of consequences matters for the seventeenth-century playwright taking on the topic of betrayal. In the first two acts, Shakespeare directly associates Macbeth with Judas and his evil motives. Then the remaining portions of the play consciously and perpetually postpone any rationales for Judas' betrayal because of his unwavering commitment to evil. Through Macbeth, Shakespeare's biblical messaging reveals

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<sup>73</sup> Shaheen does not reference any quantitative study, but like many before him, guesses based on that infamous "cursory reading."

that, for any “man born of woman,” the concept of evil, and whatever motivates it, remains quite indefinable. The inexactitude of Shakespeare’s biblical lesson comes with “great perturbation” for a biblically-minded audience in search of an answer about their own spiritual condition. For Shakespeare’s audience, assuring one’s self of salvation is an actionable religious internalization that access to a personally interpretable sacred text demands.<sup>74</sup> The Tyndalian domestication project that persisted after Tyndale’s Bible created a wide-ranging space for exploring the strain of exegetical nuance infused within the internal religious identities of Shakespeare’s audiences.

### **Shakespeare’s Biblically-Minded Readers**

The cultural phenomenon of consuming biblical and literary “texts” (the Bible, poetry, sermons, performances, artwork) in early modern England largely came in the form of

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<sup>74</sup> For this section on *Macbeth* and the Bible, see Greenblatt, Stephen. *Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics*, 2018; Fulton, Thomas, and Kristen Poole. *The Bible on the Shakespearean Stage: Cultures of Interpretation in Reformation England*, 2018; Abdalla, Laila. “Birthing Death: A Reconsideration of the Roles of Power, Politics and the Domestic in *Macbeth*.” *Journal of the Wooden O Symposium*, vol. 14/15, Jan. 2014, pp. 1–20. Anderson, Judith. “Doers of the Word: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, and the Epistle of James.” *Christian scholar’s review*. 46.4 (2017); Dustagheer, Sarah, and Gillian Woods. *Stage Directions and Shakespearean Theatre*, 2018; Sukic, Christine. “From Fear to Anxiety in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*.” *Actes Des Congrès De La Société Française Shakespeare*, vol. 36, 2018; Dutton, Elisabeth. “*Macbeth* and the Croxton Play of the Sacrament: Blood and Belief in Early English Stagecraft.” *Blood Matters: Studies in European Literature and Thought, 1400-1700*, 2018, 183; Gibinska, Marta. “Politics and *Macbeth*.” *British and American Studies*, vol. 24, 2018, pp. 123-267; Clegg, Cyndia S. *Shakespeare’s Reading Audiences: Early Modern Books and Audience Interpretation*, 2017, Van, Oort R. *Shakespeare’s Big Men: Tragedy and the Problem of Resentment*, 2016; Holderness, Graham. “Terrorism and Culture: *Macbeth*, 9/11 and the Gunpowder Plot.” *Actes Des Congrès de La Société Française Shakespeare*, vol. 36, French Society of Shakespeare, 2018; Thompson, Ann. *Macbeth: The State of Play*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014; Savatier-Lahondes, Celine. “the Walking Forest Motif in Shakespeare’s “*Macbeth*” - Origins.” *Notes and Queries*, vol. 64, no. 2, 2017, 287.

interpretative performance. The colophon to the collection of essays titled *The Bible on the Shakespearean Stage* and edited by Thomas Fulton and Kristen Poole, directly identifies how impactful biblical material was for interpretive thought:

The Bible was everywhere in Shakespeare's England. Through sermons, catechisms, treatises, artwork, literature, and, of course, biblical reading itself, the stories and language of the Bible pervaded popular and elite culture... Shakespeare's audiences were not simply well versed in the Bible's content—they were also steeped in the practices and methods of biblical interpretation. Reformation and counter-Reformation debate focused not just on the biblical text, but—crucially—on how to read the text.

The introduction to that collection mentioned above, "Popular Hermeneutics in Shakespeare's London" by Fulton and Poole, delineates the "how" of understanding biblical material in early modern England: spiritual, political, and personal life was informed by the Bible and interpretations of it. "The Bible was," as Fulton and Poole claim, "culturally ubiquitous; it was a text that people spoke through and about" (2). It must also be noted that the people Fulton and Poole mention were legally compelled to encounter Bible stories in the same way that, as Hannibal Hamil points out, we view stories through screens today (5). Early modern English subjects consumed the Bible through a fusion of tactile sensory interactions—the aural and oral preachments of sermons, ink-to-margin inscriptional annotations, paratextual didactic tools like quick-reference glosses in pocket Bibles or substantial glosses embedded in larger editions, and artistic renderings in page illustrations and painted home furnishings.

The Bible reader received and interpreted scriptural knowledge in a variety of environments and mentalities. In *Shakespeare's Reading Audiences*, Cyndia Susan Clegg attempts to reconceptualize Shakespeare's addressees as hermeneutically-driven consumers who

developed discursive clusters based on shared communicative interactions with the “texts” they accessed through print culture. Recalling other scholars’ views on Shakespeare’s audiences, Clegg identifies the significance of Alfred Harbage’s insistence on the “intuitive good taste of the masses” and Ann Jennalie Cook’s “privileged” playgoer, whose enjoyment stems from a refined education. These audiences existed, Clegg emphasizes, but they are not the only kinds of readers to consider within the cultural circumstances of Shakespeare’s audience. Andrew Gurr, in contrast, conceives of a broader readership by imposing the notion of the “cultural literacy” which “explicitly informs the social transaction of performance” between a multiplicity of readers (7). Gurr’s audiences are products of their culture, and Clegg builds on this argument to suggest it would be a mistake to limit the imaginative space available in the minds of early modern subjects to their larger intellectual history. Instead, readers’ own personal intellectual histories broaden the meaning of the what it is to “read” a text in early modern England. “Reading” a “text” refers to the many methods of assimilating literary material, based on the process and medium of literary reception. The auditors at St. Paul’s, for instance, represented a grouping of religiously motivated watchers, hearers, readers, and maybe even debaters. By experiencing sermons, they participated in a “reading” and simultaneously learned how to read within the context of their surroundings. Print culture and religious life gave the early modern English an abundance of options for interpreting their textual interactions. According to Clegg, because of the various spaces available to them, these “readers” shared three qualities: 1) “[practice] in interpolating between their reading experiences and Shakespeare’s texts;” 2) acclimation to “experiencing intertextuality between the heard and the written word;” and 3) membership into “reading clusters” that “constructed interpretation out of their shared experiences” (10). Using Clegg’s formulation, I suggest that the shared and common experience



of the Bible generated clusters of biblically-minded readers formed from the intensive religious conversations and texts circulating throughout England. Poole shares this sentiment when speaking about the allegorical reach of Hamlet's puns: early modern audiences possessed interpretive minds that "serve a range of functions, reflect a number of cultural concerns, and have a variety of constructions" (81). Shakespeare's audience, in other words, adjusted the texts that they encountered. Their ability to be adaptable largely comes from the tradition of biblical exegesis extended to them from Tyndalian translation mentalities. Hamlet could find the providence in the fall of a sparrow and the gravediggers he meets could invoke the theological station of Adam, and the audience could make sense of them both based on the delivery of the dialogue.

These variegated responses to scripture are what Brian Cummings calls the function of the "Protestant allegory." By insisting on the Bible's preeminence in interpretation, a literal reading, when available to a mass readership, produces an eisegesis rather than an exegesis, approving of almost any interpretative application to the text. For Cummings, "the allegorical is a necessary function of the literal. In this way the literal sense broadens to take in other senses" (184). Those other senses, in Clegg's theory, should be examined as products of discursive communities that are always in flux. The transformative nature of the Bible's meaning in the hands and minds of its early modern readers is the Tyndalian effect upon English biblical reception. As James Kearny puts it, "in asserting the primacy of the literal sense, Tyndale does not embrace what we might call literalism. For Tyndale, the letter is always pregnant with the spirit; God's word is always in motion from hermeneutic promise to fulfillment" (78). Any motion inherent in the text comes from the individual reader's community, which makes hermeneutic movement a constant in early modern English contexts.

Shakespeare relied on the effusion of biblical knowledge throughout his audience's reading clusters because he does not explicitly invoke the Bible. Surprisingly, the word "Bible" never finds a full enunciation in any of Shakespeare's texts, despite the seemingly incalculable references to biblical material. However, there are a few near-mentions. To induce further corruption in the murderers, Macbeth asks them, speaking of Banquo, "Are you so gospelled/To pray for this good man, and for his issue,/Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave,/And beggared yours for ever?" (3.1.89-92). Such references to a physical scripture appear in Shakespeare's plays, usually encoded with expressions like "gospelled" or "holy saws of writ" (*Henry VI, Part 1*, 1.3.59) or "proofs of holy writ" (*Othello*, 3.3.325-7) or "Odd old ends, stolen forth of Holy Writ" (*Richard III*, 1.3.333) or "the scripture of loyal Leonatus" (*Cymbeline* 3.482-3). Some references are more directly associated with the Bible, indicating actual portions of the text: "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose" (*Merchant of Venice*, 1.3.94, "he [the devil] said unto him: if thou be the son of God cast thy self down. For it is written he shall give his angels charge over thee," Matthew 4:6) or "How dost thou understand the/Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged" (*Hamlet* 5.1.36), "In sorrow shalt thou eat thereof all days of thy life. And it shall bear thorns and thistles unto thee. And thou shalt eat the herbs of the field: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," (Genesis 3:17-19). The only actual invocation of the word "Bible" is deflected by Shakespeare's attempt at capturing a foreign accent: "He has pray his Pible well" (*Merry Wives*, 2.3.6-7). These mentions may be few, but Shakespeare relied extensively and necessarily upon biblical material, as would anyone within his cultural circumstance, regardless of how directly he actually invoked the name of the Bible.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Obviously, the Bible's importance for Christendom as a cultural whole cannot be underestimated. Though countless tomes contribute to cataloguing the roots of Christian and Biblical interactions with

Shakespeare, like his contemporaries, naturalized the language of the Bible, so that its direct allusions are obvious, and its echoey background reverberates with Christendom's mythos. Speaking of Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Thomas Watson, Richard Barnfield, among others in *Interweaving Myths in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*, Vallis-Russell, Coffin, and Lafont argue that:

Shakespeare and his contemporaries converse—and are conversant—with sources and influences indiscriminately across the board: they invite classical texts into their writing along with medieval commentaries, Tudor refashionings and humanist glossings, reworking all this with and into material drawn from medieval chronicles, biblical writings, romances, Italian novella, and the works of fellow poets and dramatists. (6).

Inviting, conversing, reworking—these are the actions of a fully immersed cultural artifact, and the Bible's role within this circumstance means reading the Bible into the text could be just as natural as the original inclusion of the Bible. Upon Mephistopheles's transformation to appease Dr. Faustus's aesthetic tastes, his, "What wouldst thou have me do?" (1.3.35) certainly echoes Paul's "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). They are unmistakably similar, but the expression is so common that it could be nothing more than an unconscious projection from the cultural integration of biblical utterances. Since Tyndale, England became more Protestant and welcoming of the Bible's role within the scope of solascripturalism, and the Bible not only stabilized as a mainstay of English identity, but it became diffusely familiar to a wide range of

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western civilization, a useful starting point for the sake of the current argument is Jeffrey, David, *People of the Book: Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. His argument specifically aligns biblical literature with Christian cultural influence.

Anglophonic ears. The biblically minded reader hears these references as the mythological construction of the English realm and church. It is as Debra Shuger argues in *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*, religion, or one's way of life, can mean many things, but "for English Protestants," it meant "the Bible" (17).

Recognizing a biblically-minded readership demonstrates how imaginative analyses of individual plays have drawn out the rich textures of biblical influence.<sup>76</sup> *Richard II*, for instance, can be read as a retelling of Christ's betrayal and death in which specific biblical scenes are vividly recalled to explicitly relate to events in the play:

Though some of you, with Pilate, wash your hands,  
Showing an outward pity, yet you Pilates  
Have here delivered me to my sour cross,  
And water cannot wash away your sin.

(4.1.239-42)

Did they not sometime cry "All Hail" to me?  
So Judas did to Christ, by He in twelve  
Found truth in all by one; I, in twelve thousand, none.

