"Virtualized Biblical Authority:
A 50-Year Megashift from Biblical Inerrancy to Automated Translation Work"
Thomas P. Johnston, Ph.D.
19 Nov 2013 (ETS, Baltimore)

A certain blogger, Matt Smith, identified nine computer viruses in his blog, "The

Nine Types of Computer Viruses to Watch Out for & What They Do." They are:

> (1) Boot Virus Sector; (2) Browser Hijacker; (3) Direct Acton Virus; (4) File Infector Virus;
> (5) Macro Virus; (6) Multipartite Virus; (7) Polymorphic Virus; (8) Resident Virus; (9) Web
> Scripting Virus.[1]

Each virus has its unique features and infects computers and propagates itself in different

ways. Yet, I was introduced to another type of virus this past May (2013) in Lomé, Togo,

West Africa. Perhaps this virus may apparently be called the "Religious Virus." The

"Religious Virus" appears to consist of passing previously censored books in certain

countries that have agreements with Microsoft or another virus detector service. The

story starts with two books that I obtained legally from the Internet in the U.S.:

- A PDF of Geneva historian Jean de Hainault's 1562 *L'Etat de l'Eglise avec le Discours des Temps depuis les Apostres jusques au Present* [The State of the Church with a Discourse of the Times since the Apostles up to the Present] (Geneva: Jean Crespin, 1562; Bergues sur le Zoom: Jacques Taffin, 1605).
- A Microsoft Word document of the British and Foreign Bible Society's French agent Samuel Lortsch's 1910 *Histoire de la Bible en France* [Story of the Bible in France] (Paris: Société biblique britannique et étrangère [British and Foreign Bible Society], 1910); available from: http://www.bibliquest.org/Lortsch/Lortsch-Histoire_Bible_France-1.htm; Accessed 4 Mar 2005; Internet.

These documents had no viruses as scanned from my U.S. Dell Computer. However,

when I transferred these books to a thumb drive of one of my students, the Microsoft

virus scanner running in Togo, detected a virus. The thumb drive had no virus when I

checked for one, and it was otherwise empty, except for the two books I was attempting

to share with my student. When he used the "Remove Virus" feature, the books were

---

[1]Matt Smith, "The Nine Types of Computer Viruses to Watch Out for & What They Do";
available at: http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/types-computer-viruses-watch/; accessed: 6 Nov 2013;
Internet.

deleted from the jump drive. After a second attempt, I told the student not to use the "Remove Virus" feature, and he was able to copy the two books to his computer.

Similarly, when the student returned the thumb drive to me, I also received a flag that there was a virus on the thumb drive. The books were removed by the virus detector running on my computer also. In retrospect, I am very grateful that the original files were not automatically erased off my computer when I originally booted up!

Could it be that "Censorship Virus Scanning Feature" was running from a Microsoft Windows virus detector in Togo? It may very well be that the scanner either noted unacceptable religious content or the names of previously censored books, and cited them as computer viruses. This occurrence shows that the rules of publishing, storage, and sharing of data may be changing in these past 10-15 years. The changes and the implications of the changes in just the last five years are absolutely massive.

This paper will consider the impact of computer technologies on practical inerrancy, especially as it relates to the translation of, storage of, and dissemination of worldwide Bible translations. While this author holds the inerrancy position as described in the 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, it is in the practical arena that inerrancy is flushed out. What original texts are used? What theories of translation are being followed? How is the Bible printed, published, and marketed? In light of computer advances in these past 5-10 years, Bible translation and dissemination is rapidly changing. These changes will be grouped into three areas of consideration: (1) massive changes in the use of computer technology for Bible study and translation; (2) that the Internet may represent an unstable platform for publishing the Bible in the future; and

(3) the continued need for a "Federal Model" of unity in maintaining administrative control of the text of Scripture.

