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Hans Holbein the Younger and Reformation Bible Production

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Hans Holbein the Younger produced a large corpus of illustrations that appeared in an astonishing variety of Bibles, including Latin Vulgate editions, Desiderius Erasmus's Greek New Testament, rival German translations by Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli, the English Coverdale Bible, as well as in Holbein's profoundly influential Icones veteris testamenti *(*Images of the Old Testament*)—to name only his better-known contributions. This essay discusses strategies that the artist developed for accommodating the heterogeneity of the various humanist and Reformation Bibles. For Erasmus's innovative Bibles, Holbein connected the text to the expansive concept of Renaissance humanist art, simultaneously portraying the new Bible and humanist art as part of a broadly defined cultural-philosophical discourse. Similarly, Holbein's production of Protestant Bibles, most importantly the epochal Luther Bible, associated the new text with the humanist Bible and, in so doing, conceptualized the humanist biblical image as a validation of religious art in a new context. Ultimately, the reliance on humanist art as a cultural authority mitigated perception of the heterogeneity of the text to the point that the publishers of Holbein's* Icones *completely displaced the text with the daring creation of a new genre: the picture Bible. With the exception of the iconography of royal supremacy in England, Holbein's Bible image was exceedingly movable, an artistic efficiency designed to contribute to the stability of the Bible image across a wide humanist and multiconfessional spectrum.*

HANS Holbein the Younger (1497–1543) contributed to a greater number and a greater variety of Bible editions than did any other artist of the early Reformation. Although only a partial compilation, the bibliography of Holbein's book illustrations in *Hollstein's German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts* tallies some seventy-two Bible productions, in seven languages, that used his artwork.[1] His designs also

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[1]Robert Zijlma, *Ambrosius Holbein to Hans Holbein the Younger*, in *Hollstein's German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1470–1700*, ed. Tilman Falk, vols. 14, 14A, 14B

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appeared in other biblical works, including major commentaries and at least eighteen editions of Desiderius Erasmus's influential *Paraphrases of the Bible*.[2] Despite such a prodigious output and despite Holbein's prestige as a painter, relatively little scholarship has been devoted to interpreting his approach to Bible illustration. Nearly all the research thus far has addressed questions of attribution (a significant matter because very few Holbein woodcuts are signed) and, especially, the genealogy of his iconography.[3] Yet, Holbein's career unfolded as part of a truly revolutionary moment in the history of the Bible: the proliferation of printed Bibles in original language editions as well as in new translations. In the aftermath of Erasmus's first ever publication of the New Testament in Greek (1516) and Martin Luther's first ever German translation of that original text (1522)—and the massive Bible movement they helped launch—the cultural status of the Bible became paradoxical: philologists, theologians, artists, publishers, and, of course, rulers firmly established the Bible as the ideological authority for Christian culture, yet, in the process of making biblicism hegemonic, they shattered the unity, even the textual uniformity, of the Christian Bible.

The new heterogeneity of the Bible and the sociopolitical upheavals of the religious innovations presented challenges with which publishers and artists, such as Holbein, had to contend. His work appeared in rival Protestant versions—the translations by Luther and Ulrich Zwingli—as well as in the French humanist translation by Jacques Lefèvre and the first complete Bible in English, the Coverdale Bible (1535). Moreover, his art also illustrated a host of Catholic-oriented Bible texts, including the Vulgate as well as Erasmus's Bible editions and paraphrases. At first glance, this striking ecumenicity seems to intensify a conundrum in Holbein research: despite his prolific production of religious art, it has proven impossible to define

(Roosendaal: Koninklijke van Poll, 1988) (hereafter cited as *Hollstein*), lists the first use of each image systematically and otherwise includes extensive coverage only for early reprints. Many more reprints of Holbein's images are identified in Frank Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration 1500–1545: Oberrheinische Buchillustration*, vol. 2 (Basel: Universitätsbibliothek, 1984), but not systematically and without an overview on Holbein. A unified bibliography based on Hieronymus's learned but scattered observations would be of great value for the study of Holbein's graphic art. I have tallied seventy-two Bible imprints in the bibliography of *Hollstein*, 14B:168–175, along with two *plenaria* listed separately in *Hollstein*, 14, no. 11. The *Hollstein* list of Bibles includes several editions of the *Icones*.

[2]This tally is also based on the partial bibliography in *Hollstein*, 14B:180–188.

[3]According to Jeanne Nuechterlein, *Translating Nature into Art: Holbein, the Reformation, and Renaissance Rhetoric* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 174, the force of tradition was so strong that "prominent artist [such as Holbein] were willing in their illustrations to hold back their independent creativity." Nuechterlein's discussion of Holbein's biblical imagery focuses mostly on the 1523 designs for Revelation.

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Holbein's personal stance on the reform movements.[4] Although perceived as vexing in Holbein studies, this conundrum should not be agonized over as an unfortunate lacuna in our biographical knowledge but rather embraced as a foundation for interpreting his biblical art. As this essay will argue, Holbein created designs capable of transcending the textual and confessional heterogeneity of the Bible, an approach that developed from various efforts, both practical and ideological, to rationalize the production of illustrations for innovative and diverse Bibles.

I. Rationalizing Production and Humanist Style

For Holbein, the Bible image was fundamentally collaborative, and his capacity to have such a pervasive presence depended largely on the rationalization of book production, especially in advanced printing centers such as Basel. Holbein's work was limited to creating designs for illustrations that were transformed into woodcuts or metalcuts by other highly talented and often highly successful artists called "*Formschneider*." The printers of Basel, and not the artists, had attracted some of the most talented woodcut and metalcut makers in Europe, including Hans Lützelburger and Jacob Faber, who were able to turn Holbein's designs into prints with consummate skill and sensitivity.[5] This division of labor enabled Holbein to achieve astonishing productivity during his tenures in Basel (1515–1516, 1519–1526, 1528/1529–1532).[6] In one scholar's reckoning, he created over 1,300 images and over 1,000 initials,[7] even as he was also in great demand as a painter. An exceedingly important aspect of the production rationalization was the reuse of images in numerous imprints, including many books that, we can safely

[4]An important reason that Holbein's personal stance on the Reformation remains a mystery is the remarkable paucity of written documentation (in stark contrast to Dürer and Cranach). In one rare, but potentially telling, record, Holbein appears to have resisted making formal allegiance to a new ecclesiastic identity. His name appears on a document listing members of the painters guild who were not attending the new Basel church services in 1530; see Eduard His, "Holbeins Verhältnis zur Basler Reformation," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 2 (1879):158. In three instances, he produced woodcuts that supported Luther's opposition to scholastic theology and the campaign against the practice of selling indulgences. Nonetheless, those are not positions that would indicate allegiance to Lutheran or Protestant theology. See *Hollstein*, 14, nos. 1 ("Luther as Hercules Germanicus"), 3 ("Christ as the True Light"), and 4 ("Selling of Indulgences"). See Fritz Saxl, "Holbein and the Reformation," in *Lectures* (London: Warburg Institute, 1957), 1:277–285, for an attempt to stress the impact of Erasmus on Holbein's reception of Luther.

[5]See Christian Müller, *Hans Holbein d. J.: Die Druckgraphik im Kupferstichkabinett Basel* (Basel: Schwabe, 1997), 13.

[6]Holbein also briefly visited Basel in September 1538; see Susan Foister, *Holbein and England* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press for Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2004), 13–14.

[7]Heinrich Alfred Schmid, *Hans Holbein der Jüngere: Sein Aufstieg zur Meisterschaft und sein englischer Stil* (Basel: Holbein, 1945), 1:208–209.

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assume, were designed without input or even awareness of the artist. As can be seen in many fifteenth-century examples, the movability of woodcuts was a well-established design efficiency from the very beginning of the print industry. Nearly every Holbein image, including many Bible illustrations, appeared in multiple imprints, often on different subjects.

Holbein's contributions to the early modern Bible grew out of the production strategies of Basel publishers, even if the major work of the 1530s would be printed in other cities.[8] From its inception, the Basel print industry was notable for its production of scholarly Bibles. Beginning with a circa 1468 imprint by Berthold Ruppelt, some twenty of the ninety-four Latin Bibles printed during the fifteenth century were published in Basel,[9] whereas not a single German Bible was printed there until December 1522.[10] The most significant printer of scholarly Bibles in Basel was Johannes Froben. After an apprenticeship at the prolific Nuremberg press of Anton Koberger, Froben established himself in Basel, initially under the auspices of Johann Amerbach, who had printed four important Latin Bibles between 1479–1486. Amerbach's 1479 imprint was the earliest known "*fontibus ex graecis*" Bible, an attempt to correct the Latin text through comparison with Greek manuscripts. Froben's first imprint in Basel (1491) is also of the "*fontibus ex graecis*" text, but set in an innovative format, the first time that a complete Bible was printed in octavo. Froben's 1495 reissue of his "*ex fontibus graecis*" Vulgate has the further distinction of being the first Latin Bible with a printed illustration, fittingly, a title page woodcut of Jerome with the opening words of Genesis rendered xylographically from the Septuagint Greek and the Vulgate Latin.[11] His octavo Bibles appeared in a small gothic font, but soon, in imitation of Italian printers, Froben developed antiqua and italic fonts and engaged artists to design humanist illustrations. His breakthrough in achieving an Italianate typography came with his 1513 deluxe edition of Erasmus's *Adagia*, illustrated by Urs Graf.

[8]Holbein worked for at least seven local printers—Johannes Froben, Adam Petri, Thomas Wolff, Andreas Cratander, Valentin Curio, Johannes Bebel, and, perhaps once, Pamphilus Gengenbach—as well as for Melchior and Gaspard Trechsel in Lyon and for the Zurich printer Christoph Froschauer.

[9]At least eighteen—possibly twenty—separate printings of the Latin Bible appeared in Basel between 1468 and 1502. See the *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue*, British Library, accessed 10 February 2017, http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc/index.html.

[10]*Plenaria*, which included German translations of biblical readings, were printed in Basel prior to 1522.

[11]See David Hotchkiss Price, *Albrecht Dürer's Renaissance: Humanism, Reformation and the Art of Faith* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 199–200. The design was based on Albrecht Dürer's title page for Saint Jerome, *Epistolare* (Basel: Kessler, 1492).

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As humanism became firmly established in Basel during the first two decades of the sixteenth century,[12] a novel ideological basis for production rationalization appeared: the uniform presentation of classical and Christian texts. This innovation was nowhere more pronounced than at Froben's press, which consistently coalesced the designs for diverse books across a spectrum of Greco-Roman literature, early Christian writings, and humanist scholarship. For Froben, this was not only a production efficiency but also the embodiment of an aspiration to create an expansive humanist discourse of classical antiquity and Christianity. In this calling, he was inspired by the Venetian printer Aldus Manutius and by the writings of Erasmus. The aesthetic, intellectual, and, especially, the moral-philosophical compatibility of non-Christian and Christian ancient culture was a fundamental principle in Erasmus's Christian humanism. After the success of the 1513 *Adagia*, Froben worked closely with Erasmus, soon becoming his quasi-exclusive publisher, creating editions and translations of early Christian writers, the Bible paraphrases, humanist educational texts, and, above all, the Greek Bible editions.[13] For nearly a decade, 1521–1529, Erasmus worked in Basel, residing next to Froben's house and press. He left Basel in February 1529, after iconoclastic riots and the abolition of the Catholic Mass,[14] but maintained his close relationship with the press, returning in 1535 to live in the house of Froben's son, Hieronymus, until his 1536 death.

Although deeply Christian and doctrinally within the norms of Catholicism, the Froben-Erasmian discourse of Christian humanism promoted classical and Christian history, philosophy, literature, rhetoric, and myth as valid sources of knowledge and art. This can be seen in the overall scope of their publishing program and in the complexity of individual works. For example, the *Adagia* embodied the humanist syncretism of pagan learning and ancient Christianity, for the moralistic axioms are derived broadly from classical, early Christian, and biblical sources. Most importantly, in Erasmus's view, the New Testament itself was not only divine revelation of religious mysteries but also philosophical literature (*litterae*) that warranted consideration alongside of Socratic and Platonic ethics. In the preface to his path-breaking edition of the Greek New Testament, Erasmus described a methodology of reading the Bible as moral philosophy, an articulation of a "*philosophia Christi*," that in general terms can be compatible with the

[12]Hans R. Guggisberg, *Basel in the Sixteenth Century: Aspects of the City Before, During, and After the Reformation* (St. Louis, Mo.: Center for Reformation Research, 1982), 13–17.

[13]See Peter G. Bietenholz, "Printing and the Basle Reformation, 1517–65," in *The Reformation and the Book*, ed. Jean-François Gilmont, trans. Karin Maag (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 246–249. Bietenholz estimates that by 1536 over 400 Erasmus imprints had been produced in Basel.