(4.1.170-2)

In other instances, specific verses are superimposed upon the text as a means of conveying the message: "It is as hard to come as for a camel/To thread the postern of a small needle's eye" (5.5.16-17; Mark 10:14-25) and "Fiend, thou torments me ere I come to hell" (4.1.270). In all instances, the biblical scaffolding exists and persists in a variety of forms. Interestingly, the

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<sup>76</sup> See Marx, Steven, *Shakespeare and the Bible*; Boitani, Piero, and Rachel Jacoff, *The Gospel According to Shakespeare*; and Hamlin, Hannibal. *The Bible in Shakespeare*.

superimposition also matches the dilemma faced by translators and interpreters alike, the choice between the literal or the metaphorical, the word and the sense, capturing a full sense of the biblical influence upon the mind of an early modern Bible reader/viewer.

But even with just a sense of the biblical material, the effect of Tyndale's Anglo-openness comes across powerfully. Boitani's *The Gospel According to Shakespeare* proposes to examine how, from "*Hamlet* onward, Shakespeare is engaged in developing his own gospel" (i). Boitani traces out what seems like a Bible-forged mold that gives a shape to many of Shakespeare's later plays as a means of sketching out some personalized and quasi-secular version of evangelism. By patterning his plots after the New Testament, Shakespeare, by Boitani's estimate, provides a tale of salvific heroes with doctrinal "epistles" for edification. His analogy may seem like a stretch, but the parallels are intriguing. Generally, the conclusion from Boitani is that ample space exists to make parallels between the Bible and whatever Shakespeare is doing with his plays.

Indeed, the big four of Shakespeare's later tragedies can be regarded as spiritual dramas, pitting heroes against evil alongside political strife. *Hamlet* (1599-1601), *Othello* (1603-1604), *King Lear* (1605-1606), and *Macbeth* (1606-1607), traditionally, have been interpreted as heroes whom seem to encapsulate a digression from goodness to evilness, or in New Testament sentiments, from Christ-likeness (*Hamlet*) to humanity's inevitable spiritual inadequacies (*Othello* and *King Lear*) to personal evil (*Macbeth*).<sup>77</sup> One might see Christ figures, at least to

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<sup>77</sup> Though some meaningful push-back on reading Christian spiritualism into Shakespeare comes from critics like Richard Levin in his introduction to *New Readings Vs. Old Plays*, (196-200) the general critical consensus cautions toward Shakespeare's inclusion of various resources that encourage such a reading. See Bevington (1255), Suzanne Wofford's Introduction to *Shakespeare's Late Tragedies: A Collection of Critical Essays*, and

some extent, slowly evolving toward less Christological and more Adam-like representatives.<sup>78</sup> Othello and Lear are, in many respects, the victims of their own human qualities, the assuredness that comes from prime adulthood and old age, respectively. Though they each carry desirable traits, those human age ranges present a kind of inflexibility, the old fierce battle between conviction and repentance. But Macbeth's temptation is neither overcome with thought nor wrested by resoluteness. In a perverse setting, Macbeth, motivated by power and encouraged by supernatural insinuations, feels obligated to commit himself to a clearly evil behavior. Whatever is biblical in *Macbeth* is associated with the profane, the blasphemy of an apostate and the necessary restoration that must come when facing such an evilness.

From that restorative interpretation, Hannibal Hamlin reads a retelling of the apocalypse as recorded in the book of Revelation, where Macbeth is an Antichrist. Hamlin draws on parallels between King Saul and Macbeth that have been noted by the scholarship of John Park and Manfred Weidhorn. Saul as an Antichrist type, explicates Macbeth, who, like Saul and the Antichrist, utilize supernatural powers to fulfill their tragic destinies. The commonest term of derision during the Reformation was "Antichrist," and it came to represent anyone who opposed whatever true religion was thought up by one's opponents.<sup>79</sup> Tyndale did not shy away from the

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<sup>78</sup> Hamlet's "these tedious old fools" resonates in the same way Christ's "ye brood of vipers" does, as a weary indignation. In fact, Tyndale's "Ye serpents and generation of vipers" intonates the chronology that Shakespeare emphasizes here. Still, this personal interpretation comes from a generous hermeneutic, similar to that of Siegel's Marxist reading of Shakespeare, which insists upon finding christological machinery, using *Hamlet* and *King Lear* specifically (39-46).

<sup>79</sup> The matter has been attested regularly, but for more detail see Pelikan, vol. 4, 38, 170-176; Lake and Questier, 58-140, 579-615; and Lawrence, *The Roman Monster: An Icon of the Papal Antichrist in Reformation Polemics*.

term when referring to the Pope or other church officials, taking his lead from Luther.<sup>80</sup> The Antichrist's biblical role, as a character who foils Christ, provides readers an opportunity to glimpse into the future where true believers have a keen awareness of what constitutes the right belief. Those believers, therefore, reject the Antichrist, and in return, they suffer momentarily before receiving eternal reward from the real Christ. But, as the Reformation and Tyndale's use of the slur indicate, there are many Antichrists from which to choose, and there are many signs that lead to the true Christ. Biblically speaking, one's options are wide open when selecting a doomsday hermeneutic, and not surprisingly, most generations of Christians have believed themselves to be on the verge of making their apocalyptic choice.<sup>81</sup>

Tyndale's domesticated translation instituted this kind of variety for the future of English Protestants, including Shakespeare, who would read through a diverse set of cultural circumstances and points of view. Though Shakespeare's most likely Bible of choice was the Geneva or Bishop's Bible, he certainly had access to Tyndale's Bible, among others. He was all too aware of the diverse kinds of readings possible with the various Bibles at his disposal, and based on the influence that Tyndale had on his successors, whether Shakespeare held Tyndale in hand or not is immaterial.<sup>82</sup> Examining *Macbeth* with an understanding of the play's biblical

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<sup>80</sup> In *Answer*, Tyndale equates the anti-Christ's snares, which are meant to sway people to damnation, to the Pope's snares that he sets for the ordination of priests, 161.

<sup>81</sup> The age of the Reformation marks a unique use of the term. The actual Greek expression for anti-christ, ἀντίχριστος, only appears four times in the Bible (*1 John 2:18, 2 John 1:7, 1 John 2:22, and 1 John 4:2–3*) and another version, pseudochrist, ψευδόχριστος, appears twice, once in Mark 13:22 and then in Matthew 24:24, during the Judas narrative. Reformers revitalized the word to refer to the false teachers (the Pope and Church officials) of their day. See note above on the frequency of the word.

<sup>82</sup> See Sheehan, 3-30; Streete, 1-23; and Ackerman, 19-31; In some cases, especially where Tyndale's specific translation has simply been preserved, there is no way to tell, however unlikely it may be, if Shakespeare is intentionally drawing from Tyndale. In some cases, where Tyndale is not preserved in later

openness demonstrates the ways in which Shakespeare took advantage of biblically-minded readers.

Bruce Gordon links to Shakespeare three distinct phases of Bible production: 1) the initial stages (1516-1560) made up of Erasmus, Luther, Zwingli, Tyndale, Melancthon, and Calvin which “cleared the stage of the most celebrated translators and commentators,” and instituted the sola scriptura principle (17); 2) the medial stage (1560-1604), associated with the formative ages of Shakespeare, the Geneva Bible (“an elegant vernacular translation surrounded by a dense forest of Reformed Protestant doctrinal interpretation,” (17) ), and a flourishing of biblical scholarship and philology that produced a prolific influx of translational and exegetical texts, including new Latin Bibles, polyglot Bibles, and over a dozen distinct English Bibles; and 3) the final stage (1604-1630), which instituted the KJV at Hampton court and saw it through to fruition until it finally, through a monopoly on printing, gained a “unique hold on the English consciousness” (Norton qtd. in Bruce 32). Aaron Pratt recognizes that the medial stage, which includes the life and work of Shakespeare, represented such a heavy mixture of biblical texts that the hermeneutical options for readers and users would widen significantly. What he sees as fully consistent during this period is the stress upon biblical literacy, the inextricable role of the Church of England, and central Protestant doctrines. But as he points out, this plethora of material causes a troubling incoherence for those exposed to multiple renderings and a constant delivery of interpretative apparatuses—it could induce a heterodox mentality, unsuited to the common interests of the state, as it eventually did in later figures like Milton.

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versions but is chosen by Shakespeare, the matter is clearer. Sheehan takes the Geneva for granted, but also clarifies, as do Streete and Ackman, that Shakespeare accessed and used Tyndale. Interestingly, newer editions of the Arden Shakespeare plays tend to prefer the Bishop Bible for reference, which is the edition of Macbeth used for this chapter.



Eventually, the biblical references in Shakespeare can be direct, structural, and even generic but always drawn from the cultural setting of biblically-minded readers. The Bible likely came to many early modern subjects in the interpretative context of the Church of England through *The Prayer Book Psalter* and *The Book of Common Prayer*. Established reading methods from the Church of England led to practices of interacting with the text psychologically, instructing the devout on ways to think and behave as good Christians. Tyndale's translation specifically diverged from a solascripturalism of the Bible speaking for itself, and initiated a Bible designed for internalizing systems of meaning. The Tyndalian Bible worked well for the doctrinal goals of the Church of England, which required congregants' openness to religiously interpretive suggestion. Sermons also taught readers how to understand the Bible, and they were possibly even more popular than Shakespeare's plays. As chapters one and two argue, Tyndale came from a tradition where becoming a preacher of note was a serious boost in stature. Whether text, church, or preacher, explicating the Bible was a pedagogical system for inculcating congregations with personal interpretations and exegetical reading techniques. Congregants were taught how to foster a basic comprehension of the Bible, harmonize passages and theologies, and spot typologies. All of these interpretative techniques, including the medieval quadriga (literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical), had the effect of giving readers/audiences lessons on symbolism and psychological internalization. The result, at times, were personality cults forged from agreeable preaching or personal interpretations that veered into sedition. Most likely, however, the ability to individualize biblical expressions gave readers personal liberty to cultivate an inward spirituality.

Following the pattern of Marx, Boitani, Gaff, and Hamlin, and using the leeway afforded by Tyndale's biblical project, I identify how Shakespeare uses the character of Macbeth to stir a

Judas-hermeneutic within his biblically-minded audiences. Macbeth presents a unique psychological dimension that is not available to the character of the Antichrist. More than any other hero, he faces a temptation that he knows is wrong. Then, rather than a flaw that draws him into a series of calamitous events, he actively chooses, or, in a more biblical sense “gives in” to his role as “betrayer.” Consequently, Macbeth is much more than a morality play; it does not preach. Macbeth’s “false face must hide what the false heart doth know” (1.7.83) and he must “Look like th’innocent flower/ But be the serpent under’t” (1.5.65-6). Based on such complexities, as a play, Macbeth glimpses into “the operation of evil in human affairs” (Bevington, 1255)—despairing and frenzied after he commits the crime. Unlike the Antichrist, Judas is variously represented in gospels, which render him ambiguous. Motifs dominant in Macbeth, like inversion and equivocation, therefore, correlate to the character of Judas as he is depicted in the Bible. These themes provide an interpretive quality for re-examining Macbeth’s psychology in proportion to the disordered relationships that ensue from his betrayal and overcommitment.

### **Shakespeare’s Judas**

As for the specific biblical character, Judas Iscariot, Shakespeare would have inherited, not only the rich biblical material, but possibly some popular expressions of Judas. Shakespeare invokes the name of Judas a mere seventeen times in four of his entire corpus of plays: *As You Like It* (1), *3Henry VI* (1), *Love’s Labor Lost* (13), and *Richard II* (2). As mentioned above, *Richard II* directly identifies himself as a Christ-figure and explicitly calls Bolingbroke’s forces, who would betray him, “Judases” (3.2.8). The constant use of Judas in *Love’s Labor Lost* is, unsurprisingly, used for comedic relief, whereby the Judas Maccabeus is mistaken for Judas Iscariot, the former a Jewish hero and the later a Christian villain. The antics are amusing and

reflect, probably for the sake of exaggerating the character's ignorance, only a few instances of the biblical knowledge of Judas ("Not Iscariot" 5.2.593; "Judas was hanged on an elder" 5.2.602).

That Judas was hung on an elder suggests an extra-biblical tradition about Judas, but exactly what traditions Shakespeare possessed are not clear. The biblical account of Judas is outlined below, and Shakespeare seems to draw all of his material from it, which is, in itself, quite a lot of material to encounter. But some possible sources related to Shakespeare's knowledge of Judas can be identified by examining allusions to, rather than direct references to Judas because the other plays that use the actual name of Judas, *As You Like It* and *3 Henry VI*, both reference Judas's kiss, which is a prominent element in the biblical account.