(1) Massive changes in the use of computer technology for Bible study and translation

The digital revolution has not gone unnoticed in the world of biblical studies. As of 2013, many Bible software applications for computers are over 20 years old. QuickVerse was founded in 1987 (from Parsons Technology, later acquired by WORDsearch and then by Lifeway); ThePerfectWord was founded in 1988 (later MacBible, and later Accordance); Logos and BibleWorks were both founded in 1992; the GRAMCORD website is 18 years and 2 months old (~1995), but its software system goes back almost to the founding of the personal computer in 1982; Olive Tree started in 1998 with BibleReader; eSword was founded in 2000; The SWORD Project (of the CrossWire Bible Society) was founded before 2004; etc.

Further, Bible software was also created for the palm pilot, Blackberry, Android, and iPhone. Websites also host Bible functionality: Online Bible was founded in 1987; BibleGateway (owned by Zondervan) was founded in 1993; BibleServer.com was founded in 2002.

With developments in computer hardware capabilities, the dreams and ambitions of Bible translators and Bible Societies have also expanded. Supercomputers are now capable of running at 33.86 PFLOPS (P=Peta=10^{15}; FLOPS=Floating Point Operations per Second) and mass data storage is capable of holding above 1 yottabyte of data (1 yottabyte=1 trillion terabytes=1 quadrillion gigabytes). These remarkable speeds and computer data capabilities have led Bible Societies to work toward speeding up the processes of Bible translation.

At the forefront of digital advance are initiatives supported by the Green family, owners of Hobby Lobby. For example, the tag line for a story in the November 26, 2010 edition of *Charisma Magazine* [online] was "Mart Green, is backing a cooperative effort to digitize Bible content and speed up the translation process."[2] This first step was followed by a second, the standardization of a Bible translation library. The goal of "A central Hub for Bible Texts" is being realized through the ETEN digitization process— ETEN being the acronym for "Every Tribe Every Nation"—which will result in the DBL or Digital Bible Library:

> "The Digital Bible Library™ is a central location that stores and provides information about each Bible translation, along with various digital formats and renditions of the text itself (for example, digital files, PDF, audio, and video). It serves as a hub to find quality licensed Bible translations."[3]

The final step envisioned in this ambitious project is to provide "every tongue and every nation" with a Bible translation. So advances in the world of computers have moved technology far beyond the capabilities of mere Bible software applications. Keeping inerrancy front and center in this whirlwind of computer technology provides a new challenge for those who believe in inerrancy.

Meanwhile, through the use of computer technology, knowledge of people groups and linguistics has exponentially increased. For example, people group websites have emerged that are mapping people groups worldwide. The Joshuaproject.net site lists and describes 16,801 total people groups, 7,287 of which are considered unreached.[4] All of these people groups are listed alphabetically on the site. Another site, Peoplegroups.org, lists 11,264 people groups in the world, 6,577 of which are considered unreached, with

---

[2]"Businessman Helps Speed up Bible Translation Process"; available at: http://www.charismamag.com/site-archives/570-news/featured-news/12246-hobby-lobby-founder-unites-bible-translators; accessed 14 Dec 2013; Internet.
[3]"ETEN Digitization Initiative"; available at: http://everytribeeverynation.org/resources/look-inside.php; accessed: 13 July 2013; Internet.
[4]"Joshua Project"; available at: http://www.joshuaproject.net; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Internet.

2,933 people groups unengaged.[5] Clearly both of these sites approach the concept of

people groups from a Christian worldview.

The field of linguistics has also made great strides through the use of computer

technology. Ethnologue.com, maintained by SIL (Summer Institute of Linguistics of

Wycliffe Bible Translators) "contains information on 7,105 known living languages."

These languages are divided into five categories according to language development:

682 are deemed "Institutional"; 1,534 "Developing"; 2,502 "Vigorous"; 1,481 "In

Trouble"; and 906 "Dying."[6] Another site, Llmap.org run by The Linguist List is

dedicated to the linguistic mapping of the world. This site is a joint project of East

Michigan University, University of Stockholm, and of other collaborators, and is funded

by a three year grant from the National Science Foundation.[7] This site identifies and

categorizes language groups, charting them on a multitree chart[8] which is available at

multitree.org. Multitree.org defines itself as "a searchable database of hypotheses on

language relationships."[9]

In a remarkable way, research in linguistics and research in people groups and

enhanced computer capabilities have converged to meet the needs of Bible translators

---

[5]"People Groups: Reliable, Relevant, Realtime"; available at: http://www.peoplegroups.org; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Internet.

