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-Modelled on Zürich: A fresh study of Miles Coverdale's 1535 Bible

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ABSTRACT

In the preliminaries of his 1535 Bible, Miles Coverdale openly declared his dependence on five sundry sources. The challenge of identifying all five has obscured the strong and unique relationship between Coverdale's text and the bibles produced at Zürich. Findings from a systematic study of the book of Ruth combine with observations on the Coverdale Bible as a whole, to provide irrefutable evidence that the 1534 Zürich Bible had a unique position among Coverdale's sources. Reading Coverdale alongside an informed selection of contemporary versions sheds fresh light on factors at work in the translator's decision process—including theological, political and social interests. The centrality of Zürich as a model prompts speculation about the relationship between English reformers and the Zürich church in the mid-1530s, with import also for Henry VIII's "Great Matter".

Keywords: bible translation; Zürich; Miles Coverdale; English reformation; German

I

In dedicating the first complete printed English Bible to Henry VIII, Miles Coverdale (1488–1569) admitted his dependence on others in the most direct terms:

> so make I this protestacyon . . . that I have . . . with a cleare conscience purely & faythfully translated this out of fyve sundry interpreters, havyng onely the manyfest trueth of the scripture before myne eyes[2]

Determining the identity of those five interpreters has surely occupied more scholarly hours than Coverdale's own work translating the Bible, and more reams of paper than his translation's print runs. The quality of research has been variable. At the publication's quatercentenary, Henry Guppy asserted that "Modern scholarship has succeeded in practically demonstrating the authorities Coverdale had in mind".[3] Heinz Bluhm subsequently (and correctly) complained of a tendency among scholars to base their remarks on older studies without pursuing independent investigation.[4] The present study aims to achieve two things: (i) to demonstrate that the Zürich Bible had a more particular impact on Coverdale's work than has hitherto been recognised (and thereby illustrate the importance of

attending to the detail of individual editions); and (ii) to explore the ideas, methods, and commitments that governed Coverdale's approach to translation by studying his work alongside that of his contemporaries, and in relation to his primary source.

The first aim ought already to have been achieved by J.F. Mozley, who presented evidence concerning the 1534 Zürich Bible in his 1953 study of Coverdale's works. Yet he concluded somewhat oddly that "Luther exerts most of his influence in those parts of the bible where his work is incorporated into the Zürich version" without recognising how strong a debt to Zürich was thereby indicated.[5] A subsequent trail of misinformation suggests readers have commonly failed to appreciate why that matters. This article therefore supplies a fresh and independent study based on the book of *Ruth*, laying out a cumulative case for the distinctive role of Zürich that may assist expert and non-expert alike in understanding Coverdale's work. This is supplemented by discussion of what Coverdale did with *Ruth* and why.

If scrutiny of a specified portion of Coverdale's work is justified as a response to Bluhm's criticisms, the question remains: Why focus on *Ruth*? One answer is practical: the present study is an outworking of a larger study of English bible translation in the early modern period which takes *Ruth* as its focal text. As a short coherent stand-alone narrative, it is possible to report concisely and in detail on the close study of biblical text and supporting paratext (chapter headings, structure of versification). It is also part of that rare portion of English bibles where independent contemporary translations endure: the text published in the so-called Matthew Bible in 1537, commonly understood to have been part of William Tyndale's oeuvre, provides a kind of alternative testimony.[6] One may compare Coverdale's efforts with the best English Hebrew scholarship of this period and consider the range of lexical choice available to a bible translator in the mid-1530s. If at first glance *Ruth* is a seemingly unimportant text, with little to offer to reformation debates, consideration of

Coverdale's translation choices shows this conclusion to be false.

II

The reference to "fyue sundry interpreters" is both precise and obfuscatory. Rhetorically, the total is sufficient to fit Coverdale's claim that he has not set out to produce a sectarian version. This had practical benefits: to be linked with any specific source could inhibit his bible's free circulation. The king is not given any further information about the interpreters, but the original titlepage advertised:

> BIBLIA. The Bible / that is, the holy Scripture of the Olde and New Testament, faith-fully and truly translated out of Douche and Latyn in to Englishe. M.D. XXXV.[7]

Ilona Rashkow judged this wording discriminatory because it made "no mention of the Jewish source of the Hebrew text . . . no mention of the Hebrew text at all", assuring the reader "that the new text is wholly Christian".[8] The truth is more prosaic: Coverdale lacked knowledge of the biblical languages, Greek and Hebrew. His title wording reflected reality. When Coverdale's work reached England, new title-pages were printed and the words "out of Douche and Latyn" omitted. This might accord with the modern prejudice that a derived translation was inferior and not a feature to promote. It also reduced the risk of offending authorities or potential purchasers for whom "Douche" sounded too like evangelical heresy, or "Latyn" too like Rome.[9] There is no indication that Coverdale was ashamed of having relied upon intermediaries. In the opening paragraph of his address to the reader, he again explains that:

> to helpe me herin, I have had sondrye translacions, not onely in latyn, but also of the Douche interpreters: whom (because of theyr synguler gyftes & speciall diligence in the Bible) I have ben the more glad to folowe for the most parte, accordynge as I was required (+iiii *verso*)

Combining the last-quoted statement with his "protestacyon", Coverdale's account indicates that he had five interpreters spanning Germanic and Latin sources. Comparing Latin and Germanic versions of the book of *Ruth*, this article demonstrates that "for the most parte"

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Coverdale followed the Swiss German bible published at Zürich in 1534 and that this preference was intentional.

Accounts of Coverdale's sources commonly show ignorance about the Germanic texts available. Errors cluster around three false assumptions: that "Douche" must be narrowly synonymous with "German"; that the text associated with a given translator did not vary between editions; and that Coverdale began the task before 1534.

Presses in the Holy Roman Empire, the Swiss confederation, the Low Countries, and neighbouring principalities had produced at least eighteen Germanic editions of the Bible by 1522, the year Luther began translating the New Testament. Thereafter, it became common practice to feed public demand for an authoritative bible translation by combining Luther's work with parts of these older versions. As Paul Arblaster has shown for Dutch bibles, publishers producing such compilations did not simply adjust the text to reflect local dialect; they also took pains to mitigate the threat of censorship, while catering to audiences with differing theological sensitivities.[10] Consequently, elements of Luther's translations circulated in a variety of forms. It is unscholarly to allow Luther's paradigmatic status as reformation bible translator to interfere with a clear examination of the textual evidence. Equally, while the recent suggestion that Coverdale's Bible was printed in Antwerp can be dismissed,[11] the Flemish port city remains a plausible candidate for the site of Coverdale's own labour. It is therefore reasonable to include "Douche" editions from the Low Countries among the candidates.

Luther's own text was not static. In the case of *Ruth*, a first translation appeared in the second Old Testament volume in 1524. This was amended in subsequent reprints with the revised text appearing in Wittenberg versions from 1525 to 1528. When a complete Luther Bible left the Wittenberg presses in 1534, the text of *Ruth* had undergone twenty-one substantive revisions.[12] Though David Daniell reported that Coverdale had used "Luther's

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German Bible, completed in 1532", no such edition existed.[13] Luther's collaborator Johann Bugenhagen was responsible for the earliest complete volume to bear Luther's name, published at Lübeck in 1533.[14] Adapted to Low German, its *Ruth* text remains closest to that of 1525. Subsequent discussion reflects a sustained comparison of all these *Ruth*s, together with those included in the 1534 Vorsterman and 1526 Liesvelt bibles, both printed at Antwerp.[15] Although not discussed in detail, pre-Lutheran German bibles have also been scrutinised. An edition printed at Cologne, where Coverdale's own work was most probably printed, is tabulated to illustrate some features of early Vulgate-led versions.[16]

Luther's 1525–8 text formed the basis of *Ruth* in Swiss German bibles, with editions published at Zürich in 1530, 1531 and 1534. The results have been misrepresented as a simple Swissification of Luther. However, as has been shown in detail by Traudel Himmighöfer[17] and is substantiated below in the discussion of *Ruth*, while the Swiss churchmen took Luther's available text as a starting point, they carefully reviewed it against the original Hebrew. The circle around Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531), head of the Zürich Church, prioritised study of the Bible in the ancient languages. Sessions of Old Testament exegesis ("Prophezei") worked through the Hebrew Masoretic text, the Greek Septuagint, and the Latin Vulgate in turn.[18] Their 1530 Bible was legitimately promoted as a work "faithfully" translated, following "the truth of the original Hebrew and Greek sources".[19] The 1531 edition was the last of Zwingli's lifetime, incorporating a new translation of poetic books and prophets.[20] Another edition followed in 1534. This featured a prominent preface composed by the printer, Christoph Froschauer (1490–1564). The biblical text was the same as in 1531, Froschauer claimed, but with technical improvements: increased cross-references, square parentheses to distinguish interpolations not based on the Hebrew and Greek, and revised summary headings for each chapter. [21] These advertised features combine with further silent changes to prove Coverdale's dependence on that edition.[22]

Two further preparatory observations are necessary: Firstly, the case for counting Tyndale as one of the five interpreters[23] is not sound. To hold otherwise is to give undue precedence to Tyndale when Coverdale had at least one other English interpreter's aid (i.e. George Joye),[24] and to ignore the force of the prepositional phrase "out of". Secondly, *Ruth* provides no grounds for refuting the current consensus that Coverdale's Latin sources were the Dominican Xantes Pagnino's 1528 Hebrew bible translation,[25] and the Vulgate, collated here principally on the basis of Robert Estienne's critical edition, printed at Antwerp in 1534.[26] To support this with examples, Coverdale's characterisation of Ruth as a "vertuous woman" (3:11) follows Pagnino's "mulier virtuosa". The same Hebrew word, *hayil* | חיל, recurs in *Ruth* 4:11, where Coverdale presents Ruth as "an ensample of vertue", corresponding instead to the Vulgate's "exemplum virtutis". In subsequent discussion, these sources are referred to by the Latin monikers Pagninus and Stephanus, respectively. Deducting these two from Coverdale's five, a reasonable hypothesis about the Germanic sources can call upon up to three versions to explain details in Coverdale's text. Though it would come to guide Coverdale's subsequent efforts and produce many of the revisions realised in the 1539/1540 Great Bible, there are no signs that Coverdale had obtained access to either volume of Sebastian Münster's Hebrew-Latin diglot (1534/ 1535).[27]

III

The task of ascertaining Coverdale's sources is inevitably complicated: To prove that Coverdale was using one version it is first necessary to find points where it differs from all other candidates and then to show that such differences determined Coverdale's translation. The first step in breaking away from assumptions is to compare Luther's evolving *Ruth*s with corresponding passages in Zürich editions.

Luther's Ruths

Variation in interim versions is usefully illustrated by the characterisation of Boaz in *Ruth* 2:1. Luther's Boaz begins as "streyttbar hellt", a battle hero (1524). In the second surviving issue (1525) the characterisation is changed to "redlicher man", an adaptation shown in the critical edition of Bindseil and Niemeyer. Zürich's Boaz is also "redlicher". The underlying Hebrew phrase is a binomial construct. Its translation with a single adjective necessitates the inference that the Swiss had an interim Luther edition at hand. Luther's Boaz changed again in 1534, becoming "ehrlicher man". The passage has minimal significance for the wider source question: "redlicher" and "ehrlicher" are too close to decide that either determined Coverdale's "honest" Boaz. A sixteenth-century Swiss lexicon used the terms in parallel matching the "wol erkannter und redlicher eerlicher man" to the "honestus et spectatus vir", a man both honourable and well-regarded.[28] This expression equates well with the cultural capital of "honesty" in sixteenth-century England.[29] "Douche interpreters" may have collectively determined Coverdale's decision here.

