

Tom Furniss: Reading the Geneva Bible: Notes Toward an English Revolution?

Since its first publication in 1560, the Geneva Bible has been considered by many as a revolutionary or seditious text, especially because of the numerous explanatory notes that the translators added in the margins of the text. Focusing on the 1560 Old Testament, this article takes a fresh look at the text, marginal notes and editorial apparatus of the Geneva Bible in order to ask whether they can be read as recommending English readers to overthrow Mary Tudor as an idolatrous tyrant and whether they could be read as giving support to the revolution against Charles I almost a century later. A close reading of the Geneva Old Testament leads to the conclusion that its politics are undecidable because the notes and prefaces faithfully reflect the internal political undecidability of the Bible itself. While some of the Geneva notes and prefaces encourage a revolutionary response to tyrants, there are many others that recommend obedience or passive resistance. As a consequence, the Geneva Bible's marginal notes could only be used to legitimize revolution through radically reductive reading strategies.

Keywords Geneva Bible; marginal notes; Marian regime and exiles; English Revolution; tyranny; radical politics; English Puritanism; reading; undecidability.

This article sets out to explore the text, marginal notes and editorial apparatus of the Geneva Bible (1560) in order to ask whether they fashion a revolutionary English Puritanism that encouraged the violent overthrow of Mary Tudor and offered support for the revolutionary war against Charles I almost a century later. I will argue that although the Geneva Bible's editorial apparatus is designed to enable 'simple' readers to arrive at 'simple' interpretations of individual passages, and although some of those 'simple' interpretations are unambiguously revolutionary, the translators' faithfulness to the Bible's intrinsic indeterminacy generates a set of notes whose overall political message is irreducibly complex and undecidable. Given this, the Geneva notes could only be read as justifying revolutionary struggle against idolatrous tyrants through selective quotations that sidestep other notes and prefaces that offer responses to tyranny and idolatry that are incompatible with revolution.

Some critics have reiterated the assumption of many early modern readers that the Geneva Bible is a radical text that gave support to revolutionary ideas and movements in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For most of these critics, the marginal notes are the main source of this radicalism. Winthrop S. Hudson argues that the Geneva Bible

provided an excellent medium by which to popularize [the Marian exiles'] political ideas, and in marginal notes they brought attention to biblical proofs for such concepts as an elective kingship, a compact between the ruler and the ruled, the subjection of magistrates to the law, and the right of active resistance and even of tyrannicide. (*John Ponet*, 184-5)

Hudson concludes that 'There can be no doubt that, among generations of Englishmen, both in England and in America, these belligerent marginal notes served to make current coin of revolutionary political principles' (*John Ponet*, 186). Despite Hudson's confidence, there is an on-going scholarly dispute about the political orientation of the Geneva Bible's editorial apparatus. Gerald Hammond, for example, argues that although the notes are theologically Calvinist they are not politically controversial:

In essence the Geneva Bible's notes combine the scholarly and the popular, and they seldom glance at anything that could be called seditious. Doctrinally, their position is entirely what would be expected, Protestant, Calvinist, anti-Catholic. ... But such notes are far outnumbered by those that are aimed at revealing to the people the nature of the original text and, where it is obscure, its meaning. (*Making of the English Bible*, 94)

Such differences lead Lloyd E. Berry to suggest that 'much remains to be done in analyzing the theological and historical implications of the marginal notes' of the Geneva Bible.¹ In response to this suggestion, I want to take a fresh look at the Geneva Bible's political orientation, asking in particular whether the text and critical apparatus can be seen as offering a revolutionary solution to the crisis of the Marian regime that, in turn, could become applicable to later political crises such as the English Civil War.

I. Research Leave in Geneva

During her brief reign from July 1553 to November 1558 Mary Tudor attempted to break the fragile and recently-forged link between English national identity and Protestantism by dismantling the Reformation in England. Her first Parliament repealed the Protestant legislation of Edward VI and she released and restored leading Roman Catholic churchmen and imprisoned their Protestant counterparts. While about three hundred lower class Protestants, and a few prominent churchmen, were burned at the stake, more than eight hundred Protestants from the middle classes fled abroad to the Lutheran and Calvinist strongholds of Germany and Switzerland. In cities such as Frankfurt, Strasburg, Zurich and Geneva, English theologians and scholars had the opportunity to encounter leaders of the European Reformation and to develop their religious and political thought 'free for once from the inhibiting influences of an English government' (Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 339). Between 1553 and 1558, the exiles produced roughly one hundred and sixty publications, about one hundred and twenty of which were published in English and were intended to be smuggled into England to console or rally the oppressed population.² The most important of these works radically

transformed English political and theological thought, making the period of continental exile a decisive episode in the formation of a discourse of revolutionary English Puritanism. The fact that the chosen people of the Old Testament are marked out by a history of exile, martyrdom and the struggle to survive as a persecuted minority under an idolatrous regime offered a compelling interpretive paradigm for the experience of English Protestants under Mary Tudor. That Mary could be seen as a 'foreign' tyrant, promoting antichristian idolatry and persecuting those who held to the true faith, actually strengthened the imagined link between English national identity and Protestantism and gave rise to the belief that the 'last days' envisaged in the Scriptures were fast approaching and that the English were about to play a special role in the final struggle.³ Some of the exilic publications exploit the idea that the English were an elect people in order to develop a Puritan theory of revolution, the central claim of which is that the people as a whole had the right and duty to overthrow idolatrous tyrants.⁴ John Ponet's *A Short Treatise of Politike Power, And of the Obedience which subjectes owe to kynges and other civile Governours, with an Exhortacion to all true naturall Englishe men* (Strasburg, 1556) powerfully articulates such revolutionary assumptions, so much so that it was republished in England in 1639 and 1642 when its arguments had become pertinent once again.⁵ The title page of Christopher Goodman's *How Superior Powers Oght to be Obeyd of their subjects: and wherin they may lawfully by Gods Worde be disobeyed and resisted* (Geneva, 1558) announces that the work identifies 'the cause of all this present miserie in England, and the onely way to remedy the same'.⁶ For Goodman, as for Ponet, England has been handed over to tyranny and idolatry by all the institutions that ought to have protected the realm, and the only remedy is revolution. Ponet's and Goodman's assumption that the sufferings of the

people of England somehow paralleled the sufferings of the chosen nation of the Old Testament thus allowed them to articulate revolutionary political ideas that went far beyond the hesitant resistance theories of the mainstream Reformation and veered towards the dangerous ideas of the Radical Reformation. It was in this atmosphere that a group of English exiles in Geneva produced a new English translation of the Bible that included marginal notes and other editorial matter that some readers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took to be as revolutionary as the tracts of Ponet and Goodman.

