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The Interlinear Editions of the New Testament:
Historical Notes, Hermeneutical Issues and Operational Challenges*

Interlinearna izdanja Novog zavjeta
Povijesne bilješke, hermeneutička pitanja i operativni izazovi

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Abstract

Following a quick historical excursus on how and why the interlinear editions (of the Old and) of the New Testament came into being, this paper examines the operational challenges that arise today, particularly with regard to the Greek text and the type of translation offered.

Key words: interlinear editions, polyglots, translation techniques, textual criticism AT, textual criticism NT

Sažetak

Nakon kratkog povijesnog ekskurza o tome kako i zašto su nastala interlinearna izdanja (Staroga i) Novoga zavjeta, razmatraju se operativni izazovi koji se javljaju danas, prvenstveno u odnosu na grčki tekst i vrstu ponuđenog prijevoda.

Ključne riječi: interlinearna izdanja, poligloti, tehnike prevođenja, tekstualna kritika SZ, tekstualna kritika NZ

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Introduction

Preparing an interlinear version requires an awareness of the nature of the instrument one intends to create, and the purposes for which one intends to create it. The paper therefore offers a quick historical excursus on how and why interlinear editions (of the Old and) of the New Testament came to be, leading to the operational challenges that arise today. Along the way, the paper highlights the hermeneutical issues underlying such an enterprise (without neglecting the publishing endeavour initiated by Edizioni San Paolo, which produced the *Bibbia ebraica interlineare* and the *Nuovo Testamento Interlineare*).

1. From Aristarchus of Samothrace to the Glossed Bibles

As etymology suggests, a text is the result of weaving, an interweaving of words (*textus ex texto*). It is no surprise then that from the very beginning, and for economic reasons as well, several »texts« were placed on a single writing support, arranged in an interlinear and/or complementary manner. If we retrace history, we can see that such editions of a work served two purposes: philological-exegetical and pedagogical-apologetic.

We are all familiar with the critical work of some of the illustrious librarians of Alexandria, such as Zenodotus of Ephesus (285-270 BC), Aristophanes of Byzantium (204-189 BC), and Aristarchus of Samothrace (175-145 BC), the first to compose a commentary (ὑπόμνημα/*hypómnema*) to Homer and to prepare an edition (ἔκδοσις/*ékdosis*) of his works.[1] These scholars introduced practices of annotation and commentary directly on texts. This was done through *scholia*, i.e., marginal or interlinear notes and comments that explained complex words, phrases and grammatical constructs. They often included interpretations of meaning, textual variations and etymological hypotheses to help readers better understand the text. Another type of intervention consisted of inserting critical signs (Schironi, 2012). Aristarchus, in particular, developed a system of signs (such as the asterisk or obelo) to indicate what he considered to be inauthentic interpolations or additions, or to highlight problematic verses. These signs were placed next to the text to alert readers to his critical opinion on a particular passage.

Unfortunately, none of the »editions« or commentaries by Alexandrian scholars have come down to us directly. However, valuable testimonies do exist. An excellent example is found in the Venetus A codex (Marciana 454 = 822;

[1] On »Aristarchus and his colleagues« see Schironi 2018, 547-594.

10th century). It not only contains the text of the *Iliad*, but above all, bears traces of Aristarchus' interventions in the margins and interlinear spaces, including his critical marks.[2] The philological-exegetical intent of such an undertaking is evident: to fix a text, purge it of any undue intrusions, illuminate obscure points, explicate unknown or ambiguous terms, and smooth out linguistic or conceptual asperities.

The practice continued with: Origen and his *Exapla* (which, however, is more of a polyglot form) on the biblical text; the glossators to the Justinian juridical corpus;[3] the bilingual biblical manuscripts from Late Antiquity (5th century) to the Middle Ages (13th century);[4] the Masoretes on the traditional Hebrew text;[5] and, in the midst of the Middle Ages, with the glossed Bible.[6] Thanks to Anselm of Laon (ca. 1050-1117) and his marginal and interlinear glosses,[7] the latter represented a true revolution in Bible study, offering a continuous and systematic interpretative guide that enabled medieval readers to understand the biblical text more thoroughly.[8]

Things changed with Humanism and the »return to the sources« (*ressourcement*), which, in the case of Scripture, consisted in offering a text according to the oldest original forms, considered more authentic and perfect.