Agreements between Coverdale and Luther's Ruths

Case	Ruth	Luther 1525	Luther 1534	Coverdale
		Agreements between Coverdale and Luther 1525 (Total = 10)		
1	1:20		Meine Luste	
	margin		Bitter oder betrůbt	
2	2:3	erbteyl	*om.*	enheritaunce
3	2:20	/Nachman/[30]	/Erbe/	nye kynsman *also:* kynsman (4:14); nexte kynsman (3:9)
4	2:21	alle meyn erndten ausrichtē	mir alles eingeerndtet haben	made an ende of *all my harvest*
5	4:4	/losen/[31]	/beerben/	redeme
6	4:7	uber der losung und	Wenn einer ein gut	concernynge the redemynge &

		uber den wechsel	nicht beerben, noch erkeuffen wolt	chaūginge
7	4:7	eyner	er	[the] one
8	4:10	namē [erwecke]	samen	name
9	4:15	leben widder bringen	dich erquicken	restore thy life agayne
10	4:15	der	welche	him that
Agreements between Coverdale and Luther 1534 (Total = 3)				
11	1:14	hieng an	bleib bey	abode styll by
12	1:19	sprachen	sprach	sayde [*antecedent: city*]
13	2:20	noch	und	and
No significant agreement (Total = 8)				
14	1:2	wonetē	blieben	dwelt
15	2:1	redlicher man	ehrlicher man	honest man
16	2:13	zugesprochē	angesprochen	[spoken] unto
17	3:9 margin	[Nachman] Nachman heysst / der seyns bruders odder nechisten freūdes nachgelassen weyb muste zu der ehe nemen / dem der storbenen eyn samē zur weckē / wie Deutro. 25. steht.	[Erbe] --	[nexte kynsman]
18	3:10	nach ... gegangē	nachgegangen	gone after
19	3:18	hallt still	Sey stille	Abyde
20	4:11	thu redlich	werde ehrlich gehalten	[she maye] be an ensample of vertue
21	4:18	gepurt	geschlecht	generacion[32]

Table 1: Luther's 1525 and 1534 *Ruth* variants compared to Coverdale

Table 1 lists 21 substantive differences between the 1525 and 1534 Luther texts.[33] The

influence of either version upon Coverdale is negligible in eight cases (cf. §§14–21). In ten of

the remaining thirteen (§§1–10), Coverdale's reading corresponds more closely to early Luther. Consider *Ruth* 2:20 (§3), where Naomi declares that Boaz is a *go'el* | גאל. Luther first translated this Hebrew word with the coinage "Nachman[n]". The German preposition "nach" suggests both proximity and succession, similar to English "next". Compare Coverdale's "nye kynsman" and, where *go'el* recurs at 3:9, "nexte kynsman". Later Luther aligns these passages with the concept of inheritance, with Boaz as "Erbe" (heir) and a corresponding shift from "losen" to "beerben" (§5).

There are three respects in which Coverdale might be said to agree with 1534 Luther: the verb in 1:14 (§11); attribution of speech to a single actor (the city) at 1:19 (§12; see further discussion below); and the simpler conjunction "and", where earlier Luther has "noch" (in the sense "in addition to") at 2:20 (§13). Could another Germanic version have contributed these readings? Vorsterman's bibles had Ruth "bleef bi" at 1:14, as did pre-Lutheran bibles published at Cologne (1478), Lübeck (1494),[34] and Halberstadt (1522). Though not a candidate for Coverdale's sources, a rogue Wycliffite manuscript also used "abode" here (rather than "clevede to")—a reminder that Coverdale could have acted on his own impulse.[35] If Coverdale had a copy of Luther's complete 1534 bible at hand, it was certainly not his main guide.

Agreements between early Luther, Zürich and Coverdale

Case	*Ruth*	Luther 1524	Luther 1534	Zurich 1534	Coverdale
14	1:2	wonetē	blieben	wonetend	dwelt
11	1:14	hieng an	bleib bey	hieng an	abode styll by
12	1:19	sprachen	sprach	sprachend	sayde
1	1:20	[--]	Meine Luste	[--]	[--]
	margin	[--]	Bitter oder betrubt	[--]	[--]
15	2:1	streyttbar hellt;	ehrlicher man	redlicher mann	honest man

		1525–8: redlicher man			
2	2:3	erbteyl	[--]	erbteyl	enheritaunce
16	2:13	zugesprochē	angesprochen	zugesprochē	spoken unto
13	2:20	noch	und	noch	and
3	2:20+	Nachman	Erbe	Nachmann	nye kynsman *also:* 4.14 kynsman 3.9 nexte kynsman
4	2:21	alle meyn erndten ausrichtē	mir alles eingeerndtet haben	alle meyn ärnd ausrichtend	made an ende of *all my harvest*
17	3:9 *margin*	[Nachman] Nachman heysst ...wie Deutro. 25. steht.	[Erbe]	[Nachmann]	[nexte kynsman]
18	3:10	nach . . . gegangē	nachgegangen	nach . . . gegangen	gone after
19	3:18	hallt still	Sey stille	halt still	Abyde
5	4:4+	losen	beerben	losen	redeme
6	4:7	uber der losung und uber den wechsel	Wenn einer ein gut nicht beerben, noch erkeuffen wolt	über die losung und über den wæchsel	concernynge the redemynge & chaūginge
7	4:7	eyner	er	eyner	the one
8	4:10	namē	samen	namen	name
20	4:11	thu redlich	werde ehrlich gehalten	thü redlich	be an ensample of vertue
9	4:15	leben widder bringen	dich erquicken	læben wider bringen	restore thy life agayne
10	4:15	der	welche	die	him that
21	4:18	gepurt	geschlecht	geburt	generacion
22	2:7	gangen	gegangen	gangen	have bene gone

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23	2:8	gang	gehe	gang	go
24	2:11	zogē	gezogen	zogen	[art] come
25	2:20	horet	gehoret	hort	belongeth
26	4:9	kaufft hab	gekaufft habe	kaufft hab	have boughte

Table 2: Luther's *Ruth* variants compared with Zurich and Coverdale

Zürich bibles correspond to the 1525 text in 20 of the 21 substantive differences between Luther versions (see **Table 2**). These include 9 of the 10 Coverdale agreements. The exception is §10: Zürich's feminine pronoun "die" in 4:15, where Luther had "der". This change corresponds to the Hebrew text, providing evidence of the careful Swiss revision. A similar shift occurs in 1534 Luther (cf. feminine "welche"): Who was "better than seven sons" to Naomi? The Hebrew answer is emphatic and unambiguous: her daughter-in-law Ruth. However, in translation the honour was commonly given to Ruth's newborn son, Obed. Forms of Dutch and Low German had only one nominative relative pronoun so that Vorsterman, Liesvelt and Bugenhagen's *dye | die | de* might be applied either to Ruth or Obed. Pagninus favoured Obed. Stephanus' Vulgate equivocated, supplying the Hebrew in the margin of the Antwerp edition (quae te diligit). Coverdale agrees with early Luther against Zürich (and against later Luther), honouring "him", i.e. Obed. The decision here goes against his general trend, where agreement with Zürich predominates. One ought probably to assume that Pagninus convinced Coverdale of Obed's deserts, perhaps aided by latent misogyny (how could a woman be better than seven sons?).

To summarise observations so far: Analysing versions of Luther's *Ruth* that could have been available to Coverdale, there is nothing that could not have been derived by consulting a different pair (or trio) of Germanic texts with the established Latin interpreters. Sound analysis ought to reflect the Zürich bibles' evolution from an earlier Luther translation, without drawing the conclusion that Luther was "obviously" a direct source.[36]

Zürich's Ruths

[Table appears on next page.]

Ruth	Luther 1524|1534[37]	Zürich 1534	Coverdale 1535	Vulgate Steph. 1534	Pagninus 1528	MT	LXX	Liesvelt 1526	Bugenhagen 1533	Vorsterman 1534	Quentell ca. 1478
1:2	Mahelon uñ Chilion	**der ein Mahelon, und der ander Chilion**	the one Mahelon, and the other Chilion	alter Mahalon, & alter Cheliõ	Machlón & Chilion	מחלון וכליון	Μααλων καὶ Χελαιων	Mahelon eñ Chilion	Mahelon unde Chilion	die eene Mahalon eñ die ander Chilion	der ein hete maalan ende die ander chelion
1:6	schnuren	sunsfrauwen	sonnes wyves	nuru [sic]	nurus	כלתיה	νύμφαι	sonen wijven	sõns frouwen	sonē huys-vrouwē	snurgen
1:6	--	(. . .)	(. . .)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1:7	schnur	sunsfrauwen	sonnes wyves	nuru	nurus	כלתיה	νύμφαι	sonen huys-vrouwē	sõns frouwen	sonen huys-vrouwen	snurgen
1:9	--	**[die ir überko�465men werdēt]**	(whom ye shal get)	quos sortituræ estis	--	--	--	--	--	*dat ghi crijgē sult)[38] || ten is niet int hebr.	die gy nemen sult
1:11	farder	fürhin	eny more	ultra	ultra	העוד	μὴ ἔτι	voert aen	vordan	voort aen	meer

1:13	zu wee	wee	*therfore am I sory for you*	*vestra* angustia magis *me premit*	amaritudo . . . valde plus	מר־לִי מאד מכם	ἐπικράνθη μοι ὑπὲρ ὑμᾶς	te wee	tho wee	te wee	*uw* bedroffnis meer *mi drukt*
1:14	--	[unnd keret umb:]	(and turned backe againe)	ac reversa est	--	--	καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸν λαὸν αὐτῆς	--	--	ende keerde wederomē	ende keyt den wederumb
1:15	schwegeryn*n*	geschwey*en* (2)	syster in lawe (2)	cognata; ea	cognata (2)	יבמתך (2)	ἡ σύννυμφός	zwagerinne; swagerinē	swegersche; swegerschen	*nichte) ‖ th. swagherinne ; haer	nicht, er
1:16	rede myr nicht eyn[39]	Red mir nit darein	Speake not to me therof	Ne adverseris mihi ‖ *margin:* roges me	Ne roges me	אל־תפ געי־בי	μὴ ἀπαντήσαι ἐμοὶ	spreect mi niet in	Rede my dat nicht yn	en wilt mi niet tegen zijn	Tot ne dy niet up my
1:19	uber yhn	über sy	over them	apud cunctos[40]	super eis	עליהן	ἐπ᾿ αὐταῖς	over hē	aver en	over	uyt over all
1:19	sprachen ǀ sprach	[die weyber] sprachend	sayde	dicebantq[ue] mulieres	dixerunt	ותאמר נה	εἶπον	seydē	spreken	die fame… seydē	de wyff sedē
1:22	schnur	suns frauw	sonnes wife	nuru	nurus	כלתה	ἡ νύμφη	soons wijf	sōns frouwe	soons wijf	sons wyff

2:3	--	[åhern][41]	--	spicas	--	--	--	--	--	die aernen	die aren
2:7	den̄	Und[42]	And	& rogavit	Et	ותאמר	εἶπεν	Wāt	wente	En̄	ende
2:9	*om.*	dan̄	for	enī	An . . . ?	הלוא	ἰδού	--	--	--	--
2:9	antaste	anrüre	touch	molestus sit	tangant	נגעך	ἅψασθαί	aen … tastē	antaste	quellic	hinderlik en sy
2:14	sangen fur	sengelkorn[43]	parched corne	polentā	polentam	קלי	ἄλφιτον	koeckē voor	vorsengede are vor	brij voor	--
2:20	schnur	sunsfrauw	doughter in lawe	Cui	nurui	כלתה	τῇ νύμφῃ	soōs wijf	soøs frouwen	haer	der
2:22	schnur	sunsfrauw	doughter in lawe	Cui	nurum	כלתה	τὴν νύμφην	soons wijf	soøs frouwen	soons wijf	--
3:7	mandel	hauffen garbē	a heape of sheves	acervū manipuloʀ	*in summitate* acervi	בקצה הערמה	ἐν μερίδι τῆς στοιβῆς	eenē hoop scovē	einen dymen	eenē hoop schoovē	einen hoep der garven

3:11	tugentsam	**tapffer from̄**	vertuous	*mulierem te esse* virtutis	*mulier* virtuosa	אשת חיל	γυνὴ δυνάμεως	duechdelick	dogentsame	duechdelijck	ein wyff der duechdē
3:15	er kam	**sy gieng**	she wente	Quae . . . ingressa	& ingressa est	ויבא	εἰσῆλθεν	hi quam	he quam	si quam	droch sy in
3:16	sie aber kam	**und** kam	& came	& venit	Et venit	ותבוא	καὶ Ρουθ εἰσῆλθεν	mer si quam	Se overst quam	en̄ si quam	en̄ quā
4:1	fur uber gieng	fürgieng	wente by	præterire	transibat	עבר	παρεπορεύετο	voor bi ginc	vor aver ginck	voor by ginc	gink dar aff
4:10	zeugen seyt yhr des heutte.	**dess sind ir zeügen.**	Of this are ye witnesses.	huius rei testes estis	Testes estis hodie.	עדים אתם היום	μάρτυρες ὑμεῖς σήμερον	ghetuygē sijt ghy des heden	des syn gy hueden tuͤgē	zijt ghy huyden ghetuyghen vraech ick?	so weset gy getuch deses dinges
4:11	sey beruffen	beruff den nammen	*that she maye* have an honorable name	*ut* . . . habeat celebre nomē	celebre nomen	וקרא־שם	ἔσται ὄνομα	si vermaert	wes beropen	si vermaert	heb einē verhochdē namen
4:15	schnur	**sunsfrauw**	sonnes wife	nuru	nurus	כלתך	ἡ νύμφη	soōs wijf	sons frouwe	soons wijf	snurgen

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4:15	der | welche	die	him that	qui . . : &[44]	qui	אשר-ה יא [טובה]	ἥ ἐστιν ἀγαθή	die u	de dy	dye u	dat is dy
4:17	Der ist der vater	Der ist ein vatter	The same is the father	hic est pater *Isai*	Ipse est pater	הוא אבי־	οὗτος πατὴρ	Dye is dye vader	de ys de vader	dye is dye vader	Dese was … vader
4:18₊	zeuget[45]	gebar[46]	begat	genuit	genuit	הוליד	ἐγέννησεν	wan	telde	wan	gewan

Table 3: Zürich departures from Luther compared with Coverdale and other interpreters

Heavy type is used to indicates divergences between Zürich 1534 and its predecessors (which correspond to early Luther unless otherwise stated). A smaller typeface designates marginalia.