[14]On iconoclasm in Basel, see Lee Palmer Wandel, *Voracious Idols and Violent Hands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 148–189.

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moral-philosophical study of classical history, philosophy, and myth: "We may find in the books of the pagans very much that expresses the same thought as his (Jesus's) teaching."[15] As a sign of a composite Christian-Classical ethical perspective, the preface to the Bible has several lists of ancient philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Diogenes, Epictetus, and so on) whose moral teachings are implicitly authoritative.[16] In fact, addressing his humanist readers, Erasmus's special plea was actually for the elevation of the philosophical status of New Testament writings, insisting that Christ's teachings embody a philosophy that deserves to be taken as seriously as the thought of the ancient philosophers.

This composite discourse of Christian humanism informed Hans Holbein's earliest known attempt at book illustration, the seventy-nine drawings he created for Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* in 1515–1516.[17] Holbein's comprehensive visual interpretation unfolds as a series of thematically diverse but stylistically coherent images from the classical and Christian worlds, often set in complex juxtapositions. For example, an image of the classical Greek artist Apelles painting his famous *Aphrodite Anadyomene* precedes a drawing of nuns venerating a statue of the Madonna.[18] As images of images, both compositions invite reflection on the function of visual art in humanist classicizing culture and Christian devotion, and do so without implying a clash between the art of Venus and the art of Mary.[19]

As we turn more strictly to Bible production, we will see a fundamental aspect of the Froben-Erasmus aesthetic: the Bible was construed in a sufficiently classical way to allow for the presence of Greco-Roman motifs and myths among its illustrations. The breakthrough publication in the history of Bible production at Basel (and Europe) was Erasmus's Greek New Testament (in five editions: 1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, and 1535), a research project sponsored and printed by Froben's press. The book immediately commanded international attention, for Erasmus not only challenged scholastic theology with a revolutionary philological-historical methodology

[15]Desiderius Erasmus, ed. and trans., *Novum Instrumentum omne* (Basel: Johannes Froben, 1516), fol. aaa5v: "Permulta reperire licet in ethnicorum libris, quae cum huius doctrina consentiant." The translations throughout this essay are mine. For a complete translation, see Desiderius Erasmus, *Christian Humanism and the Reformation*, ed. John C. Olin, 3rd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1987).

[16]See Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum omne* (1516), fols. aaa4r, aaa5v.

[17]See Heinrich Alfred Schmid, ed., *Erasmi Roterodami Encomium Moriae . . . Faksimile-Ausgabe* (Basel, 1931); and Erika B. Goodman Michael, *The Drawings by Hans Holbein the Younger for Erasmus'* Praise of Folly (New York: Garland, 1985), for the most extensive analyses of the drawings. Current scholarly opinion attributes seventy-nine of the marginal drawing to Hans Holbein the Younger and three further drawings to Ambrosius Holbein.

[18]See Schmid, ed., *Erasmi Roterodami Encomium Moriae*, fols. L3v, M1v.

[19]For both images, Erasmus's text in *Praise of Folly* refers humorously to problems of imputing too much significance to art objects.

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but also undermined the authority of the Vulgate. In essence, he confronted theologians with a new Bible: the original Greek texts along with a new Latin translation and extensive philological commentary.

Given the new philological focus on the text, the illustrations of the Froben-Erasmus Bible imprints may at first glance seem surprisingly unbiblical. In the first edition of 1516, Urs Graf created ornamental metalcut borders for three pages—the dedication to Leo X, the first page of Matthew (that is, the initial immersion into the Greek text; fig. 1), and the beginning of the *Annotationes*—that feature opulent festoons, lively putti, cherubim, an intriguing satyr, an hermaphroditic faun, Italianate columns, and candelabra, but without any specifically biblical ornamentation.[20] Rather, the Graf-Froben design makes it clear that this new Greek text has emerged out of classical antiquity and that ancient Christian texts are constituent elements of that classical culture. One opens the new humanist Greek text, as if entering the Sistine Chapel, seeing the great substance of the Bible set in a classicized world teeming with putti and *ignudi*, a visual frame that celebrates the humanist embrace of ancient aesthetics and culture generally.

Perhaps even more daringly, Erasmus's second edition of the Bible (1519) has a title page border, designed by Holbein's brother, Ambrosius, that depicts Mercury and Apollo, Apollo and Daphne, and a Venus among the pagan gods, as well as, at the base of the page, a moralistic scene of the woes of courtly life (probably derived from the ancient satirist Lucian) but, again, without any reference to the Bible or Christian God (fig. 2).[21] Ambrosius Holbein also designed a new dedication page to Pope Leo X, which consists mostly of two motifs from classical history (fig. 3). The top frieze presents a German-humanist patriotic image of *The Battle of Teutoburger Forest* between Roman general Varus and German leader Arminius, an event Northern humanists repeatedly cited to raise ancient Germans to a level of classical heroism. The lateral borders feature four personifications of virtues—Temperance, Justice, Charity, and Fortitude—as dynamic sculptures on plinths. At the base of the page, Ambrosius Holbein recreated *The Calumny of Apelles* (based on the

[20]For a Froben anthology of satires that included *Praise of Folly*, Urs Graf created a metalcut title page in a similar style with a representation of a satyr, probably as a reference to the genre of satire. See *In hoc opera contenta . . . Erasmi Roterodami Moriae Encomium* (Apud inclytam Germaniae Basileam: Johannes Froben, 1515), reproduced in *Erasmus von Rotterdam: Vorkämpfer für Frieden und Toleranz; Ausstellung zum 450. Todestag des Erasmus von Rotterdam verantstaltet vom Historischen Museum Basel* (Basel: Historisches Museum, 1986), 85, 182. On the Italianate style of the 1516 metalcuts, see Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, 145–147.

[21]*Hollstein*, 14, no. 19a, image by Ambrosius Holbein. This was probably originally designed for an edition of Velleius Paterculus, *Historiae Romanae duo volumina*, an ancient work that offers a heroic portrayal of Arminius. The title page was reused several times, including as the title page for the second volume, the *Annotationes*, of Erasmus's third edition of the New Testament in Greek (1522). The border was first printed in a Froben edition of the Greek philosopher Maximus Tyrius (January 1519).

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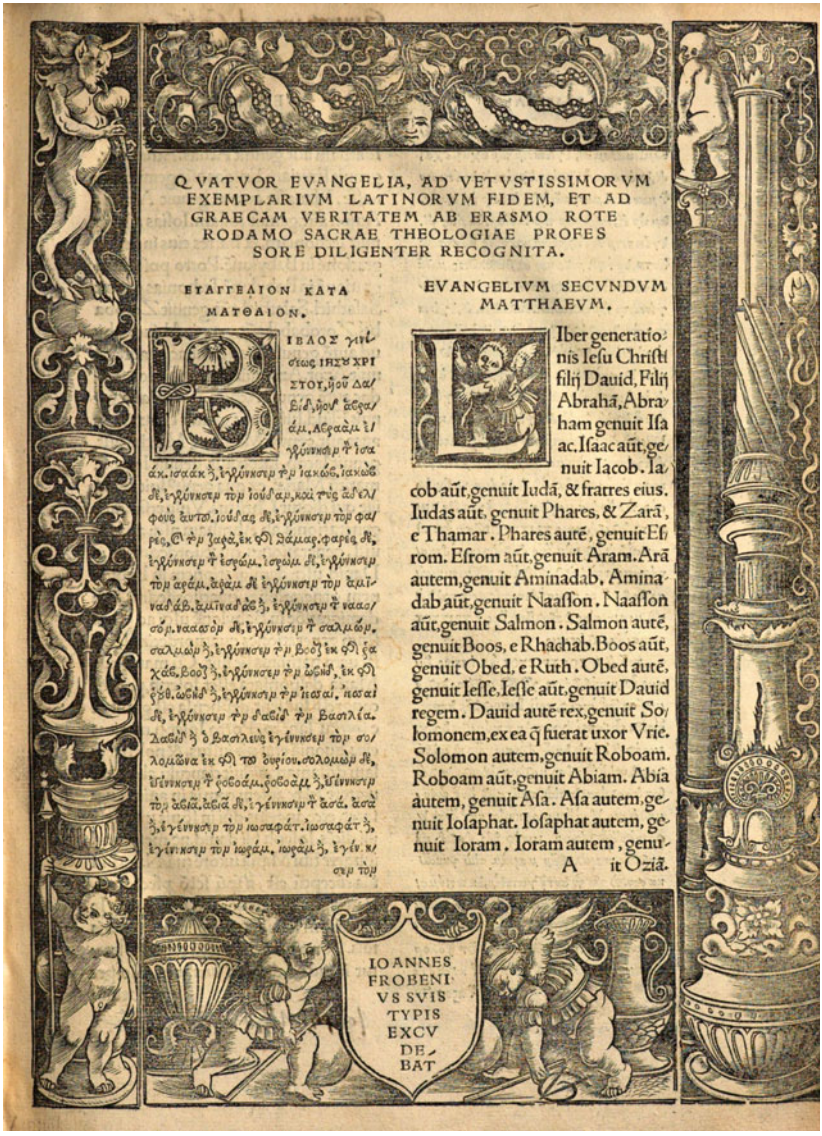

QVATVOR EVANGELIA, AD VETVSTISSIMORVM EXEMPLARIVM LATINORVM FIDEM, ET AD GRAECAM VERITATEM AB ERASMO ROTE RODAMO SACRAE THEOLOGIAE PROFES SORE DILIGENTER RECOGNITA.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΝ.

EVANGELIVM SECVNDVM MATTHAEVM.

Liber generationis Iesu Christi filij Dauid, Filij Abrahã, Abraham genuit Isaac. Isaac aũt genuit Iacob. Iacob aũt genuit Iudã, & fratres eius. Iudas aũt genuit Phares, & Zarã, e Thamar. Phares autẽ genuit Esrom. Esrom aũt genuit Aram. Arã autem genuit Aminadab. Aminadab aũt genuit Naasson. Naasson aũt genuit Salmon. Salmon autẽ genuit Boos, e Rhachab. Boos aũt genuit Obed, e Ruth. Obed autẽ genuit Iesse. Iesse aũt genuit Dauid regem. Dauid autẽ rex genuit Solomonem, ex ea q̃ fuerat uxor Vrie. Solomon autem genuit Roboam. Roboam aũt genuit Abiam. Abia autem genuit Asa. Asa autem genuit Iosaphat. Iosaphat autem genuit Ioram. Ioram autem genuit Oziã.

IOANNES FROBENIVS SVIS TYPIS EXCVDEBAT

Fig. 1. Urs Graf, metalcut page border for the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew, in *Novum Instrumentum omne*, ed. Desiderius Erasmus (Basel: Johannes Froben, 1516), fol. A1r, Bavarian State Library, Munich.

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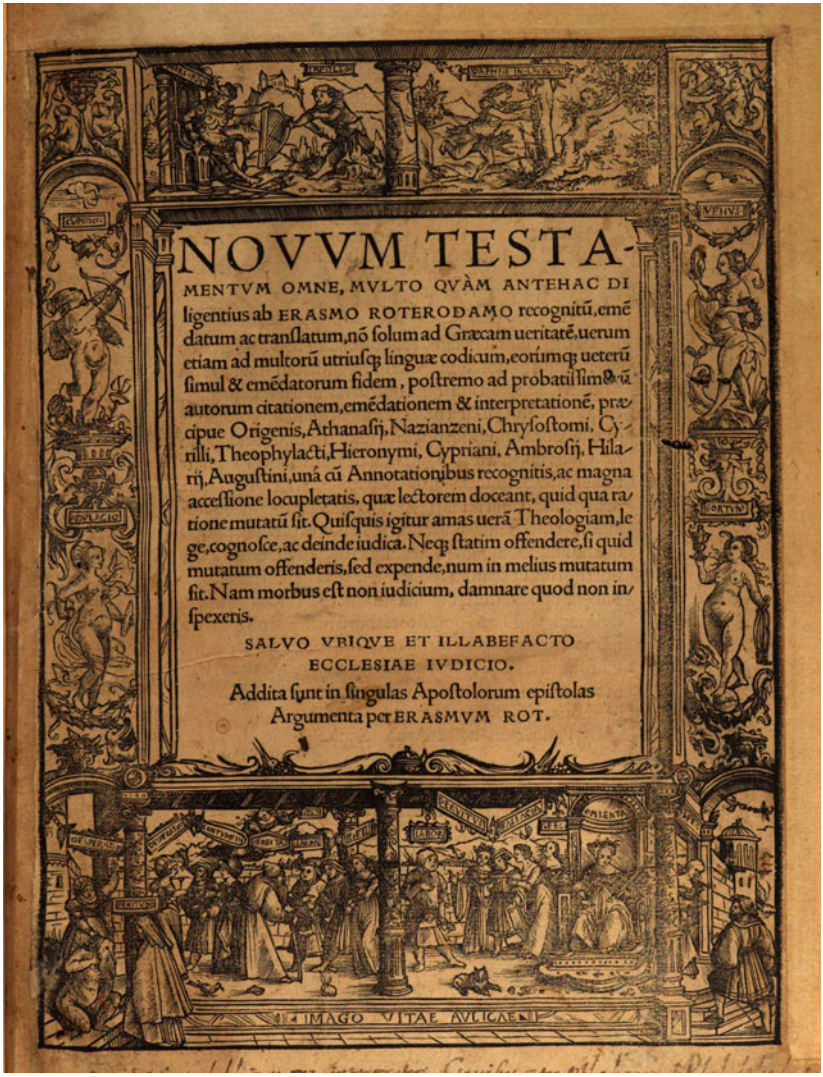

Fig. 2. Ambrosius Holbein, woodcut title page, in *Novum Testamentum*, ed. Desiderius Erasmus (Basel: Johannes Froben, 1519), Bavarian State Library, Munich.

ancient description by Lucian), a painting by Apelles of a near miscarriage of justice that he suffered under King Ptolemy.[22] It is also particularly important

[22]See David Cast, *The Calumny of Apelles: A Study in the Humanist Tradition* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981), 98–99.