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2 Clearly visible in https://www.homermultitext.org/facsimiles/venetus-a-2020/pages/urn_cite2_hmt_msA-v1_12r.html and following. An analytical illustration of the Aristarchus' critical marks reported here can be found in Bird 2009.

3 From the Justinian age (6th century) to the great jurist Accursius († 1263), passing through Irnerius himself († after 1125): see Kantorowicz 1978.

4 See Houghton 2023, in particular the tables on pp. 155-159.

5 On vocalization, paratextual elements, accent and the apparatus of the Masora, see Tov 2012, 39-70.

6 The editio princeps of the *Biblia Latina cum glossa ordinaria* dates back to no later than 1480 and was prepared by Adolf Rusch (Strasbourg). The attribution of the work not only to Anselm of Laon but also, erroneously, to Walafrid Strabo (9th century) dates back to this edition. See the introduction by Froehlich and Gibson 1992. The digitized version can be found at https://dhb.thulb.uni-jena.de/receive/ufb_cbu_00000227.

7 Interlinear glosses »sono quasi delle notazioni abbreviate, dei pro-memoria che il maestro poteva e doveva sviluppare nella *lectio*. Gli bastava uno sguardo alla sua Sacra pagina glossata, per avere sotto gli occhi tutto un materiale sufficiente per mostrare ai suoi allievi il significato o i vari significati o sensi del testo biblico letto. Con la glossa marginale poi il maestro aveva a disposizione varie fonti per la sua spiegazione più approfondita«: Bertola 1978, 43. Dahan disputes the distinction between *glossa ordinaria* (spiritual level) and *glossa interlinearis* (literal level): »only the length determines the place of the gloss. It is true, however, that interlinear glosses, because of the little space in which they must be written, often give only synonyms or they clarify understatements; but we find also allegorical or typological explanations, or even moral considerations« (Dahan 2000, 219).

8 In this regard, see Andrée 2023, 211-217.

2. The Polyglot Period

2.1. The Biblia Polyglota Complutensis

With regard to the Old Testament, the first real example of an interlinear version can be found in the first four volumes of the Polyglot Complutense (1514).[9]

The undertaking of the polyglots was born of a twofold intention.[10] On the one hand, they were »in search of the perfect text«,[11] i.e., a reliable text in view of a better understanding of Scripture and thus a more correct theological approach. One finds here the aim pursued by Aristarchus of Samothrace. On the other hand, aware of the distance between the source text and the target reader, the Latin versions of the Septuagint (Conde Salazar 2018)[12] and the Targum Onqelos (Cañas Reillo 2018)[13] were prepared, among others. The New Testament, conversely, in the fifth volume, includes only the Latin version of the Vulgate alongside, without any indication of verses. Similarly, spiritus and accents are excluded, as they are absent in the oldest manuscripts.

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[9] The title page reads as follows: *Biblio Sacra Polyglotta, complectentia Vetus Testamentum, Hebraico, Chaldaico, Graeco et Latino idiomate, Novum Testamentum Graecum et Latinum, et vocabularium Hebraicum et Chaldaicum, cum grammatica Hebraica, nec non dictionario Graeco. De mandato et sumptibus Reverendissimi in Christo Patris Domini, Domini Francisci Ximenis de Cieneros, tituli sancte Balbine, sacrosancte Romane Ecclesie presbyteri Cardinalis, et Hispaniarum primatie ac regnorum Castelle Archicancellarii, Archiepiscopi Toletani, etc., etc. 6 vols. fol. In Complutensi Universitate. 1514-1517.* As is well known, the printing of the work began in 1502 and was completed in 1517, but the work was not distributed until 1520, upon receiving the approval of Pope Leo X (22 March). In 2014, the journal *Estudios bíblicos* dedicated a monographic issue to the fifth centenary of the Complutense. In the first week of November 2014, a conference was held in Madrid, the proceedings of which can be found in Piquer Otero and Torijano Morales 2017. However, the two contributions of Delitzsch 1871 and Delitzsch 1886 remain fundamental.