The main suggestion for an outside source comes from the textual debate over a line in *Othello*: "the base Indian" (5.2.357). That is the quarto rendering. The folio reads "the base Judean," which could possibly refer to Judas ("base" because of his betrayal but emphasizing the "Judean" in a possible anti-Semitic remark). Although the quarto is usually preferred, the argument for the folio, offered by Shaheen, likens the death scenes of Desdemona and Othello to a depiction in Geoffrey Fenton's *Certaine Tragicall Discourses* (1567), based on Belleforest's French version of Bandello. Sheehan claims that Bandello's Italian recounts a tell more closely similar to that of Shakespeare's *Othello*, and that it carries expressions associated with the kiss and betrayal of Judas. Though Levin carefully rebuts Sheehan's preferencing of "Judean," it is still likely, based on Sheehan's analysis, that Shakespeare had access to this source and applied it here. The references to Judas in Fenton are as follows: "Wherewith, after he had embraced and kissed her, in such sort as Judas kissed our Lorde the same night he betrayed him, he saluted her with ten or xii estockados [stabs];" and [after stabbing her, he] "commended his ... soul to the

reprobate society of Judas and Cain, with other of th'infernall crew."<sup>83</sup> These representations indicate a Judas much like the biblical character, but adding an association with Cain, the first murderer, and others, unnamed, who belong to a damned "crew." This source also marks Judas as a member of a "reprobate society" to which he was "commended" based on his deeds.

*Macbeth* does carry some similarities, since the emphasis on a "society" or kingdom, which is marred by murderous treachery, makes up the entire plot. When speaking to Malcolm, the doctor calls those sick with the evil, "a crew of wretched souls" (4.3.142). But any other suggestions that this Judas is represented in *Macbeth* is not fully evident.

Shakespeare and his audience, however, would likely hear about Judas, most often, in church services and sermons, where their most common understanding of Judas developed. *The Book of Common Prayer* serves as one of the interpretive examples for readers. It guides clergy through various processes of religious life, utilizing biblical material as a means of examining one's duties as a Christian. In the event that a congregant takes the communion unworthily, *The Book of Common Prayer* invokes Judas: "and come not to this holy Table, lest after the taking of that holy Sacrament, the devil enter into you, as he entered into Judas, and fill you full of all iniquities, and bring you to destruction both of body and soul." The betrayer, unworthy of sacrament, is possessed by the devil and led to utter annihilation, a horrifying and unimaginable circumstance for the early modern mindset, much like the commitment to evil presented to readers in *Macbeth*'s unworthy deeds.

Judas also appeared in popular writings reflecting Protestant interpretations. According to Clegg,

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<sup>83</sup> Taken from Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, VII (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1973), 260-61.

The most popular religious writers at the time of *Macbeth* were Calvinist. The distinctly English form of Calvinism produced in the English imagination an intense interiority that engaged English men and women in an internal drama where the Calvinist uncertainty about individual salvation and damnation played out. (99).

That inward drama is based on three features of Calvinist theology: predestination, providence, and discernment. For Calvin, each person is predestined for Heaven or Hell at the moment of death or Armageddon, but the inability of human resistance to God's salvific determinism creates providence (God working with humans). Finally, and most English of the three, discernment is a process by which believers could discover, through providence, whether they were predestined to be saved or damned. These doctrinal notions, especially discernment because of its status-producing nature, permeated English thought. Even though John Calvin had "warned against inquiring into 'God's inscrutable decrees,' popular English Calvinists like [William] Perkins and [Arthur] Dent emphasized the importance of a life spent in ceaseless inquiry 'making election sure'" (Clegg 102). Perkins would argue that "every Christian" has a duty to "examine himself whether he be in the faith or no" (qtd. in Clegg 105). Perkins and Dent both enjoyed dozens of editions of their works in circulation, and according to Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser, religious publication made up nearly half of the book trade's speculative publications between 1599 and 1602. In other words, their thoughts were extensively available and were highly significant to the biblically-minded reader. The psychology of discernment is Clegg's way of giving *Macbeth* a religious quality based on the trends of theological debates, but it also matches the complications of Judas's betrayal. Up until the final battle scene of *Macbeth*, "the audience members accustomed to Calvinist discernment have been drawn into the dramatic action by

conflicting evidence about Macbeth's internal experience and their special knowledge about the forces of evil that have been unleashed in the play, of which, for the most part, Macbeth is ignorant" (115). According to Calvinist theology, the Devil is permitted to urge the damned and test the righteous, but discerning which activity inflicts one's soul is difficult to know, and an explicative biblical figure might be necessary for examining the allegorical machinations of tragic behavior. Satan has urged, not tested, Macbeth, and the interpretative action required to arrive at that theological reality, invokes a biblical catharsis. In *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*, Arthur Dent says that Satan "lieth in this, that he can give us our death wound, and we shall never know what hurt us" (56). If Judas is possessed of the Devil, then Macbeth may reflect that same destructive possession.

Biblically-minded readers also gained insight on Judas through sermons, which made up 12% of the print trade by the time of Macbeth (Farmer and Lesser). As Lori Anne Ferrell explains in "How-to Books, Protestant Kinetics, and the Art of Theology," the "pastoral problem" in a Calvinist circumstance was to "explain the confusing notion that those predestined to salvation neither acted nor felt particularly saved on bad days, and those predestined to damnation might actually do good works and feel filled with grace on good days" (600). What, in other words, does it mean to be self-aware of the providential control that God's predestination decrees? Sermonizing about Judas offers a glimpse into this Calvinistic mindset, pastorally guiding the reader to an interpretive principle. In a sermon at St. Paul's Cross in 1599, John Dove offered an interpretation of Judas to prove the discernable ordination of God's cosmos, and Judas is his main example:

And least any should think, that this distinction of the will of God into his secret will, and revealed will, is but an idle and frivolous distinction, savoring of

curiosity more than of substance, I will prove it by such evident places of Scripture, that it cannot be denied. In one and the self same action of the treason of Judas, when he sold his Lord and master, appeared two sundry wills of God, the one hidden, the other revealed, and one contrary to the other. His secret will was that Judas should betray him: his revealed will was, that he should not betray him: and yet both these wills, in respect of God, were good and just. His revealed will was, that Judas should not betray him. (45)

Dove's two "wills," aside from bolstering Calvinistic theology, emphasize the complex nature of Judas as a biblical character. Judas is caught in-between the secret (inescapable) will of God and the action that God desired (revealed will) from his followers. Judas must not betray Christ, yet he also cannot resist the betrayal if Jesus is to be sacrificed for sins and God's plan unfurled. For Dove, continuing the examination of Judas, God's "secret will had appointed that Judas should betray [Jesus]," and by that will, Jesus was "taken by the hands of the wicked, being delivered by the determinate counsel and providence of God, and have crucified and slain." Strikingly, the wickedness is even extended to Jesus whose equally incapable of escape but paradoxically, in Protestant theology, is also God and immutably good. The dizzying theological maneuvers match the incomprehensibility of Judas's internalizations. He is a character, confronted with evil, possibly possessed. But he is concurrently offered an alternative and preferred action (the refusal to betray), which, if Dove's summation is correct, he cannot take even though it is God's "revealed will." In other words, Judas, could not control his circumstance even though he had nonevil and divinely preferable alternatives available. Macbeth echoes a similar situation after receiving his payment and contemplating the king's circumstance with Banquo: "Being unprepared,/Our will became the servant of defect,/Which else should free have wrought"

(2.1.16-18). The biblically-minded reflectiveness available from Judas's circumstance reads into Macbeth's unalterable path of betrayal.

### **The Bible's Judas (Tyndale's Translation)**

Aside from the cultural representations of Judas, the Bible itself characterizes Judas as a complicated person in the gospel and passion narratives. Using Tyndale's translation of the Judas narrative, which coined the term "betrayer" for Judas, an intriguing glimpse into the depths of biblical psychology emerges. Judas's representation in the Bible (the Gospels and Acts), like his representation in popular and religious expressions, comes in a variety of interpretative options, depending on the theological motivations of the writer, and Tyndale picks up on the various portrayals for his translation. The synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), coupled with John and Acts (which is the second volume of Luke) offer a Judas whose motivations for betrayal are indeterminate, requiring further speculation from the reader about the nature of Judas's eventual commitment to treason.

In all the Gospels, Judas is portrayed, ad nauseum, as the one who betrayed Christ. Mark 3:19 adds him to a catalogue of the twelve, placing Judas at the end of the list with the epithet, "which same also betrayed him." Matthew 10:14 (also 26:25, 26:48, 27:3, among others) uses a similar technique, undoubtedly copying Mark: "and Judas Iscariot which also betrayed him." Then Luke 6:16 uses "Judas Iscariot which same was the traitor." Each of these moments use some form of the term *παραδοῦς*, the Latin *proditor*, which as a verb best means "betrayed" and as a noun, "traitor" or "deceiver." In the case of Luke 6:16, the Greek's aorist middle indicative form of the predicate, more accurately suggests, "who became the traitor" rather than "who was the traitor." Tyndale's translation again underscores the way an English version can widen the possible reading. At the beginning of the gospel narratives, is Judas already the traitor or will he



become the traitor? By labelling him “was the traitor,” Tyndale ascribes an inevitability to Judas’s actions, and more closely links him to the other Gospel passages that indicate Judas as he who “betrayed [Jesus].” Tyndale, interpreting the tension between contrasting sentiments, harmonizes the meaning of Judas’s predestined activity despite the texts’ literal divergence.

John is generally considered to be in another category when comparing gospels, and Tyndale’s version of Judas’s betrayal is quite different as well. John 6:71 and 12:4 both include the Greek auxiliary verb ἔμελλεν (“to be about to”) to the verb for “betray,” which Tyndale renders as “he it was that should betray him” and “which afterward betrayed him,” respectively. For a point of reference, the Bishop and the Geneva Bibles use “which should betray him” in both instances. These decisions match the narrative structure of John, so that Judas, while in the act the betrayal, is labelled, “Judas[,] also which betrayed him” (John 18:2 and 18:5). Tyndale provides a bit of extra variety for the early translations, which more deeply complicates the character of Judas. However, the Geneva and Bishop follow Tyndale’s lead for the final two verses depicting Judas as the betrayer. All the gospels highlight Judas as the betrayer, while John adds a sense of the future actions of Judas, as if he fits more squarely in the “predestined” category of religious characters. The Synoptics do not clearly provide any definitive sense of Judas’s deterministic state of betrayal, but Tyndale, in contrast to John, uses his translation to infer the inescapable condition of Judas’s evil.

The Gospels also remind their readers that Judas belonged to the twelve, specifically calling attention to his role as a friend and disciple of Christ as counterpoint to the ensuing betrayal. Aside from including his name in lists of the twelve, the Bible specifically calls him “one of the twelve” in several instances: Matthew 26:14 and 26:46; Mark 4:10, 14:10, 14:20, and 14:43; Luke 22:3 and 22:47; John 6:71. Some verses are translated “which was of the number of

the twelve,” to match the Greek sentence. However, all are reminders of Judas’s former role as a committed follower of Christ, ranked among the top leaders in Christ’s coterie, making his eventual or inevitable or purposeful betrayal more stinging. Tyndale and future translators maintain this consistent repetition throughout the Gospels.

The richest diversity of thought concerning Judas appears in the narratives involving his actual betrayal. Matthew tells the story of Judas in chapter 26, after Jesus is lavishly anointed with expensive oil by an unnamed woman. The disciples express concern over the wasted oil, which they believed could have been better used if sold for alms. Jesus rebukes them with his infamous admonition, as Tyndale records it: “ye shall have poor folk always with you: but me shall ye not have all ways” (v. 11). Jesus continues to praise the woman, then

one of the twelve called Judas Iscariot went unto the chief priests and said: what will ye give me and I will deliver him unto you? And they appointed unto him thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.  
(vv. 14-16)

The passage does not explicitly state but seems to indicate that Judas is triggered by the ointment scene and feels like betraying Jesus makes sense in light of his prodigality. The rest of the betrayal narrative in Matthew, however, intensifies speculation about Judas’s motivations. Jesus engages the disciples with a morose contemplation of his foreknowledge that “one of you shall betray me” (v. 21). He turns the contemplation into a penetrating psychological introspection when he ponders aloud, “He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish[,] the same shall betray me” (v. 23). Each disciple asks Jesus if he is the one, and when Judas asks, “is it I master?” Jesus replies with “thou hast said” (v. 25). Later in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas, along with a band of soldiers and Jewish priests, approaches Jesus and says, “Hail master and kissed him,” as

the prearranged signal for identifying Jesus. After the betrayal, Jesus is arrested and Judas, remorseful, returns his silver and hangs himself (Matthew 27:1-5). Judas, here, clearly understands his deed to be wrong, and seeing no means for satisfaction, commits a final act of desperation. Still lingering, nonetheless, is the reason he chose betrayal. Indignation? Greed? Spite? All are equally valid, yet none are fully correct.