The translation of the Bible into English in the early modern period was highly controversial, routinely equated with the promotion of sedition and heresy. The Constitutions of Oxford of 1408, which decreed that 'Any unauthorized person caught with a Wycliffe Bible could be tried for heresy', were still in force in the early sixteenth century and the Lollards were still being persecuted (Bobrick, *Making of the English Bible*, 62). William Tyndale's piecemeal translations of the Bible in the late 1520s and early 1530s had to be produced in exile and in defiance of the secular and ecclesiastical authorities of Henrican England. When copies of Tyndale's New Testament were smuggled into England, Cardinal Wolsey headed a campaign of repression in which large numbers of copies were ceremonially burned. After Wolsey's fall in 1529, Thomas More continued the attack and a royal injunction forbade buying or owning an English Bible. Readers who disobeyed this injunction were burned and Tyndale himself was captured and burnt as a heretic in October 1536. Even after Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer persuaded the king to license English Bibles on the assumption that they would help establish England's independence from Rome and bolster the king as head of state and church, there was some anxiety about allowing general readers outside the Church

and the political elite to have access to a text that was seen as having radical political tendencies. As a consequence, 'for the century after the Reformation, the Anglican church did its best to smother the revolutionary message which some English men and women read into it' (Hill, *English Bible*, 16). After Cromwell's downfall in July 1540, the conservatives encouraged the king in what A.G. Dickens calls his 'experiment in Anglo-Catholicism' (*English Reformation*, 208). Protestants were persecuted and sometimes burned, and the Act for the Advancement of True Religion (1543) attempted to abolish 'diversity of opinions' about scriptural interpretation, condemned 'crafty false and untrue' (i.e., Protestant) translations, and sought to prohibit 'women, artificers, apprentices, journeymen, servingmen under the degree of yeomen, husbandmen and labourers' from reading the Bible (quoted by Dickens, *English Reformation*, 213).

The highly-charged history of biblical translation into English between the 1520s and the 1540s, along with the actions of the Marian regime and the radical writings of the Marian exiles, might suggest that the exiles' decision to embark on a new translation of the Bible in the late 1550s was a politically motivated act. But it is also possible to see the project as a response to the scholarly opportunity that exile in Geneva provided. Geneva was an ideal location for a new translation of the Bible: it was the centre of the Calvinist Reformation, it had the best printers in Europe, and it was 'a power-house of textual research and translation into European vernaculars, of secular classics as well as of Scripture'.⁷ The Bible published in April or May of 1560 as *The Bible and Holy Scriptures Conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament Translated According to the Ebrue and Greke, and conferred with the best translations in divers langages* (Geneva: Rouland Hall, 1560) quickly came to be

regarded as 'a *locus* of Renaissance and Reformation scholarship, a triumph of textual, theological, and linguistic excellencies, universally admired'.⁸

There is general agreement among scholars that the Geneva Bible was produced by a group of exiles under the direction of William Whittingham, one-time Fellow of All Souls and now Calvinist pastor of the English congregation at Geneva. An English New Testament, based largely on Tyndale, appeared in 1557 with explanatory notes and a prefatory epistle by John Calvin.⁹ When Mary Tudor died in November 1558, many of the exiles returned to England, eager to contribute to the renovation of the English state and church under Elizabeth. But Anthony Gilby, William Cole and others remained with Whittingham in Geneva 'to finish the work on the Bible and see it through the press' (Berry, 8). *The Booke of Psalmes* was published in Geneva with a dedicatory epistle to the new queen, dated 10 February 1559, which claims that the entire Bible was 'in good readines'.¹⁰ In the preface to the reader in the Geneva Bible itself, dated 10 April 1560, the translators indicate that they had worked on the translation and editorial apparatus 'for the space of two yeres and more' (iiii, recto). Berry concludes from these indications that Whittingham's team of scholars 'had begun as early as 1556 to devote themselves to translating the Scriptures into English' and that the bulk of the work on the Bible was completed by 1558 (9, 8). In other words, although the Geneva Bible was published about eighteen months into Elizabeth's reign, most of the translation and editorial apparatus appears to have been produced while Mary Tudor was still on the throne. Any reading of the politics of the Geneva Bible needs to take this fact into account.

II. Seditious and Traitorous Conceits

The Geneva Bible marks the change of regime in England with a dedicatory epistle 'To the Moste Vertuous and Noble Quene Elisabet' from her 'humble subjects of the English Church at Geneva' (ii, recto). Despite this dedication, the Geneva Bible never became the official Bible of the Elizabethan church and had to be imported from Geneva until the death of Archbishop Matthew Parker in 1575. But between 1575 and the first appearance of the King James version in 1611, the Geneva Bible went through about a hundred English editions, becoming 'the most widely read book of any kind in the Elizabethan era and into the seventeenth century'.¹¹ Even the King James version 'did not immediately eclipse the popularity of the Geneva Bible'; although it had to be smuggled into England from Amsterdam after 1616, 'The extraordinary fact ... is that over sixty editions (some, of the New Testament only) appeared after the Authorized Version' (Berry, 14).

One of the main reasons for the Geneva Bible's popularity was its provision of a sophisticated but user-friendly editorial apparatus (Berry, 13). The Geneva Bible is designed to be used by ordinary, non-expert readers. As Alister McGrath notes, the 1560 edition 'was produced relatively cheaply (bringing it within the reach of many families). It was handsomely printed in an attractive typeface, and its relatively compact size – quarto rather than folio – made it convenient for personal and family use' (*In the Beginning*, 119). This new English translation builds on Tyndale's example not only by returning to the original Hebrew and Greek, but also by being designed, as David McKitterick puts it, 'to be read, as well as to be heard' (*Cambridge Geneva Bible of 1591*, x). The text was divided into numbered verses for the first time, and each book and chapter is headed by a summary of the contents. The Geneva Bible's title page assures the reader that the text is embellished 'With Moste Profitable Annotations upon all the hard places, and other things of great

importance as may appear in the Epistle to the Reader'. This Epistle explains that the editorial apparatus was added 'that by all meanes the reader might be holpen' (iiii, verso). Such comments are extremely significant. The notes and other editorial material made accessible to ordinary readers the enormous learning and scholarship of the Geneva translators. Of the thousands of notes that crowd the margins of the text, many explain details of translation, many consist of cross-references between books and between Testaments, and a good deal serve simply to explicate the text – interpreting figurative language or spelling out ambiguities and alternative readings. At the end of the volume there is a table of Biblical names with explanations of their meaning, a table of things contained (i.e., an index), and a computation of the period of time between the creation of the world and the publication of the Geneva Bible itself – information that was deemed vital for millenarian calculations. The Geneva Bible is also illustrated and interpreted by visual aids, including twenty-six woodcut illustrations and five maps to help the reader understand the symbolic geography and journeys of the Jews and early Christians. The editors claim that their notes and illustrations serve simply to explain and interpret the text:

Forthermore whereas certeyne places in the bookes of Moses, of the Kings and Ezekiel semed so darke that by no description thei colde be made easie to the simple reader, we have so set them forthe with figures and notes for the ful declaration therof, that thei which can not by judgement, being holpen by the annotations noted by the lettres a b c. &c. atteyn thereunto, yet by the perspective, and as it were by the eye may sufficiently knowe the true meaning of all suche places. (iiii, verso)

Michael Jensen reads such pronouncements as evidence that the Geneva Bible was designed to present a 'simple' reading for 'simple' readers ("Simply" Reading the Geneva Bible', 30) – a suggestion that I will bring into question in the course of the present article.