[10] »Beside this humanist ideal of establishing a text coming close to the original, with the help of the best manuscripts, the second leading idea was didactic. Readers should be taught to use the Bible text in the best way by making use of the original languages«: Schenker 2008, 289.

[11] The title of the contribution by Hamilton from 2016 is referred here.

[12] »For the Septuagint the editors used several manuscripts for the different parts of the Old Testament. They usually followed one principal manuscript which they corrected with the help of another, secondary textual witness. The Greek text therefore is not uniform. It changes from book to book or even from one part of the book to another, in dependence of the selected manuscripts« (Schenker 2008, 290).

[13] Vol. 2 the targum is missing: *Secunda pars Veteris testamenti Hebraico Grecoque idiomate nunc primum impressa: adiuncta utrique sua latina interpretatione*.

2.2. The Biblia Polyglotta Regia (or of Antwerp)

In the mid-16th century, copies of the Polyglotta Complutense became unavailable. Thus, Christophe Plantin, an ingenious printer from Antwerp,[14] succeeded, through the Spanish scholar Benito Arias Montano, in convincing King Philip II[15] to finance the republication of this work in an expanded and corrected edition.[16] In this edition we find the first example of interlinear in terms of the New Testament. Vol. VII (1572) opens: from the right on *Hebraicorum Bibliorum Veteris Testamenti latina interpretatio, opera olim Xantis Pagnini Lucensis*;[17] from the left on *Novum Testamentum Graece cum vulgata interpretatione Latina Graeci contextus lineis inserta*. In both cases, the Latin of the interlinear is printed above the Hebrew and Greek respectively. However, the presence of verse numbering outside the text should be noted.

2.3. The Biblia Polyglotta Waltonensis

The famous Polyglot of Walton (1653-1657),[18] which includes interlinear texts for both the Masoretic Old Testament and the Greek New Testament, features two notable elements on its title page (visible, for example, at https://www.flickr.com/photos/lac-bac/31954683143). The engraving, designed by John Webb and executed by Wenceslas Hollar, depicts a triumphal arch with eight biblical scenes: from the two progenitors in the harmony of the earthly paradise to the Pentecost event. The story of salvation reaches its climax (architecturally as well) in the gift of the Spirit, that enables everyone to understand the Gospel message in their own language. The God of Israel makes himself comprehensible to everyone by becoming »polyglot«. Significantly, in the frontispiece, created by Pierre Lombart (the leading engraver in England at the time), Walton himself appears, working on his edition of the Bible in a library setting

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14 On the exceptional figure of this book entrepreneur, among other things, see Milazzo 2024, which broadens the discussion to the book market of that time.

15 Hence the nickname *Regia*.

16 The title from the title page reads: *Biblia Sacra Hebraice, Chaldaice Graece et Latine, Philippi II. Reg. Cathol. Pietate et Studio ad Sacrosanctae Ecclesiae usum*, Christophorus Plantinus excudebat Antwerpiae 1569. For a detailed description of the title page of the Polyglot Bible see, Coppens 1988-1989, 192-200.

17 On the history and characteristics of this translation, see Dahan 2018.

18 According to Schenker 2008b, 781, »It was published in London 1653–58 (although the printed date on the front page is 1657)«; unfortunately, he does not provide any justification for his statement. On the difficult circumstances under which this editorial project was conceived and completed, see Kaiser 2002.

where, in a top-to-bottom sequence, earlier polyglots are displayed (including Sebastian Münster's Latin-Jewish Bible of 1634) culminating in Walton's.[19] This represents the culmination of a centuries-old tradition (starting with Origen's *Exapla*) and affirms the principle that only by comparing textual traditions as widely as possible can one arrive at the most genuine text.