When variants between Zürich bibles and Luther texts are brought into view, it becomes clear that Coverdale was working with the Zürich Bible of 1534. Divergences from the earlier Zürich editions are highlighted in **Table 3** using heavy type. The most powerful evidence in *Ruth* pertains to Coverdale's combination of parentheses (i.e. brackets) and textual interpolations.

Parentheses and interpolations

Parentheses occur three times in Coverdale's *Ruth* 1. Twice they enclose phrases not in the Hebrew text: (i) a clarification that Naomi's speech is concerned with future husbands "(whom ye shal get)" in 1:9; and (ii) an explicit narration of Orpah's departure "(and turned backe againe)" in 1:14. Both interpolations are traditional, with parallel phrases appearing in the Vulgate, and in the case of 1:14 in the Septuagint also. Yet these are not the only interpolations that occur in the chapter. At 1:2, Coverdale's formula "the one . . . the other" parallels the Vulgate's "alter . . . alter", words not present in the Hebrew text. This addition is unmarked in Coverdale's text. In the Zürich Bible of 1534—and in that edition alone—the same interpolations appear, that at 1:2 unmarked and the other two distinguished by the heavy square parentheses promised in the printer's preface. Coverdale drew his parentheses from Zürich.

An attentive review of Table 3 reveals that Vorsterman employed similar technical apparatus to demarcate interpolations based on the same Vulgate traditions. In this case, phrases were enclosed by an asterisk and curved parenthesis. Accompanying marginalia record the divergence between the Dutch text and the Hebrew. Yet the Dutch text could not have produced the pattern seen in Coverdale. The future husbands are marked (1:9), but Orpah's departure is not. Nor are phrases at 1:19 and 2:3, discussed below.

Reformation Coverdale import

The third parenthetical phrase of Coverdale's *Ruth* is the most significant. It encloses the explanation for Naomi's departure from Moab in Ruth 1:6. The clause is semantically subordinate, but among the Germanic and Latin texts examined only Zürich 1534 (hereafter **Z34**) applied parentheses—in this case curved rather than square.

There are other parenthetical phrases in Z34: at 1:19 "[die weyber]"; and at 2:3 "[åhern]". The latter clarifies what Ruth proposes to glean and parallels the Vulgate's "spicas" (ears of grain). The Hebrew text supplies this object in a similar phrase when reporting Ruth's speech four verses later. Seeing Zürich's parentheses, Coverdale would know this was an interpolation. He compensates for potential incoherence by including "of corne" in his summary of *Ruth* 2 (see below). At 1:19, the parenthetical phrase supplies the verb's subject, the women. In Hebrew, gender is communicated within the verb form, on this occasion feminine plural. Verb forms are not gendered in Latin or Germanic languages. Therefore both Vulgate and Zürich make the speakers' gender explicit by adding a noun: "mulieres", "die weyber". Lacking Hebrew knowledge, seeing that "die weyber" was an interpolation and that these women had no prior presence in the text, it was a natural step for Coverdale to leave "the Cit[y]" as antecedent to his verb, "sayde". Z34's parentheses thus inform what Coverdale includes and what he omits.

At 4:10, Luther and Zürich both include a very minor unmarked interpolation. Boaz invites his Bethlehemite audience to acknowledge their role as witnesses in a formulaic manner, opening and closing the invitation (4:9–10) with three words: *'edim 'attem hayyom* | עדים אתם היום—witnesses you *are* today. Compare Pagninus: "Testes estis hodie." The position of the Hebrew noun *'edim*, witnesses, is emphatic. Luther replicates this by placing "Zeugen" at the head of his clause. He also inserts the word "des", i.e. of this. In Zürich 1534, the same insertion is present but "heute" (today) is omitted and the word order is changed, shifts mirroring the Vulgate: "dess sind ir zeügen"; "huius rei testes estis". Coverdale's text

matches: "Of this are ye witnesses." The Vulgate is a supporting witness here. Yet neither Zürich nor Coverdale have a lexical counterpart to "rei", genitive of "res", 'thing'.[47] Bugenhagen's Luther Bible could also lie in the background. There too, the conclusion of Boaz's speech emphasises what is being witnessed ("des") rather than the witnesses. This suggests that Luther's word order felt too unnatural when not linked with the Hebrew. Yet Bugenhagen's text will not account for Coverdale's omission of *hayyom,* which appears as "huͤden" in the Low German text. Coverdale's text again corresponds directly to the 1534 Zürich Bible.

Narratorial perspective

Interpolations and parentheses are not the only evidence. Another case concerns the subject of the final verb in *Ruth* 3:15: whose movement toward Bethlehem is narrated?

Two different readings are attested in the manuscript tradition. The received Hebrew text, represented by the Leningrad and Aleppo Codices, has the masculine form of the verb: *wayyavo* | ויבא. This was the version printed in Bomberg's sixteenth-century Tanakhs[48] and in the Complutensian Polyglot (1522). It is also supported by virtually all recensions of the Septuagint, which name Ruth at the start of verse 16 to answer the Greek requirement for an explicit change of subject.[49] The masculine reading governed the first printing of the King James Version, with *Ruth* 3:15's "and he went" generating that edition's alias of "He Bible". However, most manuscripts accord with some of the ancient versions to give a feminine action.[50] This is seen in the Vulgate, which narrates Ruth's entrance to the city using the feminine pronoun *quae*. It is also, in part by error, the common identifier for later editions of the King James Version (the "She Bible"), when the verse reads "and she went".[51] This printing shibboleth postdates Coverdale, who faced a choice between Luther and the early Zürich bibles' masculine "er kam" and Zürich 1534's feminine, supported by the Vulgate and by Pagninus.[52] Coverdale chose the latter. Because *Ruth* 3:16 opens with a feminine form of

the same verb (*wattavo* | ותבוא), this second option creates a sense of continuous action: entering the city (verse 15), Ruth approaches Naomi (verse 16). In the Latin texts the entry is conveyed with the participle "ingressa" and the approach by "&/et venit". Z34 and Coverdale similarly employ a simple conjunction (und, &). If Coverdale's choice was supported by the Latin versions, it remains possible to discern a distinct contribution from Z34: the viewpoint attached to Ruth's first action. She is not entering the city as "ingressa" suggests, but rather "wente" (Z34: gieng) into it as if perceived by Boaz from without.

Reviewing these examples, two things should be noted: (i) the Vulgate was a co-witness to these readings; (ii) they are peculiar to the 1534 Zürich edition. Whoever had responsibility for improving the technical apparatus of that edition also had a high opinion of the Vulgate.[53] The common pattern of parentheses, including in 1:6, is the most conclusive evidence that Coverdale took on such details under Zürich's influence and not the Vulgate's testimony alone.

Without the Vulgate

What of instances where Zürich differs from Luther and is not perceptibly following the Vulgate?   Where do Coverdale's loyalties lie?

Such departures are slighter in number and in extent and not particular to the 1534 edition, but the general pattern is in Zürich's favour. See for example Zürich's omission of Luther's "zu" in 1:13. The resulting "wee" accords better with the plain "sor[r]y" of Coverdale's text. "Sengelkorn" (2:14) provides another minor case: Luther's Boaz provides non-specific roasted leftovers, "sangen fur"—compare Liesvelt's "koeckē voor". The matter is clarified by Bugenhagen, where Ruth receives pre-cooked grain-based fodder. Vorsterman's Ruth dines on "brij voor", a mushed substance that probably suggested porridge-meal for his contemporary reader. According to Coverdale's contemporary Thomas Elyot, the Latin "polenta" was a preparation involving barley, the very harvest at which Ruth

and Naomi have arrived (cf. 1:22). In contrast, corn was the generic term for all grain. Even given this generic status, it seems that Coverdale's "corn" was consumed under Zürich's influence.[54]

One distinctive Coverdale reading is accounted for by Zürich's linguistic interference: In 1:16, Coverdale's Ruth pleads "Speake not to me therof". The last word is significant because it has no parallel in Luther nor in Hebrew. There is slight precedent in Bugenhagen's text, where Ruth's speech also incorporates an object, "Rede my *dat* nicht yn" (emphasis added). However, the flow of speech in Coverdale is closer to Zürich, if we allow that the English translator has misinterpreted a compound verb "dareinreden" (persuade, interfere) as plain verb (reden) with complement. According to this view, Coverdale's "therof" mimicked the aesthetic form of "darein". Combined with an interpolative Germanic "davon" in verse 18, this creates a literary inclusio in Coverdale's narrative that is not present in the Hebrew: Naomi "spake no more . . . therof" (1:18). Mitigating the silence with which Naomi met Ruth's passionate speech, Coverdale anticipated preachers' anxiety over this mute response; generations later John Gill insisted that "otherwise, no doubt upon this a close, comfortable, religious conversation ensued, which made their journey the more pleasant and agreeable."[55]

We have now covered the textual data that can be gleaned from *Ruth*. In punctuation, in grammar, in syntax and in content, the 1534 Zürich edition is evident as Coverdale's principal guide. A translator using multiple intermediaries might be expected to follow the majority view at moments of disagreement; on that logic, accumulating sufficient examples to show dependence in any one direction should be a Sisyphean task. That it is possible to demonstrate conclusive dependence on the Zürich Bible of 1534 in the course of 85 verses is testament to Coverdale's sustained preference. Is this dependency particular to this portion of Coverdale's version? Even closely studied, 85 verses can hardly stand proxy for a whole bible. Data from outside the text of *Ruth* extend the case.

IV

The major premise of this study is that the Zürich Bible of 1534 was more significant than

Coverdale's other sources, whether Germanic or Latin, because it functioned as a model

throughout Coverdale's work. Though supported by close textual study of *Ruth,* this premise

stands upon broader evidence, including the changes the printer advertised.