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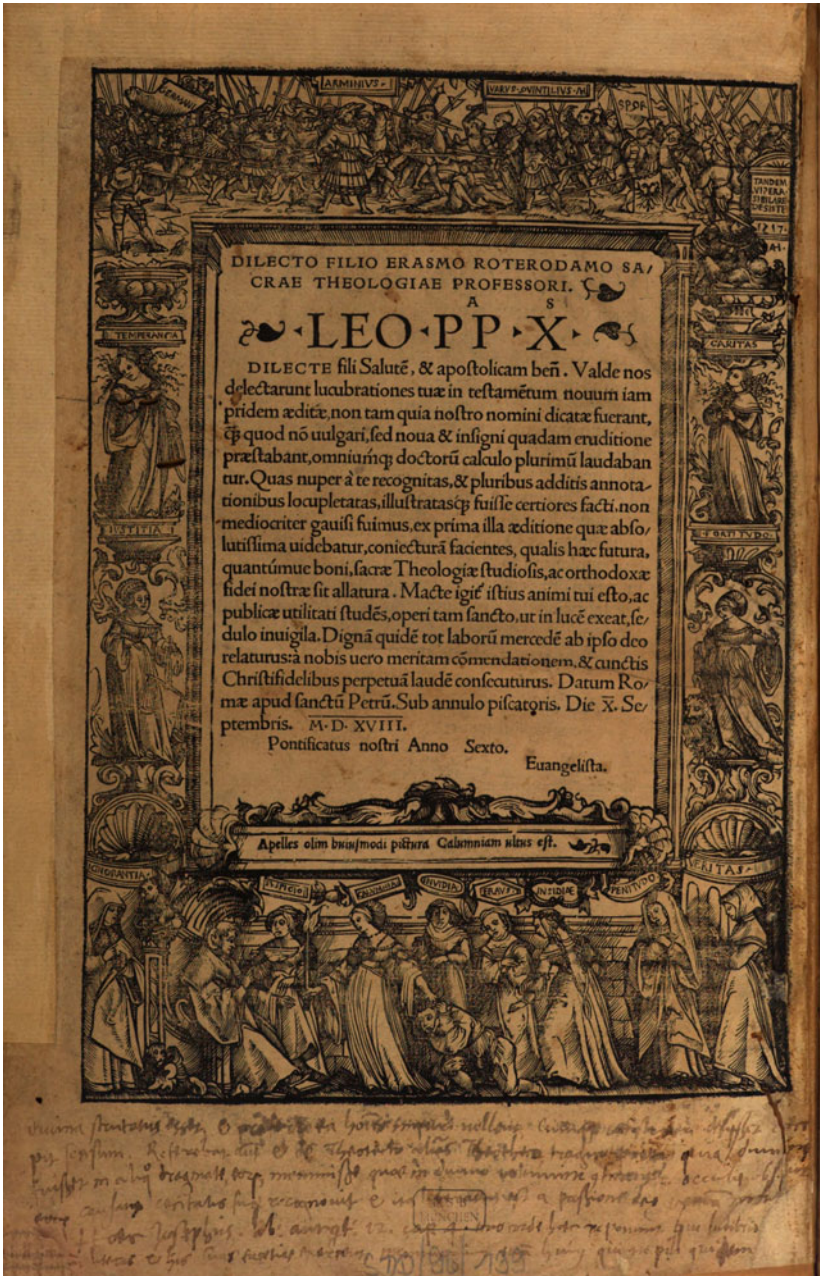

DILECTO FILIO ERASMO ROTERODAMO SACRAE THEOLOGIAE PROFESSORI.

A S

LEO PP X

DILECTE fili Salutē, & apostolicam beñ. Valde nos delectarunt lucubrationes tuæ in testamētum nouum iam pridem æditæ, non tam quia nostro nomini dicatæ fuerant, q̄ quod nō uulgari, sed noua & insigni quadam eruditione præstabant, omniumq̄ doctorū calculo plurimū laudabantur. Quas nuper à te recognitas, & pluribus additis annotationibus locupletatas, illustratasq̄ fuisse certiores facti, non mediocriter gauisi fuimus, ex prima illa æditione quæ absolutissima uidebatur, coniectura facientes, qualis hæc futura, quantúmue boni, sacræ Theologiæ studiosis, ac orthodoxæ fidei nostræ sit allatura. Macte igit̄ istius animi tui esto, ac publicæ utilitati studēs, operi tam sancto, ut in lucē exeat, sedulo inuigila. Dignā quidē tot laborū mercedē ab ipso deo relaturus: à nobis uero meritam cōmendationem, & cunctis Christifidelibus perpetuā laudē consecuturus. Datum Romæ apud sanctū Petrū. Sub annulo piscatoris. Die X. Septembris. M·D·XVIII.

Pontificatus nostri Anno Sexto.

Euangelista.

Apelles olim huiusmodi picturā Calumniam uocauit.

Fig. 3. Ambrosius Holbein, woodcut page border, in *Novum Testamentum* (1519), fol. [1v], Bavarian State Library, Munich.

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that, with the *Calumny of Apelles*, Ambrosius Holbein portrayed the ancient artist, in addition to the philosopher, as a source for moral philosophy since it is a story that exemplifies the didactic function of art—the capacity of visual art to teach and uphold social morality. By construing the Greek Bible editions as part of the larger humanist recovery of classical antiquity, grounded in the Erasmian approach to the Bible as a guide for moral edification and devotional reflection, the illustrations contribute to the destabilization of the Vulgate, suggesting that there is a vastly larger historical context for Christian authority than the medieval Latin text. Nonetheless, unlike the paratexts of Erasmus's Bible that excoriate scholastic methodology, no polemical tones emerge from the illustrations, perhaps because, from Ambrosius Holbein's classicizing perspective, scholasticism has simply been submerged fully out of sight.

Hans Holbein's contributions to the Erasmus-Froben Bible began in 1522 with the third edition, which was arguably the high point of Erasmus's editorial achievement and also the most lavishly decorated of the Greek imprints. The 1522 Bible reprints the borders by Urs Graf and Ambrosius Holbein from the previous editions, although in different places, and also presents an elaborate new title page border by Hans Holbein, the *Tabula Cebetis* (*Painting of Cebes*).[23] The composition, which was so significant to Holbein that he created three additional title page designs using the same complex theme, one of which was also used for the second volume of the 1522 Bible,[24] exemplifies the function of the visual arts as a philosophical discourse. In the Renaissance, the ancient Greek dialog titled the *Painting of Cebes* enjoyed great prestige because it was thought to be an authentic source of Socratic ethics written by Cebes, a student of Socrates. Now the dialog is almost completely forgotten because scholars have downgraded it to a pseudo-epigraphical work, probably written between the first century B.C.E. and the first century C.E. The *Painting of Cebes* unfolds as a discussion of a painting hanging in a temple of Cronos that reveals in a single composition all the ethical challenges of life. Both an ekphrasis and an allegorese of the painting, the dialog explains how people move through the stages of life assisted by virtues and assailed by vices, struggling past "*falsa disciplina*" to "*vera disciplina*" and the ultimate achievement of the "*arx*

[23]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 43a, has the wrong image reproduced for the title page of the 1522 New Testament in Greek. The border reproduced erroneously is the same as *Hollstein*, 14A, no. 33b. Reinhart Schleier, *Tabula Cebetis* (Berlin: Mann, 1973), has the correct image as fig. 7.

[24]See Schleier, *Tabula Cebetis*, 34–36. The first *Tabula Cebetis* design by Holbein was used for an edition of Tertullian, *Opera*, ed., Beatus Rhenanus (Basel: Johannes Froben, 1521). See *Hollstein*, 14A, no. 33b. For the editions of the New Testament in Greek (1522 and 1527), the second *Tabula Cebetis* woodcut was used for the frame to the beginning of the *Annotationes* to Matthew. As of 1519, Erasmus's commentary, the *Annotationes*, was printed as a second volume.

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verae felicitatis" (citadel of true happiness). Especially in the aftermath of Holbein's four separate graphic reconstructions of the painting, the motif proliferated in European art, though only Holbein's images were ever used to illustrate a Bible. As the title page to the authoritative edition of the Christian Bible, this woodcut is a bold assertion of humanism: construed as an image of Socratic ethics, Holbein's *Painting of Cebes* conveys the idea that the Bible and classical philosophy together inform moral understanding, the path to "true happiness."

Classical art also informs one of Holbein's most successful title page frames for a Froben Bible, the *editio princeps* of Erasmus's *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John* (1523; fig. 5).[25] Notable for the energy unleashed by the absence of borderlines, allowing the figures to torque freely into open space, the composition resembles an Italian Renaissance memorial monument, albeit in a parodistic way since Holbein's monument depicts tyranny. In a tour de force of humanist subject matter and technique, the base shows the suicide of Cleopatra as a classical recumbent nude—with the pose suggestive of pediment sculpture—after she conspired unsuccessfully against Augustus and the new Roman imperium. Equally dramatic, both sides of the sculptural monument represent a notorious ancient case of art vandalism: the sacrilegious plundering of temples by the tyrant Dionysius I of Syracuse (depicted on both sides). Among the Italianate features are the muscular contrapposto and the powerful movement of the statues, which evoke the manner of early sixteenth-century Italian sculpture and sculpturesque painting created in the aftermath of the 1506 discovery of the Hellenistic statue *Laocoön and his Sons* in Rome (fig. 6).[26] Holbein's representation of statuary coming alive in a moral-philosophical drama is yet another example of his desire to add an aesthetic layer of meaning to the composition, for it draws attention not only to the moral message but also to the fact that it is visual art that conveys that message. Because of the absence of biblical reference, scholars have often surmised that this was originally intended for the imprint of a classical text, but there is no evidence for that, and, on the contrary, the classicizing motifs are entirely consistent with the style of other Froben productions of Erasmian biblical texts. This is especially appropriate in this context because, after all, a major part of the rationale behind Erasmus's Bible *Paraphrases* was to recast and amplify the biblical text with the elegance and clarity of classical rhetoric. Thus, the visual ornatus of the Froben-Erasmus Bible imprint evokes an ideal embodied by the classicizing

[25]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 50, a woodcut that would be reprinted and copied with great frequency.

[26]For a general study of Holbein's reception of Italian styles in his painting, see Oskar Bätschmann and Pascal Griener, *Hans Holbein* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 120–148.