At this point, the second traceable element of the title page becomes relevant. In the long title given to the work, as was the custom at the time, it is specified that the reader is offered *Quicquid comparari poterat Ex M.SS. Antiquis undique Conquisitis optimisque Exemplaribus impressis summa fide collatis*. Thus, not only a greater number, but above all, a better quality of texts. The editor's intent is therefore, to preserve »those sacred oracles in their original purity, freed, as much as may be, from all possibility of error that may arise, either by the negligence of scribes, and injury of times, or by the wilful corruption of sectaries and heretics, which, as was foretold, abound in these latter times, and so to transmit them to posterity«.[20] What Lorenzo Valla had begun with his *Collatio Novi Testamenti cum graeca veritate*,[21] i.e., the revision of the text of the Vulgate on the basis of a comparison between Latin and - to a lesser extent - Greek manuscripts, now became more scientific: thereby beginning the process of elaboration of a critical text, resulting from a comparison of the variant lessons and their systematic evaluation.

3. The choice of the Greek text

From Walton's Polyglot onwards, a Greek text of the New Testament began to be regarded as »critical«, the realization of how far the goal of a truly reliable Greek text was to be reached was nevertheless consolidated. Various attempts were made to approach it, resulting in the Greek text of the New Testament for the interlinear varying from time to time, there being no established one. It was not until the mid-20th century that one Greek text prevailed over the others. Until then, different Greek texts were proposed as a base.

[19] In this regard, see Brent 2016.

[20] Text in the *Advertisement to the Subscribers* composed for the fundraiser two years before the appearance of the polyglot; reported by Todd 1821, 32.

[21] Valla 1970, or Valla 1962. The importance of his work is highlighted by Kraye 2016 and by Rex 2016.

3.1. Robert Estienne (Stefanus)

In the case of the Complutense, the manuscripts used have not yet been identified.[22] The text adopted by the Antwerp Bible derives from the third edition of the New Testament edited by Robert Estienne (*Stefanus*) in 1550, published under the auspices of King Henry II and considered, perhaps somewhat excessively, the first critical edition of the Greek text of the New Testament. The text offered was created by comparing fifteen Greek manuscripts along with the Complutense text.[23] It became the *textus receptus* for centuries, especially in the Reformation churches. Notably, for the first time verse numbers were inserted, although placed outside the text.

3.2. From Walton to von Soden

As previously mentioned, the first work to systematically collect variant lessons from the Greek New Testament is Walton's Polyglot Bible: volume 5 contains Estienne's Greek text and presents variant lessons from the Alexandrian Codex at the foot of the page; volume 6 offers lessons from the Beza Codex and the Claromontanus Codex, from thirteen other Greek manuscripts, readings from Robert Estienne's glosses and from other sources.

Other attempts followed: Johann Bengel (1687-1752), Johann J. Griesbach (1745-1812), Karl Lachmann (1793-1851), Lobegott Friedrich Constantin von Tischendorf (1815-1874), Brooke F. Westcott (1825-1901) and Fenton J.A. Hort (1828-1892), Hermann von Soden (1911-1913) (Epp 2016).

3.3. The interlinear editions of the 19th century

As far as the interlinear editions of the 19th century are concerned, an example can be found in Benjamin Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott* (1864), *an interlinear Word for Word English Translation*. It adopts Johan Jakob Griesbach's recension of the Vatican manuscript (BAV 1209) as the base Greek text. It also offers: »a New Version, with the Signs of Emphasis; a copious selection of References; many

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22 »The source manuscripts for the New Testament, however, have not yet been identified. […] The Vulgate was mainly based on three known manuscripts, but also on some others unknown« (Schenker 2008a).

23 The text of the *Vulgate* for the Old Testament and the New Testament, also derives from the Complutense, »but in a revised form, according to the observations of Arias Montanus' advisors of the University of Louvain, authors of the *Biblia Vulgata Lovaniensis* (1574)«: Schenker 2008b, 779.

appropriate, illustrative, and exegetical Foot-notes; and a valuable Alphabetical Appendix« (p. III).