The Geneva Bible's use of a combination of verbal and visual aids has recently been seen as an early modern equivalent of the search engine and as an important development in the evolution of the book as an artifact (Corns, 'The Early Modern Search Engine', 102-3). Yet the Geneva Bible was not unique or even unusual in this respect since earlier and rival English translations, like their Lutheran and Calvinist models on the continent, also employed such technical and visual aids, prefatory material and marginal notes (see Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England*, 66-79). What is distinctive about the Geneva Bible is the sheer number of marginal notes and the fact that some of the notes and prefaces highlight the fact that the Bible contains examples of resistance to oppressive kings and the revolutionary overthrow of tyrants that are inspired by God. The politically contentious tendency of some of the Geneva Bible's marginal notes was one of the main reasons why it did not become the official Bible of the English church and why two official translations were produced to try to neutralize it. In a memorandum to the translators of the Bishop's Bible in 1568, Archbishop Parker insisted that they should 'make no bitter notis uppon any text, or yet to set downe any determinacion in places of controversie'.¹² Forty years later, the 'King James' translation was designed to displace the Geneva Bible. Having been brought up on it by his tutor, George Buchanan, and having witnessed the way it was used to justify the overthrow of his mother, James saw the Geneva Bible as an attack on monarchy and the divine right of kings. At the Hampton Court Conference in

January 1604, the king called the Geneva Bible 'the worst of all' English translations and gave permission for a new translation, with the caveat

that no Marginal Notes should be added, having found in them that are annexed to the Geneva translation ... some Notes very partial, untrue, seditious, and savouring too much of dangerous, and traitorous conceits. As for example, the first Chapter of Exodus and the nineteenth Verse, where the Marginal Note alloweth Disobedience unto Kings. And 2. Chro. 15.16 the note taxeth Asa for deposing his Mother, only, and not killing her.¹³

These examples reveal why James found some of the Geneva notes problematic. The first chapter of Exodus records that the King of Egypt had 'commanded the midwives of the Ebrewen women' to kill all male babies (1:15-16), but the midwives, fearing God, disobeyed the king; when the king demanded an explanation, the midwives claimed that they had not been able to kill the male babies because Hebrew women tend to give birth before midwives are able to attend them (1:19). The Geneva marginal note makes the following comment: 'Their disobedie[n]ce herein was lawful, but their dissembling evil' (24, verso). The implication, then, as James saw, is that subjects may disobey a king – at least if his command goes against God's laws or if he is a tyrant. The Geneva Bible and its notes continued to be seen as a threat to monarchs and monarchists well into the seventeenth century, especially because of the way it was used by radicals in the revolutionary struggles of the mid century. In 1648, Sir Robert Filmer, in order to discredit the use of the Geneva Bible to label Charles I as a tyrant, noted that

the words [tyrant and slave] are frequent enough in every man's mouth, and our old English translation of the Bible useth sometimes the word tyrant. But

the authors of our new translation have been so careful, as not once to use the word, but only for the proper name of a man – Acts xix, 9 – because they find no Hebrew word in the Scripture to signify a tyrant or a slave. (*Anarchy of a Limited or Mixed Monarchy*, 147-48)

As late as 1670, twenty years after the Revolution, Peter Heylyn, chaplain to Charles I and Charles II, asserted that James I and VI had rightly judged that the Geneva notes 'in many places savour of Seditious, and in some of Faction, destructive of the Persons and Powers of Kings, and of all civil intercourse and humane society' (*Aerius Redivivus*, 247).

The two Geneva notes that James I and VI identifies as seditious in the Hampton Court Conference are both taken from the Geneva Old Testament. In what follows, I focus almost entirely on the Geneva Old Testament, mainly because the Geneva New Testament is significantly less radical than the Geneva Old Testament. For Hudson, the Geneva Bible's politically radical notes are mostly to be found in the Old Testament 'owing to the fact that the translation of the New Testament, first published in 1557, was made before the translators had begun to think along these more radical lines' – that is, before Ponet's and Goodman's revolutionary tracts could have had an impact on the Geneva translators (*John Ponet*, 185, n.13). It is also the case that the political context explored in the New Testament is quite different from that in the Old Testament. Whereas the Old Testament is obsessed with the relationship between the people of Israel and the kings, tyrants and oppressors who rule over them, the New Testament is concerned with working out how small communities of Christians can survive within the Roman Empire. The latter question is one of the main issues that St Paul attends to in his epistle to the

Christians in Rome, in which he recommended them to 'be subject unto the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordeined of God' (Romans 13:1).

Before I go on to develop a close reading of the Geneva Old Testament, however, it is important to note that the text and notes of the Geneva New Testament went through two significant reincarnations between the publication of the first edition of the Geneva Bible in 1560 and the end of the sixteenth century:

In 1576, the Puritan Lawrence Tomson, scholar, member of Parliament, and aide to Sir Francis Walsingham, brought out an edition of the Genevan New Testament. Although there were some revisions in the text, mainly from [Theodore] Beza's later work, the substantial changes were in the marginal notes, which were based on those of Beza and Camerarius in the 1573 edition of the Greek New Testament edited by Pierre Loisseleur de Villiers. In 1587 a quarto edition of the Geneva Bible was brought out with Tomson's New Testament and notes substituted for those in the 1560 edition, and from this time on some editions had the Tomson and some the original notes. Another important addition was the commentary of Franciscus Junius on the book of Revelation, translated in 1592 from Latin into English. These notes, extremely anti-Catholic, were first appended to Tomson's New Testament, then to some editions of the Geneva Bible, and from 1599 on replaced the original notes on Revelation in the Geneva Bible. (Berry, 14-15)

In the early part of the seventeenth century, then, there were several different versions of the Geneva Bible in circulation and any discussion of the political implications and potential impact of the Geneva Bible in the period between 1560

and the revolutionary wars of the 1640s has to take this into account. Yet in assessing the impact of these changes to the Geneva New Testament, it is worth remembering that the two Geneva notes that James I and VI identified as seditious in the Hampton Court Conference were both taken from the Geneva Old Testament – which remained unchanged throughout the Geneva Bible's publication history. It should also be said that the New Testament notes of Beza and Camerarius are not obviously more politically radical than the 1560 notes and that Junius's notes to Revelation are less concerned with the political relationship between princes and people than with presenting 'a massive and violent antipapal diatribe' (Betteridge, 'The Bitter Notes', 45).¹⁴ I would therefore suggest that the various transformations that the Geneva New Testament underwent did not significantly modify the Geneva Bible's potential impact on the English Revolution of the 1640s and that our primary focus in this regard should be on the text and annotations of the Old Testament.