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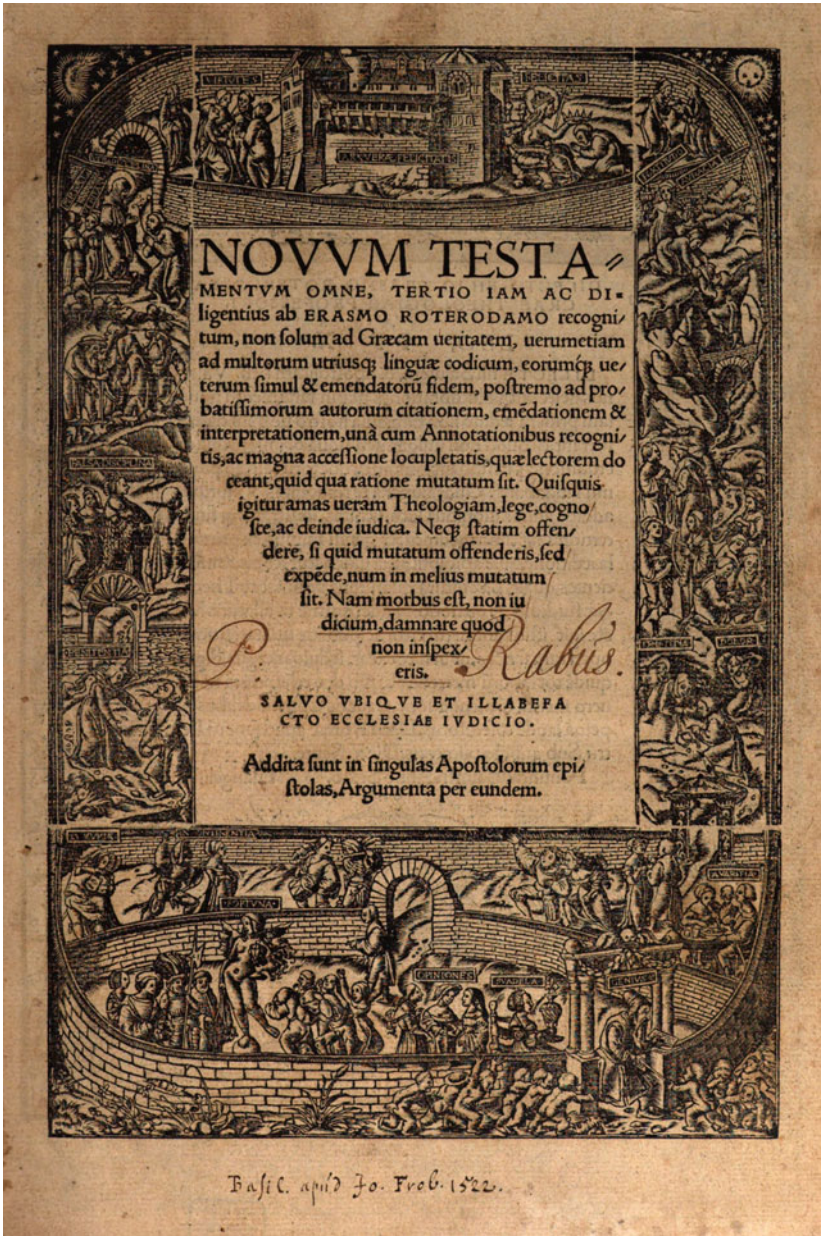

Fig. 4. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Tabula Cebetis*, metalcut title frame, in *Novum Testamentum*, vol. 2, ed. Desiderius Erasmus (Basel: Froben, 1522), title page, Bavarian State Library, Munich.

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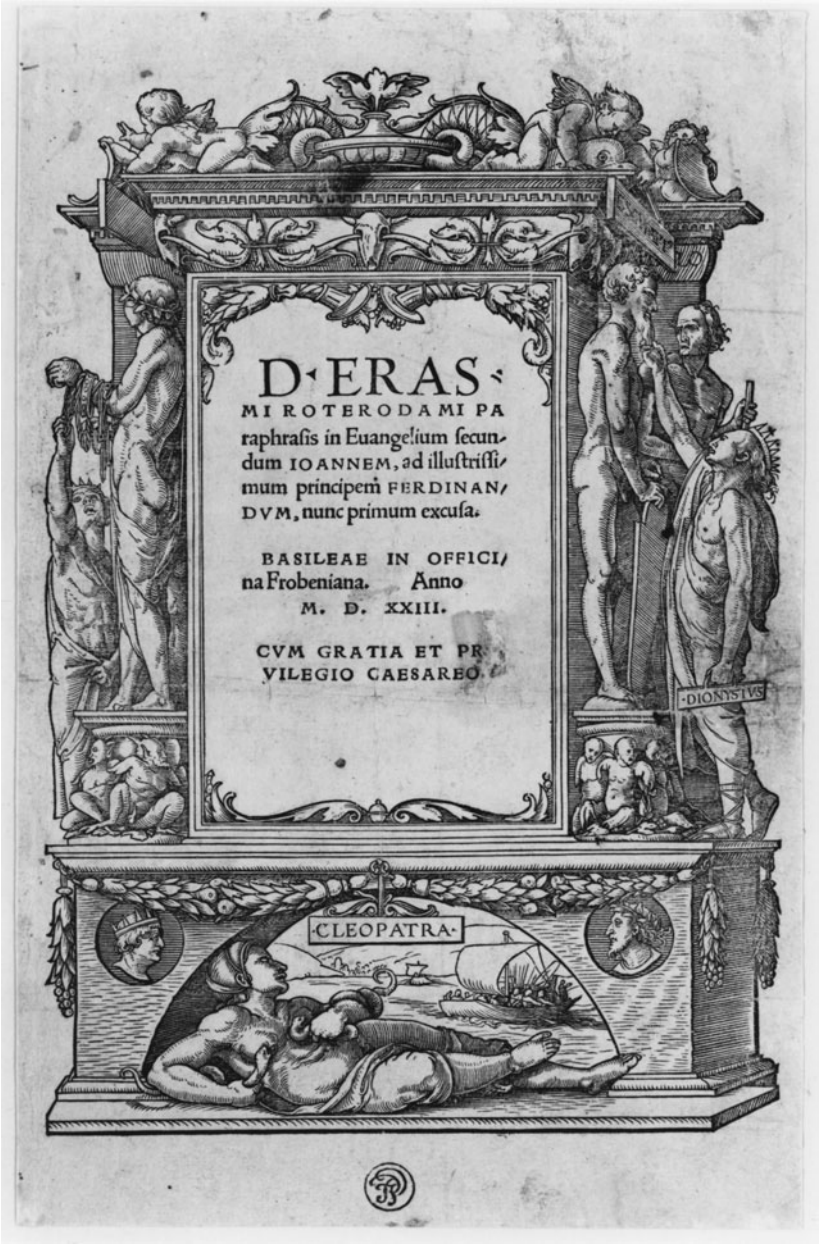

Fig. 5. Hans Holbein the Younger, woodcut title page, in *Paraphrasis in Euangelium secundum Ioannem*, ed. Desiderius Erasmus (Basel: Froben, 1523), Inv. X.2145, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

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Fig. 6. Marco Dente, *Laocoön and His Sons*, engraving after drawing by Marcantonio Raimondi (ca. 1515–1527).

rhetorical amplifications of the text. The design was used frequently in subsequent books, including Polydore Vergil's Christian humanist *Adagia* (*Opus adagiorum*, 1525), as well as, in an exceedingly well-cut copy, for a

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history of the destruction of Jerusalem: Pseudo-Hegesippus's adaptation of the Jewish Wars.[27]

In the 1522 borders of the *Painting of Cebes* and in the 1523 title page for the *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John*, the validation of representational art may indicate awareness of early Protestant iconoclasm. In 1523, Holbein also created an exuberantly classical title page for Petri's publication of Luther's first major rejection of iconoclasm: *Von anbetten des Sacraments des heyligen leichnams Christi* (*Concerning the Veneration of the Sacrament of the Sacred Body of Christ*; fig. 7).[28] Moreover, Petri reused the same woodcut frame in his 1525 reprint of Luther's definitive rejection of iconoclasm: *Wider die himelischen propheten, von den bildern vnd Sacrament* (*Against the Heavenly Prophets, Concerning Images and the Sacrament*).[29] The woodcut represents a triumphal arch with statues of Hercules's first and final labors (defeating the Nemean lion and Cerberus) as well as a portrayal of the myth of Orpheus evoking an idea of the metaphysical power of music and art generally. Hercules was used occasionally to portray the force of Luther's early movement, as in a broadside woodcut attributed to Holbein in which Hercules/Luther smashes scholastic theologians and the pope;[30] and the myth of Orpheus had become a commonplace for humanists championing the cultural-political power of poetry and rhetoric, as can be seen even in Erasmus's preface to the New Testament (titled *Paraclesis*), where he cites the supernatural force of Orpheus's music to express his own longing to master persuasive rhetoric.[31] Thus, Holbein used humanist strategies—in a general way engaging the entire humanist discourse on the power of ancient art—as validation of the function of images in a Christian context. Ultimately, it is hard to measure with any precision the relationship of Holbein's Bible illustrations to the emergence of iconoclasm in the Reformation movements. In any event, Froben maintained the 1522 humanist art in the fourth Greek edition of 1527, including one version of Holbein's *Tabula Cebetis*. Yet, all of the images disappeared from the final 1535 edition of Erasmus's Bible, which

[27]Pseudo-Hegesippus, *Egesippi . . . de rebus a Judaeorum principibus . . . gestis* (Cologne: Soter, 1525).

[28]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 62, which corresponds to Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München, ed. *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachgebiet erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1988) (hereafter cited as *VD 16*), L7071.

[29]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 62, which corresponds to *VD 16* L7456. This border was used subsequently in several publications, including many Basel editions of Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia*. See Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, 476–477 (no. 428).

[30]Christian Rümelin, "Hans Holbein und die Druckgraphik," in *Hans Holbein d. J.: Die Jahre in Basel 1515–1532*, ed. Christian Müller (Munich: Prestel, 2006), 125–126, dates the broadside to ca. 1519. Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, 360–361, with considerable circumstantial evidence, suggests 1522.

[31]See *Novum Instrumentum omne*, fol. aaa3v.

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Fig. 7. Hans Holbein the Younger, woodcut title page, in *Von anbetten des Sacraments des heyligen leichnams Christi*, by Martin Luther (Basel: Adam Petri, 1523), Inv. X.2154, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

Froben's son, Hieronymus, printed after the February 1529 iconoclastic riots and the ensuing iconophobic policy in Basel.[32]

[32]Hans Koegler, *Johann Froben, 1460(?)–1527: Gedächtnis-Ausstellung* (Basel: Gewerbemuseum, 1927), 23–24, on Froben's return to unadorned title pages.

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II. Re-forming the Reformation Bible

Hans Holbein was the first artist outside of Wittenberg to design artwork for a Luther Bible, a feat he achieved for a folio edition published by Basel printer Adam Petri in December 1522. Petri had already played a key role in the early promotion of Luther's writings, having been, among other contributions, the first to print the Ninety-Five Theses as a pamphlet, which he accomplished in December 1517. Now, in immediate response to the initial release of Luther's New Testament in September 1522, Petri and Thomas Wolff, another prolific Basel printer, became major forces in promoting the broad distribution of the revolutionary work. The Froben press continued printing important biblical material by Erasmus but never entered the fray for the new German-language Bible market. In fact, Froben suddenly ceased publication of Luther's writings after 1518, certainly under the influence of Erasmus, who had already become apprehensive about Luther's theology and the emerging schism.[33] Although Wittenberg production would soon become proportionally more significant, Luther's Bible was initially distributed most extensively through the spontaneous efforts of printers elsewhere, specifically in Augsburg, Basel, Nuremberg, Strasbourg, and even Zurich. During the first two years of production (1522–1523), partial Bibles translated by Luther appeared thirty-four times, with only six of them produced in Wittenberg.[34] Of these initial thirty-four Luther Bibles, no fewer than twelve were printed in Basel, even though Basel had had no prior tradition of vernacular Bible production. Although the first Basel imprint was Petri's stately folio, the two Basel printers were also the first anywhere to produce inexpensive small format German Bibles. In 1523, Petri issued the first Luther New Testament in octavo, and Wolff created the first quarto, two further innovations that used Holbein illustrations. Altogether, Petri and Wolff produced some thirty-four imprints between 1522 and 1527, after which, in a sudden halt, no further Luther versions appeared in the city, apart from a 1552 complete Bible printed by Nicolaus Brylinger (which also featured Holbein's designs).[35] The year 1526 marked the beginning of strong

[33]In 1518, Froben published an influential edition of Luther's collected works in Latin that sold briskly all over Europe. In a letter of February 14, 1519, Froben wrote to Luther that he had shipped 600 copies to France and Spain and many also to Italy. See *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Briefwechsel, ed. Gustav Bebermeyer, Otto Clemen, Eike Wolgast, Norbert Müller, Christian Köckert, Hans Volz, and Gerhard Ebeling, 18 vols. (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1930–1985), vol. 1, no. 146; and Bietenholz, "Printing and the Basle Reformation," 249–250.

[34]For a convenient list of the printings of Luther Bibles during Luther's lifetime, see Heimo Reinitzer, *Biblia deutsch: Luthers Bibelübersetzung und ihre Tradition* (Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek, 1983), 116–127.