In 1937, Ernst Nagel described for readers of *Zwingliana* what he saw as the

"Abhängigkeit" or dependency of Coverdale's bible upon Zürich. Believing Coverdale could

not have completed a translation between late 1534 and 4 October 1535, Nagel focused on

the 1531 edition, leading to some false conclusions. For example, he thought summary

headings in Revelation were Coverdale's work; whereas full headings were one of the selling

points Froschauer highlighted to his customers. Their former absence is best explained by

Zwingli's antipathy toward Revelation, which he judged uncanonical. The new headings

represent the "void . . . quickly filled".[56] Some of what follows nonetheless builds upon

Nagel's work, hitherto overlooked in Anglophone scholarship.[57]

Peritext (1): Summary headings

Zurich 1534[58]	Coverdale
Das Erst Cap. **Elimech [sic] von Bethlehem zeücht** *wandlen in der thüre* **[sic] mit** *Naemi* **seinem weyb, und zweyen sünen in der Moabiter land. Ruth dess einen suns** *verlassne witwen,* **zeücht mit der schwiger heym.**	Chap. I. Elimelech departeth from Bethleem with his wife and two sonnes in to the londe of the Moabites, *where the father dyeth and both the sonnes.* Ruth *the wife* of the one sonne goeth home with hir mother in lawe.
II. Ruth samlet ǻhern auff dem acker Boas ires manns vetters.	Chap. II. Ruth gathereth *up* eares *of corne* in the felde of Boos hir houssbandes kynsmā.
III. Ruth legt sich zun [sic] fussenn *an das bett* **Boas,** *wirt morgēs* **mit sechs Maſsle gersten abgefertiget.**	Chap. III. Ruth lyeth her *downe in the barne* at Boos fete, *and he geveth her good wordes, and* ladeth her with six measures of barlye.

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> **IIII.** <u>**Boos**</u> *wirt mit recht als d̕ nå̍her* <u>**Ruth**</u> *ē̍* Chap. IIII. <u>Boos</u> *marieth* <u>Ruth, which</u>
> *Eeman* **[sic],** <u>**die gebirt im Obed Davids åni.**</u> <u>beareth him Obed Davids graundfather.</u>

Table 4: Correspondence between *Ruth*'s chapter summaries in Zurich and Coverdale

<u>Complete correspondence</u> (including orthography of proper nouns) is fully underlined; <u>indirect correspondence</u> partially underlined; *lack of correspondence* shown with italics. Although the later edition expanded headings elsewhere, *Ruth*'s headings underwent no substantive change between 1531 and 1534. The summary of *Ruth* 2 was one of Nagel's examples of Swiss influence.[59] **Table 4** sets out the texts for comparison. Portions of Zürich's *Ruth* summaries not taken over by Coverdale are italicised, and in Coverdale's summaries direct matches are underlined, additions italicised, and slight variations (e.g. of orthography) indicated by a dotted line. As Nagel noted, introductory formulae and sentence structure correspond closely.

One departure is not demonstrable in this tabular presentation: Coverdale collected together *Ruth*'s four headings, placing them at the start of the book. Visible adjustments therefore do more than correct slapdash errors in the Zürich edition (e.g. "thüre", door, where we would expect "theüre", famine). Narrated details such as the deaths of father and sons in *Ruth* 1 serve to create a coherent narrative-in-miniature, suited to the headings' new position. That a Zürich Bible provided Coverdale's base is not the less evident; consider details such as "dess einens suns" | "of the one sonne" (chapter 1), the reflexive "legt sich" | "lyeth her" (chapter 3), and "gebirt im" | "beareth him" (chapter 4).

Peritext (2): Marginal references

Ruth	Zurich 1531	Zurich 1534	Coverdale
4.3	Levit. 25.	Levit 25 d	Levi. 25 d
	Hier. 32.	Ier 32. b	Iere. 32.b

4.5		Deut 25. a	
4.10	Weyb nemēn Deut. 25a.	Deut 25. a	Deut 25. a
4.11		Gen 29. 30.	Ge. 29. 30
4.12		Gen. 38. e	Gen. 38. e
4.18	I. Para. 2. Matth. 1.a	I. Par. 2. a Matth. 1. a	1 Par. 2. a Matth. 1. a

Table 5: Marginalia of *Ruth* 4 in Zurich and Coverdale Bibles

Ruth	Zurich 1531	Zurich 1534	Coverdale
1:4		Ruth 4.b	
1:11		Deut 25.a	
1:16		Reg xxv.d [sic] (i.e. *1 Sam 25*) Judith xi.d	
2:2	Deut. 23d[60]		
2:4	Grůss. [Greeting]		
2:20			Tobi. 2.a
2:20		Deut. 25.a	
3:3			some reade *Anoynte the[e][61]

Table 6: Marginalia of *Ruth* 1–3 in Zurich and Coverdale Bibles

Another Zürich 1534 change did impact *Ruth*: more elaborate marginal cross-references.   As with summaries, visible correspondence between Coverdale and the earlier Zürich edition (observed by Nagel) is weak when compared with Zürich 1534.[62] **Table 5** sets out the marginalia found in *Ruth* 4. Zürich 1531 refers the reader to five passages. Coverdale includes the same cross-references. Yet Coverdale gives more detailed references, with paragraphs designated according to a traditional lettering system. For example, at what

became 4:3, Coverdale's reader is referred to paragraph "d" of Leviticus 25 and "b" of Jeremiah 32. Similarly, a more precise reference to the 1 Chronicles genealogy appears at 4:18, using its Latin title *Paralimpomenon*. This additional detail corresponds to Zürich 1534. References at 4:11–12 were prompted by mention of biblical characters and are found widely in early modern bibles. Nonetheless, it is evident that Coverdale's match those of Zürich 1534. *Ruth*'s marginalia also provide an example of Coverdale's independence, but that (with **Table 6**) is reserved for discussion below.

In marginal cross-references as within translated text, patterns of inclusion and omission support the hypothesis that the Coverdale Bible had as its model the Zürich Bible of 1534. Nagel's case, now enhanced in the context of the 1534 edition, drew upon other aspects of the bibles' design.

Presentation and preliminaries

Nagel saw the Zürich Bible as a physical model for Coverdale's: both employed comparable format, large clear typeface, careful division of books, running heads, page and chapter numbers, and decorative illustrations.[63] One might also note the dual column format. For Luther's texts were presented in a single column, as was Bugenhagen's. The dual-column format was not itself unusual. Nor can Zürich have sole credit as its inspiration. Pagninus, Stephanus' Vulgate, and the Dutch versions of Vorsterman and Liesvelt all used two columns, a format based on manuscript practice. To Nagel, the overall visual similarity jumped out at the reader. His compatriot Walter Hollenweger inclined to agree, and so ought we.[64]

Nagel traced similarities in front matter too. The contents list contains the same information: abbreviated title, number of chapters, initial page number. It also provides book names in both Latin and vernacular, a step not seen in Luther and irrelevant within Latin versions. Nagel also connected the descriptions introducing contents pages. In this instance,

the claim of Zürich 1531 is stronger than 1534: in 1531 alone marginal cross-references are referred to as "allegationen" (Coverdale: "allegacions"). The OED knows no earlier use of the English term in this sense, and Zürich 1534 has "abbreviaturen". [65] Perhaps we ought to imagine Coverdale (or a separate agent of the preliminaries) working with a copy of the 1531 edition too? Setting aside this one detail, Coverdale had nonetheless learned from the example of Zürich 1534. Nagel saw the shift from an alphabetised contents list to a canonically ordered one as Coverdale's innovation. Yet this step had already been taken in the later Swiss edition. The effect is deleterious; a reader unfamiliar with the canon will find it hard to match abbreviation with book or locate a page number.[66] Regardless of that practical impact, here again Coverdale shows dependence on Zürich 1534.

Another of Nagel's observations bears on the matter of the variant title pages. Scholarly discussion has normally focussed on the cause of adaptation, omitting to wonder why "out of Douche and Latyn" appeared in the original title. Yet as Nagel saw, the ingredients of Coverdale's original title-page reflect the recipe of the Zürich Bible (see **Table 7**).[67] Both assert truth and fidelity. Both advertise their sources.

Edition	Title wording
Coverdale	BIBLIA. The Bible, that is, the holy Scripture of the Olde and New Testament, faith-fully and truly translated out of Douche and Latyn in to Englishe
Zurich 1531	Die Gantze Bibel der ursprünglichen Ebraischen und Griechischen waarheyt nach auffs aller treuwlichest verteutschet
Zurich 1534	Bibel Teütsch der ursprünglichen Hebreischen und Griechischen warheit nach, auffs treüwlichest verdolmetschet. Was über die nächst aussgegangnen edition weyters hinzůkommen sye, wirt in nachvolgender Vorred gnůgsam begriffenn. Getruckt zů Zürich bey Christoffel Froschouer, im Jar als man zalt M.D.XXXIIII.
Luther 1534	Biblia, das ist, die gantze Heilige Schrifft Deudsch. Mart. Luth. Wittemberg. Begnadet mit Kürfurstlicher zu Sachsen freiheit. Bedruckt durch Hans Luft.

	M.D.XXXIIII.
Bugenhagen	De Biblie uth der uthlegginge Doctoris Martini Luthers yn dyth duͤdesche vlitich uthgesettet, mit sundergen underrichtingen, alse men seen mach. Inn der Keyserliken Stadt Luͤbeck by Ludowich Dietz gedruͤcket. M.D.XXXIII.
Pagninus 1528	Biblia: habes in hoc libro prudens lector utriusq[ue] instrumenti novam tranlationē aeditum a reverendo sacrę theologiæ doctore Sancte pagnino lucēsi concionatore apostolico Praedicatorij ordinis, necnon & librum de interpretamentis hebraicorum, arameọrū, græcorumq[ue] nominum, sacris in literis contentorū, in quo iuxta idioma . . . [*There follows a long description, naming those involved in correcting the work and including the papal endorsement*.] 1528.
Stephanus 1534	Biblia: Breves in eadem Annotationes, ex doctiss. interpretationibus, & Hebræorum commentariis. Interpretatio propriorum nominum Hebraicorum. Index copiosissimus rerum & sententiarum utriusque testamenti. Antverpiae. Excudebat Martinus Cæsar, sumptu & opera Godefridi Dumæi. An. M. D. XXXIIII. Mense Ianuario.

Table 7: Titles as printed on the title page of the given edition

It is risky to extrapolate from a single biblical book—especially one as short as *Ruth*. Zürich's special role is illustrated through cumulative testimony: parallels in paratext, preliminaries, and minor details are no coincidence. The next evidence establishes beyond doubt that Coverdale had some special sympathy with his Swiss source.

From "wir" to "I"

Coverdale's address to the reader offers compelling evidence, hitherto unrecognised, that he was sincere in his preference not only for "Douche" but for Zürich: In large part, he is ventriloquising words first published in Swiss German. To reproduce examples at length would quickly exhaust any sensible word count. Indicative passages are therefore presented, supplemented by some briefer illustrations of the correspondence:

Zürich 1534	**Coverdale**

Das aber etlich vermeynēd <u>mancherley</u> <u>translationen machind zweytracht im</u> <u>glauben und im volck Gottes</u>, ist falsch. Dañ nye ist es bass umb die kirchen Gottes gestanden, dann do schier ein yede kirchen <u>ein besondere translation</u> hatt.   Bey den Griechen, hatt nit <u>Origenes</u> ein besundere, ein besundere <u>Vulgarius</u>, <u>Chrisostomus</u>? Sind nit über <u>die sibentzig tolmätschen</u>, <u>die</u> <u>translation Aquile, Theodotionis, Symachi</u>, und die man nennet die Fünffte und die Gemeyne? Nim̄ da[ss] nach <u>die Latiner</u>, findst du das sich gar nach ein ieder einer sunderen translation gebraucht hat.   Dann als Hieronymus bezeüget, sind schier als vil tolmätschungen gewesen als kirchen, nach dem <u>ein yetlicher Bischoff</u> Griechisch kondt, nach dem machet er im ein tolmätschung, und hatt also ein yeder ein eygne Bibel. Anders lisst <u>Hireneus,</u> anders <u>Cyprianus,</u> anders <u>Tertullianus</u>, anders <u>Hieronymus</u> uñ <u>Augustinus</u>, anders <u>Hilarius</u>, anders <u>Ambrosius</u>. (**iii *verso*–**iiii *recto*)

Where as some men thynke now yᵗ <u>many</u> <u>translacyons make divisyon in yᵉ fayth and</u> <u>in the people of God</u>, yᵗ is not so: for it was never better with the congregacion of God, then whan every church allmost had yᵉ Byble of <u>a sondrye trāslacion</u>. Amonge the Grekes had not <u>Origen</u> a specyall translacyon? Had not <u>Vulgarius</u> one peculyar, and lykewyse <u>Chrysostom</u>? Besyde <u>the seventye interpreters</u>, is there not the <u>translacyon of Aquila, of Theodotio,</u> <u>of Symachus</u>, and of sondrye other? Agayne amonge <u>the Latyn</u> men, thou findest yᵗ every one allmost used a specyall & sondrye translacyon: for in so moch as <u>every bysshoppe</u> had the knowlege of yᵉ tongues, he gave his diligence to have the Byble of his awne translacion. The doctours, as <u>Hireneus</u>, <u>Cyprianus</u>, <u>Tertullian</u>, S. <u>Jherome</u>, S. <u>Augustine</u>, <u>Hylarius</u> & S. <u>Ambrose</u> upon dyverse places of the scripture, reade not yᵉ texte all alyke. (+iiii *verso*)

Zürich's discussion begins in the context of the competing editions of Luther and Emser, who had adapted Luther's text for a Counter-reform bible. Coverdale's follows his grief that the English should have no translation while "other nacyōs" are "plenteously provyded for" (+iii *verso*). It remains plain that Coverdale depends on the Swiss for his list of previous translators and interpreters. Even his reference to sundry translation has its origins in Zürich's "besondere/sunderen translation".