The gospel of Mark tells a similar story, without the remorse and the hanging, which is one of the reasons Mark has long been understood as the source for Matthew and Luke. Though succinct, Mark, perhaps more than any other gospel, permits speculation about Judas. The abrupt transition between (vv. 9-10) the story of the anointing and Judas's offer to the priests leaves a worrisome gap about his decision:

Verily I say unto you: wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world: this also that she hath done shall be rehearsed in remembrance of her. (9) And Judas Iscariot one of the twelve went away unto the high priest to betray him unto them. (10)

Tyndale's translation renders verse ten about as literally as possible. Fascinatingly, the more literal translation, in this instance, only further opens possible interpretive speculation about Judas's motivation, recalling Cumming's "Protestant allegory." The next verse restricts Judas's decision to greed, but Mark's meanings remain tacitly stored away in its abruptness: "When they heard that they were glad and promised that they would give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him" (v. 11). Again, the reader remains beholden to "and" as the only clue for making a hermeneutical leap of faith regarding Judas's impetus for disloyalty. Mark does utilize the "one of the twelve" epithet more than any other gospel writer during the betrayal sections, which has been interpreted as placing Judas apart as a lone and wicked (free-will) actor

among the twelve. Judging from the rest of Mark, it is difficult to claim any particular authorial intention outside of a translator's flourish. Tyndale, however, hoped to maintain the ambiguity that comes from Mark's minimalism. Whether at the supper (vv. 16-20) or at the moment of the kiss (vv. 44-45) Mark never fully glimpses into the psychology of Judas. The Gospel simply moves on, straightforwardly delivering the plot points to complete the narrative. Tyndale more closely adheres to Mark's style than any other portion of the Bible (many translators do because of Mark's simple but technically proficient Greek), and that style gives readers a wide margin for analyzing Judas's motives.

Luke, quite oppositely, adds details that obfuscate Judas's motivation even more than the Matthew-Mark narratives do. Judas is not triggered by the anointing. Instead, his decision to betray Jesus occurred because Satan "entered into" him (Luke 22:3). The implication is that Judas either willingly received Satan or, with a more literal reading of the verse, Judas was chosen by Satan and could not resist the possession. Such a version of Judas further complicates his psychology and leaves the work up to the reader, or in the case of *The Book of Common Prayer*, the interpretative community of the Church of England. Jesus as much as poses the question for the audience, "Judas[,] betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?" (22:48). Christ proffers both Judas and the reader, and Judas does not answer. So, the reader must conjure meaning, wrestling with Judas's action. Without a satisfying answer, Luke jumps from that question to a brief skirmish between Peter and some of the high priest's servants, one of whom who loses an ear that Jesus miraculously reattaches. Luke isolates a moment, puts it in frieze, and then breaks the surrealness with violent action, never giving the reader a chance to process Judas's betrayal fully.

Luke's portrayal of Judas is continued in its second volume, the Book of Acts (1:16-22), again adding detail but failing to offer insight into the betrayer's mentality. According to Acts, the apostle Peter suggests that Judas, "who was numbered among us," (v. 16) should be replaced. Through the voice of Peter, Tyndale translates Judas's position among the disciples as a "ministration" (v. 17) and a "bishopric" (v. 20), a clear attempt to further slander Judas alongside governing Church offices. During Peter's executive meetings, he includes the story of Judas's death, the infamous tale of Judas's ghastly demise:

And the same hath now possessed a plot of ground with the reward of iniquity and when he was hanged burst a sunder in the midst and all his bowels gushed out. /And it is known unto all the inhabiteurs of Jerusalem: in so much that that field is called in their mother tongue Acheldama that is to say the blood field. (vv. 19-20)

The monstrous act of betrayal is not analyzed, but the suicidal aftermath takes a prominent position within the narrative. Judas, by the Luke-Acts narrative, is like a momentary and necessary evil, whereby the natural order is restored after its inevitable passing. Judas, rather than possessing a motivation is possessed by the motivating forces of good versus evil, and being swept up in the action of evil, he receives damnation after his destructive betrayal.

Finally, the Gospel of John (chapters 13 and 18), the most distinct of all the others, delivers a Judas that is both motivated and possessed, a matter of willingness turned into fully inescapable malevolence. During the betrayal narrative, Judas is depicted as having a "mind" for betrayal in the same context as Jesus is depicted as an object of divine fate: "And when supper was ended after that the devil had put in the heart of Judas Iscariot Simon's son to betray him:/ Jesus knowing that the father had given all things into his hands. And that he was come from

God and went to God” (13:2-3). Tyndale’s translation of John 13 is completely preserved in the Bishop Bible and nearly perfectly extant in the Geneva, with the exception of context-orienting punctuation, indicating how well Tyndale’s perception of this story persisted for generations.

The distinction between Judas and Christ strikingly affords Judas some agency as a decision-maker, whereas Jesus relents all agency to God. What follows from this contrast is the endearing scene in which Jesus washes the feet of his disciples, presumably Judas’s feet as well, even though Jesus is quite aware of his deceptive thoughts (vv. 4-10). Contrasting the satanic manipulation of Judas with the divine resolve of Christ provides a significant glimpse into the character of Judas. At the end of the feet-washing scene, Jesus comments on the internal state of his betrayer: “Jesus said to him [Peter]: he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet and is clean every whit. And ye are clean: but not all./ For he knew his betrayer. Therefore said he: ye are not all clean” (vv. 10-11). Judas does not offer any commentary on being identified, and the moment is puzzling for that reason. Why does the gospel neglect to record Judas’s reaction to being identified? The answer depends upon the reader, who must grapple with the narrative gap and imagine what the reaction must have looked like.

In John 13:12-19 Christ explains his role in the divine scheme as it relates to the servanthood he had just displayed. But seemingly troubled by the forthcoming events, he laments that one of his disciples will betray him. Dismayed, his disciples ask for clarification about who it will be, then “Jesus answered he it is to whom I give a sop when I have dept it. And he wet a sop and gave it to Judas Iscariot Simons son./ And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him: that thou dost do quickly.” (vv. 26-27). Judas then immediately leaves the supper. In a truly stupefying moment, Judas is identified as the betrayer by two means (the sop and the quick departure) but the disciples do not follow: “That wist no man at the table for what

intent he spake” (v. 28). How could they have missed the clues? The remaining portion of John’s gospel indicates that they assumed Judas had left to buy more supplies or to, at Jesus’ command, give alms to the poor (vv. 29-30). From this account, Judas’s reputation among the disciples make him an unlikely betrayer, so unlikely that even Jesus’ insistence does not sway them.

In John, Judas is encouraged by and overtaken by Satan, the evil inside of him simultaneously a choice and a fate. At the scene of the actual betrayal, John does not record a payment, a kiss, or a question. It simply depicts “a band of men and ministers of the high Priests and Pharisees [who] came thither with lanterns and firebrands and weapons” (John 18:3), and “Judas also[,] which betrayed him[,] stood with them (18:6). Finally, in the end, Judas, whatever his motivation, through the biblical depictions provided by Tyndale and subsequent translators, resolutely stands with the enemy and as the enemy. Macbeth’s fate is not different.

The Gospels and Acts, passed down from Tyndale’s Englishing of the New Testament, give a clear picture of Judas’s evil but only a glimmer of his impetus. Tyndale translates the Bible to imagine a Judas who could be motivated by myriad ambitions and also driven by insurmountable Satanic forces. Tyndale’s Bible, which effectively captures the ambiguity surrounding Judas’s motivation to betray Christ, leaves a lasting sentiment of deep complexity for the Judas character, and that persists within the New Testament pages that would eventually come to Shakespeare. Taking the liberties afforded him with biblical material, Shakespeare reads into the lines of this material to fashion the famous multifaceted psychologies of his characters. For Macbeth, Judas’s range of possibilities motivating his obsessive commitment to evil provides a model for pondering the mentality of possessive evil.

Tyndale’s English project widened the perspectives for biblically-minded audiences, and as a result multiple approaches for using scripture arose, including psychological analysis.

Macbeth is not solely patterned after Judas's storyline, though many similarities exist. The way in which Shakespeare uses Macbeth gives the audience a chance to come to terms with the unscalable evil that Judas exhibits in the Bible. That audience may very well be viewing a possession, a supernatural action that was often attested but rarely witnessed. Shakespeare exploits these gaps to provide an exploration, not an answer, of the Judas that betrayed Christ. The tension about Judas largely centers on the overcommitment to his evil persona. For the Anglophone, Tyndale and his successors use their translation to question Judas' overcommitted evil; Shakespeare provides a text to dramatize its answers.

To date, no specific scholarship has made any claim linking Macbeth to Judas as a motif for the entire play and character. But Macbeth gives its audience a space for negotiating the sordid matter of apostate infidelity, and in the case of several lines, the parallels are undeniable for biblically-minded English readers. Macbeth is scrutinized as a means to answer an important cultural curiosity about Judas' betrayal, but Judas also explicates the character of Macbeth as a type of betrayer, possessed and consumed.

### **Macbeth as Judas: Acts I -II**

Shakespeare's Macbeth begins with an evil presence and marks the play as a bloody and treacherous tale that will mimic the destructive path of Judas. The witches' lightning-and-thunder-filled exposition, whose "hurl-burly" (1.1.3) and "heath" (1.1.7) foreshadow tumult and desolation. As a result, the following scene's war stories are no surprise, wherein the captain's retelling of Macbeth's gruesome triumph wonders at the heroic efforts mustered by the warrior: "Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds/O memorize another Golgotha,/I cannot tell" (1.2.39-41). Most basically, the three signs of Judas and Macbeth establish significant themes



from the outset: wickedness, rebellion (the story of Mcdonwald's insurrection), and a contemplation of "Golgotha."

In one of the most direct allusions to Judas, the witches greet Macbeth as he enters the expository scenes: "All Hail Macbeth! Hail to thee!" (1.2.48). Though this greeting is certainly respectable and common, a case can be made that this instance is taken from the English Bible, in which Judas salutes Christ at the moment of his betrayal, just before he kisses him. The repetition of "Hail" throughout the following scene further emphasize Macbeth's link to Judas. The witches repeat the greeting ten times, a reference to the unholiness of their salutation, but according to biblical numerology, many other meanings are possible. Ten is the number of commandments and plagues in Exodus. The Temple tabernacle requires ten-by-ten foundational planks, and one-tenth is the tithe required of one's earnings. The numerological significance of "ten" associates the number with divine definitiveness. Whether good or bad, ten represents inescapable determinism. The sisters also greet Macbeth this way at night, while alone in a natural setting, surrounding their enchanted fires. The moment recalls Judas, with his band of priests and "firebrands," approaching Christ in the garden of Gethsemane (a ten-letter word), where in each version it is the evening and Jesus is deeply entrenched in the spiritual exercise of prayer, the divine kind of magic that instead of enchanting, activates the will of God. Shakespeare specifically uses this greeting in Henry VI Part 3 (5.7.33-4) and Richard II (4.1.169-71) as allusions to Judas. According to the gospel of Matthew, "He came to Jesus and said: hail master and kissed him" (26:48). "Hail" may be a common salutation in verbal discourse, but at this moment, early in the play, this verbally greeting links Macbeth to Judas.

Unquestionably, Macbeth's ambitions for power play the most significant role in his betrayal of Duncan and others, but the matter of inevitability and overcommitment surfaces as he

seeks power. Like Judas, he is faced with supernatural forces that seem impossible to resist, and initially, Banquo uses further biblical allusion to encourage the witches' suggestions:

You greet with present grace and great prediction  
Of noble having and of royal hope,  
That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.  
If you can look into the seeds of time,  
And say which grain will grow and which will not, 160  
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear  
Your favours nor your hate. (1.3.55-61)

Toying with the possibility of commitment, Banquo invokes Christ by alluding to the parable of the sower, whereby Jesus associates human behavior and activity with eternal flourishing (Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20, and Luke 8:4-15). In the parable, a sower casts seeds that fall onto various types of soil. Some produce no fruit, some produce fruit that is choked by thorns, and some produce an ample harvest of fruit. The meaning of the parable is multifaceted, and by utilizing it here, as the witches correlate their greeting with the likes of Judas, Banquo conjures the effect of a Christ figure who is aware of the unknowable aspects of existence. Some people are just, according to the parable, bad, or worse yet, unrealized fruit, depending on the type of ground that nourishes them. Planting a Judas-like seed in Macbeth, the witches hail him as a conduit for the deterministic fates that a parable like the sower attempts to relay. Banquo, later one of Macbeth's victims, will take on the role of a betrayed Christ.