[35]See Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, 423; and Philipp Schmidt, *Die Illustrationen der Lutherbibel 1522–1700* (Basel: Reinhardt, 1962), 235–236. Brylinger's Bible combined the

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religious turmoil in Basel, which resulted in Holbein's first departure for England, an event that, in turn, occasioned Erasmus's foreboding complaint that "here the arts freeze."[36]

Petri's initial folio reproduces the entire text of the *Septembertestament* with all of Luther's daring paratexts—prefaces, annotations, and the revolutionary canon—even if, like the Wittenberg original, it does not disclose the translator's name.[37] It replicates the Wittenberg original in every important detail except the program of illustration: it removed Cranach's illustrations for Revelation, redesigned the woodcut author portraits throughout, and added an elaborately historiated title page. Indeed, a major departure from the *Septembertestament* is the absence of the twenty-one full-page woodcuts illustrating Revelation, an alteration that visually cleanses the imprint of Wittenberg partisan polemic. Revelation remained unillustrated in Petri's Luther Bible imprints until his third octavo edition in 1525. These illustrations, moreover, were not imitations of the Cranach woodcuts but, rather, recut images from the Koberger Bible (1483). Tellingly, Petri also omitted one Koberger image (the third woodcut) of a pope being destroyed and had the fifth Koberger image redesigned, substituting a cardinal for a pope perishing in the apocalyptic mayhem.

Holbein designed a new title page in part to make the German Bible appear compatible with humanist culture (fig. 8).[38] The original title page has a simple, unhistoriated woodcut of the words "*Das Newe Testament Deůtzsch*" in an elegant gothic script with balanced arabesque flourishes, followed by a simple, but ominous, type-set word: "*Uuittemberg*" (fig. 9). In the new Holbein title page, a center-top banderole reads "*Inclyta Basilea*" (glorious Basel), thus trade-marking the imprint as the latest distinguished international Bible production from Basel. Froben, after all, had proclaimed on the title page of the 1516 Erasmus Bible: "*apud Germaniae inclytam Basileam*," "*inclyta*" having become the proud epithet of humanist Basel. The connection of the city, as a scholarly brand, to the new, but unnamed,

phrasing of the Zwingli and Luther translations. The illustrations, derived from the 1531 Zurich Bible, are based on Holbein designs. Brylinger's is the first and only complete German Bible translation printed in Basel until 1660. Eventually in the nineteenth century, even though Basel remained a Reformed polity, Luther's version would be produced there.

[36]See Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 38.

[37]Petri had recently been fined for offending the canton of Luzern in one of his reprints of a Lutheran tract and, perhaps, wanted to avoid unnecessary provocation of the Basel city government.

[38]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 48a. Adam Petri's first printing of Luther's translation of the Pentateuch, *Das Alte Testament deutsch* (Basel: Adam Petri, 1523; which corresponds to *VD 16* B2891), makes an even stronger connection to the scholarly Bible by using an Urs Graf classicizing title page frame in the style of those used for the Erasmus Bibles.

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Fig. 8. Hans Holbein the Younger, woodcut title page for 1525 reprint of Luther's *Septembertestament*, *Das New Testament* (Basel: Adam Petri, December 1522), Inv. 2144, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

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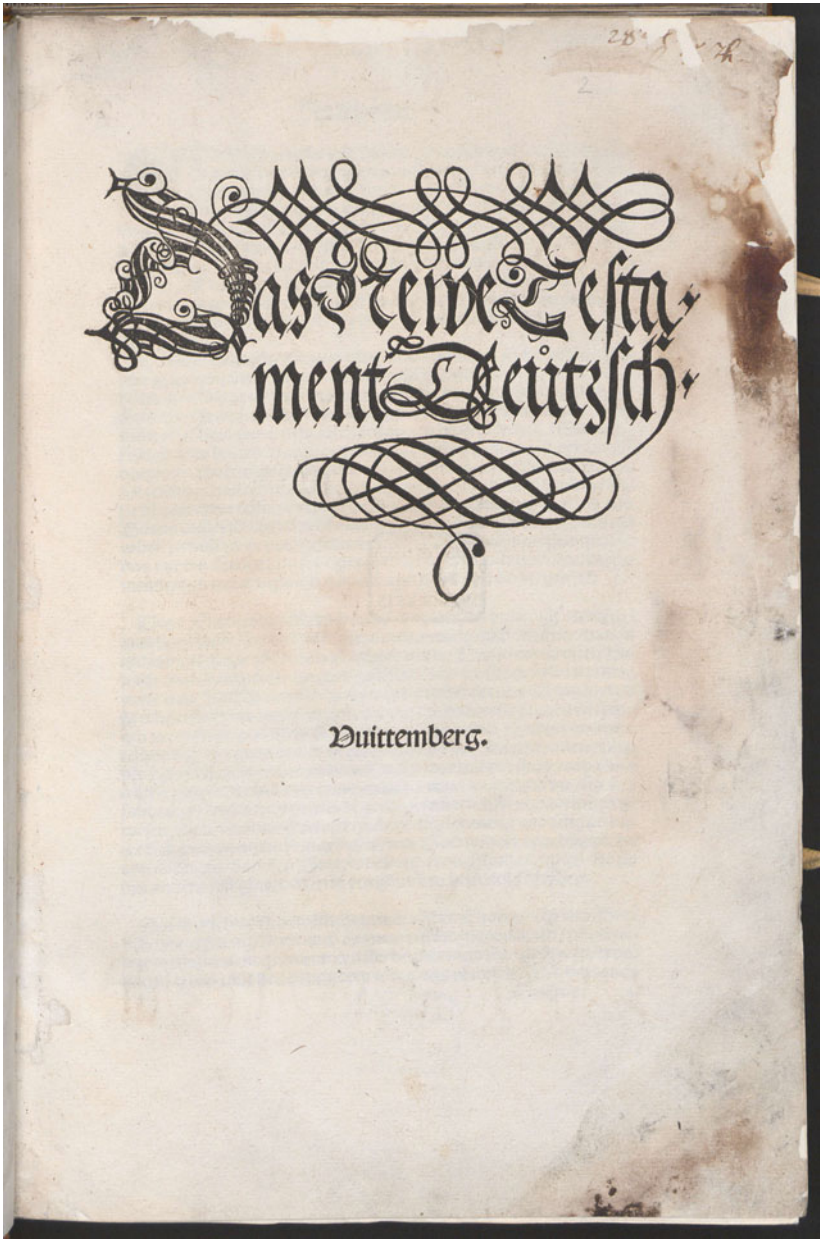

Fig. 9. Title page of Luther's *Septembertestament*, *Das Newe Testament Deůtzsch* (Wittenberg: Melchior Lotter the Younger for Lucas Cranach and Christian Döring, September 1522), Bavarian State Library, Munich.

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Luther Bible is reinforced by the rendering of the coat of arms of Basel—the emblazoned bishop's crozier—flanked by two basilisks (center top). Animal symbols are the leitmotif of the design: the Petri device of the Christ child on a lion (base of page), the two basilisks of Basel, and the four traditional animal symbols of the evangelists in the corners make the upper and lower registers of the design cohere tightly. The new title page also promises a scholarly achievement, a Bible that has been accurately translated (*recht grüntlich teutscht*) with learned and reliable notes, as would be expected of a Basel Bible. For example, one note at the end of 1 Corinthians ostentatiously quotes Greek and Hebrew words, both languages seamlessly typeset.[39] Yet, reliable scholarship is a novel claim for a vernacular Bible and one that the Wittenberg first edition did not explicitly make. With a nod to Erasmus's "*philosophia Christi*," the title page also makes the assertion that the New Testament is the only source that teaches Christ "accurately and clearly" (*recht vnd klärlich*).

Moreover, in the midsection of the title page, Holbein places the unnamed Luther Bible in an Italianate architectural frame, not unlike those used for Erasmus imprints, though with the important difference that the statuary of the Luther imprint is strictly limited to biblical motifs. The portraits of Peter and Paul, as authors of biblical texts and biblical saints, are rendered with their traditional symbols (emphasizing salvation with Peter's keys and the authority of the Bible with Paul's sword[40]) but also as if they are statuary installed in half-dome shell niches of an Italian Renaissance structure. As in the 1523 title page of Erasmus's *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John*, the statues replicate the powerful forms of Italian sculpture as the figures move off their plinths in action. The aesthetic ambivalence of the representation—are they woodcut renderings of the apostles or woodcut renderings of sculptural representations of the apostles?—allows the image to operate on two levels simultaneously, as a validation of the veneration of biblical saints and of the integrity of biblical art.

We can also view Holbein's title page as an adaptation (and evocation) of the iconography of the German-language *plenaria*. The *plenaria*, usually richly illustrated books designed for lay readers, included German translations of the readings from the Gospels and Epistles arranged in the order used during the annual cycle of Masses.[41] As can be seen in earlier *plenaria* imprints by

[39]*Das New Testament* (Basel: Adam Petri, 1522), fol. CXX v.

[40]Ephesians 6:17.

[41]On illustrated *plenaria*, see Carsten Kottmann, *Das buch der ewangelii und epistel: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung und Gebrauchsfunktion südwestdeutscher Perikopenhandschriften* (Münster: Waxmann, 2009); and Karl Knappe, "Bibelillustration," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980), 6:148. Twenty-four *plenaria* were printed between 1475 and 1519, according to Heimo

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Petri, two of which featured Holbein designs,[42] the dominant iconography of the title page was the four symbols of the evangelists and portraits of the two major epistle authors, Paul and Peter. The connection to the *plenarium* also induced Petri and Wolff to prefix to their imprints a calendar for the weekly readings (not included in the *Septembertestament*), enabling use of the new scholarly translation instead of the German *plenaria* as a guide to the annual cycle.

As in the title page representation of Peter and Paul as sculpture, biblical artwork looms large in the interior illustrations. While Petri dropped the anti-papal illustrations to Revelation of the *Septembertestament* from his design, he did include woodcut author portraits at the beginning of New Testament books, as was the case in the *Septembertestament*. Altogether, Holbein designed eight new woodcuts but in considerably more ambitious and complex compositions than in the Wittenberg original: seven biblical author portraits and one woodcut of Pentecost (for the introduction to Acts).[43] Petri also recycled four other woodcut author portraits from his own 1516 printing of the *plenarium*.[44] The illustrations were used in Petri's folio editions, but their dimensions (8.0 × 6.6 cm) indicate that Holbein designed them for the octavo layouts, where they also subsequently appeared. Moreover, Holbein's author portraits are notable for the detailed portrayal of the figures, with strong facial expression and convincing psychologies, engaged dramatically in motion and action, even though they are seated at their desks, writing the Gospel accounts. The convincing realism of the portraits of scholars in action depends greatly on Holbein's elegant rationalization of space in his perspectival compositions. The sensation of immediacy—that something powerful is happening—prefigures his development of a dramatic approach to representing the narratives of the Old Testament.[45] In all four Gospels, Holbein embedded a narrative from Christ's life that enacts the meaning of the four traditional symbols of the evangelists.[46] For three of the four portraits, Holbein incorporated these narratives as works of art that depicted the evangelists as being inspired by a sacred image of Christ's life. Matthew

Reinitzer and Olaf Schwencke, "Plenarien," *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Burghart Wachinger, Gundolf Keil, Kurt Ruh, Werner Schröder, and Franz Josef Worstbrock (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 7:737–763.

[42]See *Hollstein*, 14A, no. 11; *Das Boek des hillighen Evangelij* (Basel: Adam Petri, 1517); and *Das Neu Plenarium* (Basel: Adam Petri, 1518).

[43]*Hollstein*, 14A, nos. 48b–48i. The portrait of Paul was printed several times throughout.

[44]See Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, no. 391.

[45]See Foister, *Holbein and England*, 2, for her perceptive remarks on the "sensation of immediacy" in Holbein's style.

[46]*Holstein* 14A, nos. 48b–48e. See also the reproductions in Müller, *Hans Holbein d. J.: Die Druckgraphik im Kupferstichkabinett Basel*, nos. 93a–d (p. 120).

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is contemplating a painting of the Nativity, the event that reflects the meaning of his symbol, the man, as the Incarnation of God (figs. 10 and 11). Mark studies a representation of the Resurrection, since the lion symbolizes Christ's victory over death (fig. 12). Luke is shown with a painting of the Crucifixion, since the ox represents Christ's sacrifice. Holbein expressed the meaning of John's symbol, the soaring eagle, as a vision (apparently not a painting) of the Ascension of Christ. These images of images recall the focus on humanist art in the Erasmus Bibles, except that now Holbein is explicitly representing the power of Christian biblical imagery for the formation of Christian devotion instead of focusing on the philosophical validity of the works of ancient art.