Coverdale adapts his source; excising a parenthetical reference to the papacy (NHG:

Papsttum), for example. Its influence remains clear:

Wolte Gott es wäre nach der zeyt Augustini nye underlassen worden, so wärend wir in söliche blindheit und unwüssenheit, in söliche irrsal und verfürnuss (so im Bapstthumb regiert hat) nie komēn; (** iiii recto)	wolde God it had never bene left of after yͤ tyme of S. Augustine, then shulde we never have come in to soch blindnes & ignoraūce, in to soch erroures & delusyons. (+iiii *verso*)

When Coverdale writes that "every one of his own head [began] to write whatsoever came into his brain and that seemed to be good in his own eyes", he is copying Zürich's "ein yeder fieng an auss seinem eygnen kopff schreybē was im eynfiel und was in güt ducht". In claiming ironically "that a mā maye well perceave, how that" (some translators) "never sawe the oryginall" (+iiii *verso*), Coverdale follows Zürich's claim "das man wol sicht dass sy den ursprung und brunnen nye besähen habend" (** iiii *recto*). Most striking is how, within the apologetic, Zürich's "wir" becomes Coverdale's "I":

<u>Und ob wir</u> gleych etwo gefält (dann niements labt der nit fäle) hettēd, sind wir in hoffnung, liebe werde sölichs, one allen hochmüt und falsch urteyl, dulden unnd verbesseren. Es labt niemants der alle ding sähe, es hat auch Gott niemants gebē das er alle ding konne, oder wüsse, einer sicht vil klaarer unnd häller dann der ander, einer hat mer verstands weder der ander, einer kan ein ding bass zů worten und an tag bringen dann der ander, da sol aber kein verbunst noch verachtung sein. (** iiii *verso*)	<u>And though I</u> have fayled eny where (as there is noman but he mysseth in some thynge) love shall const[ru]e all to yͤ best without eny perverse judgment. There is noman lyvynge yͭ can se all thynges, nether hath god geven eny man to knowe every thynge. One seyth more clearly then another, one hath more understondyng then another, one can utter a thynge better then another, but noman ought to envye, or dispyse another (+v *recto*)

Advice to the reader ("Findst du etwas" | "yf thou fynde oughte") is appropriated from Zürich. The account of the Bible's contents is similarly a condensed version of Zürich's. Reading these texts in parallel, one sees how the Swiss text primes Coverdale's lexicon and

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guides his grammar.

The 1531 preface has two paragraphs that do not appear in the later version.[68] The first articulates a negative attitude towards Jewish scholarship and declares independence, manifest in the eschewal of Hebrew vocalisation and commentaries and an avowed preference for the Septuagint because it antedated Christ. The credibility of Jewish scholarship had become an area of tension and disagreement among Christian Hebraists. The position taken here is typically ascribed to Zwingli.[69] No such statements appear in the 1534 text. As seen in the discussion above, Zürich's biblical text itself had been partially reworked in favour of a different tradition—the Vulgate—making affirmation of the Greek tradition redundant. Omission was an efficient solution. The other excised paragraph carried information about printing features such as the (then more limited) summary arguments and concordance, material covered by the printer's own preface in 1534. Neither matter is treated by Coverdale, permitting us to imagine that he worked from the later edition in this instance too. In any case, the English prologue demonstrates that Coverdale was willing to rely upon Zürich's judgments and transmit them as his own. The Zürich tradition had become the most particular of his sundry sources.

V

The first aim of this article has now been satisfied: a particular and previously unrecognised impact of the 1534 Zürich text has been demonstrated, and the argument substantiated with reference to what might otherwise be dismissed as minor differences between editions. A second aim remains, i.e. to demonstrate what we can learn about the ideas and methods that governed Coverdale's approach by studying his work alongside that of his contemporaries and likely sources. What follows is a response to the question, "So what?" Or, more elegantly phrased, *how* does careful consideration of Coverdale's work with sources take forward an understanding of the translator and his translation?

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We know that Coverdale based his text on a series of others and that he did not have access to the original sources. When his sources disagreed, how did he choose? Even to attempt the task he must have operated with a notion of Scripture akin to a platonic form, something that could be discerned in and beyond the polyvocal testimony of competing versions. He himself confessed that he had been "more glad to folowe" the "Douche interpreters", but these too conflicted. Coverdale had the capacity to choose God's speech, a brave undertaking. The labour of identifying his interpreters permits us to examine how Coverdale proceeded.

The following discussion draws on points where Coverdale made theologically-sensitive interventions in the text of *Ruth*, using these to illustrate his agency. *Ruth* 2:12 will be considered in relation to the doctrine of justification; the marginal note at *Ruth* 2:20 in relation to purgatory and prayer; and the orthography of proper names and use of "kynsman" to translate Hebrew *go'el* | גאל, as instantiations of canonicity.

Ruth 2:12 and justification

Described by Jaroslav Pelikan as "the foundation of the entire Reformation", the doctrine of justification was an exegetical battle waged on New Testament turf. Romans 3:28 was the initial site of contention over the relative role of faith and works in setting humans right with God.[70] As Luther acknowledged in his open letter on translating (1530), his German version incorporated the word "allein" which had no direct counterpart in the traditional Latin, nor in New Testament Greek.[71] This, Luther argued, was equivalent to the Latin adverb *solum* and meant that "*only* faith saved"—a natural way to convey Paul's emphasis in German. Coverdale remains on the sidelines of this debate, incorporating a brief note in his margin: "some read: by faith onely". Contrast this with the 1537 Matthew Bible: its main text contained neither "only" nor "alone", but the adjacent margin is filled with a 163-word exposition of "by faith alone", invoking patristic authority. At the other central prooftext of

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the justification debate, James 2, commentary literally takes over the Matthew Bible's page: 114 words expound what "to be iustifyed" means in "all thys chapter", while another 379 cover the specifics of 2:24 ("how that of dedes a man is iustifyed"); the annotator uses 156 words "to conclude", ending with the observation that "Place fayleth me here (O reader) rather then tyme or wyll: or elles wolde I yet have spoken moare of thys thyng." Some decades later, the New Testament produced at Reims to support England's Roman Catholics bore a similar weight of commentary on these passages.[72] In its counterpart Old Testament, two volumes printed at Douai in 1609 and 1610, the Catholic annotator greets *Ruth* 2:12 with enthusiasm, commenting that: "Booz doubted not but that reward was due to good workes."[73] This edition deliberately drew upon the "authenticall" Latin text, i.e. the Vulgate. When one compares its *Ruth* passage with the Council of Trent's pronouncements on justification, there is a noticeable alignment in vocabulary—highlighted here in parentheses alongside the English texts:

> Our Lord **render** (*reddat*) unto thee for thy **worke** (*opere*), and God grant thou mayest receive a full **reward** (*mercedem*) . . .
> —*Ruth* 2:12 in the Douai version[74]

> And, for this cause, to those **working** (*operantibus*) **well** unto the end, and hoping in God, life eternal is to be proposed, both as a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God through Jesus Christ, and as a **reward** (*merces*) which is according to the promise of God himself, to be faithfully **rendered** (*reddenda*) to their good **works** (*operibus*) and merits.
> —The Council of Trent[75]

In its Latin state, then, the *Ruth* text coheres with Tridentine doctrine: human action could merit eternal life. So what happens when Coverdale encounters this passage? And in his other sources?

Pagninus has, like the Vulgate, a form of the noun "opus". This is the noun conventionally used to translate Greek ἔργων in the core New Testament passages—Romans

3 and James 2, and also at Galatians 2, a text commonly cross-referenced with the Romans passage.[76] In those passages, Coverdale's Germanic sources employed forms of the noun "Werk". This is also the noun found at *Ruth* 2:12 in pre-Lutheran Germanic bibles. However, Luther and related versions employ a different noun in this setting: "that" (NHG: Tat), a verbal noun derived from "thun", to do. Etymologically, it is cognate with English "deed". With this switch in vocabulary, Coverdale's Germanic sources resist reading Ruth as a works proof-text. Coverdale must be attentive to this: In English discourse around justification, two nouns are used interchangeably.[77] Survey the core passages in the early New Testaments of Tyndale and Geneva, and the Matthew, Great and Bishops Bibles and you will find "deeds". Study editions of the Geneva Bible and, like Douai, you will see "works" in each proof text. Neither Coverdale nor King James' translators were so systematic: both switch between the two English terms, as do the marginalia in other editions. The English vocabulary for talking about justification was flexible. For this reason, demonstrating his attentiveness not only to his Germanic sources, but also his sensitivity to doctrinal implications, in *Ruth* 2 Coverdale employed the alternative verbal noun "doing". This is one of three ways Coverdale alters the text of this verse to diminish the implication of meritorious works the Douai annotator later revelled in. Let us briefly examine the others:

> The LORDE recompence the[e] thy *doinge*, and thy rewarde be parfecte *w[ith]* the
> LORDE God of Israel, unto whom thou art come to put thy *trust* under his wynges.
> (Coverdale *Ruth* 2:12, emphasis added.)

Where Coverdale uses the preposition "with", other English versions have "of"; he is opting for the Germanic "bei" over Latin "a". As a result, the implication that Ruth is to receive something specific from God is diminished. This is furthered by a more enduring adaptation. In Hebrew, Ruth is implicitly likened to a small bird, coming to shelter beneath God's wings. There is nothing difficult in this metaphor, but it is not conveyed by Coverdale's English. His "trust" is the Germanic "Züversicht"—belonging to the same semantic domain as belief and

faith.[78] With this non-metaphorical intrusion, the telos of Ruth's actions is reframed as a categorically religious endeavour.[79] Although in the Great Bible, Ruth is "come to abide", the trust reading dominates subsequent English bibles. The Geneva, Bishops and King James Versions reorder the words so that "trust" is the terminus of this verse.[80] Her work has become one of faith, and therefore something that can be justly rewarded.

Ruth 2:20: Prayer and purgatory

Mercy for the dead, Johann Brenz (1499–1570) advised, does not consist of "Missas p*ro* p*ecca*tis mortuoru*m in*stituere", instituting masses for the sins of the dead.[81] As a first-generation reformer, Brenz feared that without direct instruction his preaching peers and their audiences would comprehend Naomi's mention of mercy to the dead in such terms.

Augustine had allowed for the efficacy of prayers for the dead. Gregory the Great (d. 590) went further in affirming that such prayer could achieve their "mitigation and ultimately release" from "purgatorial fire".[82] He accorded a special status to the Eucharist, as the ultimate in mitigating measures, illustrating this with the case of a monk from his own order who (after death) assured the monks that the thirty masses conducted on his behalf were sufficient to obtain his release from purgatory's pains. From such teaching stemmed the sponsorship of masses in honour of the dead. The system has its attractions, providing means for the living to maintain some semblance of relationship with the dead. Yet if faith were the sole mechanism of justification, the elaborate machinery constructed around efficacious good works was redundant, and that included such mass-saying.