Lady Macbeth, also a perverted Christ figure, instigates her husband's treacherous actions, in the way Christ prods along Judas's betrayal. Aside from the inevitability of evil, goodness can spurn along the action of the wicked. In the Calvinist tradition, God's providence

wills diverse actions. The narratives of Judas portray Jesus going out of his way during the last supper to identify an impending betrayal. In John, Jesus outright pinpoints him, even though the disciples have a difficult time accepting it. The narratives each place Christ as a hero and as an unaffected object in the divine plan. He is only moved emotionally, it would seem, when he realizes the inescapable fate that is set before him and Judas. Famously, to Judas, Jesus says, “that thou do doest quickly” (John 13:27). Indeed, Lady Macbeth builds within her a motivating ire that she will eventually direct toward Macbeth, much like Christ directs motivation toward Judas. Whereas Christ generates his encouragement after a feast and fellowship, Lady Macbeth draws hers from antagonist reflections upon her husband’s frailty, which pushes her into a supernaturally-directed resolve. The letter she has just read indicated that the witches “have more in them than mortal knowledge,” much like Christ’s understanding of his betrayal (1.5.3). She also reads that “This have I thought good to deliver thee, / my dearest partner of greatness that thou mightst not/ lose the dues of rejoicing by being ignorant of what/ greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart” (1.5.10-13). Macbeth fills her with a hope, perhaps, as has been suggested, one that they have previously contemplated.<sup>84</sup> But she is to lay that hope to her heart. The letter carries a Satanically infused influence, like the betrayal that Satan had already put “into the heart of Judas” (John 13:2), which would later inspire actions that can be rationalized as either determined events or freely chosen behaviors. To lay “what thou wouldst” do “to thy heart,” ambiguates the forces responsible for an action because they pit “do” against “think” or “believe.” The force of Lady Macbeth’s moment characterizes how dialogue moves plot and symbolizes the inexactitude of motivating forces.

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<sup>84</sup> Bevington, 1255.

Critics have associated this particular section, not only with Judas, but with the early modern audience's proverbial reflections upon action and motivation, which complicates how one can interpret intentions. Frank Kermode, speaking of what he called the "lexical habit" of *Macbeth*, claims that ambiguity, double meanings, and circumlocutions, among other rhetorical features dominate the expressiveness of *Macbeth* (203). Russ McDonald reinforces the "lexical habits" by highlighting the "unremitting repetition" of the word "do," whose common usage for early modern English demonstrates how something familiar can take on a darker meaning when put into the mouths of the witches, "I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do" (1.3.10). Often linked with sexual implications, Lady Macbeth's later invocation of Judas continues the darkening force of the word "do." Judas's call to action that Christ draws from his perturbation over the unavoidable betrayal, marks Lady Macbeth with a similar, though perverted, role in the grand scheme of divine activity: "That thou wouldst highly,/ That thou holily" (1.5.20-21)—not quite holy, marked with the inevitability of an unclear spiritual allegiance. Again, versions of "doing" summon references to the last supper scene: "if it were done, when 'tis done then 'twere well/It were done quickly" (1-2). The audience may relate some of Macbeth's commentary to colloquial proverbs like "the thing done has an end" (Dent, T149) and "things done cannot be undone" (Dent, T200). However, doing and undoing are themes throughout the play (2.2.52,74; 3.2.13; 5.1.68-9), which are always contrasted with the unrelenting spirit of Judas' ambiguous motivations through the topic of Macbeth's murderous actions. The rest of his soliloquy has him pit his potential betrayals against the realities of their consequences, both temporal and spiritual (2-26): "if th'assassination/Could trammel up the consequence, and catch/ With his surcease success; that but this blow /Might be the be-all and the end-all here,/ But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,/ We'ld jump the life to come" (2-6). Macbeth expresses a concern here about the dual

function of his consequences, both negative, both the be-all and the end-all. A trammel, like the commitment to “th’assassination,” entangles and restricts; it is also a way to “surcease” an action, a hobbling device for catching fish or binding a horse’s legs from kicking, and Macbeth’s contemplation of these restrictive devices show his relation to the equally trapped Judas, who possess neither a clear escape or a clear control. He is trapped in a situation that he may not want to be trapped in, even though, still, he might. Macbeth’s sentiments initiate the sequence of events that take him toward complete destruction: “I have no spur/ To prick the sides of my intent, but only / Vaulting ambition, which o’erleaps itself/ And falls on the other” (25-28). During his vigorous leap into the assassinations and corrupt power-grab, he recognizes his failure, and yet he cannot escape it. He has no spur to guide the fate of his intended outcome. Like the narration of Judas before the last supper, Macbeth’s pre-dinner speech opens speculation about his internalized state, which is not easily reduced to any single intention or emotion. Wavering but rallied by Lady Macbeth’s evil urges, Macbeth “bend[s] up each corporal agent to this terrible feat” (1.7.81). The revealed and the secret wills are at odds and Macbeth discovers, it would seem, the secret will of predestined action like Judas in Dove’s sermon.

Act Two largely recreates Gethsemane, harkening back to Judas’ role as “one of the twelve” and a friend of Christ. In the Gospels, the oblivion of the disciples underscores how trusting they were and how apparently close they were to Judas. But Judas, immediately after any kind depictions, continues with his plot against Christ, which culminates in Gethsemane, and establishes a more sincere glimpse into Macbeth’s psyche after he commits his first betrayal by murdering Duncan. The entire act offers scenes of post-supper, mental anguish late into the evening, mimicking the intensity of Jesus, who, during his post-supper prayers, bled from the emotional stress he was experiencing. Banquo and Fleance, “with a torch before him,” cross

paths with Macbeth and his servant, also “with a torch,” prompting Banquo to draw his sword in an unmeasured reaction. The four calm down a bit, mimicking the overall anxiety of Gethsemane as Jesus prayed for the “cup to pass” from him. The moment is charged with expressions of spirituality, realized in natural, or non-spiritual terms: “husbandry of heaven,” (2.1.4), “Merciful power/Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature/Gives way to in repose!” (2.1.7-9). Then enters Macbeth, revealing himself as “a friend” to Banquo and Fleance. Instead of thirty pieces of silver, or as Mark indicates, simply “money,” Macbeth receives a Diamond, for his wife, and upon receipt he comments on his immediate circumstance: “Being unprepared,/Our will became the servant of defect,/Which else should free have wrought” (2.1.17-19). Harkening back to the supper scene, both in the Bible and the play, Macbeth provides a sense that he is not fond of his meagerness, nor is he capable of changing the matter, but still perceives of himself as somehow wrongful, a “servant to defect.” Macbeth is a servant (friend), defect (flawed), and defector (traitor). The contemplation deeply cuts into motivating factors, one that is neither filled with exactitude or completely devoid of meaning. It is an unsure lucidity. Macbeth’s condition as a traitor, much like Judas’s, produces a liminal understanding of his mindset and intentions.

That ambiguous condition brings Macbeth to a point of surrender. In his following soliloquy during the vision of the daggers (2.1.34-65) Macbeth entreats supernatural, mythical, and natural entities to summon some support or impetus for his endeavors: Hecate, Wolves, Tarquin, and a ghost (2.1.51-6). They are all powerful yet unhelpful. So, he settles the matter, again, with an unclear solution: “Words to the head of deed too cold breath gives” (2.1.62). The counterpoints in that line, carry a cacophonous meter. Their sound and meaning grate upon the wonderment of the audience. Then the bell rings, and the audience cannot decide whether the line or the bell is more grating upon their ears, and in that moment of linguistic and aural ringing,

Macbeth is off to commit his murders, with the audience still ringing for an answer. Though resolute in his action, his betrayal is not clearly assigned to a personal vice or an unremitting evil. He is simultaneously consigned and unsure, much like the audience, during his soliloquy of surrender.

Here, Macbeth also imitates the surrender to Satan. In the Gospels, Judas surrenders, both in Luke and in John. Luke portrays Judas as willfully giving himself over to the devil, while John indicates that Judas was first tempted, then gave in to his influence. In both gospels, it is said that Satan “entered” him, indicating a possession. Macbeth’s possession says something of his willfulness, which, being a trait associated with Lady Macbeth, comments on his masculinity as it further complicates the factors that lead him to the assassination. Something has clearly possessed him throughout his surrender soliloquy because “[he goes],” mildly echoing Christ’s final words: “it is done” (2.1.63). But his possession lacks a vitality, as if the Devil has only partly possessed him, and Judas shares similar sentiments. In Matthew, he is remorseful and hangs himself, but in that gospel, Judas is not possessed. In Acts, the second volume of Luke, Judas is possessed and hangs himself, but there is no mention of remorse. Indeed, he uses his “reward of iniquity” to purchase the plot of land on which he is hanged (Acts 1:23), suggesting that he died on his own terms. Macbeth, likewise, totters on the brink of complete surrender. He completes his task, but he is also troubled by his deeds. As he explains to Lady Macbeth, during the murder, he heard the chamberlains murmuring in their sleep and crying out “Murder!” (2.2.26) and “God bless us!” (2.2.30), and Macbeth, “List’ning their fear, I could not say ‘Amen’” (2.2.32). The very utter of finality in religious ceremony, “Amen,” escapes Macbeth’s capabilities. By losing his religious function, Macbeth admits to his surrender to evil, but by

fixating on “Amen,” he indicates a glimmer of remorse, cuing the biblically-minded audience to notice another possible link to Judas’s betrayal.

Nearing the climax, Macbeth builds more upon his condition as a traitor as he struggles with remorse by lamenting the blood upon his hands. The blood is literal at one point, but later, metaphorical, so much so that Neptune himself could not wash it all away. The frequency with which blood is mentioned, considering the setting to be “another Golgotha,” comes with heavy Christological undertones. The concerned characters, the twelve followers of Duncan (if one counts the sons), begin to exemplify the consequences of a slain king in biblical proportions. The knocking with the Porter (2.3.1-15) recalls Revelation 3:20: “Behold I stand at the door and knock.” The porter’s comical response shrugs off the serious undertones of a savior knocking upon the eve of the apocalypse, and either in drunkenness or agitation, asks of the knocker, “What are you?” rather than “Who are you?” (2.3.16). The apocalyptic machinery in this scene continues with Macduff and Lennox, whose interactions reference the effects of “sacrilegious murder” that “hath broke ope the Lord’s anointed temple and stole thence/The life o’th’building” (2.3.67-69) by summoning “The great doom’s image!” of graves that rise up and spirits that walk (2.3.80-81). Macbeth’s murderous behavior engages an entire community, much like the dispatched disciples in Acts, worrying about their resurrected and transcended Christ and contemplating the correct replacement for Judas. In this moment, Macbeth is an anti-congregationalist Judas, a destroyer of wholesome communities and discursive clusters. The biblically-minded reader notes the division sown by his unrequited evil.

A common theme with which Biblical writers struggled was the lamentation experienced by believers concerning the return of Christ and the chaos it would wreak upon the earth. Judas’s betrayal instigates one of the first of such panics because the twelve needed closure through the



reassignment of Judas' position. Macbeth's fellow Scotsmen are struggling with the same issue, replacing those whom they have lost. For the eleven remaining disciples, it was a troublesome matter that needed a resolution. For Duncan's twelve, it is equally troubling. Macduff, Lennox, and Donalbain contemplate their circumstance and Macbeth joins them. Though feigning ignorance of the murderer, he unwittingly reveals hints of his psychology:

Who can be wise, amazed, temp'rate and furious  
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.  
Th'expedition of my violent love  
Outran the pauser, reason... (2.3.110-113)  
For ruins wasteful entrance; there the murderers,  
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers  
Unmannerly breeched with gore. Who could refrain  
That had a heart to love, and in that heart  
Courage to make's love known. (2.3.115-118)

He hears a confession and delves more deeply into the reasoning of evil. His false explanation is truer than he may realize. He admits that no one can be completely true to another, especially if love is a motivation. Though his love is a "violent love," which gives one enough courage to make the love "known." Macbeth's repetition of love indicates another fixation of his and provides the audience with an avenue for exploring the motivation behind Judas. Was he driven by an intense love, so fixated that it becomes psychopathic? Love is a difficult quality for an audience to see in Judas or Macbeth, but the obsessive qualities of psychopathy might provide the clue, and if this possibility is true, "who could refrain" from being internally driven by a personal nature? Neither Judas, nor Macbeth.