Holbein also created title page designs for important small format Bibles printed by Petri and Wolff, as well as by Christoph Froschauer in Zurich. For Petri's 1523 octavo imprint of the new Bible,[47] Holbein adapted the figures of Peter and Paul from the folio title page but muted the Italianate style, as well as the focus on art, by removing the architectural setting, thereby rendering the composition more evocative of the *plenarium*. While the new title page does not have any representations of artwork, the interior illustrations include seven of the Holbein author portraits from the folio edition, including the three depictions of the evangelists being inspired by biblical painting.

The 1523 designs for Thomas Wolff's quarto Bible introduced an innovation for Holbein: the realistic portrayal of the Bible as history in small format compositions (fig. 13).[48] The title page frame consists of four separate woodcuts,[49] representing, at the top, the baptism of Christ flanked by symbols of the four evangelists; on the left, Philipp's baptism of the chamberlain (Acts 8:35); on the right, Paul at Melita (Acts 28); and, at the base, the printer's device of Thomas Wolff flanked by the conversion of Saul (Acts 9) and Peter's vision of the unclean animals (Acts 10). All of these images express an aspect of salvation—Peter's vision may suggest abrogation of the Old Testament law (since in his vision he is told that he may eat the unclean animals)—but they do so by recording events from the Bible as history. This historical approach is also reflected in an octavo design printed by Froschauer in 1524. At the base of that metalcut frame, Christ appears as the good shepherd, serving the weak and sick. The border

[47]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 52.

[48]See *Hollstein*, 14A, no. 55; and Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, no. 399. Wolff used the woodblocks in 1523–1524 for his octavo and quarto productions (four quartos and three octavos), then the woodblocks went in 1524 to Strasbourg (Knobloch), in 1525 back to Basel (Bebel), in 1530 back to Strasbourg (Köpfl), and then in 1531 to Zurich (Froschauer).

[49]In challengingly small formats, measuring 2.8 x 11.3 cm (top), 8.7 x 2.7 cm (left side), 8.7 x 3.5 cm (right side), and 4.0 x 11.3 cm (base).

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Fig. 10. Hans Holbein the Younger, woodcut of Matthew, in *Das New Testament* (Basel: Adam Petri, December 1522), fol. B1r, Inv. X.2172, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

was also used, probably earlier in 1524, for the printing of Zwingli's tract *Der Hirt* (*The Shepherd*). Otherwise, this title page evinces a more general humanist spirit with the portrayal of trophies and musical instruments on the sides, and a faun and a female nude at the top.[50]

Another innovation, this one published by Wolff in both his quarto and octavo Bibles, was Holbein's adaptation of the Cranach illustrations for Revelation in the *Septembertestament*,[51] which, as stated on the new title page, were being promoted as another example of visual art abetting understanding of the text: "The Revelation of John with attractive illustrations, from which the most difficult passages can be easily

[50]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 66.
[51]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 49.

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Fig. 11. Lucas Cranach the Elder and workshop, woodcut initial of Matthew in Luther's *Septembertestament*, *Das Newe Testament Deůtzsch* (Wittenberg: Melchior Lotter the Younger for Lucas Cranach and Christian Döring, September 1522), fol. a1r, Bavarian State Library, Munich.

understood."[52] Although closely based on the Cranach scenes, the Holbein designs are careful efforts to reconstruct Cranach in accord with Renaissance conventions of representation. This is most evident in Holbein's consistent perspectival rationalizations of space, as can be seen in his scrupulous revision of Cranach's skewed rendering of the *Measuring of the Temple* (Revelation 11; figs. 14 and 15).[53] As we will see in his images for the *Icones*, Holbein also achieved a more realistic rendering of deep landscape vistas, including the integration of buildings and figures in a convincingly naturalistic scale, in the challengingly narrow format. This is especially obvious in his revision of Cranach's rough, expressionist landscape of the

[52]*Das gantzs neuw Testament* (Basel: Thomas Wolff, 1523): "Auch die Offenbarung Ioannis mitt hübschen figuren, ausz welchen man das schwerest leichtlich verston kan."

[53]See the excellent reproductions in Müller, *Hans Holbein d. J.: Die Druckgraphik im Kupferstichkabinett Basel*, nos. 94.1–94.21 (pp. 122–130).

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Fig. 12. Hans Holbein the Younger, woodcut of Mark, in *Das New Testament* (Basel: Adam Petri, December 1522), fol. E5v, Inv. X.2173, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

city of Rome as Babylon (Revelation 14) as well as in the cityscape of Luzern that replaces Cranach's New Jerusalem (Revelation 21). Holbein also subtly altered the facial appearances of many figures engaged in the apocalyptic drama, evidently trying to soften the political contentiousness of the Wittenberg Bible, even if he wanted to retain the impression that his figures were individual portraits. For example, in "Angels Holding Back the Four Winds" (Revelation 7), the original quasi self-portrait of Cranach as the first to be anointed has been slightly altered so that it is no longer an obvious tribute to the painter.[54] Holbein removed Emperor Maximilian from a group of bystanders in Cranach's "Animal from the Sea" (Revelation 13) and modified the composition for the "Babylonian Harlot" (Revelation 17) just

[54]The figure being anointed looks like the older Lucas Cranach the Elder with a long beard. It is possible that Cranach has suggested his own features but projected them somewhat into the future. He was fifty when the *Septembertestament* woodcuts were designed.

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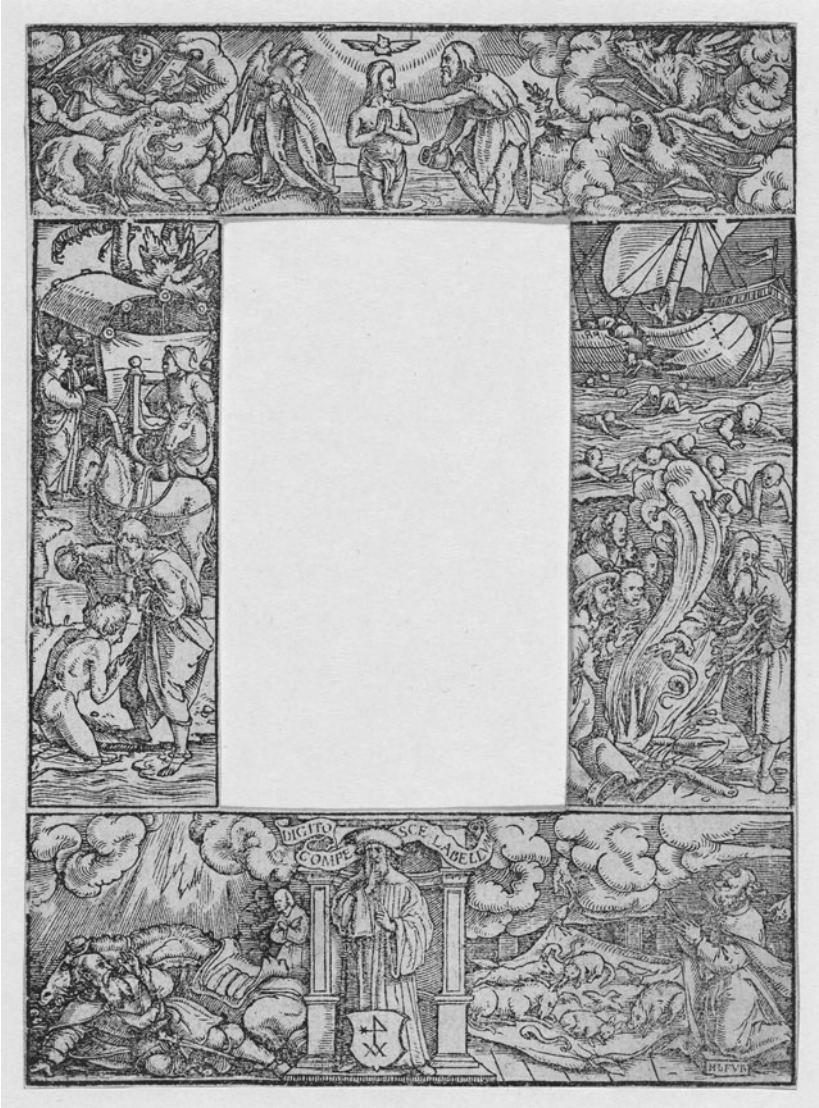

Fig. 13. Hans Holbein the Younger, woodcut title page, in *Das newe Testament* (Basel: Thomas Wolff, 1523), Kunstmuseum, Basel, Kupferstichkabinett, Inv. X.2150. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler. This edition printed by Wolff corresponds to *VD 16* B4329.

enough to efface recognizable traits of Charles V, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, and Duke George of Saxony, even if Holbein retained the papal

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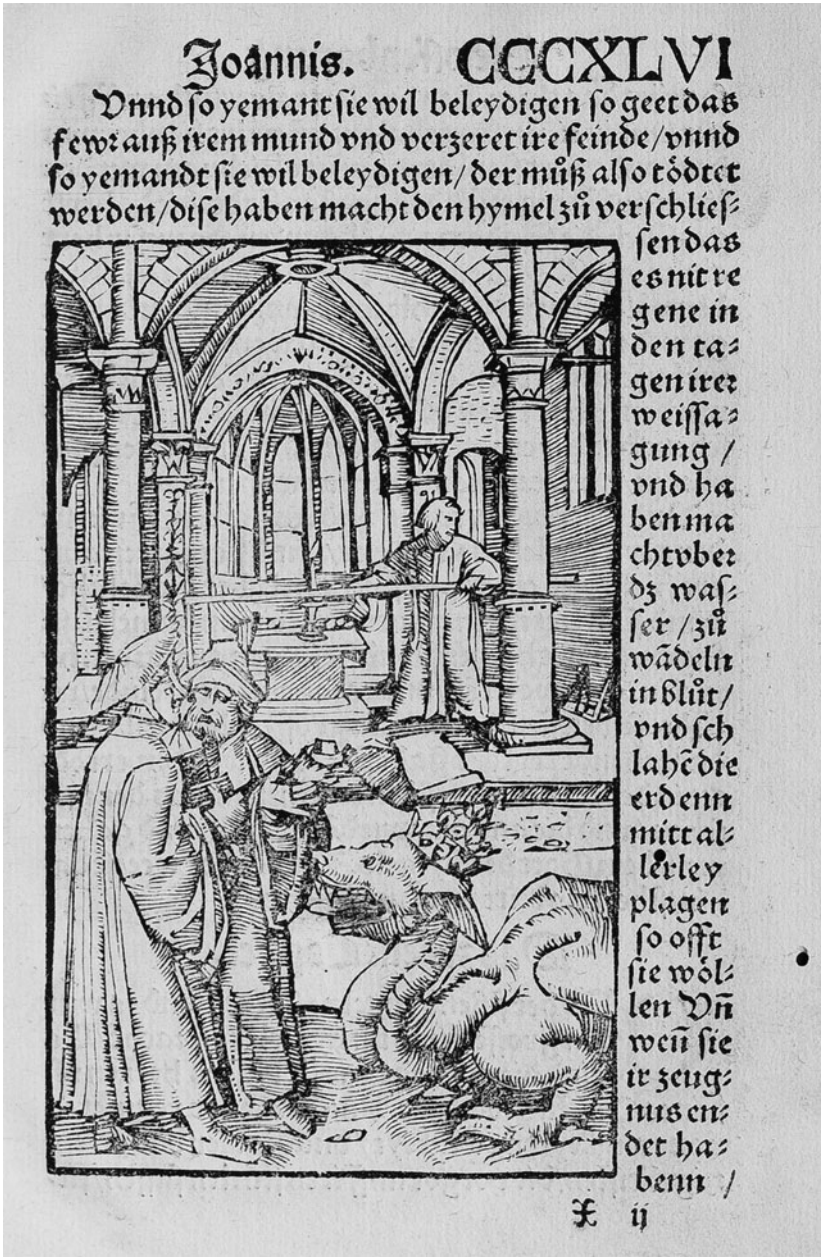

Joannis. CCCXLVI

Vnnd so yemant sie wil beleydigen so geet das fewr auß irem mund vnd verzeret ire feinde/vnnd so yemandt sie wil beleydigen/der müß also tödtet werden/dise haben macht den hymel zů verschliessen das es nit regene in den tagen iret weissagung/ vnd haben macht vber dz wasser/zů wãdeln in blůt/ vnd schlahẽ die erden mitt allerley plagen so offt sie wöllen Vñ weñ sie ir zeugnus endet haben/

ij

Fig. 14. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Measuring the Temple* (woodcut), in *Das newe Testament* (Basel: Thomas Wolff, 1523), fol. CCCXLVI, Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel. This edition printed by Wolff corresponds to *VD 16* B4329, the octavo imprint.