III. Reading the Geneva Bible

The most significant tendency of the Geneva Bible's editorial apparatus is to encourage its readers to make direct connections between what they read about the Old Testament Jews or early Christians and their own contemporary situation in England. As John R. Knott puts it, 'The habit of identifying with the experiences of the Israelites, by an essentially ahistorical leap to the truth of the Word, pervades the Geneva Bible' (*Sword of the Spirit*, 29). This reading strategy draws on one of the founding myths of English radicalism – the idea that the people of England might be a post-biblical equivalent to the chosen people of the Old Testament. Despite the fact that the Geneva note to Revelation 22:2 asserts that 'Christ who is the life of

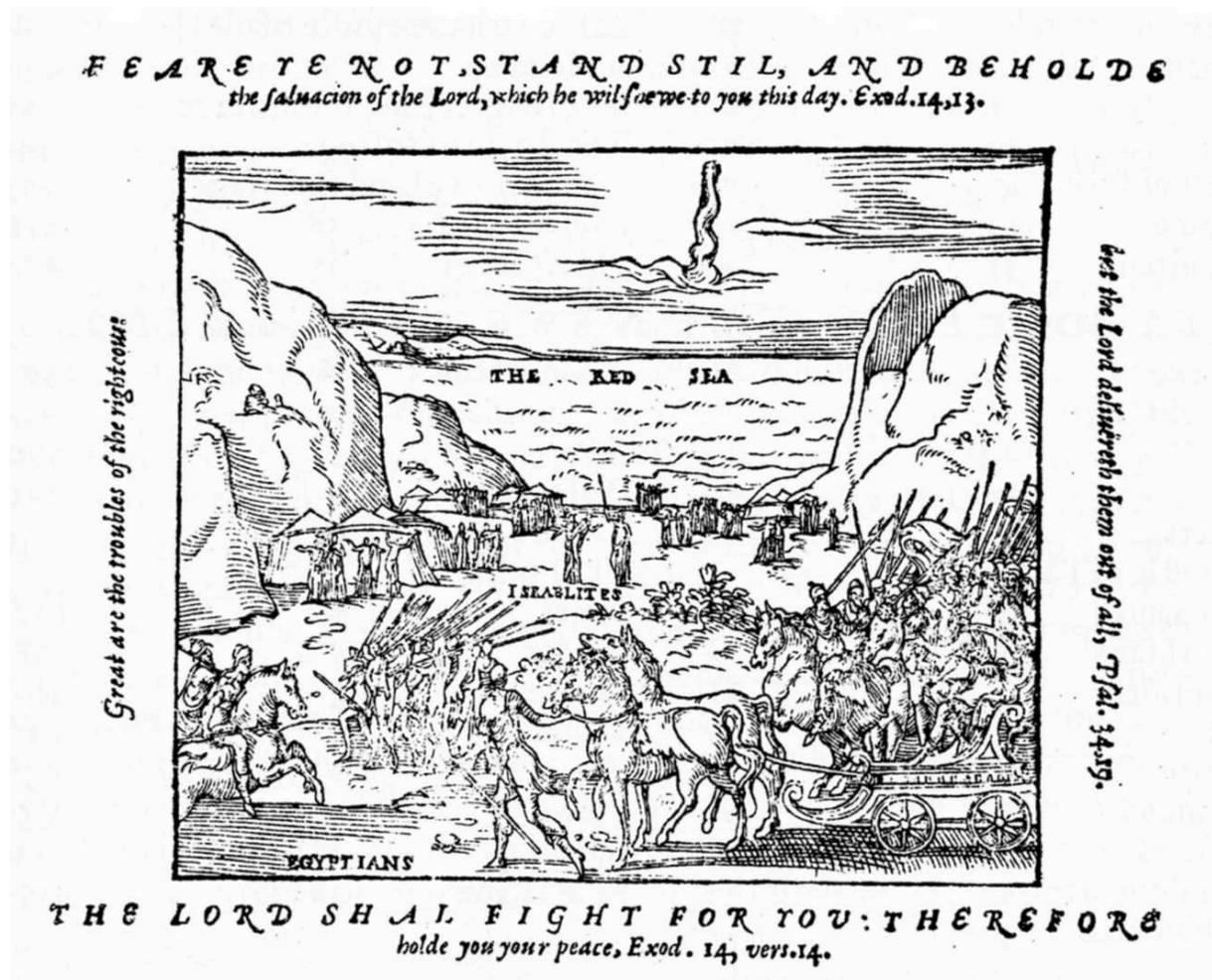
his Church, is commune to all his and not peculiar for any one sorte of people' (122, recto), the 'Epistle to the Reader' that follows the dedication to Elizabeth invites 'our Beloved in the Lord the Brethren of England, Scotland, Ireland, &c' to compare their lot with that of the Old Testament Jews. Although the people of Britain (especially the English) have been severely persecuted they have not yet suffered the fate of the children of Israel, who so betrayed the trust of God that they were and remain scattered throughout the world:

we are especially bounde (deare brethren) to give [God] thankes without ceasing for his great grace and unspeakable mercies, in that it hath pleased him to call us unto this mervelous light of his Gospel, & mercifully to regarde us after so horrible backesliding and falling away from Christ to Antichrist, from light to darckness, from the living God to dumme and dead idoles, & that after so cruel murther of Gods Saintes, as alas, hathe bene among us, we are not altogether cast of, as were the Israelites, and many others for the like, or not so manifest wickednes, but receyved agayne to grace with moste evident signes and tokens of Gods especial love and favour. (iiii, recto)

This analysis of England's recent history suggests that the Marian tyranny was a period in which the chosen people of England fell into national sin and that Mary's overthrow and her replacement by a godly queen is a sign of God's special grace and mercy to His favored people. Indeed, the Geneva Bible itself is now being offered as a gift of God that will enable His own people to become worthy once more of His favor (iiii, verso).

The establishment of parallels between the experiences of the Old Testament Jews and the current situation of the people of England underlies the implicit meanings

of the Geneva Bible's frontispiece. The woodcut illustration of the Red Sea incident in Exodus that forms part of the frontispiece apparently serves as a visual key to the Geneva Bible's whole ideological project:



A critical moment in the account in Exodus of the children of Israel's flight from the Egyptians is vividly illustrated by an image of the Jews facing the Red Sea, hemmed in by mountains on either side and with the Egyptians hard on their heels. The pillar of cloud can be seen above the sea, but the sea has not yet parted. In other words, the Jews appear to be at the point of destruction at the hands of their enemies, but are about to be saved, and their enemies destroyed, by a spectacular intervention by their God that would confirm once more their special status as

God's chosen people. The parallels between the situation of the Jews at this moment and that of English Protestants would have been vivid to contemporary readers who were already primed to think of the agents of Marian tyranny as 'idolatrous Egyptians'.¹⁵ Elizabeth's accession is thus made equivalent to the Red Sea miracle – an epochal event in the formation of the children of Israel into a nation. For the Geneva Bible's first readers in England, Mary's sudden death and Elizabeth's accession would have seemed a striking confirmation of the reassurances presented in the biblical quotations that surround the frontispiece illustration and that appear to spell out the text's theological-ideological standpoint regarding the question of the appropriate response to tyranny. Above and below the image are quotations from Exodus: 'Feare ye not, stand stil, and beholde the salvacion of the Lord, which he wil shewe to you this day. Exod.14,13'; 'The Lord shal fight for you: therefore holde you your peace, Exod. 14, vers.14'. A quotation from the Psalms is placed to the right and left of the illustration: 'Great are the troubles of the righteous: / but the Lord delivereth them out of all, Psal. 34,19'. Although Hammond claims that the Geneva notes are not seditious, he suggests that the implications of the Geneva frontispiece 'are obvious – that this is the word of Scripture aimed at comforting and strengthening a beleaguered and oppressed people. Of all English versions the Geneva Bible had probably the greatest political significance, in its preparing a generation of radical puritans to challenge, with the word of God, their tyrant rulers' (*Making of the English Bible*, 136). Yet while it is clear that the frontispiece seeks to comfort and strengthen the people of England in their darkest hour, the quotations used to expound the visual image of the Red Sea incident do not encourage readers to challenge their tyrant rulers. Instead, these passages reinforce the standard Lutheran and Calvinist position that the people

should remain passive under tyrants and that God would deliver the righteous from tyranny. In other words, the Geneva Bible's frontispiece appears to adopt a political position that is at the opposite end of the spectrum from the revolutionary theological politics of Ponet and Goodman.