### Acts III-V: “Precious Motives” (4.3.28)

At last, Shakespeare brings the audience to the moment of a fuller spiritual exploration, whereby the Judas of *Macbeth* is established, and his psychology will begin to take form and lend clues to readers about its religious dimensions. Though Judas remains a type to explicate Macbeth, the biblical references widen beyond the New Testament and the Judas narrative in acts three, four, and five. The biblically-minded, therefore, has more space to draw out the mental and social complexities of evil. In response to Macbeth’s “violent love” excuse, Donalbain, Malcolm, and Banquo, the choric characters of this drama, demarcate the play by setting standards for examining a traitor’s rationality:

MALCOM [aside to Donalbain]

Why do we hold our tongues,

That most may claim this argument for ours?

DONALBAIN [aside to Malcolm]

What should be spoken here, where our fate,

Hid in an auger hole, may rush and seize us? (2.3.121-4)

Both men pose questions about trusting Macbeth. Malcom’s suggestion is that his explanation is not good enough, and Donalbain suggests that standing around and talking about it will not help anything; hence they prefer augury over conversation with Macbeth. But Banquo’s addition redirects the line of questioning with a pledge of spiritual fidelity: “Let us meet/ And question this most bloody piece of work/ To know it further...In the great hand of God I stand, and thence/ Against the undivulged pretense I fight/ Of treasonous malice” (2.3.129-34). Banquo’s call to reason re-establishes the line of questioning for discovering the truth about the murders by welcoming a later discussion in a warmer location under a more judicious (undivulged pretense)

mindset. They build up to this invitation, beckoning an audience to further explore the matter. The dramatic irony suggests that the audience's role in this exploration is to pinpoint motive. Aside from discovering Macbeth's fate, the final mystery of Macbeth, like that of Judas, is to understand his complete commitment to evil. The remainder of the play gradually expands that notion to contemplate Judas's motive. At this point of the play, Macbeth is less like Judas, literally. His role is to be an evil king, one who is not designed by nature: "Gainst nature still!/Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up/ Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like/ The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth" (2.4.27-30). Macduff draws together Macbeth's "nature," inverted and evil though it be, and his current condition as "sovereign." The lines show a progressive exegesis of what is happening now ever since the betrayer has accomplished his goal. There is a break from the physical, biblical Judas to the internal, exegeted Judas.

The Judas/Macbeth divide progressively works out that exegesis by examining Macbeth's role as having "given into" evil. Macbeth's soliloquy that relates Banquo to his ambitions to remain king still alludes to Satanic surrender. But here his surrender soliloquy is replaced with a possessed soliloquy (3.1.55-70). He is singularly fixated on a single recipient of his betrayal: "There is none but he/Whose being I do fear: and, under him,/ My Genius is rebuked; as, it is said,/ Mark Antony's was by Caesar" (3.1.55-58). His "genius," or spirit, being rebuked, reflects the many times Christ rebuked storms, demons, and Satan. By placing his condition within the context of a Satan/Christ dichotomy, conjured through Mark Antony/Caesar his fearfulness resides in a hidden reluctance to fully take responsibility for betraying a friend. Macbeth extends this dichotomy to Banquo with the biblically-themed circumstance of betrayal: "then prophet-like/They hail'd him father to a line of kings" (3.1.60-1). Macbeth notes that Banquo "chid" (chided) them, but he counts that as unproductive and steels himself in the knowledge that "For

Banquo's issue have I filed my mind" (70). Macbeth sees what he considers an injustice, an unwillingness to deal with the prophet frugally, which simultaneously consumes and triggers his actions. His language twists ("wrench'd" and "inlinal" 68) around into a justification that, seeming empty ("Fruitless," 66 and "barren," 67), provides a perspective for acceptance. He is, in this moment, possessed with the full assurance of what he must do for himself and Banquo, deeds that he finally associates with the convictional fortitude drawn from his "eternal jewel" (immortal soul, 3.1.70) that is "given to the common enemy of man" (Satan, 3.1.70). Macbeth pronounces himself as fully possessed of the powers that will maintain his treacherous actions while also placing his deeds within the framework of fulfilling a prophecy (John 13:18). Prophetic realizations pose a problem for any audience because they make certain events inevitable, thereby removing agency, and they also can, as a result, be self-fulfilled. By claiming that something will happen, does someone of a similar conviction feel obliged to make it happen. Macbeth is caught in this Judas-like dilemma. He must be the traitor, but how detectable are his motivations, if a motive even exists. Like the Judas narrative, Macbeth offers some thoughts but no concrete answers. The remainder of *Macbeth* facilitates an examination of this ambiguity as a means of exploring Macbeth's motives, and much of that exploration continues to utilize a language recognizable by Shakespeare's biblically-minded readers.

Coincidentally, the OED identifies an entry for "motive" as "Chiefly Scottish," and the fortuitous humor that makes this term so highly relevant to my argument is not lost on me. The biblical narratives that inspire close examinations of the text find an imprint in the story of Macbeth because the audience (biblically-minded or not) wants to understand the motives behind the full surrender to evil. If tragedies aim for catharsis through a hero's flaw-induced calamity, then that catharsis requires contextual introspection. By following the ways Macbeth foils

Judas's biblical narration, the next exegetical process is a coming to terms with Judas's role. Can a generous hermeneutic, like the interpretative English tradition initiated by Tyndale, get to the bottom of this "chiefly Scottish" matter for Macbeth? Since Macbeth can take on the role of a biblical character, an exegetical calculus factors Macbeth's own contemplation of his role as a possessed agent of humankind and humanity's enemy, a means for explaining his motivations.

Macbeth himself begins the interpretative exercise with a case study on the murderers' reluctance to kill. Macbeth has to convince his hitmen to do their job by ridiculing strict biblical adherence: "Do you find/ Your patience so predominant in your nature/ That you can let this go?/ (3.1.86-7). His "do you find" line of questioning creates a resolve-challenging tone, and it is the deep kind of meaning and motive seeking that he inspires in them that challenges the audience's sense of a literal, solascriptural reading. The murderers, concerned for their immortal souls, are told that their murders will be enacted against the one "Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave/ And beggar'd yours for ever" (3.1.90-91). Then Macbeth defies their hesitations by further requiring them to rethink their resolve: Are you so gospell'd/ To pray for this good man and for his issue" (88-90). Here the inversions of Macbeth again carry the message, both in theme and language. Not only does Macbeth make the sin the virtue, but the language of biblical witness, "gospel," (which is a vocative expression that means "Good news!") becomes the psychological barrier to committing the crime. One must also note that explaining how he subsumes sin requires a reader to backtrack lines, a common action necessary for exegeting Macbeth's motives. That is, as Macbeth provides expressions of his motivations, those motivations can only be understood by inverting the sentence structure, more deeply weaving the inversion motif into his action and dialogue, a mark of a betrayer to the crown and to the literal reading of a text.

Macbeth imparts a perverse wisdom when he turns his persuasive speech into a philosophical contemplation of human nature: “in the catalogue ye go for men” (3.1.93). The catalogue echoes Aristotle as he taxonomically discusses animals and humans, but the speech quickly introduces a biblical theme closely linked to Christ: “the son of man.” Throughout the gospels, and air of mystery surrounds Christ’s use of this expression. The Biblical Greek term for “man,” ἄνθρωπος (anthrop-), used more than 550 times in the New Testament, is sometimes translated to represent the human male. However, more commonly, in biblical literature, ἄνθρωπος translates into a general reference for humans. As Christ uses “man” reflexively in the formulation, “son of man,” he designates himself as both human and as the eschatological judge of humanity. Macbeth and the characters surrounding him will begin a dialogue throughout the rest of the play that considers humanity by frequently referencing the general “man.” Indeed, traditional emphasis on “masculinity,” though clearly present, may also be reconsidered in light of the audience’s exploration of Macbeth’s motivating flaws. Perhaps Lady Macbeth and her husband are talking past one another earlier in the play, whereby she was putting his manhood on trial, while he was more concerned with his condition as a person interacting morally with fellow humans. Regardless of the multifaceted ways to interpret Macbeth’s conception of “man” earlier in the play, at this point (3.1.93-109), his thoughts are loftier notions of the human circumstance, and the other characters, along with their sons, will contend with what it means to be “man:”

“According to the gift which bounteous nature/  
Hath in him closed; whereby he does receive/  
Particular addition from the bill/  
That writes them all alike: and so of men” (3.1.99-102).

Macbeth’s biblical reflection upon the catalogue of men, references the early church in Acts, where the believers lived communally, “And distribution was made unto every man according as he had need” (4:35). He finishes his explanation of man with a Christological glimpse into man’s

mortality, whereby a sickly life could mean that “death were perfect,” which “grapples you to the heart and love of us [fellow humans]” (3.1.108-109): “For it became him for whom are all things and by whom are all things after that he had brought many sons unto glory that he should make the lord of their salvation perfect through suffering” (Hebrews 2:10). Macbeth explains to the murderers that by maintaining a “bloody distance” (3.1.117), their “Spirits shine through” them (3.1.129). By reworking biblical material, Macbeth convinces killers that they can be driven by a very human motivation and committed to desires that might seem perverse but actually have more than one rationale behind them, multiple wills in action.

Continuing in the mindset of “rationales” Macbeth and other characters begin offering justifications for their behaviors and circumstances. For Macbeth and his wife, these justifications begin to move from philosophical to poetic. Lady Macbeth believes “Tis safer to be that which we destroy/ Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy” (3.2.8-9). Her expressions of living and destructiveness include the same kinds of inversions that have been established throughout, but she extends her thoughts to more deeply consider how she can justify living by destruction. Since, for her, “nature’s copy’s not eterne,” she believes that the cycle of destruction will end for her (3.2.41). Yet her thought-process is irrational, perhaps drawn out of desperation to make an excuse for her culpability, for the very basis of inferential thought, statistically speaking, is the reliability on former behavior and activity. If destruction is common, then her special pleading will not suffice or stave off an impending doom. Lady Macbeth offers what may be the only specific motivation that could be considered a reason for giving into evil: illogicality. Is it evil to be illogical? Her early insistence that Macbeth murder Duncan because of a prophecy, as is the case with any prophecy, does not make logical sense. Perhaps being “too full

o'th' milk of human kindness" invites a more logical motivation to live in harmony rather than pursue a prophecy to the point of insurrectional slaughter (1.5.17).

Interestingly, as Lady Macbeth grows less rational in her explanations, Macbeth grows more poetic, intoning hints of biblical utterances that contrasts his wife's irrationality. Macbeth looks at his situation realistically, from the vantage of dramatic irony, and he invokes the lapsarian moment to express himself: "We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it:/ She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice/ Remains in danger of her former tooth" (3.2.15-17). The snake and the feminine conjure Edenic scenes whereby the snake and the woman (also "man") will be in constant strife. The snake, according to most Christian theology, was possessed by Satan in order to tempt Eve, which initiated "original sin." If all humans are cursed by the snake, then is there really a *felix culpa*? Macbeth's thoughts offer a possible "no," as he traces his condition to Judas, of whom Christ said it would be better that he were never born, hence Macbeth's "better be with the dead" than continuing in the futility of enmity with nature and man (3.2.15-22). Macbeth later recalls this theme with fluid expressiveness, this time sharper and more resolute about the invariability of evil and his future existence with evil: "There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled/ Hath nature that in time will venom breed,/ No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow / We'll hear, ourselves, again" (3.4.28-31). Tyndale's never fully revised Old Testament records "Then said the serpent unto the woman: tush ye shall not die" (Genesis 3:4). Macbeth knows better, and his justifications express how inevitable that death will be because it is rooted in evil.