Lastly, we should point out the case of George Ricker Berry, *The Interlinear Literal Translation of the Greek New Testament with the Authorised Version conveniently presented in the margins for ready reference and with the various readings of the editions of Elzevir 1624, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford and Wordsworth* (New York 1894), with the variants in the notes.

3.4. The »official« editions

Eberhard Nestle's edition, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, first published in 1898 in Stuttgart by the Württemberg Bible Society, went through twelve editions (1898-1923), and later came under the editorship of his son Erwin Nestle (13th-20th editions, 1927-1950). It was subsequently edited by Kurt Aland (21st-25th editions, 1952-1963), and finally it was jointly edited by Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland (26th-27th editions, 1979-1993).

In 1955, the American Bible Society, at the initiative of Eugene A. Nida, assembled a group of international scholars to prepare a Greek New Testament that could be used by hundreds of Bible translation committees, in the revision of existing Bible translations or in the creation of new ones.[24] This marks the beginning of the Greek text of the Universal Biblical Covenant, called *The Greek New Testament*.

Today, two different critical texts are used: *The Greek New Testament* (4th edition, 1994) and the *Novum Testamentum Graece* Nestle-Aland (27th edition, 1993[25]). In both cases, the text is identical, although the critical apparatus differs in the following respects: Nestle-Aland's textual notes report a more extensive documentation (i.e., present a more complete textual history); while *The Greek New Testament* lists only those attestations that have a substantial

[24] The international team of scholars, who formed the editorial board of this new Greek text, consisted of Matthew Black (St. Andrews, Scotland), Bruce Metzger (Princeton), Allen Wikgren (Chicago) and Kurt Aland (Münster). Subsequently, other members were added to the committee, such as Carlo M. Martini and, from 1982, Johannes Karavidopoulos and Barbara Aland.

[25] An *Editio Critica Maior* is being published by the Institute for Textual Research of the New Testament (Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung) in Münster. More information is available at http://www.uni-muenster.de/INTF/. In this edition, a new Greek text of the NT will be proposed. For now, please consult http://nttranscripts.uni-muenster.de/AnaServer? NTtranscripts+0+start.anv. For the changes introduced in the letters of James, Peter and John, cf. http://www-user.uni-bremen.de/~wie/ECM/ECM-index.html.

bearing on the understanding of the text. Additionally, it provides evaluations for each textual note, so that the reader can determine the extent of certainty for each lesson.

The issue of the Greek text seems to have been resolved with either the critical editions of the Bibelgesellschaft (the *Novum Testamentum Graece* Nestle-Aland, 27th edition, 1993) or the United Bible Societies and Universal Biblical Alliance (the *Greek New Testament*, 4th edition, 1994), however these have undergone multiple editions over time. This brings up the problem of »what« to say, to borrow Umberto Eco's definition[26], when one wants to translate. This vagueness should make one more cautious about the term »original texts«.[27]

Finally, one should detach oneself from the principle of *recentior potior*: the most recent editions of the Greek text are not always the most reliable and the »revised and improved« editions do not always differ from the earlier ones (for example, the differences between the 27th and 28th editions of Nestle-Aland are essentially graphic).

4. The choice of translation

If today the supralinear text has a certain (albeit problematic) stability of its own, the problems increase with the infralinear text or translation into one's own language, usually qualified as »literal«. This is achieved by inserting a word for word lexicographic equivalent, without any regard for fluency in the target language. Therefore, in order to obviate such alienating meta-language, a fluent and »comprehensible« translation is proposed next to it.

What appears to be an objective choice encounters obstacles of a historical, hermeneutic and linguistic nature. First of all, words do not always have a fixed lexicographic equivalent. Moreover, a text is not merely the sum of its words, but their »inspired« combination: a literal translation, precisely because it is literal, will not succeed, for example, in capturing the sonority of a

[26] »Che cosa vuol dire tradurre? La prima e consolante risposta vorrebbe essere: dire la stessa cosa in un'altra lingua. Se non fosse che, in primo luogo, noi abbiamo molti problemi a stabilire che cosa significhi 'dire la *stessa* cosa' […]. In secondo luogo perché, davanti a un testo da tradurre, non sappiamo quale sia *la cosa*. Infine, in certi casi, è persino dubbio che cosa voglia dire *dire*« (Eco 2003, 9).