Crawford Gribben convincingly reads the frontispiece illustration and quotations as recommending devout passivity to a godly people suffering under tyranny. Less convincing is his claim that the frontispiece clarifies the 'polemical agenda and political utility' of the whole Geneva Bible (*Puritan Millennium*, 68). Although the sustained diatribe against idolatry and tyranny throughout the Geneva Bible's prefaces and notes clearly invited its intended readers to apply the biblical text to their situation under Mary Tudor, it is far from obvious what remedy is being prescribed in the Geneva Bible as a whole. While early-modern readers attempted to derive a coherent set of political principles from the Bible, the Bible itself would seem too diffuse and self-contradictory for that. The history of the Jews in the Old Testament and of the apostles and early Christians in the New Testament involves a huge variety of political situations and different kinds of responses to them. The Old Testament's vacillations about the origins and nature of kings allowed readers who searched the Bible for guidance about contemporary political problems to arrive at diametrically opposed views about kings in the early modern world. While monarchists could find scriptural evidence for the divine right of kings, radicals could find support for the view that the power of kings derives from the people and that kings who fail to rule for the good of the people could be overthrown. Yet if the Geneva Bible does not resolve the contradictory politics of the Bible, it can nonetheless be seen as a powerful interpretive machine for reading the Bible as repeatedly attending to two interrelated political questions that were especially

urgent for the people of England: what is the distinction between a legitimate king and a tyrant, and how should a people react if they find themselves oppressed by a tyrant or conqueror?

The Geneva editors amplify the ambiguity in Deuteronomy about whether the early kings and magistrates of Israel were appointed by God or elected by the people – a question that was crucial in understanding the people's right, or not, to resist and/or overthrow a tyrant. The editorial preface to Deuteronomy emphasizes the divine origin of kings, stressing that God established kings to promote His word and protect His people:

And for this cause God promised to raise up Kings and gouvernours for the setting forthe of this worde and preservacion of his Church: giving unto them an especial charge for the executing thereof: whome therefore he willeth to exercise them selves diligently in the continual studie and meditacio[n] of the same: that they might learne to feare the Lord, love their subjects, abhorre covetousnes and vice, and whatsoever offendeth the majestie of God.
(80, recto)

Yet the notes to Deuteronomy also indicate that political power in Israel originally had an elective element. In Deuteronomy 16:18 Moses tells the Israelites that 'Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy cities ... & they shal judge [the] people [with] righteo[us] judgeme[n]t'. The Geneva note underlines the point: 'He gave authortie to that people for a time to chuse them selves magistrates' (88, recto). The head-note to Deuteronomy 17 announces 'The election of the King' (88, recto), although Deuteronomy 17:15 gives God a role in the elective process: '*Then* thou shalt make him King over thee, whome the Lord thy God shal chose: from

among thy brethren shalt thou make a King over thee: thou shalt not set a stranger over thee, [which] is not thy brother'. According to the Geneva note, this verse means that the people cannot elect a king 'Who is not of thy nacion, lest he change true religion into idolatrie, and bring thee to slaverie' (88, verso). Given that Mary Tudor was perceived as a half-Spanish tyrant who was reintroducing idolatry into England and enslaving the English people, this note could be read as a precise analysis of the situation in England.

The editorial preface to 'The First Booke of Samuél' offers an alternative account of the provenance of kings in Israel, implying that God was offended that the children of Israel had wished for a king and that he had therefore given them a tyrant in order to teach them what good kingship ought to be:

here in this first booke of Samuel is declared the state of this people under their first King Saul, who not content with that ordre, which God had for a time appointed for the governement of his Church, demanded a King, to the intent thei might be as other nacions & in a greater assurance as thei thoght: not because thei might the better therby serve God, as being under the safegarde of him, which did represent Jesus Christ the true deliverer: therefore he gave them a tyrant and an hypocrite to rule over them, that they might learne, that the persone of a King is not sufficient to defend them, except God by his power preserve and kepe them. (121, recto)

This suggests that God would have preferred that the people had remained content with the non-monarchical political system established by Moses. It also suggests that God sometimes imposes tyrants on the chosen people in punishment for collective sin. But even though it began with tyranny, once the monarchical system

is established in Israel there is little in the Bible to suggest that it should be replaced by any other political system. Although the head-note to Deuteronomy 29 emphasizes that 'The whole people from the hiest to the lowest are co[m]prehended under Gods covenan[n]t' (93, verso), and although the 'Argument' or preface to Genesis claims that Genesis demonstrates that the true church 'dependeth not on the estimacion and nobilitie of the worlde: and ... that it standeth not in the multitude, but in the poore and despised, in the smale flocke and litle nomber' (1, recto), the Geneva translators are anxious to distance themselves from the radical egalitarianism of groups such as the Anabaptists: 'All are a like holy: therefore none ought to be preferred above other: thus the wicked reason against Gods ordinance' (note to Numbers 16:3, 69, recto). Their simultaneous commitment to egalitarianism and godly monarchic rule governs the Geneva editors' careful negotiation of the Bible's confusing and contradictory politics.

In I Samuel 8, the prophet Samuel conveys to the people God's words concerning the kind of ruler that he will set over them in response to their demands for a king: 'And he said, This shalbe the maner of the King that shal reigne over you: he wil take your sonnes, and appoint them to his charets ... He wil take the tenth of your shepe, and ye shalbe his servants' (I Samuel 8:11-17). The Geneva note to this stresses that this is not the pattern of monarchy but of tyranny: 'Not [that] Kings have this autoritie by their office, but that suche as reigne in Gods wrath shulde usurpe this over their brethren co[n]trary to the Law. Deu.17.20' (124, recto).

Having been set over the people of Israel as a punishment from God, Saul's defeat by the Philistines and subsequent suicide supposedly indicates that God overthrew him for being a tyrant:

And because Saul, whome of nothing God had preferred to the honour of a King, did not acknowledge Gods mercie towarde him, but rather disobeied the worde of God and was not zealous of his glorie, he was by the voyce of God put downe from his state, and David the true figure of Messiah placed in his steade, whose pacience, modestie, constancie, persecucion by open enemies, fained friends, and dissembling flatterers are left to the Church and to every member of the same, as a paterne and example to beholde their state a[n]d vocacion. (Preface to The First Booke of Samuél, 121, recto)

Saul and David thus become the exemplary tyrant and the exemplary king respectively. Yet the preface to 'The Second Booke of Samuel' explains that I Samuel and II Samuel treat 'the lives and actes of two Kings, to wit, of Saul and David, whom [Samuel] anointed and consecrated Kings by the ordinance of God' (135, verso). Both kings and tyrants, then, are appointed by God and anointed by His prophets. The difference between them is entirely a matter of how they rule.