[6]"Ethnologue: Languages of the World"; available at: http://www.ethnologue.com/world; accessed 16 Nov 2013; Internet. Language development is determined using three categories: graphization; standardization; modernization. For more detail see: http://www.ethnologue.com/language-development.

[7]"LL-MAP is a joint project of Eastern Michigan University and Stockholm University, in collaboration with several projects and archives in the USA, Europe, and Australia. Collaborators include PARADISEC, The Alaska Native Language Center, The Tibetan-Himalayan Digital Library, and The WALS Project, as well as noted documentary linguists. Technical development is directed by The Institute for Geospatial Research and Education (IGRE) at Eastern Michigan U. The project was funded by a three-year grant from the National Science Foundation" ("LL-MAP: Language and Location - A Map Annotation Project"; available at: http://llmap.org/about.html; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Internet).

[8]"Multitree: A Digital Library of Language Relationships"; available at: http://multitree.linguistlist.org; accessed 16 Nov 2013; Internet.

[9]" MultiTree: A Digital Library of Language Relationships"; available at: http://multitree.org; accessed: 16 Nov 2013. Note that this URL is a different than that of the prior footnote.

approaching a Revelation 5:9 moment, where people "from every tribe, tongue, and nation" can hear the gospel in their own tongue.[10]

To harness these new opportunities, SIL, International has remained on the forefront of computer technology for Bible translation. SIL has developed two levels of software for Bible translation. The first is called Fieldworks.[11] This software program has several levels of inputting linguistic information within Language Explorer (FLEx): Lexicon, Interlinear, Bulk Edit, and Grammar. The next stage of Fieldworks is the Translation Editor, which includes: Formatted Views, Back Translations, Error Checking, and Import Export. Once a Bible translation is ready, it can be exported into Paratext.

The United Bible Society (UBS) and SIL International have developed a proprietary software called "Paratext." Data exported from Fieldworks is inputted into Paratext,[12] and then Paratext is becoming the standard for all present and future UBS Bible publishing.[13] Interestingly, as a sideline, the word "paratext" originated with French literary theorist Gérard Genette in his book, *Paratexts. Thresholds of interpretation*

---

[10]Rev 5:9 (NKJ), "And they sang a new song, saying: 'You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.'"

[11]"SIL Fieldworks"; available at: http://fieldworks.sil.org; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Internet.

[12]Here is a software support email from a software developer of Paratext dated 8 Feb 2011: "We have set up the folder use and the Global Id's so that a user can install Pathway for FieldWorks 6.0.x and Paratext 7.1. You should be able to leave SetupPwBTETest-0.6.16-2011-02-4-Fw6.0.4.msi installed and also install SetupPw7BTEt-0.6.16-2011-02-3.msi. You will have two versions of Pathway installed in different folders. One will be used with Fieldworks 6.0.4 and the other with Paratext. You can not install Pathway for 6.0.4 and 6.0.6. All the installers for FieldWorks 6.0.x use the same folder and the same global id to prevent you from installing two of them simultaneously. (I can't think of any reason you would want to do it and it would be very confusing if you had these versions installed simultaneously — both for you and for the software.)" ("Installing for FieldWorks 6.0.x and Paratext"; available at: http://pathway.sil.org/installing-for-fieldworks-6-0-x-and-paratext/; accessed 16 Nov 2013; Internet)."

[13]"Paratext and related tools are a collection of software programs for Windows and Linux developed jointly by the United Bible Societies and SIL International which allow you to input, edit, check, and publish a translation of the Scriptures, based on the original texts (Greek, Hebrew), and modeled on versions in major languages" ("About Paratext Translation and Publishing Software"; available at: http://paratext.org; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Internet).

(French, 1987; English, 1997).[14] Whatever the source of the name, the Paratext 7.0 software is the new standard for worldwide UBS Bible publishing.