[27] With good reasons, therefore, the San Paolo publishing house had started and concluded a series of bilingual commentaries (the only such commentaries that the author is aware of) entitled *Nuova versione della Bibbia dai testi antichi*, unlike the one prepared four decades earlier by the title *Nuovissima versione dai testi originali*.

text (think of the Horatian *Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit*: *Epist*. 2,156). This is an obvious point, which requires no further elaboration.

Nevertheless, it is more important to take into account the fact that our understanding of the source terms is conditioned by earlier versions. This is akin to what is called refraction in other fields, i.e., a phenomenon in which an object partially submerged in water appears broken, or when typing accented characters on a QWERTY keyboard which does not support them. A macroscopic example is the wording Old/New Testament: in Italian and other Romance languages, this wording makes no sense unless it refers to a dated or renewed testamentary act. It would be impossible to understand it without taking into account the New Testament Latin rendering of διαθήκη/*diathḗkē*, itself an Old Testament rendering of בְּרִית/*bᵉrît*.[28]

The same phenomenon is found in the author himself: how should one understand the incipit of the book of Tobit (βίβλος λόγων Τωβιθ/τ/*Bíblos lógōn Tōbith*)? Is it a collection of Tobit's speeches (λόγοι/*lógoi*) or his »history«, where λόγος/*lógos* implies דָּבָר/*dābār*, which stands for »word« but also for »fact«, »event«? How to interpret ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ/*ho theòs ho pantokrátōr* in Revelation, a book with marked Jewish accents: as »almighty« or as »god of hosts«, given the correspondence between παντοκράτωρ/*pantokrátōr* and יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת/*yhwh ṣᵉbā'ôt* in the Septuagint?

A final note concerns the translation of words that have become almost technical in the Christian tradition and for which, in St Paul's Editions, a more neutral and generic meaning has been chosen (ἀπόστολος/*apóstolos* has been rendered as envoy, ἐκκλησία/*ekklēsía* with assembly etc.). First of all, one finds an inconsistency here, because in the case of βάπτισμα/*báptisma* Baptism was chosen over immersion. This case helps to highlight the delicacy of certain choices and the impossibility of adopting valid and consistent ones. The option for baptism over βάπτισμα/*báptisma* has its advantages. On the one hand, it is the adoption of a cast, as is easily the case with liturgical phraseology (like Easter, Pentecost, hosanna, etc.); a term that is not immediately comprehensible allows more meanings to be attributed to it. On the other hand, one does not perceive that it is an a-religious, a-liturgical term, like so many others (the New Testament as well as the Greek translators of the Old Testament

[28] Van der Meer 2024, illustrates the reasons for the choice of that specific term over others and supports semantic continuity with the Hebrew בְּרִית/*bᵉrît*. Finally, readers will benefit from consulting Eberhart and Kraus 2023. Precisely by discussing the contributions referring to the patristic period present therein, Cattaneo 2025 defends the solution of continuity between בְּרִית e διαθήκη.

avoid »religious« language). At the same time, when Paul composed Rom 6, βάπτισμα/*báptisma* already had a ritual valence, i.e., it was already »baptism«.

The same can be said for ἐκκλησία/*ekklēsía*, a term that in secular Greek is equivalent to the assembly of free men. Again, a »secular« choice on the part of the early Christian communities, themselves indebted to the Septuagint. Yet, in making that choice, how aware were the early Christians that the term had indicated in the Old Testament precisely the קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל/*qᵉhal yiśrā'ēl*? Did they want to convey an understanding of themselves as the Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ?/*Israèl toû theoû*?