The Geneva Bible's predominant advice regarding idolatrous tyrants, as indicated in the frontispiece and in many Old Testament notes and prefaces, is to say that the people should pray for forgiveness and await God's intervention. As we just saw, Saul 'was by the voyce of God put downe from his state'. The Geneva note to Psalm 37:12 sums up this outlook: 'The godlie are assured [that] the power and craft of the wicked shal not prevail against them, but fall on their owne neckes, & therefore ought paciently to abide Gods time, & in the meane while bewaile their sinnes, & offer up their teares as a sacrifice of their obedience' (242, verso). But there is another thread running through the Geneva Old Testament that emphasizes the people's duty to resist ungodly monarchs. Some of the notes to I and II Kings

encourage the people as a whole to resist their rulers' commands whenever they go against the word of God: 'The people shal not be excused, when they do evil at [the] comandme[n]t of their governours' (note to I Kings 14:16, 159, recto). In fact, the people ought to resist tyrants even at the cost of their lives: 'They thoght it their dueties rather to venter their lives, then to grant to that thing which was not lawful, onely to satisfie the lust of a tyra[n]t' (note to I Kings 20:8, 162, recto). The Book of Daniel offers vivid examples of virtuous resistance to the arbitrary will of tyrants. In addition to Daniel's resistance to Darius, the book also presents the earlier acts of resistance by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego against Nebuchad-nezzar's idolatrous decree. The fact that they survive Nebuchad-nezzar's furnace unscathed, even though it had been heated to seven times its usual temperature, 'declareth that the more, that tyrants rage, & the more witty they shewe them selves in inventing stra[n]ge, and cruel punishments, the more is God glorified by his serva[n]ts to whome he giveth pacience and consta[n]cie to abide [the] crueltie of their punishment' (358, verso). The king is forced to commend Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego for having resisted his own 'commandment, & yelded their bodies rather the[n] thei wolde serve or worship anie god, save their owne God' (Daniel 3:28). Nebuchad-nezzar's punishment is to be driven from the company of men and live with beasts until he comes to recognize 'that [the] moste high hathe power over the kingdome of men, and giveth it to whomesoever he wil' (Daniel 4:14). After his term of banishment from human society, the king is restored to human understanding and to his throne: 'my glorie and my beautie was restored unto me, and my counsellours and my princes soght unto me, & I was established in my kingdome, and my glorie was augmented toward me' (Daniel 4:33). The Geneva editors give the episode a radical cast by proposing that these princes and

counselors not only re-established Nebuchad-nezzar on the throne but also deposed and banished him in the first place (note t, 359, verso). This reading is supported by Daniel 5:20: 'But when his heart was puft up, and his minde hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kinglie throne, and they toke his honour from him'.

If the Book of Daniel indicates that idolatrous tyrants may be resisted by the godly and deposed by their princes and counselors, the Old Testament also includes characters called by God to engage in violent revolutionary struggle against idolatrous tyrants and oppressors. The second book of Kings presents some compelling examples. The central episode concerns Jehu's struggle, encouraged and inspired by the prophet Elisha, against the house of Ahab, which had divided Israel and Jordan between Ahab's sons and sons-in-law. Jehu defeats Joram, king of Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Jordan, in battle, killing Jehoram, Ahaziah's father. He then hunts out Ahab's wife, Jezebel, and violently murders her. The Geneva editors claim that Jehu did this 'by the mocion of the Spirit of God' and that Jezebel's death is an 'example of Gods judgements to all tyrants' (note to II Kings 9:33, 169 recto). (This was a significant episode to the Genevan exiles, who routinely associated Mary Tudor with Jezebel; a century later, Charles I's French Catholic queen, Henrietta Maria, was also associated with Jezebel.¹⁶) Jehu then hunts down and slaughters, or urges others to slaughter, Ahab's seventy sons and God rewards him by granting that his sons unto the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel. The Geneva editors claim, in a note to II Kings 10:30, that this demonstrates how 'God approveth & rewardeth [Jehu's] zeale, in executing Gods judgement, albeit his wickednes was afterward punished' (170, recto). That Jehu later became a follower of Baal does not conceal the fact that both the Bible and the Geneva editors

clearly approve of his violent overthrow of the house of Ahab and perceive Jehu as an inspired agent of God.

In the figure of Samson, the book of Judges presents a less equivocal liberator of Israel from ungodly oppressors. When Samson slaughters the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass he ascribes his success to God (Judges 15:18). The Geneva translators spell out the implications: 'Wherby appeareth, [that] [Samson] did these thi[n]gs in faith, & so w[ith] a true zeal to glorifie God & deliver his countrey' (116, recto). In the Geneva translation of Psalm 2:2-3 David's ideal kingship is contrasted with those kings of the earth who 'band them selves ... against the Lord, and against his Christ' (the editors justify this anachronism by telling us that 'Christ' is their translation of the Hebrew for 'anointed'); significantly for the Geneva Bible's intended readers, David calls on his listeners to break the bands and cast off the cords that the kings of the earth have put upon them. Such examples and pronouncements serve to hammer home the message that, if you know you have God on your side, it is permissible to take up arms against idolatrous tyrants and conquerors. Other passages, episodes and notes in the Geneva Old Testament suggest that the people as a whole can act to deliver their country from a tyrant, even if he is not a foreign oppressor. In a note to Exodus 32:29 the editors reassure their intended readers that 'In reve[n]ging Gods glorie we must have no respect to persone, but put of all carnal affection' (41, recto). A head-note claims that Deuteronomy 13 indicates that 'The inticers to idolatrie must be slaine, seme they never so holy, ... So nere of kinred or fre[n]dship, ... Or great in multitude or power' (86, verso). Even if English readers see Mary Tudor as English rather than Spanish, then, they must still slay her because she entices the people of England into idolatry. Indeed, the Geneva note to Exodus 17:4 can be read as directly

admonishing the people of England for not rising up against their queen: 'How readie the people are for their owne matters to slay [the] true prophets, and how slow thei are to revenge Gods cause against his enemies and false prophets?' (32, recto)

The Geneva Old Testament therefore answers the question about what a people should do if they are oppressed by an idolatrous tyrant in three different and seemingly incompatible ways. The predominant answer is that the tyrant has been visited upon the people for collective sin and that the people should repent and wait patiently for God to overthrow the oppressive regime. Yet although the frontispiece and a good deal of the editorial apparatus in the text itself endorse this answer, it is nevertheless the case that two other answers are also given support. A second answer is that the people should obey the tyrant, except when he or she commands them to do anything contrary to the word of God. A third, more radical and controversial answer is that God might inspire a champion or champions – or even the people as a whole – to overthrow their country's oppressor. The Geneva Bible's oscillation between recommending prayer, passive resistance and revolutionary action simply reflects oscillations and contradictions that are internal to the text of the Bible itself. The Geneva translation was faithful and scholarly, and the notes tend to expound what the text seems to say at each point, regardless of whether it contradicts what is said elsewhere. As Craig points out, 'Whittingham and his helpers did not falsify the text to suit their needs' ('The Geneva Bible as a Political Document', 47); Dan Danner develops this by suggesting that 'the translators were willing to theologize whatever or wherever the biblical content would lead; they seemed quite unconcerned that ... the commentary ... was often contradictory and inconsistent' (Danner, 'Contribution of the Geneva Bible to the English Protestant

Tradition', 14). Yet if some modern scholars have perhaps overstated the Geneva Bible's radicalism, it is nonetheless the case that some startlingly radical ideas are to be found among its thousands of largely scholarly notes. It should also be stressed, however, that the Geneva translation and annotations unequivocally promote godly monarchy and only rarely hint that any other form of government might be preferable.