The missing link between Fieldworks and Paratext is an issue that SIL has been working on, that is the automation of Bible translation by combining linguistic mapping with Fieldworks. The goal is to harness computer technology to run the complex algorithms merging linguistic mapping, sentence formation, and translation theory. In its 2nd April 2011 issue, *Bible Translator* discussed these issues under the topic, "Computers as translators: translation or treason?" The complications involve the huge variety of linguistic nuances between the languages of the world. Moving from base nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions to the glue that holds them together, such as vernacular word order, tenses of verbs, moods, genders, uses of pronouns, etc. This subject provides extensive motivation for future Bible translation innovation!

Next, in the field of Bible publication, the UBS had established a new set of translation standards called the Unified Standard Format Markers (USFM) in 2002.[15] USFM has centralized a system of formatting for all UBS translators, particularly related to print editions. Further, however, these newly developed standards could assist in

---

[14]"Gérard Genette"; available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gérard_Genette; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Internet. "Paratext is a concept in literary interpretation. The main text of published authors (e.g. the story, non-fiction description, poems, etc.) is often surrounded by other material supplied by editors, printers, and publishers, which is known as the paratext. These added elements form a frame for the main text, and can change the reception of a text or its interpretation by the public" ("Paratext"; available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paratext; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Interent).

[15]The five goals of USFM are to: "(1) Allow more thought and effort to be put into developing just one set of tools and utilities to be shared by all projects: (a) Tools for text checking and analysis; (b) Tools for developing supporting textual resources such as concordances and indexes; and (c) Tools for streamlining the publishing process; (2) Eliminate or minimize duplication of effort in providing these tools; (3) Allow better sharing of both tools and data; (4) Allow Paratext users to use one tested and proven stylesheet; (5) Prepare the project for a smoother transition to other markup formats or future technologies" ("USFM—Unified Standard Format Markers"; available at: http://paratext.org/about/usfm; accessed: 16 Nov 2013; Internet).

revising existing Bible translations into a unified translation model.[16] Also assisting in the

development of a standardized Bible translation model was the creation of a centralized

digital hub to maintain at least one Bible translation for each language of the world. This

hub is called ETEN:

> "In Phase 1, there are more than 270 translations in the library, with an additional 780 translations
> scheduled for Phase 2. This means that by 2015, the Digital Bible Library will contain more than 1,050
> translations, and by 2035 there will be a translation for most of the remaining languages in the
> world."[17]

A second purpose of ETEN is to provide a location and storage for technical information

using Paratext,[18] allowing Bible translation agencies to enter their translations into the

DBL (Digital Bible Library), either directly for those within the UBS fellowship, or via a

software patch those not in the UBS management system.

A system of library cardholders is in place to allow certain users access to the

library. These users then make software applications allow Bible readers to avail

themselves of these translations. Two of its current library cardholders are *YouVersion*

and the American Bible Society Bible Search website. Again, the purpose of this DBL is

to standardize all worldwide Bible translations into a common ditigal format.[19] So computer

technology advances have certainly assisted in Bible translation and Bible publication. So

far, the media used to make this technological advance accessible is the Internet.

---

[16] "The primary focus in USFM development was on unification, not markup creation. What this means is that USFM inherits support for both the positive (and some negative) aspects of pre-existing SFM marker use. The USFM working group did not wish to create an unmanageable conversion task for legacy SFM encoded texts" (ibid.).

[17] "ETEN Digitization Initiative"; available at: http://everytribeeverynation.org/resources/look-inside.php; accessed: 13 Jul 2013; Internet.

[18] "The Institute for Computer Assisted Publishing (ICAP) is an initiative sponsored by the United Bible Societies (UBS) and the Canadian Bible Society and provides support for the translation and Scripture publishing community. ICAP developed and maintains Paratext, the leading Bible translation software in the world. ICAP also developed and supports the Digital Bible Library™ which is directly integrated with Paratext for easy management of the whole translations process." (ibid.).

[19] "The need has never been greater for a market-wide digital Bible format to become the standard. While many different digital formats have existed, the Digital Bible Library™ text format now being used across the partnering organizations will quickly define the standard and set the stage for rapid development of digital Bible tools" (ibid).