In other words, the »literal« translation does not exist.[29]

5. The choice of edition

It may seem like a truism, but it must be reiterated that, as with any publishing work, for an Interlinear New Testament, it is necessary to clarify:

– the audience to whom the work is addressed (the *Nuovo Testamento interlineare* of Edizioni San Paolo is addressed to the fairly educated priest/layperson, perhaps trained at the classical high school, who wants to prepare his homilies or deepen the text taking into account the source language);

– its material extent (the New Testament is easily encompassed in a single volume; the discourse becomes more arduous for the Old Testament; see the *Bibbia ebraica interlineare* in several volumes, bound and with a dust jacket; the others usually in a single volume);

– the didactic purpose of the tool should also integrate other aids (maps, lexicons, etc.).

6. From interlinear to the Internet

The date of the first polyglot (1514) shows that the technique of printing with movable type had only been introduced sixty years earlier (1455). The typographical ability to organize volumes with foreign characters, some of them

[29] In this case we should also recall what Umberto Eco notes about faithful translations: fidelity is »la tendenza a credere che la traduzione sia sempre possibile se il testo fonte è stato interpretato con appassionata complicità e l'impegno a identificare quello che per noi è il senso profondo del testo, la capacità di negoziare a ogni istante la soluzione che ci pare più giusta. Se consultate qualsiasi dizionario vedrete che tra i sinonimi di *fedeltà* non c'è la parola *esattezza*. Ci sono piuttosto *lealtà*, *onestà*, *rispetto*, *pietà*« (Eco 2003, 364).

elaborately designed for the occasion, and the amount of information are impressive. Once again, in his *Advertisement to the Subscribers*, Walton lucidly points out the graphic arrangement as one of the advantages of his edition: »The several languages shall be printed in several columns, whereby they may all be presented to the reader's view at once; whereas in the other Editions divers great volumes must be turned over to compare them together« (Todd 1821, 42).

All in a very short time. It was taken for granted that encyclopaedic[30] knowledge (i.e., the capacity to form an integral understanding) passed through the knowledge of biblical texts and that the technical innovation of writing by means of a machine, abandoning calamities and parchments, would allow the polyglot God to be given a voice.

No one misses the parallel with the tool that has become indispensable today, specifically the Internet. Its flexibility today overpowers printed paper in the same way that in the mid-16th century movable type printing overcame the compassionate writing on parchment. The same can be said for the cost of production. Thus, numerous sites for the knowledge and study of Scripture have sprung up.

In addition to https://www.scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/Greek_Index.htm, we should point out https://biblehub.com/interlinear/, which is found the most in keeping with the cultural project of the Polyglots: not only presenting a text, with its analysis and translation (in this case, translations),

[30] The *Biblia Complutense* contains a Hebrew and Chaldean (i.e., Aramaic) vocabulary from the Old Testament, dated 17 March 1515; an explanation of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek proper names of the Old and New Testaments, in alphabetical order, with a further list of names according to the various lessons; an introduction to Hebrew grammar, dated May 1515; an alphabetical index of the Latin words that occur in the work; a Greek and Latin lexicon; an introduction to Greek grammar; and an explanation of Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic names, which appear in the NT. This volume is almost entirely the work of Alfonso de Zamora. The sixth volume of the *Antwerp Polyglot* contains: a compendium of the Hebrew thesaurus composed by Santi Pagnini, with an accompanying Greek grammar aid; a Syriac-Aramaic dictionary; a Syriac grammar and a Greek lexicon. In the last of the eight volumes, Montano added a series of his own studies, such as the measurements of the Temple and the ancient vestments. It is worth recalling a curiosity: »Devoted to the text of the Bible, Arias Montano feared that the discovery of the New World might undermine its authority. He thus claimed that the authors of the Old Testament already knew about America and added a map with the biblical names of American localities« (Hamilton 2016, 146). Finally, »While the identification of the New World with the biblical *Ophir* goes back to Columbus, and the more specific *Ophir*-Peru theory had indeed been suggested before Montano by Postel, it is Montano who provides the philological proof, bringing into action his talents as a Hebraist« (Shalev 2012, 61).

but also offering the possibility of encyclopaedic (biblical) knowledge. It could (should?) orient, inspire and enrich your initiative, which, like the Polyglots of the 16th and 17th centuries, could represent a new Renaissance for the churches and societies of your countries.

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