IV. Notes Toward the English Revolution?

The fact that its editorial apparatus helped to make the Scriptures accessible to ordinary readers allowed the Geneva Bible to play a decisive role in the formation and dissemination of radical ideas in England. But it was not so much the content of the Geneva notes that was so revolutionary but the fact that these notes, along with the rest of the editorial apparatus, empowered readers to use the Bible to interpret contemporary events for themselves. By demonstrating how biblical texts could be applied generally – to any idolater or tyrant – the Geneva translators were training their readers *as readers*, empowering them to make the specific application to their own particular circumstances. The fact that the Geneva Bible appeared after the collapse of the political regime it was written against was seized upon by its translators and readers as evidence in support of its theological politics. What began as a revolutionary critique of the Marian regime became a source book for developing a revolutionary diagnosis of any regime that looked tyrannous or idolatrous. Yet the sheer variety of political positions in the Geneva Bible and the fact that it does not consistently recommend any single response to tyranny means that any attempt to apply it to any particular political situation will end up either in perplexity or in an interpretation that can only be sustained by overlooking

numerous contradictory passages and annotations. Despite all the aids of the editorial apparatus, which actually reflect or even exacerbate the Bible's internal complexity, the task of applying any particular biblical passage to any specific political situation is left to the ingenuity of the reader. Given this, it seems difficult to accept Jensen's claim that the Geneva Bible makes possible a process of simple reading for simple readers – at least in terms of the Geneva Bible's politics. While it is true that each individual note works 'to narrow the range of interpretive possibilities' (Jensen, "'Simply" Reading the Geneva Bible', 37), the accumulated notes to the Bible as a whole constitute an irreducible political complexity, offering no univocal guidance to readers suffering under a regime like that of Mary Tudor or Charles I.

Although Hammond claims that the Geneva notes are not in themselves seditious, he suggests that James I was right to fear the Geneva Bible. By providing every reader with 'the tools to be his own Bible scholar', he argues, the Geneva editors had opened the way to the first English Revolution in the following century: 'It was the employment of these formidable tools which was eventually to help lead to [Charles I's] beheading, at a time when nearly every soldier in the New Model Army had a text for the occasion' (*Making of the English Bible*, 95). Yet these tools could allow a reader of the Geneva Bible to provide a text for *any* and *every* occasion – radical or conservative. Although the Geneva Bible could be used to identify Charles I as a tyrant, it had to be read selectively to justify a revolutionary response to that tyranny. In order to examine one example of this process, I want to end by tracing the interpretative vicissitudes of one particular passage and explanatory note from the Psalms. One of the essentially contested passages in the Bible, which was referred to in support both of the divine right of kings and of radical resistance

theories, is Psalm 105, in which the Psalmist recalls God's reiteration of His everlasting covenant to the children of Israel in the midst of their wanderings:

Saying, Unto thee wil I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.
Albeit thei were fewe in nomber, *yea*, verie fewe & strangers in the land,
And walked about from nacion to nacio[n], from *one* kingdome to another
people,
Yet suffred he no man to do them wrong, but reprov'd Kin[g]s for their
sakes, *saying*,
Touche not mine anointed, and do my Prophetes no harme.

(Psalm 105:11-15, Geneva version)

Prior to the Reformation, 'mine anointed' was taken to refer to the clergy; after the Reformation it 'came to be applied to kings, who had been anointed at their coronation' (Hill, *English Bible*, 60). As we have seen, the Geneva preface to 'The Second Booke of Samuel' explains that I Samuel and II Samuel treat 'the lives and actes of two Kings, to wit, of Saul and David, whom [Samuel] anointed and consecrated Kings by the ordinance of God' (135, verso). Archbishop Cranmer, at Edward VI's coronation in 1547, pronounced that kings are 'God's Anointed' regardless of whether or not they have been 'inoiled' by the clergy.¹⁷ In the last chapter of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536-1560), Calvin, despite his growing dislike of monarchy, uses David's description of Saul as 'the Anointed of the Lord' in order to demonstrate the reverence due to rulers regardless of their character.¹⁸ Yet the assumption that 'mine anointed' in Psalm 105 refers to kings is obviously problematic given that the text specifies that God is warning kings not to 'Touche' the children of Israel or 'harme' His 'Prophetes'. The seismic ideological

shift between Cranmer in 1547 and the Geneva interpretation of Psalm 105 is revealed in the Geneva marginal note, which explains that this passage warns kings not to touch 'Those whome I have sanctified to be my people' (257, verso). In the Civil Wars and Revolution in the following century, competing interpretations of 'mine anointed' would become highly charged. Royalist supporters – such as the anonymous writer of *The Sovereignty of Kings: Or An Absolute Answer and Confutation* (1642) – used Psalm 105:15 as evidence for the divine right of kings and tried to refute the radical interpretations opened up by the Geneva note. *The Sovereignty of Kings* attacks 'schismatics who claim that Psalm CV refers to "inferior subjects"'. 'This "dangerous tenet", the author added, will "turn a monarchy into a democracy". It "hath been buzzed into the ears of the people, as if they only were anointed, none but they"' (quoted by Hill, *English Bible*, 61). As *The Sovereignty of Kings* acknowledges, the shift in the interpretation of 'mine anointed' from kings to the ordinary people of England had revolutionary implications. In the *Declaration of the Parliament of England* of March 1649, in which the Commons attempted to justify the trial and execution of Charles I and the abolishing of the kingly office in England, the Commons assert that

no learned Divine will affirm [*the phrase of Anointed*] to be applicable to the *Kings of England*, as to those of *Judah* and *Israel*, or more to a *King* than to every other *Magistrate*, or *Servant of God*; or that the words *Touch not mine anointed*, were spoken of *Kings*, but unto *Kings*, who were reprov'd, and enjoined to do no harm to the *Prophets* and *Saints of God*, there understood to be his Anointed.¹⁹

Similarly, John Milton, in *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio* (1651), informed his continental readers that 'you will never induce me to grant you that all kings are anointed of the Lord', particularly because 'God himself forbade kings, Ps.105, to touch his anointed, that is, his people'.²⁰ The re-reading of Psalm 105, then, helped English radicals and parliamentarians to legitimize the English Revolution and the execution of Charles I on the basis that he had 'touched' and done harm to the people of England and had hence become a 'man of blood'.²¹ The Geneva Bible's justification for violent revolution against tyrants, coupled with its egalitarian strains, thus contributed to the emergence of a full-blown revolutionary discourse in seventeenth century England. But this could only happen through careful selection and interpretation of passages that supported the revolutionary cause. Although the revolutionary reading of Psalm 105 is clearly more convincing than the counter-revolutionary reading, we have seen that there are many passages and notes in the Geneva Old Testament that would not support the revolutionary overthrow of Charles I; there are also passages and notes which stress that God's 'anointed' refers to kings, to tyrants, and even to Christ.