(2) The Internet may represent an unstable platform for publishing the Bible in the future

Reality therapy may teach that the Internet will have to be modified in some way in order as to make Bible translation and publication truly secure. While this author is uncertain to details of Internet security or the development of proprietary Intranets, the volatility of the Internet has been noted in recent years. Rather than the free-flow of information online, it may even be that computers are speedily being programed for just the opposite. From search engines blocking certain content or sites, to virus detector programs blocking out specific content, the rules are changing fast. And yet the Internet has not only become a great source of information for researchers, but also a complete library of personal information on every U.S. citizen. Julian Assange, the founder of Wikileaks stated in December 2012:

> "We have this position where as we know knowledge is power, and there's a mass transfer as a result of literally billions of interceptions per day going from everyone, the average person, into the data vaults of state spying agencies for the big countries, and their cronies – the corporations that help build them that infrastructure. Those groups are already powerful, that's why they are able to build this infrastructure to intercept on everyone. So they are growing more powerful, concentrating the power in the hands of smaller and smaller groups of people at once, which isn't necessarily bad, but it's extremely dangerous once there is any sort of corruption occurring in the power. Because absolute power corrupts, and when it becomes corrupt, it can affect a lot of people very quickly."[20]

Whether the cult of technology,[21] or merely the promise of free worldwide interconnectivity,[22] it appears that some of the founders of Internet technology had an idealistic view of the free exchange of information.[23] Jimmy Wales, founder of

---

[20]"Assange to RT [Russia Today]: Entire nations intercepted online, key turned to totalitarian rule"; available at: http://rt.com/news/assange-internet-control-totalitarian-943/; accessed: 1 Dec 2012; Internet. Of William Binney, mathematician and code breaker who worked for the NSA, an article stated, "The FBI records the emails of nearly all US citizens, including members of congress, according to NSA whistleblower William Binney. In an interview with RT, he warned that the government can use this information against anyone" ("'Everyone in US under virtual surveillance' - NSA whistleblower"; available at: http://rt.com/usa/news/surveillance-spying-e-mail-citizens-178/; accessed 5 Dec 2012; Internet).

[21]For example, Brett T. Robinson in *Appletopia: Media Technology and the Religious Imagination of Steve Jobs* (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2013) described the cult-like promotion of Apple products.

[22]Consider the Beatles' song, "I Am He and You Are We"

Wikipedia, appeared to have an idealized view of the availability and accessibility of

knowledge on the Internet:

> "It is my intention to get a copy of Wikipedia to every single person on the planet in their own language. It is my intention that free textbooks from our wikibooks project will be used to revolutionize education in developing countries by radically cutting the cost of content.
> "Those kinds of big picture ideals make people very passionate about what we're doing. And it makes it possible for people to set aside a lot of personal differences and disputes of the kind that I talked about above, and just compromise to keep getting the work done.
> "Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge. That's what we're doing."[24]

Even in his idealized world of free Internet knowledge, Wales had to admit that there are

some controversial issues that will never be eliminated, especially in matters of religion.

Here is a question and answer session between a blogger named Rageon and Wales:

> "'The constant bickering...' - by Rageon
> "How is (and how will) the constant bickering between differing sides of the more controversial issues (abortion, religion, etc...) be addressed? Do you expect any changes to the current system, in which it seems the same pages get edited by the same people back and forth every day?
>
> "Jimmy Wales:
> "In our community, we very strongly discourage that kind of bickering. One of the biggest social faux pas that one can commit is the dreaded 'revert war'. But humans are humans, and they will argue, and we have to understand that there will never be a process whereby we eliminate all of that."[25]

Lovers of religious freedom will note that Rageon used "religion" as one of those "more

controversial issues" that leads to "constant bickering." So even in the world of free

information online, Wikipedia's founder observed that there is no process to stop the

constant bickering between viewpoints, and that because of human nature!

It is in fact amazing that the founders of the United States, as they drafted the

First Amendment of the Constitution, provided a means by which this constant bickering

---

[23]"For many acidheads the model of interconnectivity promised by peer-to-peer sharing through computers rang true to the experience of oneness they'd had while tripping. The Internet was millions of individual minds joined together as one communal mind—cyberspace as cosmic consciousness" (Steve Turner, *Popcultured: Thinking Christianly about Style, Media, and Entertainment* [Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 2013], 177).