Then the appearance of the ghost reinvigorates the interaction between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, forcing more biblical interactions and further examining "man's" motivations for evil. Lady Macbeth uses a lie to explain her husband's bizarre behavior, and ends the justification



with a challenge to Macbeth's manliness, much like Macbeth's challenge to the murderers: "You shall offend him and extend his passion./... Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?" (3.4.57-58). Believing he will be motivated by her words re-orient the audience to the fact that her understanding of what is happening lacks full comprehension. His response not only uses a spiritual metaphor but harkens back sharply at her misunderstanding: "Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that/ Which might appall the devil" 3.4.59). Their back-and-forth in this fashion continue for several lines because Macbeth sees something that no one else does. Whether it is real does not matter. The apparition, to Macbeth, appears clearly and summons more reflections upon the source of evil in humanity. "What man dare, I dare," he cries to the ghost, hoping it will "take any shape but that [Banquo's]" (3.4.101-103). Macbeth does not want to face his treason because it represents "unreal mockery" to him. How? That is not clear. Again, the line actually demonstrates Macbeth's interpretation of the ghost as mockery through his twisted and eventually inverted syntax:

Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves

Shall never tremble: or be alive again,

And dare me to the desert with thy sword;

If trembling I inhabit then, protest me

The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!

Unreal mockery, hence!

[GHOST OF BANQUO vanishes]

Why, so: being gone,

I am a man again. Pray you, sit still. (3.4.110-117)

The meaning of “Unreal mockery, hence!” (3.4.115) only makes sense by, again, adjusting the word order. The message is simultaneously garbled but cogent, reversed yet clear; Macbeth “trembles” because (“hence”) he is mocked (“unreal mockery,”). He is confronted by his internal fears, the evil that resides within him, but before he can further explain it, the ghost dissipates that confrontation by vanishing, and Macbeth rejoins the others’ consideration of human nature: “being gone,/ I am a man again.” Just before gaining a glimpse into the evil through a spiritual setting, it readjusts so that it can remain elusive. Lady Macbeth calls it “most admired disorder” because she, like the others in the scene, cannot see the true nature of Macbeth’s discontent. She does not understand, a reflection of the audience and the characters seeking some consolation about the driving forces of evil (3.4.120).

Perhaps, as the scene concludes, there is some comfort to be found in the corporeal. With the ghost gone, Macbeth turns his thoughts to blood once again:

It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood;  
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;  
Augurs and understood relations have  
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth  
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night? (3.4.123-127)

Almost every contemplation of the sources of evil are conjured here: bloodlust (through repetition), unnaturalness (stones moving and trees speaking), the occult/possession (Augurs), self-fulfilled prophecies (“brought forth”), falsehood/Betrayal (“secret’st), sin (man of blood). Still, Macbeth does not know the answer. To ask the time of night after his litany, Macbeth requests precision. He wants an answer for this source of darkness, and the answer he receives offers the same ambiguity that he has always faced. Lady Macbeth tells him it is “almost at odds

with morning” (3.4.28). It is well-nigh, unequal to the light of a new day. The clearest answer is that of all the options, there never will be an answer to the source of evil.

Only the all-consuming nature of Macbeth’s evil remains prominent, like a wearied and zealous war-lord, he has overcommitted his forces. The witches recognize and emphasize that fact immediately: “Something wicked this way comes. *Enter Macbeth*” (4.1.145). No longer equivocating or misdirecting, the witches speak directly about Macbeth’s malevolent existence, which has become as natural as consuming food, a function they illustrate in grotesque terms, mimicking the progression Macbeth experiences from the initial stages of evil until the last:

First Witch

Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten

Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten

From the murderer's gibbet throw

Into the flame. (4.1.64-67)

Macbeth unflinchingly attaches himself to this imagery by requesting an audience before the witches’ masters. They summon the apparitions with the ingredients of unholy digestion: maternalistically bestial cannibalism and murderous lard. Still, Macbeth is solidly entrenched in their setting, and fully realized, or fully processed, as evil. He takes great comfort in receiving their foreboding imperatives (“Sweet bodements, good!” 4.1.96):

1. “Beware Macduff” (4.1.71)
2. “Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn/ The power of man” (4.1.79-80)
3. “Be lion-hearted, proud, and take no care/ Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are” (4.1.90-91)

They grow progressively longer, and as a result, Macbeth is less concerned with addressing the terminal expressions of these prophetic suggestions. Fully immersed in the evil that directs him, Macbeth can cautiously and proudly laugh “the power of man” to scorn. As a Judas-figure, Macbeth has reached the stage of his treachery where he no longer seeks an understanding or rationale. He simply operates based on the “duties” of the wickedness (4.1.132).

Malcolm and Macduff provide another perspective on evilness during their in-depth conversation about the vices and troubles they face. Macduff reminds the audience of his honorable duty: “Let us rather/ Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men/ Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom (4.3.3-5). He set his mind to protecting the kingdom against “howls,” cries, and “new sorrows” that “Strike heaven on the face” (4.3.5-6). He perceives of himself as a defender against evil forces, directly contrasting Macbeth’s self-perception as an agent due his station. Malcolm’s response to this perspective simply pictures Macbeth as a Judas, in almost exact paraphrase of the traitor’s reception:

This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,  
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well.  
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something  
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom  
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb 1860  
To appease an angry god. (4.3.12-17)

Briefly, Macduff either misunderstands Malcolm by somewhat blaming him for Macbeth’s tyranny or understands him too well by speaking directly of the resolve that is needed against someone like Macbeth. Either way, they connect:

Macduff. I am not treacherous.

Malcolm. But Macbeth is. (4.3.18-19)

Macduff and Malcolm confirm what the witches' previous scene had enacted. They can now interact with one another openly about Macbeth, all in the spirit of comradeship and statesmanship. Their conversation, endearing and thoughtful, touches on many topics regarding the matter of the evilness that has consumed Macbeth. Greenblatt's *Tyrant* considers how Shakespeare dealt with the rise of tyranny during an age that required artistic expression to carefully censor expressions of dissent. Macbeth, he suggests, experiences, unlike any other Tyrants (except Richard III), a "sense of personal defilement" that others must speak of delicately (103). Greenblatt notes that those surrounding Macbeth, like the coterie of any Tyrant, "see clearly that the leader is mentally unstable" (107). Early they realize, "His highness is not well" at the banquet (3.4.53). Here, they finally open a dialogue that will more distinctly identify Macbeth's evil and require, as the twelve did upon realizing Judas's defilement, replacement. The biblically-minded reader will also draw from the extensive Protestant tradition of examining a monarch's role in preserving Christendom. Fulton argues that the Protestant interpretation of Romans 13:1-7, in which Tyndale invented the famous expression, "the powers that be," would have been

fostered by a monarchism in figures such as William Tyndale that ran as deep as the sea, but also by the theology of predestination, which suited the arbitrary quality of kingship. The intensive application of these verses on political obedience was reinforced by Protestant liberalism, a method of reading the Bible that sees no way around Paul's theory of divine right. (206)

Macduff and Malcolm, in a Protestant sense, cannot see Macbeth as a monarch, or else he would be above sedition. Therefore, their conversation links him to a Judas-type rather than a king.

They foil Macbeth's consideration of the witches' original prophecy, as Malcolm wonders if he is just as driven toward evil as Macbeth ("bloody, / Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful, / Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin/ That has a name" 4.3.58-61). Macduff is able to relate Macbeth to Satanic-like boundlessness and convinces Malcolm that he is worthy to rule because he, though prone to kingly vices, is not consumed by evil like Macbeth: "There cannot be/ That vulture in you to devour" (4.3.74-75). In response, Malcolm recants his self-condemnation and concludes that the "devilish Macbeth" (4.3.118), with all his evil impetuses, will not win him over "into his power" (4.3.120). Yet, when news of Macbeth's raid upon Macduff's castle and family reaches them, Macduff concludes that he must "dispute it like a man" (4.3.220) and Malcolm that he must "feel it as a man" (4.3.221). The thoughtful philosophizing in which they had engaged, though markedly more measured than Macbeth's consideration of the witches, lands back on the matter of "man." This time the emphasis, with the death of Macduff's family, recalls "the son of man" motif. As the doctor says of the disease that is inflicting multitudes says, the consuming matter of this moment and the entire play "'Tis called the evil" (4.3.147). The true king, a man, though flawed, can cure it, so both men resolve to withstand Macbeth unconditionally. Malcolm marks the decision as a manly tune (4.3.237). That is, such an action reflects their conclusive duty to humanity. Though fallen and sinful, man—for Macduff and Malcolm—represents the only opposition to evil that they can conceive.

The final moments of Macbeth deliver an end-of-man landscape that carries the biblical "man" to its revelatory conclusion. The doctor delivers a perverted form of last rites (5.1.71-79), and at the end, the "unnatural troubles" and "infected minds" rest on "deaf pillows" to "discharge their secrets" (72-73). This deathbed imagery amazes the doctor's sight (78) and he has only one recourse since his patient "more needs... the divine that the physician" (74): "God, God forgive

us all” (75). The unholy sacrament that the doctor initiates is not fully realized because he lacks the ability to do any good, as his “amazed” sight indicates. But still, he establishes an ominous helplessness that develops when human affairs confront evil. Macbeth further reflects this sentiment about the immutability of his devotion to the path he has chosen: “The spirits that know/ All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:/ Fear not, Macbeth” (5.3.3-5). Resting assured in the inescapable fate of man, Macbeth, with Seyton (Satan) by his side, stages himself as an unremorseful Judas with his plot of land: “Hang out our banners on the outward walls;/ The cry is still 'They come:' our castle's strength/ Will laugh a siege to scorn” (5.5.1-3). Fully committed to evil, he “forgot the taste of fear.”

Macbeth’s reaction to his wife’s death has long been recognized as a biblically-infused reflection. The moment demonstrates the extent to which he has succumbed to evilness, that even upon learning of his dearest ally’s suicide, he is not afraid of using scripture for to justify his purpose. Though the references are largely from the Old Testament, and not necessarily associated with Tyndale, a glimpse at a few parallel expressions demonstrate how the character of Macbeth links himself with the total perversion of the holy word (see Table 4.1: The Widower’s Bible):

Table 4.1: The Widower's Bible

<b>Macbeth</b>	<b>Bible</b>
<b>5.5.17-18: "There would have been a time for such a word. To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow"</b>	Ecclesiastes 3:1-2: "To all things there is ... a time...A time to be borne, and time to die."
<b>5.5.23: "The way to dusty death."</b>	Psalms 22:15: "The dust of death"
<b>5.5.23: "Out, out, brief candle!"</b>	Job 18:6: "His candle shall be put out with him." Job 21:17: "How oft shall the candle of the wicked be put out?"
<b>5.5.24: "Life's but a walking shadow"</b>	Psalms 39:7: "Man Walketh in a vain shadow." Job 8:9: "Our days upon earth are but a shadow." Sheehan counts six more similar verses, as well as references to the Burial Service.

These scriptures come from the wisdom tradition (Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom), so that Macbeth's manipulation creates an anti-wisdom. Wisdom scripture is noted for its practical and speculative nature, an acceptance of material reality alongside illusion and numinosity. Such scripture always imparts some expression of meaning about one's circumstances and experiences in the universe. Macbeth's "meaning," that this death signifies nothing (5.5.28), redirects attention to his wicked circumstance. By rejecting the wisdom, Macbeth unwittingly reiterates the long-held belief that evilness creates a void. He completes his life in that emptiness.

At the final scene, the audience fully associates Macbeth with evil, and his successors use their triumph to reflect one last time on the son of man's response to evil. Macbeth's unwitting wisdom about life and death invokes original sin ("of woman born" 5.8.12) but fails to consider both reality and illusion, as a true wisdom would. In Christological terms, Jesus is "of a woman born" but still capable of resisting and destroying evilness. As Macduff resoundly rebuffs



Macbeth with a reflection upon the gestational wisdom of Christ's uncanny birth, he addresses Macbeth as an evil angel: "And let the angle whom thou still hast served/ Tell Thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb/ Untimely ripped" (5.8.14-16). Fittingly, Macbeth's final expression does not curse evil or himself because his curse is reserved for the unknown source of evil that is born out of "a double sense" that he thinks he understands but really does not. Likewise, on the question of Judas's motive, the evil exists but the answer does not.

The stark contrast between Macbeth and Siward grasps one last time at an answer. Siward seems to not entirely care that his son is dead but rather that he was a good soldier. Young Siward "only lived but till he was a man" (5.8.40), which is all one could hope, in Siward's mind. After all, for Judas, and probably even Macbeth, it was better "that man...had never been born" (Matthew 26:24). Macbeth's representation of Judas brings a difficult interpretative uncertainty to its audience: the psychology of a betrayer's committed evil remains indefinable.