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Fig. 15. Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Measuring the Temple* (woodcut), Luther's *Septembertestament*, *Das Newe Testament Deůtzsch* (Wittenberg: Melchior Lotter the Younger for Lucas Cranach and Christian Döring, September 1522), fol. cc1v, Bavarian State Library, Munich.

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tiara on the Harlot of Babylon.[55] Most noticeably, Holbein altered Cranach's portrait of John as Luther in the second image, "Book with the Seven Seals" (Revelation 5). The new pictures were not only elegant, drawn firmly in a rationalized space, but also practical, executed in smaller dimensions (12.4 × 7.5 cm) that would work well in inexpensive book designs. The movability of Holbein's designs was greatly facilitated by his mastery of the small format woodcut that could be used with great flexibility in the newly fashionable octavo and small quarto formats, as well as in two column layouts for small folios. The original blocks were used in numerous printings: some seven editions by Wolff, a Strasbourg imprint by Johann Knobloch, a Basel French Bible of 1525,[56] and Froschauer's deluxe edition of the Zurich Bible in 1531.[57] The designs were also recut for several subsequent imprints, achieving a vastly broader dissemination than did the original full-page designs by Cranach and workshop. Over all, Holbein tried to stabilize (and thereby contain) the Wittenberg Bible by reconfiguring it as a humanist and, therefore, more international image.

III. The *Icones*

Images of the Stories of the Old Testament (1538), usually called the *Icones*, is regarded as a "pivotal moment in the history of Bible images,"[58] the first major picture Bible, a genre that expresses the narrative sweep of the Bible visually. For Holbein, the *Icones* represents the ultimate medium for transcending the heterogeneity of the Renaissance Bible since it is a Bible without a biblical text. The book, published in quarto by Jean and François Frellon, with presswork by Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel in Lyon, consists of some ninety-two woodcuts, eighty-eight of which are in a small oblong format (6.0 × 8.5 cm), with four reprints from Holbein's *Dance of Death* in an upright format (6.5 × 5.0 cm) at the beginning of the series. The initial 1538 publication has a brief Latin introduction by Jean Frellon as well as superscript captions for each picture. Beginning with the third edition (1539), a poetic tribute to Holbein by Nicolas Bourbon was added, as were a poetic preface and postscript by Gilles Corrozet. Corrozet also composed a quatrain for each image, thus creating the standard emblematic structure of superscript inscription, picture, and subscript epigram. Of the contributors,

[55]Schmidt, *Die Illustrationen der Lutherbibel*, 97.

[56]*Les choses contenues en ceste partie du nouveau testament* (Basel: Johannes Bebel for Schabler, 1525).

[57]Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, 421–424 (no. 300).

[58]Erika Michael, *Hans Holbein* Icones Historiorum Veteris Testamenti, *Lyon, 1547* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Octavo, 1999), 1.

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Bourbon is known to have had strong Protestant leanings in the 1530s and to have associated with Holbein at the court of Henry VIII in 1535, where Holbein produced at least two portraits of him.[59] (Bourbon returned to Lyon in 1536, but, however intriguing that connection may sound, any role he may have played in the 1538 printing of the *Icones* has remained obscure.) Altogether, the *Icones* appeared in French, Spanish, Latin, and English versions and exerted an immense impact on subsequent Bible production, including the launch of a prolific tradition of emblematic Bible books.

The work has been universally acclaimed for its aesthetic achievement, in particular, the elegant simplicity and the monumentality of the small format compositions. Holbein's virtuoso command of perspective and form enabled the creation of miniature compositions so spatially coherent and so realistically detailed that, if enlarged, they could produce compelling oversize murals. An important aspect of this miniature monumentality arises from the shift from a vertical to horizontal Bible illustration, a reorientation that allowed Holbein to perfect a wide and deep perspectival organization of space, which, in turn, facilitated dramatic enactment of biblical epic. The strong contrapposto and the ability to set figures in motion going in any direction—movement to the interior, exterior, and sides of the compositional space, as well as figures torqueing in place—are Italianate elements that inform Holbein's narratology of action.

The creation of these woodcuts is fraught with mystery for we do not know the original circumstances of their commission. According to some reconstructions, the designs predate the death of Hans Lützelberger in 1526, often thought to be the primary *Formschneider* of the blocks. Other scholars, using stylistic comparisons, believe the designs were created around 1530, when Holbein was in Basel working on monumental murals for the Basel City Hall.[60] Whatever the date of design, there is a further mystery in that two separate sets of woodblocks were created early on from the same designs or, possibly, a second set of sixty-seven woodcuts was created from proof prints of the first set.[61] The second set, which has less modeling and facial detail as well as slightly smoother contour lines, provided the illustrations for the 1531 imprint of the complete Zurich Bible, a masterful piece of typography and book design—called the "editio perfectissima et absolutissima"[62]—that also used Holbein's 1523 woodcuts for Revelation.

[59]Illustrated in Foister, *Holbein and England*, 12–13. On Nicolas Bourbon and Holbein, see also Bätschmann and Griener, *Hans Holbein*, 31, 34.

[60]See Michael, *Hans Holbein "Icones Historiorum Veteris Testamenti," Lyon, 1547*, 4–5.

[61]For detailed description, see Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, 501–503.

[62]Johann Heinrich Hottinger, seventeenth-century reformed theologian and biblical scholar, quoted in Traudel Himmighöfer, *Die Zürcher Bibel bis zum Tode Zwinglis (1531)* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1995), 368.

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The more detailed and more complete set of blocks in the *Icones* was also used for an unusually elegantly designed 1538 Latin Vulgate (also printed by the Trechsels, but for the publisher Hugo à Porta), which, in all likelihood, was printed before the *Icones*.[63]

Although the time and circumstances remain unknown, it appears that Holbein was commissioned to recreate the illustrative program of a pre-Reformation Vulgate printed by Jacques Sacon in Lyon in 1518 and again, with alterations, in 1520 (both editions for the Nuremberg publisher Anton Koberger the Younger).[64] Indeed, there are few iconographic departures from the Sacon-Bible in the *Icones*, even if Holbein totally reimagined the style of every single scene. The Sacon woodcuts feature two exceedingly dissimilar styles: images copied after the 1490 Malermi Bible (printed by Lucantonio di Giunta) and new replacement versions of many Malermi images by the Nuremberg artists Hans Springinklee and Erhard Schön. The Italian designs are simple, airy, and two-dimensional, whereas the German designs are denser and somewhat more realistic, even if the bodies and faces in both remain awkward and inexpressive. The important point is that, his technical and stylistic brilliance aside, Holbein did not invent many new subjects. He did not reconceptualize the choice of chapters to be illustrated. Nor did he or his publishers challenge the biblical canon from a Protestant perspective, for the *Icones* adheres to the Vulgate canon including the intermingling sequence of canonical and deuterocanonical books. (Protestant Bibles isolated the deuterocanonical books in a separate section usually labelled "Apocrypha," as in the 1535 Coverdale Bible.) Thus, the *Icones* is another practical production rationalization of the Bible, an economical exploitation of an earlier design, but also an ideological rationalization insofar as the Bible image references the Vulgate, a pre-Reformational, pre-heterogeneous Bible.

By stressing the significance of the Sacon iconography, I do not mean to disallow thematic analysis of the Holbein *Icones*. Holbein's realistic and dramatic style turned the woodcut Bible image into something entirely new: a visual epic. It is not an epic in a conventional literary sense of embodying a single coherent narrative; rather, it unfolds as a series of compelling *epyllia* (narrative vignettes), many of which portray the maintenance of religious and political order as a heroic epic struggle. Political force and violence form a leitmotif, with well over a two dozen images showing bloody battles, slaughter, maiming, execution, destruction, or other forms of violence and

[63]See Manfred Kästner, *Die Icones Hans Holbeins des Jüngeren* (Heidelberg: Esprint, 1985), 1:1–2.

[64]Erika Michael, "The Iconographic History of Hans Holbein the Younger's *Icones* and Their Reception in the Later Sixteenth Century," *Harvard Library Bulletin*, n.s. 3, no. 3 (Fall 1992): 35.

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Fig. 16. Hans Holbein the Younger, *David Smiting Hadadezer* (2 Kings 8), in *Historiarum veteris instrumenti icones* (Lyon: Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel for Jean and François Frellon, 1538), fol. F2r, Inv. 2189.26, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

repression. Several vignettes are portrayed as if scenes from classical heroic epic, as in the battle of the "Angel of God Killing the Assyrians" (2 Paralipomena 32), or David, appearing as Hercules, smiting the Philistine King Hadadezer (2 Kings 8; fig. 16). Many of these scenes are starkly brutal, whereas in some instances the classicized violence strikes chords of pathos, as in the image of the capture of the Medianite women (Numbers 31; fig. 17), a composition that evokes ancient funereal relief sculpture.

Within this epic of many vignettes is the pervasive representation of political magistracy—usually expressed as monarchy—and its ability to restore or preserve religious order and, by implication, to contain any religious heterogeneity. Thus, in addition to battles with foreign enemies or executions of opponents within, we also experience the rebuilding of the temple (both an Erasmian and, later, a Protestant motif[65]) in 1 Esdras 1 (fig. 18). Similarly, King Josiah restores Torah observance to the temple (4 Kings 23 and 24, that is 2 Kings 23 and 24) in a composition that shows Josiah presiding as monarch over high priest Hilkiah's reading from the rediscovered law (fig. 19). The authority of magistracy is glorified

[65]Erasmus cites the rebuilding of the temple and Josiah's restoration of temple worship in the dedication of the New Testament in Greek to Leo X, where he makes an analogy between the rebuilding of Saint Peter's Basilica and reform of the church. See Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum omne* (1516), fols. aa2r–aa2v.

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Fig. 17. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Capture of Medianite Women* (Numbers 31), in *Historiarum veteris instrumenti icones* (Lyon: Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel for Jean and François Frellon, 1538), fol. D4r, Inv. X2188, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

throughout, as in Esther's plea to Ahasuerus (Esther 1 and 2), with its starkly hierarchical composition, that suggests the monarchical ideology informing the portrait of Henry VIII in the Coverdale Bible.

Several images of the restoration or the defense of proper worship raise questions about the use of images and iconoclasm. Obviously, the *Icones* is not an iconoclastic work since it not only exemplifies the religious use of images but also adopts the traditional license of anthropomorphic representations of God, a sensibility that characterized the Lutheran aesthetic but was becoming controversial in other Protestant theologies. (Holbein's title page for the Coverdale Bible, for example, uses the Tetragrammaton to represent God in a verbal symbol.) Yet, depiction of artwork within the compositions is very limited. We find the biblical "sculpture" of the brazen serpent (Numbers 21:6–9), which in Christological interpretations expressed the salvific force of Christ on the cross (fig. 20). As a symbol of justification by faith, this scene was becoming a standard element in the Lutheran configuration of "Law and Gospel." Holbein first depicted the motif in his 1524 designs for Petri's octavo reprint of Luther's *Das Allte Testament deütsch*.[66] His new rendition in the *Icones* evokes ancient sculpture in its close copy of the posture of one of Laocoön's sons in the portrayal of an

[66]*Hollstein*, 14A, no. 72e.

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Fig. 18. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Return of the Jews* (1 Esdras 1), in *Historiarum veteris instrumenti icones* (Lyon: Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel for Jean and François Frellon, 1538), fol. H3v, Inv. X.2189.58, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

afflicted Israelite (left side of the brazen serpent). Nonetheless, as we would expect, nearly all the temple interiors within the *Icones* are without images, the one striking exception being the woodcut of *Solomon Preaching in the Temple* (2 Paralipomena 6), which depicts the altar with a portrait in the style of a Roman bas-relief displaying, perhaps, the likeness of a ruler in profile (fig. 21). These few images of representational art are counterbalanced by several portrayals of the destruction of idols or temple objects. For example, the image of Josiah restoring the law to the temple also displays, on the right, the burning of idols removed from the temple. Thus, the *Icones* exemplifies the use of religious imagery in the context of acknowledging the danger of idolatry.

The paratexts, moreover, explicitly stress the integrity of religious images as well as the grounding of the Bible image in classical aesthetics, a humanist aestheticizing of Bible culture. François Frellon endorses the work as "pictures of the sacred laws" (*sacrorum canonum tabulas*) and as "sacrosanct icons" (*sacrosanctas Icones*) that display the "innermost mysteries of the holy writers" (*hagiographorum penetralia*).[67] Nicolas Bourbon celebrates the classical lineage of Holbein's art, which, according to his poem, has aroused the envy of ancient Greek artists (Apelles, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius), who are

[67]*Historiarum veteris instrumenti icones* (Lyon: Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel, 1538), fol. A1v.