[24]"The Right Perspective"; available at: http://slashdot.org/story/04/07/28/1351230/wikipedia-founder-jimmy-wales-responds; accessed: 11 Nov 2013; Internet. Quote was partially cited in Steve Turner, *Popcultured*, 179, 242.

[25]Ibid.

has been managed for over 200 years. It was by means of the free and unhindered

communication of knowledge (especially religious, the most controversial) without

governmental interference. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution reads:

> "1st: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

The freedom of the spoken word and the printed word was not to be restricted in the U.S.

Prior to the ratification of the U.S. Bill of Rights, the printing press was the

primary means of the mass dissemination of information, and censorship of the printing

press appeared rather simple:

- Controlling the availability of paper and/or of movable type and typesetting equipment;
- Controlling publication rights and the right to sell books;
- Keeping lists of censored authors and censored book;
- Training official censors to read all new books, making sure that they contain "nothing offensive"; and
- Punishing those who possessed censored books.

Rules of this nature were enacted in the 16th Century Council of Trent,[26] and were being

---

[26]"Furthermore, to check unbridled spirits, it decrees that no one relying on his own judgment shall, in matters of faith and morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, distorting the Holy Scriptures in accordance with his own conceptions, presume to interpret them contrary to that sense which holy mother Church, to whom it belongs to judge of their true sense and interpretation, has held and holds, or even contrary to the unanimous teaching of the Fathers, even though such interpretations should never at any time be published. Those who act contrary to this shall be made known by the ordinaries and punished in accordance with the penalties prescribed by the law.

"And wishing, as is proper, to impose a restraint in this matter on printers also, who, now without restraint, thinking what pleases them is permitted them, print without the permission of ecclesiastical superiors the books of the Holy Scriptures and the notes and commentaries thereon of all persons indiscriminately, often with the name of the press omitted, often also under a fictitious press-name, and what is worse, without the name of the author, and also indiscreetly have for sale such books printed elsewhere, [this council] decrees and ordains that in the future the Holy Scriptures, especially the old Vulgate Edition, be printed in the most correct manner possible, and that it shall not be lawful for anyone to print or to have printed any books whatsoever dealing with sacred doctrinal matters without the name of the author, or in the future to sell them, or even to have them in possession, unless they have first been examined and approved by the ordinary, under penalty of anathema and fine prescribed by the last Council of the Lateran.

"If they be regulars they must in addition to this examination and approval obtain permission also from their own superiors after these have examined the books in accordance with their own statutes. Those who lend or circulate them in manuscript before they have been examined and approved, shall be subject to the same penalties as the printers, and those who have them in their possession or read them, shall, unless they make known the authors, be themselves regarded as the authors. The approbation of such books, however, shall be given in writing and shall appear authentically at the beginning of the book, whether it be

used in Elizabethan England at the turn of the 17th Century.[27]

As new technologies have emerged, however, new regulations and regulatory bodies were formed to oversee these new technologies. In the U.S. regulation for the radio began in 1926 with the founding of the Federal Radio Commission (FRC), an independent agency of the U.S. government.[28] In 1934 the Federation Communications Commission (FCC) was founded to include the work of the FRC and television.[29] In 1918, right after the end of World War I, the precursor to the National Security Agency (NSA), the Black Chamber, was established to monitor "private communications"

---

written or printed, and all this, that is, both the examination and the approbation, shall be done gratuitously, so that what ought to be approved may be approved and what ought to be condemned may be condemned" ("Fourth Session of the Council of Trent, Celebrated on 8 April 1646"; available at: http://www.forerunner.com/chalcedon/X0020_15._Council_of_Trent.html; accessed 8 Jan 2005; Internet).