### **Returning to Tyndale**

The wide berth for hermeneutical application, which highlights Shakespeare's various uses for biblical material, started with Tyndale's translation. By 1606, during the first stages of *Macbeth's* existence, no one had to fear the flames of heresy that possession of an English Bible or the use of its content promised. Stephen Greenblatt's famous retelling of James Bainham's trial and execution, recounts two of Tyndale's documents that Bainham proudly extolled as he relapsed into his heresy: *The New Testament* and *Obedience*. As Greenblatt explains, "identity," for someone like Bainham, "is achieved at the intersection of an absolute authority and a demonic Other, [and] the authority," for Bainham and those consigned to Tyndale's biblical project, "has shifted from the visible church to the book. This investment in the book has...

important consequences for self-fashioning and for the way we read” (76). Unquestionably, Bainham was a biblically-minded reader. He felt the pressure of denying what he had read, which led to his retrial and bold announcements of fidelity to Tyndale’s texts. Greenblatt associates this behavior with “a principle” that Tyndale sought as a means “to uphold individuals in daring acts of dissent against overwhelming spiritual and political authority and to sustain these individuals during the suffering that would follow” (93). I have associated that principle with Tyndale’s ambitions as a reforming preacher and his consequential translation. Greenblatt’s assessment demonstrates that during the 1520s and 1530s, Tyndale’s principle is a dire one. Though that is true, as I have argued here, that principle has been realized in future generations as a liberty to use biblical material for both exegesis and eisegesis.

The Tyndalian effect made arguments about the intricacies of language a part of spiritual life. His admonition in *Prelates* voices the exploratory nature he hoped his translation would inspire:

Forasmuch now as thou partly seest the falsehood of our prelates, how all their study is to deceive us and to keep us in darkness, to sit as gods in our consciences, and handle us at their pleasure; and to lead us whether they lust; therefore I read thee, get thee to God’s word, and thereby try all doctrine, and against that receive nothing. (361)

The individual reader could encounter scripture and assess that scripture by his or her personal devotion to the Bible, discounting quarrels over learnedness. Tyndale does not require theological precision. He requires a reader who can get to the scripture. Shakespeare, like many others following Tyndale, got to the scripture. His allusions and references may actually be incalculable, but Tyndale’s Bible provided numerous options for imaginative recreations of

biblical characters like Judas. Shakespeare was as deeply immersed in biblical thought as any other cultural voice, and his debt to Tyndale is paid in the creative examinations he inspired through his biblical renderings that the biblically-minded reader could relish.

## Coda: Found Christianities

In a closing remark, I hope to consider Tyndale's effect by highlighting the relevancy of this study beyond its Renaissance context. In his introduction to *The Bible In English: Its History and Influence*, David Daniell laments the lost status of the Bible's scholarly appeal. Daniell contrasts the "ephemera" that the English Bible has been assigned to among literary and historical scholarship with the sheer numerical influence that an English Bible conjures today in terms of global impact, suggesting that the disproportionate attention is unacceptable.<sup>85</sup> What Daniell may be missing in his attempted revivification of biblical inclusion is the role that the English Bible plays and played in its own disappearance from scholarly interest. Claiming that Tyndale aimed for a domestic bible suggests that he hoped to produce a Bible for the literate English-speaking household, and a Bible "pertaining to one's own country or nation; not foreign, internal, inland, 'home.'"<sup>86</sup> As a result, Tyndale created a mode of perception for future translators that came with, perhaps unwittingly, intertextual effects, many of which were relegated to the anecdotally idiomatic self-perceptions of a private home-dwelling English speaker. And many of which were imperialist. Certainly, the two go hand-in-hand.

The English Bible developed, it might be argued, parallel to the emergence of the English empire. Since English has become the most impactful force upon the world's translations and the Bible has been the most widely distributed book around the globe for nearly five centuries, the English Bible coincides with the rise and rejection of colonially installed Anglophonic zones.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Daniell, *The Bible In English*, xiii-2.

<sup>86</sup> "domestic, adj. and n.". OED Online. March 2016. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.uta.edu/view/Entry/56663?redirectedFrom=domestic> (accessed March 14, 2016).

<sup>87</sup> See Daniells, *The Bible, In English*, 395-421. Along with associated the English

The current trends against the perceived intrusion of the English language through colonialism, then, runs parallel to the trend away from the English Bible. So, is the English Bible to blame for this? Is the English Bible a Bible of nationalism, of empire, of Englishness? Returning to the father of the English Bible serves as a way to answer these questions through what might be deemed a discourse analysis of English influence upon humanist textuality. Tyndale's Biblical English marked successive translations up to the present day. If now is what literary and social theorists might refer to as a posthumanist age, where the last vestiges of Renaissance humanism are being purged from western and global epistemologies, then it certainly is an opportune time to re-evaluate the roots of English humanism and its effects on hermeneutical and, now, geo-hermeneutical principles.<sup>88</sup>

Indeed, these early decades of the twenty-first century, mark the quincentenials for what could be deemed the dawn of English humanism. Thomas More's *Utopia* and Desiderius Erasmus's *Novum Instrumentum* were both published in 1516. Though both originally written in Latin, they represent, respectively, an English political ideal that challenges presumed knowledge (More was England's humanist) and a preference for the new learning of the continent (Erasmus was Europe's humanist and Anglophile). But even more anniversaries (Luther's *95 Theses* of 1517, Ulrich Zwingli's *lectio continua* homilies from 1519, Tyndale's first New Testament in 1525, Calvin's *Institutio Christianae Religionis* in 1536) will, in the coming years, invite reconsiderations of momentous contributions to humanism's religious

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Bible with Drake and other "explorers," Danniells section on 417 is titled "Colonizing: A Bible Thing."

<sup>88</sup> The emerging theoretical reading called "geo-hermeneutics" is largely a construction of postcolonial thought, but it finds prominence in translation studies, from which I am drawing the term as it relates to posthumanist ideology. See its definition on pg. 21.

literary activity. Reviewing Tyndale's motivations, then, coincides with the perceived historical significance of Reformation humanism and contributes to the mounting reflections upon that tradition. This project is important to English Renaissance and Reformation, English history and literature, and English translation studies and theories. But the reach of this study may even go so far as the current domestic picture of English speaking Americans (arguably the most infamous of original English colonies) whose evangelical tradition, where the Bible is a part of daily life, invites quibbles over biblical material to crop-up everywhere in the public sphere, even in presidential elections.<sup>89</sup> Evidently, the same cultural mixture of home life and national identity that Tyndale first conjured with his Bible persists today.

The period of Bible translation initiated by Tyndale and the interpretive variety that it availed future literary expression is reminiscent of an early stage of Christian history that the Bible scholar, Bart Ehrman identifies as "lost." Referencing Roman Catholics, Appalachian snake handlers, liberal Methodists, David Koresh-followers, fundamentalist preachers, Ehrman, in *Lost Christianities: The Battle for Scriptures and the Faiths We Never Knew*, claims that the diversity in bible-based believers that clearly exists today, once also present in the first four centuries of the Christian heritage. Each primitive group of Christians, Ehrman maintains, swore some degree of fealty to a holy scripture, and they would use their scripture as claims to true Christian belief, negating the claims of the other groups. Arguments ensued until the ecumenical

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<sup>89</sup> See Michael Farris, *From Tyndale to Madison: How the Death of an English Martyr Led to the American Bill of Rights*, (Nashville, Tenn: B & H Pub. Group, 2007). Though possibly a stretch, the notion that Tyndale's translation is directly connected to modern concepts of free speech is provocative. The political reference is to Donald Trump's verbal, "Two Corinthians," which is poor parlance for the evangelical crowd he was speaking to on January 18, 2016. Jeremy Diamond, "Donald Trump Takes Liberty, Courts Christian Crowd," *CNN.com*, last modified January 19, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/01/18/politics/donald-trump-liberty-two-corinthians>.

councils, the conversion of Constantine, and the influence of missionaries eventually settled the western orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic church. However, as he contemplates the winner, he reflects upon the still extant diversity of the New Testament:

The New Testament has been and continues to be the most widely read and revered book in the history of the West. It continues to inspire belief, to stimulate reflection, and to provide hope to millions. It is preached from the pulpit; it is studied in the university; it is attacked by skeptics; it is revered by believers. In the United States it is widely considered to have been a foundational document for the founders; it is quoted on the floor of the Senate to justify acts of war and at peace rallies to oppose the use of military force; its authority is cited by both opponents and proponents of the right of a woman to have an abortion, by both opponents and proponents of the death penalty, by both opponents and proponents of gay rights; It was used to justify slavery and to abolish slavery. It has been used to justify capitalism and socialism. It has been used for good and for evil. But where did this book come from?

Ehrman answers with “the victory of the proto-orthodox [early Catholics].” But that isn’t quite right. It is true that the variety of adherents and viewpoints available within the New Testament exist today, but once the proto-orthodox had won, their scripture became dominant. Not until the aspirations of a preacher and his devotion to his native language does the Bible re-open into this astounding array of diverse modes of thought. Tyndale instigated an age of interpretive variety that would last for centuries, resulting in newly found types of Christianities throughout the West and much of the United States.

Yet Ehrman is right to invoke the many political circumstances gleaned from the New Testament. The diversity in hermeneutics is seen almost daily as clans of preachers declare support for political leaders or rail against “sins” that they have pinpointed biblically. Facebook personalities, Twitter posts, podcasts, Instagram feeds, Tik Tok profiles, Youtube channels, and many other social media accounts give platforms to tens of thousands of biblically-minded expressions, some claiming to hold the one true belief, some expressing rationalizations for unsavory behavior, and some attempting to inspire others. A line from Tyndale to these online personas exists because of Tyndale’s specific type of translation.

Amid those voices, however, legacies leave a troubling line of inquiry: what should we do with the diversity? During a time when the Bible held sway over policy and could lead a translator to the stake, that diversity was reviled and censored, until it could no longer be resisted. Tyndale and the English Reformation transported its adherents to the twenty-first century, and denizens of this age likely are troubled by the obsessive nature many have regarding the Bible. The historian Yuval Noah Harari, in *Homo Deus*, a project that speculates about the future of humanity, regularly mentions the power and sway of scripture. As a cultural story, scripture is able to convince people of its relevance even though its history is “fundamentally flawed” and its story “mislead[s] people about the nature of reality” (98). For Harari

The Bible peddled a monotheistic view of history that claimed the world is governed by an all-powerful deity who cares above all else about “me and my doings.” If something good happens, it must be a reward for my good deeds. Any catastrophe must surely be punishment for my sins....Such self-absorption characterizes all humans in their childhood. All religions and cultures think they are the center of the world and therefore show little care and interest in the



feelings of other people... Most people grow out of this infantile delusion.

Monotheists hold on to it until the day they die"

The troubling historical influence of the Bible is one of Harari's main concerns. If the inhabitants of the future are "homo deus," will they be made in the image of humanity? Harari blames the Bible for that possible scenario. However, his main point is that each individual human is fully capable of rationalizing their preferred realities because of the influence of the Bible.

The United States has unquestionably seen a resurgence in Evangelical influence, whose adherence to biblical interpretation matches Harari's estimation of monotheists. Tyndale has long been a revered figure among fundamentalist Christian communities because he gave them a Bible that could be passed down for generations, filled with mangled interpretations and permissive of religious bigotry and cultural intolerance. But Tyndale has also been gaining reverence by those who reject religious indoctrination. Melvyn Bragg, British broadcaster, parliamentarian, and atheist, recently wrote *William Tyndale: A Very Brief History*, which he discussed with Ben Virgo, the evangelical leader of Christian Heritage London, a Christian historical society in London. Their conversation took place on a Christian-theme podcast called *Unbelievable?* Bragg gleefully admitted his fondness for Tyndale's "deliberate and brilliant" role in the history of the English language and his influence upon a "common text" for future generations, a sentiment that Virgo shared. Despite the bleak rise of overbearing Biblicists and their fundamentalist agendas, exchanges like these indicate a hope that learning about Tyndale's generous hermeneutic might encourage a more generous discourse.

Tyndale, therefore, opens the way, once again, for a host of projects to keep humanists vigilant. Erasmus' *Nouvum Testamentum* does not exist in a modern, edited, and searchable electronic version, nor does Tyndale's New Testament. Mysteries still abound for Tyndale's

theology, which does not come across as overly rigid or severe. He knew of the duality humans experience, and he set a tone for exploring our double nature with the precision of a scribal exegete. Perhaps the discourse Tyndale opens can merge into the future of the liberal arts on the campuses of state universities, where the humanists revive their status with courses on biblical literature and institutions that ordain secular morality. And perhaps his “pathway” into scripture encourages a philosophical negotiation of difficult texts that illuminates our understanding, a humanistic skillset that is increasingly dire as that world expands its rhetorical spaces.

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