Brenz's comments appear at *Ruth* 1:8. Coverdale's attention turned to the same matter when he reached Naomi's speech in 2:20. Brenz's commentary operated with the Vulgate as his base text, which has "misericordiam" at 1:8 and "gratiam" at 2:20. In both cases, the Hebrew has *hesed* | חסד. Stephanus' Vulgate acknowledged this with the marginal note "misericordiam" at 2:20. This consistency would have been corroborated for Coverdale by

Pagninus, and by Luther and Zürich's repeated "Barmherzigkeit". While later English versions use secular language of goodness or kindness, Coverdale stuck to the conventional mercy. However, he qualified its manifestations with a marginal reference to Tobit 2. The passage recounts how Tobit delayed celebrations of Pentecost in order to ensure appropriate burial for a man who had been killed. The parallel is weak insofar as Boaz cannot be understood to have buried Elimelech, Mahlon, or Chilion; but it gives an example of practical help post-mortem. Supplying Tobit's treatment of a dead man as a pertinent case of mercy inhibits readers interpreting Naomi's words in terms of prayer or masses. The Bishops Bible reveals a similar anxiety, using the margins to explain that being good or kind to the dead was achieved through attention "to their frendes beyng alyve, for their sakes".[83] Coverdale's annotation stands within a wider tradition of examples and clarifications, intended to counter well-developed ideas about how the living could show mercy to the dead, and how the dead might benefit from God's grace. Having conferred with multiple potential sources (and noting the special role of Zürich 1534 in supplying Coverdale's cross-references), we are now able to appreciate the distinctiveness and creativity of Coverdale's intervention. The Tobit reference, repeated in the Great Bible, was an independent venture in Protestant exegetical prophylaxis.

Names, kin, and canon

Ruth's sister-in-law is known to modern English-speakers as Orpah. In Luther's bibles, and subsequently Zürich's, she was "Arpa". This transliteration of עָרְפָּה treats the opening *qamets* vowel as *qatan* (short, an "a"-sound) rather than *gadol* (long, an "o"-sound). However one accounts for it, "Arpa" is an effective marker of Coverdale's dependence on "Douche".[84] The same issue arises for Hebrew *noʿomi* | נָעֳמִי, now established as "Naomi" in English, but found as "Naemi" in Coverdale and as both "Naemi" and "Noemi" in Luther's first edition.[85] Coverdale's "Ephrates" (1:2) is Luther's "Ephrater", so also "EliMelech" and "Mahelon".

Reformation Coverdale import

Coverdale's capitalised "LORDE" is Luther's "HERR", his "Moabitish wives", Luther's "Moabitische weyber". That these nouns have passed through Zürich's filter is indicated by "Ephrata" (4:11) where Luther had "Ephratha", and perhaps also the capitalisation of "Allmightie" (1:21).

Coverdale's orthography does not always match his favoured source. Two additional trends can be observed. The first is respect for existing standardisation: names of important biblical characters and places already had established vernacular forms; with Jesus and Mary stand Coverdale's Bethleem. The second intervention is more striking: Coverdale's "Boos" does not match any Germanic or Latin interpreters, though the spelling appears once in the chapter summaries of the Zürich bibles (see **Table 4**). His "Phares" (4:12, 18) belongs to the Vulgate tradition not to Zürich. Both names occur also in the genealogy (4:18–22) where Coverdale repeatedly diverges from the Zürich model: Aram, not Ram; Aminadab, not AmmiNadab, Naasson, not Nahesson. "Hesrom" is especially distinctive; compare Zürich's Hezron. An exhaustive collation finds that with one exception (Isai/Jesse), Coverdale has standardised this genealogy to match that presented in the gospel of Matthew, following the spellings of Tyndale's 1534 New Testament.[86] This might be seen as subsidiary to the previous point: Coverdale was adopting established spellings. However, these were marginal characters and such standardisation was not undertaken by other bible producers.[87] By bringing New Testament spellings into his Old Testament, Coverdale gives primacy to the connected text, overwriting the Hebrew Bible with Christian metanarrative.

While definitively part of Judaeo-Christian canons, the physical location of *Ruth* varies between versions, according to its perceived function. In Jewish canons, it is one of five festival scrolls, sometimes ordered according to their liturgical sequence, or placed directly after Proverbs to encourage readers to encounter Ruth as an example of the ideal woman (cf. Proverbs 31:10–21, *Ruth* 3:11). In Christian canons, it typically appears as a

bridge between Judges and I Samuel, supporting a grand chronological narrative that climaxes with Jesus. Coverdale's treatment of the genealogy reinforces that bridge, while his marginal cross-references to Matthew and 1 Chronicles, where the genealogy is similarly harmonised, signpost the Christian message. His actions have an ideological weight that exceeds the maintenance of familiarity. Such intervention is made visible only when the detail of editions is given due attention.

There is another way in which we should recognise Coverdale's *Ruth* as a text with canonical consequences, and in this case political ones too. Charles V's ambassador Eustace Chapuys judged Coverdale's translation partisan because it used "kinsman" in Deuteronomy 25:5.[88] This was one of two passages used to inform debate about the validity of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, his brother's widow. The other was in Leviticus, which included not "uncovering the nakedness" of a brother's wife (18:16‖20:21) among a series of injunctions that came to form a list of prohibited sexual categories. Henry called upon the latter in seeking his marriage's annulment, to convince the Pope that the relationship was invalid. The Deuteronomy passage advises that where brothers ('*ahim* | אחים) live together and one dies childless, a survivor should inseminate the widow and raise a child on his behalf. Scholarly and religious authorities disagreed about if and how these texts should be applied. The introductory clause of Deuteronomy, "who dwell together", was understood by some to imply strictly consanguineous affinity. It is with that view in mind that Chapuys criticises Coverdale's rendering of a second Hebrew term, *yibbum* | יבם, as kinsman. In the Vulgate, *yibbum* was rendered as brother (frater). Coverdale's Germanic sources used "i[h]r" (i.e. her) "Schwager", a term that could be used narrowly of one's spouse's brother but was also applied to in-laws more broadly. Pagninus used "cognatus ei[us]", his co-born (referring back to the deceased).[89] Chapuys' criticism relies upon the Vulgate text. Coverdale's choice of vocabulary deals fairly with the options before him. In rejecting the simple brother, it also

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leant towards the king's case.

Coverdale strengthened the king's cause in another way: In the Deuteronomy passage, both his bible and the 1534 Zürich edition refer the reader to *Ruth*, as if to illuminate the matter. This is not itself exceptional. Scholars today disagree about the extent to which what happens between Ruth and Boaz ought to be understood in terms of the obligations of Deuteronomy. Both passages involve the symbolic passing of a sandal as part of a quasi-legal transaction, a detail that prompts some exegetical cross-referencing. Yet by employing (nigh) kinsman in place of what was variously "Nachmann," "propinquus," and in later Luther "Erbe" (the Hebrew *go'el*), Coverdale creates a core common vocabulary between the passages, something that does not obtain in any of his sources. Framing both Deuteronomic expectation and Boaz's action in terms of kin, he thus substantiates Boaz, not a sibling but an undefined male relative, as the principle fulfilment of Deuteronomy 25's obligation. This lexical dovetailing diminished the biblical precedent for the king's ill-fortuned marriage to Catherine among his Anglophone subjects. Coverdale's omission of Zurich's cross-reference to Tamar in Deuteronomy 25 further reinforces Boaz's impact.[90]

Coverdale may have announced his ignorance of biblical languages. Should we then imagine him as a naïve actor? I think not. Rather, one should consider for whom he was working. It seems evident that the Coverdale Bible was Thomas Cromwell's project. It was to Cromwell that Coverdale wrote seeking financial support for his scriptural studies in the mid-1520s;[91] and it was to Zürich that Cromwell turned attention a decade later. The fascinating and perhaps unanswerable question is: in taking Zürich as his model was Coverdale promoting Swiss Reformed scholarship to Cromwell, or simply doing as the vice-gerent "requyred"? Either way, we may now "trace back" a Zürich turn to 1535.[92]

Coverdale's preferred source was a new edition, leaving the Swiss presses in late

1534. It offered a technical cross-referencing system that aided canonical reading. It embodied a quiet conservatism through the inclusion of interpolations from the Vulgate tradition. Coverdale took it up with a similar quietness, making its voice his own, and interjecting effectively where crisis arose in support of a moderate Protestantism. The results secured his commission for England's first authorized version. As Coverdale knew, sources matter.

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1 Coverdale owned that he had received assistance; I in turn choose to acknowledge those who through attentive suggestions have enriched what began as an appendix to my PhD thesis: Anthony Milton, Diarmaid MacCulloch, John Barton, Mark Rankin, Richard Rex, and three anonymous peer reviewers. I own gratitude also to members of the University of Sheffield's Early Modern Discussion Group, Hull & District Theological Society, and the Society for Old Testament Study, who have heard and responded to iterations.

Transcriptions are exact, with the following exceptions: *i, j, u* and *v* are amended to the corresponding modern form; long *s* and its combination with *z* (approximating ß) are both transcribed using *s(s)*; and the maltese cross character which demarcates pages in Coverdale's prefatory matter (Arial unicode 1F542) is rendered as "+". Where lexical terms are compared in discussion, spelling is standardised unless the orthography is pertinent.

2 Miles Coverdale, trans., *Biblia: that is the Holy Scrypture of the Olde and New Testament, faithfully translated in to Englishe*, ([? : ?, preliminaries London: James Nicolson], 1535; USTC 502727; STC 2063.3), + iiii *recto*. Earlier preliminaries (in STC 2063) do not survive intact and may not have included the dedication to the king within which this statement appears.

3 Guppy via E.R. Smothers, "The Coverdale Translation of Psalm LXXXIV," *Harvard Theological Review* 38.4 (1945): 249–50.

4 See Heinz Bluhm, "The 'Douche' Sources of Coverdale's Translation of the Twenty-Third Psalm," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 46.1 (1947): 54.

5 J.F. Mozley, *Coverdale and his Bibles*, (London: Lutterworth, 1953), 100.

6 i.e. *The Byble: which is all the Holy Scripture: in whych are contayned the Olde and Newe Testament truly and purely translated into Englysh by Thomas Matthew* [alias William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale; ed. John Rogers], [Antwerp: Matthew Crom for] Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch, 1537 (NK 2497; STC 2066; USTC 410342; ESTC S121981).

7 Coverdale, trans. *Biblia* ([? : ?], 1535; STC 2063; USTC 442663), title page. For the secondary English titlepage, see STC 2063.3; USTC 502727.

8 Ilona N. Rashkow, "Hebrew Bible Translation and the Fear of Judaization," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 21.2 (1990), 223. The judgment is repeated in a subsequent monograph.

9 A.A. Den Hollander has shown that the Leuven censors based their decisions on titlepages; it is reasonable to imagine similar procedures across the channel. Cf. Wim François, "Vernacular Bible Reading and Censorship in [the] Early Sixteenth Century: The Position of the Leuven Theologians," in *Lay Bibles in Europe, 1450–1800*, ed. Mathijs Lamberigts and A. A. Den Hollander (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 90.   For sustained discussion of the changed title, see Harold R. Willoughby, "Current Errors Concerning the Coverdale Bible," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 55:1 (1936): 1–16; Mozley, *Coverdale and His Bibles*, 65–7; and S. L. Greenslade, "Introduction," in *The Coverdale Bible, 1535. Facsimile reprint of the Holkham copy in the British Library (C.132.h.46),* (Folkestone: Wm. Dawson, 1975), 12. Daniell confuses title-pages; David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003), 176.

10 Paul Arblaster, "'Totius Mundi Emporium': Antwerp as a Centre for Vernacular Bible Translations, 1523–1545," in *The Low Countries as a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs*, ed. Arie Jan Gelderblom, Jan L. De Jong, and Marc Van Vaeck (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 9–31.

11 See Guido Latré, "The 1535 Coverdale Bible and Its Antwerp Origins," in *The Bible as Book: The Reformation*, ed. Orlaith O'Sullivan (London: British Library, 2000), 89–102; and *idem* "The Place of Printing of the Coverdale Bible," *Tyndale Society Journal* 8 (1997): 5–18. The counter-case is summarised in David Paisey and Giulia Bartrum, "Hans Holbein and Miles Coverdale: A New Woodcut", *Print Quarterly*, 26.3 (2009), 245–6; see also Peter W.M. Blayney, *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London, 1501–1557*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1: 344–7.

