



Stephan Füssel, ed., *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* No. 93 (2018)

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This issue also serves as a celebration of the five hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Gutenberg's death. Appropriately the first four contributions deal with early printed editions of the Bible.

In the first of his two pieces Eric Marshall White discusses the neglect into which knowledge of Gutenberg's achievement fell, before he outlines its rediscovery in eighteenth-century Germany and France. He then tabulates the twelve additional paper copies discovered between 1790 and 1800. In the second he examines newly discovered vellum fragments numbering at least eighty-eight leaves of the 36-line Bible, which were preserved due to their use as binding waste in the seventeenth century. These fragments are important, because no copy of this edition on vellum was known previously. White lists the known circumstantial evidence for this Bible, affirming that it was printed at Bamberg by Albrecht Pfister between ca. 1458 and 1461. He concludes that the vellum fragments provide spectacular evidence not only of the printing of Bibles in the fifteenth century but also of the deep historical ambivalence of the seventeenth century.

Although a significant number of examples of printers' copies from Germany printing houses in the fifteenth century have been identified in other countries, few have been recorded in Germany. This important gap has now been filled by Randall Herz, who examines more than forty examples. In the first part of his study he looks at compositor's markings, which allow us an insight into early printing techniques, and in the second he turns to proof sheets and the symbols used therein in drawing a printer's attention to typographical errors.

The longest contribution is Andrew Merritt and William C. McDonald's translation into English, with the original, ornate neo-Latin text prefixed, of Johann Arnold's *De chalcographiae inventione*, published at Mainz in 1541 by the latter's employer, Franz Behem, a prolific printer of works of a Roman Catholic nature. For me the most important part of Arnold's text, because it is intellectually the most dangerous, is his plea for greater censorship of the press, in order to curb the flow of politically and theologically inflammatory publications, which would disturb the civil and ecclesiastical peace of the Empire. Merritt and McDonald are entirely correct in linking this troubling idea to the correct, frequent cries for censorship of the internet.

A regular contributor to the *Jahrbuch*, Marvin J. Heller, devotes his attention to a sixteenth-century

Jewish scholar, R. Jacob ben Samuel Bunim Koppelman. After summarizing the achievements of earlier Jewish scholars in mathematics, astronomy and other natural sciences, Heller concentrates on Koppelman. At the age of twenty-eight Koppelman moved to Freiburg, where he worked for the printer Ambrosius Froben, who had begun printing books in Hebrew in the last 1570s. The first work in which Koppelman was involved was *Mishlei Shu"alim*, a Yiddish translation of Berechiah ha-Nakdam's collection of fables. His second work, *Ohel Yaakov*, in which Koppelman demonstrated his mastery of Talmudic lore, deals with the principles of Judaism. He was also involved in the last work printed by Froben in Freiburg, Targum *shel Hamesh Megillot hi-Leshon Ashkenaz*. From Freiburg Koppelman moved to Cracow, where *Omek Halakhah* was printed in 1598 and *Ohel Yaakov* was reprinted the following year.

For me the highlight of this volume is Lenka Vesel and Marta Vaculov's attempt to reconstruct the possible fates during the seventeenth century of Theodore Beza's private library. Sold in 1598 by Beza to the aristocratic family of Zizly, based in Moravia, it was acquired during the Thirty Years' War by Cardinal Franz von Dietrichstein, an important figure in the Counter-Reformation in central Europe, for his family library. It then became part of the war booty of Swedish troops in 1646, later being moved piecemeal to Sweden, where it was scattered mostly in libraries. The piece ends with a list of twenty-five items known so far to have come from Beza's library.

Helmut Claus supplements his contribution to the 2017 volume by discussing two hitherto unidentified contemporary printed works by Luther. One of these broadsides offers a text by Melanchthon which provides a bridge to a series of further broadsides that did not appear in the Melanchthon bibliography covering the years 1510 to 1560, which was published in 2014. This supplement demonstrates more deeply than known previously Melanchthon's use of broadsides as a medium of communication. The piece ends with a description of eighteen pieces, all but three of which are located in Erlangen UL.

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