The Geneva Bible, then, smuggled in from Amsterdam, played a significant role in shaping the political and theological world view that allowed the Parliamentary army to go to war against Charles I. Hammond claims that Cromwell's soldiers carried a copy of the Geneva Bible in their boots (*Making of the English Bible*, 90), though this seems unlikely, given its size.²² If they had a text for every occasion, they drew it from *The Souldiers Pocket Bible*, a sixteen-page anthology of quotations from the Geneva Bible that was compiled by Edmund Calamy in 1643 and issued to the Parliamentary army.²³ Crucially, *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* drastically reduces the Geneva Bible's political indeterminacy through selective quotation. The

quotations were organized under a number of headings and selected to be appropriate to the general anxieties of a soldier going into battle. Many of the quotations encourage the soldiers to believe that they have God on their side and that their enemy is also God's enemy. Two of the quoted passages draw on the Geneva Old Testament's support for revolutionary action against oppressive kings and thus help to remove any doubts the soldiers might have about going to war against Charles I:

Behold our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the hot fiery furnice, and he will deliver us out of thine hand O King. (5, from Daniel 3.17)

Be strong and couragious, fear not, neither be afraid for the King of Ashur, neither for all the multitude that is with him, with him is an arme of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God for to help us and to fight our battels. (6, from II Chronicles 32.7-8)

Significantly enough, out of about one hundred quotations from the Geneva Bible in *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* only two are from the New Testament. Equally significant is the fact that the Geneva Bible's marginal notes are entirely omitted. The Geneva translation of the text alone could be selectively quoted to bolster the Parliamentary army in its revolutionary war against a king of England who was represented as a tyrant, an idolater and a man of blood.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Professor Michael Bath and Professor Jonathan Sawday for their helpful comments on this article.

Notes

- ¹. Berry, Introduction to *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition*, 1-24 (17, n.29). All quotations from the Geneva Bible are from this edition. Berry alerts us to Alexander, 'The Genevan Version of the English Bible', 213-238, and to Craig, 'The Geneva Bible as a Political Document'.
- ². See Baskerville, *A Chronological Bibliography of Propaganda and Polemic Published in English Between 1553 and 1558*.
- ³. See Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain, 1530-1645*, 69; Gribben, *The Puritan Millennium: Literature and Theology, 1550-1682*, 57-79; and Gribben, 'Deconstructing the Geneva Bible: The Search for a Puritan Poetic'.
- ⁴. See Bowler, 'Marian Protestants and the Idea of Violent Resistance to Tyranny'.
- ⁵. See the prefatory note to Ponet, *A Short Treatise of Politic Power*.
- ⁶. Goodman, *How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyd* (Geneva, 1558), title page; see Dawson, 'Resistance and Revolution in Sixteenth-Century Thought: The Case of Christopher Goodman'.
- ⁷. Daniell, Introduction to *Tyndale's New Testament*, xi; for details about the scholarly resources available to the Geneva Bible's editors, see Van Kampen, 'Do We Really Have the Translator's Notes for the 1560 Geneva Bible?', 294-5.
- ⁸. Daniell, Introduction to *Tyndale's New Testament*, xii; for a celebration of the literary qualities of the Geneva Bible, see Hammond, *Making of the English Bible*, 112-136.
- ⁹. See [Whittingham, et al], *The Newe Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ* (Geneva: Conrad Badius, 1557).
- ¹⁰. [Whittingham, et al], *The Boke of Psalmes* (Geneva: Rouland Hall, 1559), iii, verso.
- ¹¹. Jensen, "'Simply" Reading the Geneva Bible', 31. Accounts of the number of editions of the Geneva Bible vary, partly because it appeared in different versions and sometimes as the New Testament alone. See Herbert, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible, 1525-1961*, 60-145; Pollard and Redgrave, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640*, I, 85-131; and Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England*, 50-66. Also see Shaheen, 'Misconceptions about the Geneva Bible', 157.
- ¹². In Pollard, ed, *Records of the English Bible*, 297. For a discussion of the Geneva Bible stimulated by Parker's remarks, see Betteridge, 'The Bitter Notes: The Geneva Bible and its Annotations'. Green points out that, despite Parker's admonition, 'some of the potentially subversive Geneva notes slipped through the net' (*Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England*, 74).
- ¹³. Barlow, *The Summe and Substance of the Conference Which it pleased his Excellent Majesty to have with the Lords, Bishops, and others of his Clergie*, second day, section 7 (no pagination).
- ¹⁴. The revisions to the New Testament notes can be seen in numerous editions: Tomson's translations of Beza's notes first appear in *The Newe Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ* (London: Christopher Barker, 1576) and then get included in some editions of the complete Geneva Bible; for Junius's notes on Revelation I consulted a 1610 edition of The Geneva

Bible (London: Robert Barker, 1610). For a discussion of the shifting rhetorical and millenarian implications of the different versions of the Geneva Bible, see Gribben, 'Deconstructing the Geneva Bible'.

¹⁵. In the 1570 edition of *Acts and Monuments of the Church*, Foxe added a series of 'Godly Letters of William Tyms, Martyr' (written during the Marian terror in 1556), including a 'letter to certain godly women of his parish' in which he affirms 'I doe beleve, that when the Lord shall send hys Aungell to destroy these idolatrous Egyptians here in England, and shall fynde the bloud of the L[am]be sprinckled on the doore postes of your harts, he wyll go by and not hurt you, but spare your whole houtholdes for your sakes' (XI, 2078).

¹⁶. For a discussion of the way the Marian exiles saw 'the Jezebel story' as *à propos*, see Craig, 'The Geneva Bible as a Political Document', 42-44; on Henrietta Maria as Jezebel, see Hill, *English Bible*, 50, 54, 69-70, 108.

¹⁷. Cranmer, quoted in Kantorowicz, *King's Two Bodies*, 318.

¹⁸. Calvin, 'On Civil Government', in *Luther and Calvin: On Secular Authority*, ed. Höpfl, 80; see Geneva Bible, I Samuel, 24:7.

¹⁹. *A Declaration of the Parliament of England, Expressing the Grounds of Their Late Proceedings, and of Setling the Present Government in the Way of a Free State* (London, 1649), in Malcolm, ed., *Struggle for Sovereignty*, I, 372-90 (379).

²⁰. Milton, *Defence of the People of England* (1651, 1658), in Dzelzainis, ed., *John Milton: Political Writings*, 132.

²¹. See Crawford, "Charles Stuart, That Man of Blood", and Hill, *English Bible*, 324-31.

²². For the tendency of publishers to produce ever smaller Bibles in the early seventeenth century, see Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England*, 56-62. The Geneva Bible was generally printed as a small quarto (Green, 59-60).

²³. See [Calamy] *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* (London, 1643).

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