12 For an overview of Luther's printed revisions, see Heinrich Ernst Bindseil and Hermann Agathon Niemeyer, eds*., Dr. Martin Luther's Bibelübersetzung nach der letzten Original-Ausgabe, kritisch bearbeitet.* 7 vols. (Halle: Canstein'schen Bibel-Anstalt, 1845–1855) especially 2: iii (parts relevant to *Ruth*) and 1: x-xii (for whole bibles). A descriptive account appears in Siegfried Raeder, "The Exegetical and Hermeneutical Work of Martin Luther", in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation,* Vol. 2: *From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment (1300–1800)*, ed. Magne Sæbø (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 363–406. Early modern editions examined here are *Das Ander Teyl des Alten Testaments,* (Wittemberg: Christian Döring and Lucas Cranach, **1524**; Manchester University R28667.2,

USTC 626820) and (in facsimile) *Biblia, das ist, die gantze Heilige Schrifft deudsch,* ed. Stephan Füssel. 2 vols., (Cologne: Taschen, 2002)—a facsimile of USTC 616653 (Wittenberg, Hans Lufft, 1534). The 1525 text is reconstructed from these, using Bindseil and Niemeyer.

13 Daniell, *Bible in English*, 176.

14 Johannes Bugenhagen, trans. & ed., *De Biblie: uth der uthleggine Doctoris Martini Luthers yn dyth düdesche vlitich uthgesettet, mit sundergen underrichtingen, als men seen mach* (Lübeck: Ludowich Dietz, 1534; USTC 629067).

15 *Den Bibel: tgeheele Oude ende Nieuvve Testamēt met Grooter Naersticheyt naden Latijnschen Text gecorrigeert*. 2 vols. [Antwerp]: Willem **Vorsterman**, 1534. USTC 437650. *Dat oude ende dat nieuwe testament.* Antwerp: Jacob **Liesvelt**, 1526. First edition; USTC 400463; NK386.

16 Specifically, one of the pair of Low German dialect editions produced by Peter Quentell, ca. 1478 (*Hijr beghynt Genesis dat erste boeck der vijff boeckere Moysi*; USTC 740113); see the final column of Table 3 below. Also consulted at an early stage were the **Mentelin** High German Bible (*Biblia,* 1466, Strasbourg; USTC 740100), Meer and Yemantszoon's Dutch Bible (*Hier beghīt dat prologus vāder biblē des oversetters te duytsche utē latine*, **Delft:** 1477; USTC 435295), and the edition published at **Halberstadt** in 1522 (*Biblia Dudesch dat Erste (-Ander) Deell*, 2 vols, Lorenz Stuchs, 1522; USTC 616608).

17 See Traudel Himmighöfer, *Die Zürcher Bibel bis zum Tode Zwinglis, 1531: Darstellung und Bibliographie* (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1995), chs. 3–5; and for a summary, Stefan Sonderegger, "Review: Traudel Himmighöfer: Die Zürcher Bibel bis zum Tode Zwinglis (1531) Darstellung und Bibliographie, Mainz 1995. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz, Abt. Religionsgeschichte 154," *Zwingliana* 25 (2010): 195–6.

18 On this context, see e.g. Peter Opitz, "The Exegetical and Hermeneutical Work of John Oecolampadius, Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin", in Sæbø, *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, esp. 420–22; and R. Gerald Hobbs, "Pluriformity of Early Reformation Scriptural Interpretation" also in Sæbø, *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 452–511.

19 These words translate its title: *Die Gantze Bibel: Der Ursprüngliche Ebraischenn unnd Griechischenn Warheyt nach auffs Aller Treüwlichest Verteütschet* (Zürich: Christoffel Froschower, 1530; USTC 636708).

20 *Die Gantze Bibel der ursprünglichen Ebraischen und Griechischen waarheyt nach auffs aller treuwlichest verteutschet.* **Zürich**: Christoffel Froschouer, **1531**. USTC 636707.

21 *Bibel Teutsch der Ursprünglichen Hebreischen und Griechischen warheit nach auffs treüwlichest*

verdolmetschet (**Zürich**: Christoffel Froschouer, **1534**; USTC 616427), **Ii, *recto*.

22 Froschauer's preface supported the assumption that 1531 and 1534 texts were the same. Smothers' treatment of Coverdale's sources is specifically misled by this information drawn from Mezger's authoritative account; see Smothers, "Psalm LXXXIV," 257; and Johann Jakob Mezger, *Geschichte der deutschen Bibelübersetzungen in der schweizerisch-reformirten Kirche: von der Reformation bis zur Gegenwart: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der reformirten Kirche*. (Basel: Bahnmaier, 1876), 111.

23 Cf. e.g. Guppy in Smothers, "Psalm LXXXIV", 249; Daniell, *Bible in English*, 176; F.F. Bruce, *The English Bible: A History of Translations from the Earliest English Versions to the New English Bible*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 58–9. For Coverdale's critical use of Tyndale, see Heinz Bluhm, "'Fyve Sundry Interpreters': The Sources of the First Printed English Bible," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 39.2 (1976): 107–16.

24 On Joye, see Gergely Juhász, "Antwerp Bible Translations in the King James Bible," in *The King James Bible After Four Hundred Years: Literary, Linguistic, and Cultural Influences*, ed. Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 105.

25 Sante Pagninus, trans. *Biblia: habes in hoc libro prudens lector utriusq[ue] instrumenti novam tranlationē aeditum a reverendo sacrę theologiæ doctore Sancte pagnino lucēsi concionatore apostolico Praedicatorij ordinis, necnon & librum de interpretamentis hebraicorum, aramęorū, græcorumq[ue] nominum, sacris in literis contentorū, in quo iuxta idioma . . .* [Lyon: Antonius du Ry, (funded by:) François Turchi, Dominici Berticinium & Jacques Giunta,] 1528 (USTC 145898).

26 Robert Estienne (alias **Stephanus**), ed. *Breves in eadem Annotationes, ex doctiss. interpretationibus, & Hebræorum commentariis. Interpretatio propriorum nominum Hebraicorum. Index copiosissimus rerum & sententiarum utriusque testamenti. Antverpiae. Excudebat Martinus Cæsar, sumptu & opera Godefridi Dumæi. An. M. D. XXXIIII. Mense Ianuario.* (USTC 403904). Conferred also with an earlier Paris edition: *Biblia. Parisiis: Ex officina R. Stephani,* M.D. XXVIII [1528; but 1527 in colophon] (USTC 181095).

27 The evidence directly reexamined here is that pertaining to *Ruth*. Münster's text accounts for Ruth's reinstatement as "better . . . th[a]n seven sonnes" (4:15) in the Great Bible. It is difficult to imagine that a version which held so much sway in 1539 had no perceptible impact for the same translator in 1535. On Münster and the Great Bible, see Mozley, *Coverdale and his Bibles*, esp. 221-3. For further discussion of Coverdale's *Ruth* in relation to the Great Bible text and Münster's Latin, see "Many sources, one text", a second appendix to I.C. Hine, "Englishing the

Bible in early modern Europe", PhD thesis, University of Sheffield 2014 (unpublished)*, pp. 353–370.

28 Maaler's *Die Teutsch Sprach* (1561; USTC 637339), cited here via *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm*, vol.14 (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1955; digitised edition: http://woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB/: Trier Center for Digital Humanities, 2011), s.v. "redlich" §4 (478).

29 Cf. Alex Shepard. "Honesty, Worth and Gender in Early Modern England, 1560–1640," in *Identity and Agency in English Society, 1500–1800*, ed. Henry French and Jonathan Barry, (Basingstoke, Hants.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 87–105.

30 Also 3:9, 12; 4:1, 3, 4, 8, 14.

31 The verb occurs 3 times in this verse, 4 times in *Ruth* 4.5. Note also the shift from "losung" to "beerben" in 4.7.

32 The Latins have the plural (*generationes*).

33 This treats two marginalia at 1:20 as a single case, sets aside inconsistency in spelling of Noemi / Naemi in 1524 and interim editions, and overlooks the introduction of the "ge-" prefix and a change in imperative form; see Table 2, §§22–26. On shifts in German language, see William Burley Lockwood, *Historical German Syntax* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968); and David Fertig, "The Ge- Participle Prefix in Early New High German and the Modern Dialects," *Journal of Germanic Linguistics* 10.2 (1998): 237–78. doi:10.1017/S1040820700002353.

34 *De Biblie mit vlitigher achtinge recht na deme latine in dudelck averghesettet…,* (**Lübeck:** Stephanus Arndes, 1494; USTC 740114).

35 The idiosyncratic manuscript is MS Bodley 277, also known as King Henry's Bible and designated by a superscript "I" throughout the critical edition, i.e. *Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments with the apocryphal books, in the earliest English versions made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his followers*, ed. Josiah Forshall and Frederic Madden, 4 vols. (Oxford: OUP, 1850).

36 Bruce, *English Bible*, 59.

37 Orthography of 1524 except where sense differs.

38 Asterisk and curved bracket enclose passages on which there is marginal comment, commonly advising the reader that the main text differs from the Hebrew source. The marginal note is supplied here after the parallel lines. See also the entry at 1:15.

39 But see L41 and thereafter, "Rede mir nicht *drein*."

40 I.e. among them (m. pl.), by inference the inhabitants of Bethlehem: "Quibus urbem ingressis, velox apud cunctos fama percrebuit", '[Naomi and Ruth] having entered the city, news quickly spread among them.'

41 The Bayerische Staats Bibliothek's digitised copy of Zurich 1530 is damaged such that the words between *gang hin* and *auf / den schnittern* are barely legible. The text appears to be the same as Z31 (and thus Luther).

42 Z30 and Z31: *dann*.

43 Z30 and Z31: *sengkorn.*

44 Though see discussion for the Antwerp marginal reading, "quae".

45 *Zeugen* has the meaning 'generate, produce'.   Though used of reproduction in general, it is more commonly restricted to the male role than the female (see DWB s.v. "zeugen" §I. 3; 31.848). That Luther embraced this distinction may be seen in Gen 4:17-18 where Cain's wife *gebar* while Lamech (in versions post-1528) *zeugete* (compare Vulgate: *peperit, genuit*).

46 *Gebar* belongs to the cognate verb of the noun *Geburt* with which the genealogy is introduced.

47 Compare "dinges" in the older Cologne text.

48 I have checked copies from 1521 and 1533.

49 Cf. Raymond Thornhill, "The Greek Text of the Book of Ruth: A Grouping of Manuscripts according to Origen's Hexapla," *VT* 3.3 (1953), 244; Alfred Rahlfs, *Das Buch Ruth griechisch, als Probe einer kritischen Handausgabe der Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Privileg. Wurtt. Bibelanst., 1922), 66.

50 In addition to the Vulgate, the Lucian recension of the Septuagint and the Syriac Peshitta share this reading. See J. de Waard, "Ruth", in *General Introduction and Megilloth*, ed. Adrian Schenker et al, vol. 18 of *Biblia Hebraica quinta editione cum apparatu critico novis curis elaborato* [BHQ18] (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004), ad loc. for further detail. Also Rahlfs, *Das Buch Ruth griechisch*, 94.

51 Some regard "She" as a deliberate correction. I follow David Norton's view that "He" (printed in the first edition) was the translators' intended reading, being a Hebrew-led change to the 1602 Bishops' text and the *lectio difficilior*. It is not, in any case, an accurate guide to the genealogy of later printings, where "she" became the dominant reading but many elements of the first printing were retained. See Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible*, (Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 2005), 57, 65.

52 It is unusual for Pagninus to differ from the Hebrew text as now received. He may have encountered variants at Rome or Lyon, or—as a marginal hand in a copy now at Ghent University intimates (cf. Bib.Th[eol].000010, Fo.95. *verso*)—have preserved the Latin tradition with the support of the Peshitta.

53 This is not to say the Vulgate had no effect on earlier Zurich versions; "hauffen garben" (Cov. "heape of sheues") in 3:7 parallels the Latin "acervum manipulorum". Further evidence of Vulgate influence on Z34 may be seen in cohesive particles.   E.g. at 2:9, a conjunction is introduced (Z34 "dann", Vg "enim", Cov. "for") where earlier Zurich editions (and Luther) had none. Bruce Gordon regards the 1534 bible as Leo Jud's project but does not indicate his source (something accompanying the 1543 Latin bible, perhaps?); see idem. *The Swiss Reformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 243. Gerald Hobbs identifies general "respect for the 'old interpreter'" at Zurich, giving Konrad Pellikan's approach to Isaiah and the Psalter as examples ("Pluriformity", 485).