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Fig. 19. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Hilkiah Reading the Law before Josiah* (4 Kings 23), in *Historiarum veteris instrumenti icones* (Lyon: Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel for Jean and François Frellon, 1538), fol. G3v, Inv. X.2189.50, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

lamenting that Holbein has eclipsed their reputations. Perhaps it is a daring hyperbole when Bourbon claims that Holbein's images are so realistic that it appears only possible that God, not a human, could have created them. In any event, Bourbon also explicitly aligns the panegyric of Holbein's art with a traditional Christian use of religious images: "These holy images are by such a great artist that you will venerate a worthy work."[68] Similarly, Corrozet recognizes both aesthetic pleasure and religious experience, emphasizing that the "corporeal eye" can experience a pleasure that will inform a devotional or spiritual response: "The corporeal eye, moving and wandering, can have a singular pleasure here, which will engender in the heart a certain desire to love God." Everyone who looks at the pictures "will have pleasure both in the heart and the eyes."[69]

The theme of governmental authority connects the *Icones* to Holbein's title page for the 1535 Coverdale Bible, a carefully designed composition of four woodcuts that glorifies the new (and revolutionary) ideology of the

[68]Cited according to *Icones historiarum veteris testamenti* (Lyon: Jean Frellon, 1547), fol. A2v: "Icones hae sacrae tanti sunt . . . / Artificis, dignum quod uenereris opus."

[69]*Icones* (1547), fols. A3r-A3v: "L'oeil corporel, qui se tourne, et varie, / Y peut avoir un singulier plaisir. . . . auront plaisir, et au coeur et au yeulx."

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Fig. 20. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Brazen Serpent* (Numbers 21), in *Historiarum veteris instrumenti icones* (Lyon: Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel for Jean and François Frellon, 1538), fol. D3v, Inv. X.2189.25, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

ecclesiastical supremacy of the crown, as mandated in the 1534 Act of Supremacy (fig. 22). While on one level the title page forcefully expresses the new claims to an imperial authority over the state and the church,[70] on another level it deconstructs the Lutheran iconography of "Law and Gospel,"[71] effectively excising the doctrine of solafideism. Possibly inspired by slightly earlier works, Lucas Cranach developed a popular iconography of Luther's doctrine of justification by faith that contrasted biblical images of the law, such as Moses receiving the tablets on Mount Sinai and the fall of Adam and Eve, with pictures of the Gospel (the message of salvation through Christ), such as the Annunciation, the Crucifixion and, above all, the Resurrection (fig. 23 is an example of an early Lutheran title-page design of "Law and Gospel").[72] Holbein adopted the basic Lutheran binary

[70]This is the interpretation of Roy Strong, *Holbein and Henry VIII* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), 14–16; also adopted by John N. King, *Tudor Royal Iconography* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 54–63.

[71]On "Law and Gospel," see David H. Price, "The Bible and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe," in *New Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. Euan Cameron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 3:731–732.

[72]A painting of the *Allegory of the Old and New Law*, which reflects the basic Cranach iconography and composition, has been attributed to Holbein. See Foister, *Holbein and England*,

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Fig. 21. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Solomon Preaching in the Temple* (2 Paralipomena 6), fol. H2r, Inv. X.2189.55, Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel. Photograph by Martin P. Bühler.

organization, with the law on the left and the Gospel/grace on the right, but utterly contradicted its binary opposition by portraying their complementarity instead of opposition. The woodcut of the law, Moses's dramatic reception of the tablets (Exodus 21) on Mount Sinai,[73] is paired with Christ's final commission to his disciples to preach the Gospel to the nations, set in a similarly rocky landscape. Both the "Law and Gospel" message of salvation through Christ are to be propagated: God says to Moses, on the left, "These are the lavves that thou shalt laye before them," whereas, on the right, Jesus says to the apostles, "Go youre vvaye into all the vvorlde, and preach the Gospel" (Mark 16).[74] The meaning of the lower parts of each woodcut also inflects across the title page. On the left, in a literal rendering of 1 Esdras 9, Ezra reads the recovered law on a platform in front of the temple, while, on

154–159; and Anne-Marie Bonnet and Gabriele Kopp-Schmidt, *Die Malerei der deutschen Renaissance* (Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 2010), 382–383.

[73]Myles Coverdale's dedication to Henry VIII, in *Biblia* ([Antwerp?]: [Marten de Keyser?], 1535), preliminary fol. +2r, says that "the ryght and iust administracyon of the lawes that God gaue unto Moses and unto Josua" are now given to the king.

[74]This passage, as propaganda for Henry VIII's new Bible politics, was also used in Joos van Cleve's portrait of the king. See Strong, *Holbein and Henry VIII*, 8.

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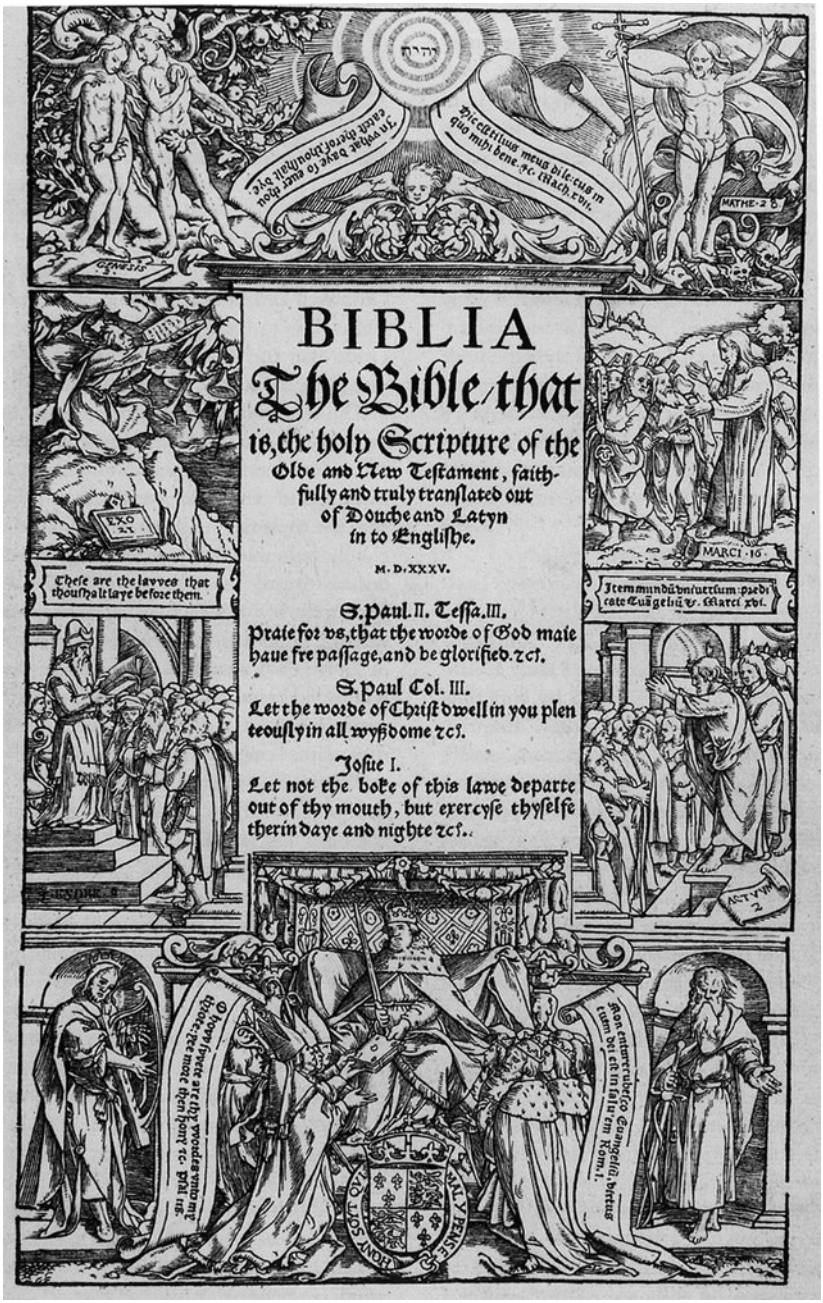

Fig. 22. Hans Holbein the Younger, woodcut title page of Myles Coverdale's translation of the Bible, *Biblia* ([Antwerp?]: [Marten de Keyser?], 1535).

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Fig. 23. Erhard Altdorfer, woodcut of *Law and Gospel*, used as the title page for the 1533 Low German version of Luther's Bible, *De Biblie* (Lübeck: Ludwig Dietz, 1533). This title page was later used for the English *Matthew's Bible* (n.p., 1537).

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the right, Peter delivers the Pentecostal sermon (Acts 2) in a similar setting, thus founding the church for evangelization after Christ's ascension. Moreover, all the apostles carry the keys of salvation, a motif associated with Saint Peter and the papacy, but also used elsewhere by Holbein to project the saving power of preaching the word rather than the soteriological authority of the papacy.[75] Holbein's unity of "Law and Gospel" flows visually into the final woodcut, which does not depict a historical episode from the Bible, but rather the contemporary status of the Bible, newly legalized in England. However propagandistic (and radical) this imperial representation of the king as "the ymage of God vpon the earthe" may be,[76] the title page iconography does not articulate a shift in the doctrine of justification or in devotional piety. With Bible and sword in hand, Henry VIII presides, as the supreme head, over a unified sovereignty of church (Archbishop Thomas Cranmer on the left) and state (Vicegerent Thomas Cranmer on the right), as he distributes the Bible, flanked by statues of David with his harp and Saint Paul with his "sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17). The symbols of the two swords (temporal and spiritual), the book of the Bible, and the harp of the Psalms coalesce to articulate the immense scope of the monarch's authority under the Act of Supremacy. Thus, in the Coverdale title page, monarchy sustains the "Law and Gospel," just as, in the *Icones*, we see that magisterial authority over religion, especially over worship, liturgy, and vigilance against idolatry—all portrayed as biblical history—became part of the discourse of the biblical image.

IV. Conclusion: An Artist for All Bibles

As far as the interpretation of Holbein's Bible illustrations is concerned, we are left with a meaningful paradox: Holbein's Bible images both expanded and contained Reformation biblicism, for the metatextual focus on the Bible as art and as history enabled Holbein to accommodate the heterogeneity of the various humanist and Reformation Bibles. With the exception of the iconography of royal supremacy in England, Holbein's Bible image was exceedingly movable, an artistic efficiency designed to contribute to the stability of the Bible image across a wide humanist and pluriconfessional spectrum.

Perhaps it is best to think of the Holbein image as a medium for enlarging the context of the printed Bible. For the revolutionary Erasmus Bible, Holbein tried to connect the text to the expansive discourse of Renaissance humanist art,

[75]See the 1523 title page for Jacques Lefèvre's *Commentary on the Four Gospels*; *Hollstein*, 14A, no. 53a.

[76]See Strong, *Holbein and Henry VIII*, 68. According to Strong, during his second English period, 1532–1543, Holbein "invented the English royal portrait as a means of propaganda."

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simultaneously portraying the new Bible and humanist art as part of a broadly defined cultural-philosophical discourse. Similarly, Holbein's production of Protestant Bibles, most importantly the epochal Luther Bible, strategically associated the new text with the humanist Bible and, in so doing, conceptualized the humanist biblical image as a validation of religious art in a new context. Ultimately, the reliance on humanist art as a cultural authority mitigated perception of the heterogeneity of the text to the point that Holbein's publishers completely displaced the text in the *Icones* with the daring creation of a new genre: the picture Bible. It is important, moreover, to stress that, in each of these visualizations of disparate Bibles, the practical and ideological interests of publishers played a critical role.

The production of Holbein Bible images was so prolific and their distribution so broad that they manifestly contributed not only to the rapid popularization of the Bible but also to the vitality of the Bible image in Protestantism. The foundational 1531 Zurich Bible, with Holbein illustrations for the Old and the New Testaments, established a high standard, based on humanist conventions of representation, for the production of fully illustrated German Bibles. Froschauer would reprint this deluxe design, grounded in the Holbein image, in 1533, 1536, 1540, 1545, and 1551, and his successors would reprint the illustrations four more times.[77] This, moreover, happened in a culture of iconoclastic Protestantism well before the first complete Luther Bible, the profusely illustrated imprint of 1534, appeared in an iconophilic milieu. Holbein's image informs the experience of the Bible as art and as sacred history, not as text or theology—and his formulation of the narrative historical Bible image would soon proliferate in Protestant sensibilities.

[77]See *Hollstein*, 14A, p. 212, for a partial list of many more Bibles based on Holbein's designs for the *Icones*. Pierre Regnault, for example, printed six complete Bibles in Paris using metalcuts after Holbein designs. For more examples, see Hieronymus, *Basler Buchillustration*, 500–506. The Paris printer Benedictus Prevotius also printed a complete Vulgate from a separate set of woodcut copies after Holbein's *Icones*.

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