54 See s.v. "polenta" in *The dictionary of syr Thomas Eliot knyght.* London: Thomas Berthelet, 1538; USTC 502989. What is indicated in Hebrew is purely the cooking process (roast, fried; cf. Coverdale's "parched").

55 Directly aiming to reconcile contradictions, John Gill provides a fine example of a wider trend. See idem. *An Exposition of the Old Testament: in which are recorded the Original of Mankind, of the Several Nations of the World, and of the Jewish Nation in particular: . . . and throughout the whole, the Original Text, and the Versions of it are inspected and compared; Interpreters of the best note, both Jewish and Christian, consulted; difficult places at large explained; seeming contradictions reconciled, and various passages illustrated and confirmed by testimonies of writers, as well Gentile as Jewish* (London: George Keith, 1763; ESTC T93022), 2: 368–9.

56 Irena Backus. *Reformation Readings of the Apocalypse: Geneva, Zurich, and Wittenberg, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 29.

57 Ernst Nagel, "Die Abhängigkeit der Coverdalebibel von der Zürcherbibel." *Zwingliana* 6.8 (1937). Apart from two references in later issues of *Zwingliana* (see 1938, 1992), I have only found Nagel's work noted in H.W. Pipkin, *A Zwingli Bibliography* (Pittsburgh, PN: Barbour Library, 1972); a French history of Swiss publications (Charles Gilliard and Henri Meylan, "Histoire de la Suisse Publications des années 1936 à 1940," *Revue Historique* 196.1 (1946): 77); and as a footnote in G.W. Locher's *Zwingli's Thought: New Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 366 n. 127.

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58 For Ruth, editions vary only in orthography.

59 Nagel, "Die Abhängigkeit der Coverdalebibel", 541.

[60] The reference is not clearly printed but fits Deut. 23:25; cf. Coverdale's translation: "Whan thou goest in thy neghbours cornefelde, thou mayest plucke the eares with thine hande, but with a syccle mayest thou not reape therin."   In Zurich 1531, this passage is linked by another cross-reference to the gleaning rules that follow in Deut. 24.

[61] This reading reflects the Latin "unge" given by the Vulgate and Pagninus. Luther had misconstrued a Hebrew root, translating וסכת with "verhulle", veil or cover (for Coverdale's "moffell", read muffle). The result is a somewhat incoherent set of instructions in which Ruth is told to veil herself *before* dressing. "Anoint" reflects the Hebrew instruction and appears as the main text in subsequent English versions; the superior reading stands in Coverdale's margin as testimony not only to his inability to read Hebrew but also his preference for the Douche interpreters. Luther's readers had to wait until 1541 until their Ruth was told to anoint herself (salbe).
An earlier attempt to assess Coverdale's sources focused on such marginalia; cf. Brooke Foss Westcott's *A General View of the History of the English Bible* (London: Macmillan, 1868).   The approach is of questionable value because it attends to secondary readings rather than those that dominated. Westcott also failed to consider the significance of different editions, though this gap is partly addressed by the reviser of the third edition, W.A. Wright (London: Macmillan, 1905).

62 Mozley, *Coverdale and his Bibles*, 85–6.

63 Nagel, "Die Abhängigkeit der Coverdalebibel", 442–3.

64 Nagel, "Die Abhängigkeit der Coverdalebibel", 442: "Die Ähnlichkeit der äußeren Form . . . ist in die Augen springend." Cf. Walter J. Hollenweger, "Zwinglis Einfluss in England," *Zwingliana* 19.1 (1992): 176.

65 Nagel, "Die Abhängigkeit Der Coverdalebibel", 443–44. Cf. *OED Online* (Third edition. September 2012.) s.v. "allegation, n." 4. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/5200/ Accessed 7 December 2014.

66 It might also indicate an assumed canonical literacy among Zurich readers, or an interest in advertising the fullness of one's canon (cf. Juhász, "Antwerp Bible Translations," 103).

67 Nagel, "Die Abhängigkeit Der Coverdalebibel", 443–5.

68 The two paragraphs run consecutively, beginning "Nun wollend wir" (Z31, 3v–4r). Other variations between 1531 and 1534 are of such minor character as to render strange Gordon's treatment of the 1534 preface as if it were Jud's; see Bruce Gordon, "The Authority of

48

Antiquity: England and the Protestant Latin Bible," in *The Reception of Continental Reformation in Britain*, ed. Polly Ha and Patrick Collinson, Proceedings of the British Academy, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 18, nn. 69 and 70. I have identified in Z34 only two further substantive amendments, both omissions: a gloss on the minor prophets (Z31: 4r) and a repeated negative (2v).

69 Zwingli's commitment to the Septuagint is explored by Hobbs, "Pluriformity," esp. 432–4. For the wider debate about Jewish biblical sources, see Opitz, "Exegetical and Hermeneutical Work"; Sophie Kessler-Mesguich, "Early Christian Hebraists" in Sæbø, *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 254–75; Siegfried Raeder, "Exegetical and Hermeneutical Work"; Stephen G. Burnett, *Christian Hebraism in the Reformation Era (1500–1660): Authors, Books, and the Transmission of Jewish Learning* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); idem. "Reassessing the 'Basel–Wittenberg Conflict': Dimensions of the Reformation-Era Discussion of Hebrew Scholarship," in *Hebraica Veritas? Christian Hebraists and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Allison P. Coudert and Jeffrey S. Shoulson (Philadelphia, Penn.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 181–201; Alister E. McGrath, *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 151–153.

70 Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, Volume 4: *Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300–1700)*, (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 4:139.

71 Luther's letter, *Ein Sendbrieff D. M. Lutthers. Von Dolmetzschen und Fürbit der heiligenn* ([Wittenberg:] MDXXX) is cited here from the Taylor Institution edition: *Ein Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen—an open letter on translating,* ed. Emma Huber; English trans. Howard Jones (Oxford: Taylor Institution, 2017). https://editions.mml.ox.ac.uk/editions/sendbrief/

72 I.e. *The new testament of Jesus Christ translated faithfully into English out of the authentical Latin . . . In the English College of Rhemes*, [trans. Gregory Martin], (Reims: John Fogny [Jean de Foigny], 1582; USTC 156842).

73 *The Holie Bible: faithfully translated into English out of the Authentical Latin, diligently conferred with the Hebrew, Greeke, and other editions in divers languages: . . . . By the English College of Doway; The Second Tome of the Holie Bible faithfully translated into English . . .*, [trans. Gregory Martin] (2 vols. Douai: Laurence Kellam, at the signe of the holie Lambe, 1609–10; STC 2207; ESTC S101944; digital copy: EEBO: 1021:01), ad loc.

74 Latin according to the Stephanus and Clementine versions.

75 Session 6: 13 Jan 1547. *Decretum de Justificatione*. Chapter XVI: De fructu justificationis, hoc

est, de merito bonorum operum, deque ipsius meriti ratione. Latin text via Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, vol. 2: *The Greek and Latin Creeds, with translations,* Bibliotheca Symbolica Ecclesiæ Universalis (New York: Harper, 1882), 107. Schaff's English translation is here amended in order to make clear that both "working well" and "hoping in God" are required for the receipt of life eternal.

76 As e.g. in Luther's letter, and in the margins of Zurich 1534, and the Great and Bishops Bibles (e.g. USTC 503073; 506837). Intriguingly, Pagninus employs a form of *factus* ("deed") in James 2.

77 Subsequent remarks draw on a collation of Romans 3:28, Galatians 2:16, and James 2:24 prepared using the online edition of Chadwyck-Healey's *The Bible in English* (ed. Gerald Hammond, Sylvia Adamson) for a majority of versions including the 1534 Tyndale New Testament (USTC 410313) and *Newe Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Geneva 1557 (USTC 450078), supplemented with Hendricksons' facsimile editions of Tyndale's 1526 New Testament (based on the British Library copy; cf. USTC 516283) and the 1537 Matthew Bible.

78 A helpful counterpoint is provided by Johann Böschenstein, whose 1525 Ruth was intended as a tool for those learning Hebrew, and who is credited with teaching both Melanchthon and Zwingli. This was his version of Ruth 2:12: "Got sol bezalen dein werck, und es sol sein dein volkumner lon, von dem Herren Got Iisrael, das du bist kamen, zů beschůtzt werden under seinen fertichen." Johann Böschenstein, *Die warhafftig histori der Moabitischen frawen, Ruth…* (Nuremberg: Hans Hergot, 1525 | USTC 637419; VD16 B3046).

79 The religious reading had precedent—the Targum explicitly identifies Ruth as a proselyte at this juncture.

80 The endurance is not solely due to Coverdale. In the Matthew Bible, this verse climaxes with "unto whom thou art come, to trust under his wings".

81 Johannes Brenz, *In librum Iudicum et Ruth commentarius: Iohanne Brentio authore*, (Hagenau: [Braubach], 1535; USTC 665988; VD16 B7759), 280.

82 R. R. Atwell, "From Augustine to Gregory the Great: An Evaluation of the Emergence of the Doctrine of Purgatory," JEH 38.2 (1987), 175.

83 Comment from 2:20 in the 1568 edition (ed. Matthew Parker; USTC 506837); see also at 1:8. For a more detailed account of such sensitivities and the interventions made in translation, preaching and commentary, see Hine, "Englishing the Bible", pp. 114–120.

84 So also Bugenhagen and Liesvelt. Vorsterman and pre-Lutheran versions give the traditional Latin

transcription, "orpha"; see similarly the Septuagint, ὀρφα. Reconstructing historical pronunciation and pedagogy is not straightforward: At Zürich, Konrad Pellikan recommended the vowel be transcribed å "being inter *a* clarum et *o* medium" (Kessler-Mesguich, "Early Christian Hebraists," 266 n.56). Joüon & Muraoka suggest *qamets*'s pronunciation was always properly a variant of "o"—an observation made already by the medieval scholar Abraham Ibn Ezra (cf. 37 n.20), but scribal differentiation is attested in the Qumran documents (37 n.20) and pragmatically a distinction continues to be made by most modern scholars to demonstrate the plain *qamets gadol*'s origins in a primitive "a" and the *qatan* in primitive "u" (40–42); Paul Joüon & T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. T. Muraoka, (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 2006), 37–42.

85 The latter spelling matches both Vulgate and Septuagint (Νωεμιν). The later dominance of English "Naomi" reflects Sebastian Münster's influence over the Great Bible.

86 "Hesrom" may be justly regarded as the shibboleth. The combination of initial "H" and terminal "–m" (apparently a Vulgate influence) I have traced only to Tyndale's 1534 New Testament (Matt 1). In Z34, the genealogies of Ruth 4 and 1 Chron 2 match except for Nahesson's son who appears as Salmon (Ruth 4:20–21) and Salma (1 Chron); in Matt 1 stand Judas, Pharetz, Hetzron, Aminadab, Nahasson, Salmon and Jesse, with Juda, Phares, Hezron, Aram, and Boos (alongside Aminadab, Salmon and Jesse) in Luke 3.

87 The Geneva Bible provides an instructive parallel.   Its translators pursued accurate transliteration, with accents to aid pronunciation; they also differentiated between "the usual names" and less common ones "for fear of troubling the simple readers" (preface to the 1560 edition, cited via Lynne Long, *Translating the Bible: From the 7th to the 17th Century* (Aldershot, Hants.: Ashgate, 2001), 173).   In the genealogies of Ruth and Matthew, they prioritise alignment with the source rather than English consistency, replicating even the immediate discrepancy between Hebrew "Salmàh" (Ruth 4:20) and "Salmòn" (4:21).

88 See Mozley, *Coverdale and his Bibles*, 116.

89 I am being literal here, but then at Ruth 2:1, Pagninus uses "consanguineus", and could have used it here had general blood relations been his emphasis.

90 Zurich 1534 has both Ruth and Genesis 38 as reference points in Deuteronomy 25. Though it is her father-in-law who comes to impregnate her, Tamar's situation in the Genesis narrative supports the interpretation of *yibbum* as an obligation falling upon a sibling. Her subterfuge is justified because her father-in-law has withheld a living son.

91 Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cromwell: A Life* (London: Allen Lane, 2018), 69.

92 MacCulloch, *Cromwell*, 364.