[27]"LI. Item, because there is a great abuse in the printers of books, which for covetousness chiefly regard not what they print, so they may have gain, whereby ariseth great disorder by publication of unfruitful, vain, and infamous books and papers; the queen's majesty straitly charges and commands, that no manner of person shall print any manner of book or paper, of what sort, nature, or in what language soever it be, except the same be first licensed by her majesty by express words in writing, or by six of her privy council; or be perused and licensed by the archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishop of London, the chancellors of both universities, the bishop being ordinary, and the archdeacon also of the place, where any such shall be printed, or by two of them, whereof the ordinary of the place to be always one. And that the names of such as shall allow the same to be added in the end of every such work, for a testimony of the allowance thereof. And because many pamphlets, plays, and ballads be oftentimes printed, wherein regard would be had that nothing therein should be [Page 437] either heretical, seditious, or unseemly for Christian ears; her majesty likewise commands that no manner of person shall enterprise to print any such, except the same be to him licensed by such her majesty's commissioners, or three of them, as be appointed in the city of London to hear and determine divers causes ecclesiastical, tending to the execution of certain statutes made the last Parliament for uniformity of order in religion. And if any shall sell or utter any manner of books or papers, being not licensed as is above-said, that the same party shall be punished by order of the said commissioners, as to the quality of the fault shall be thought meet. And touching all other books of matters of religion, or policy, or governance that have been printed, either on this side the seas or on the other side, because the diversity of them is great, and that there needs good consideration to be had of the particularities thereof, her majesty refers the prohibition or permission thereof to the order which her said commissioners within the city of London shall take and notify. According to the which her majesty straitly commands all manner her subjects, and especially the wardens and company of Stationers, to be obedient" ("The Injunctions of 1559"; available at: http://history.hanover.edu/texts/ENGref/er78.html; accessed: 20 Sept 2008; Internet).

[28]"Federal Radio Commission"; available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Radio_Commission; accessed: 11 Nov 2013; Internet.

[29]"Federal Communication Commission"; available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Communications_Commission; accessed: 11 Nov 2013; Internet.

through the Western Union telegram lines.[30] So as technology advanced, so did

government oversight and regulation. So perhaps it was quite naïve for the early leaders

of advances in Internet technology to assume that the worldwide web would remain

unregulated.

Interestingly, rather than deregulation, Worldwide Internet regulation is rapidly

increasing country-by-country according to recent reports by "Freedom House." Freedom

House is "an independent private organization supporting the expansion of the freedom

throughout the world."[31] Their 888 page 2013 report was supported by the Dutch

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human

Rights, and Labor [DRL], and Google.[32] Their 2012 report found that religious freedom

was increasingly being stifled in many countries of the world:

> "Concerned with the power of technologies to catalyze political change, many authoritarian states
> have taken various measures to filter, monitor, or otherwise obstruct free speech online. …
> "This year's findings indicate that restrictions on internet freedom in many countries have
> continued to grow, though the methods of control are slowly evolving and becoming less visible."[33]

Countries such as Bahrain hired "hundreds of trolls" posing as ordinary users to supervise

the use of the Internet. In their 2013 analysis, Freedom House commented of China:

> "And as in the previous years, China has led the way in expanding and adapting an elaborate
> technological apparatus for systemic internet censorship, while further increasing offline coercion
> and arrests to deter free expression online."[34]

Nine primary methods are now being used to monitor and regulate use of the Internet

worldwide: (1) Blocking;[35] (2) Filtering; (3) Paid online commentators;[36] (4) Passing

---

[30]"National Security Administration"; available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_security_ administration; accessed: 11 Nov 2013; Internet.

[31]"Freedom on the Net 2012" (available at: http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/ MapInetF2012_WhiteLogo2-FINAL.pdf#overlay-context=report/fotn-2012-internet-freedom-map-pdf; accessed 11 Nov 2013; Internet), 42.

[32]"Freedom on the Net 2013"; (available at: http://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/ FOTN%202013_Full%20Report_0.pdf; accessed 11 Nov 2013; Internet), back of cover page.

[33]"Freedom on the Net 2012," 1.

[34]Sanja Kelly, "Despite Pushback, Internet Freedom Deteriorates," in "Freedom on the Net 2013"; (available at: http://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/FOTN%202013_Full%20Report_0.pdf; accessed 11 Nov 2013; Internet), 3.

restrictive laws;[37] (5) Forced deletions and takedown requests; (6) Surveillance[38]

sometimes resulting in self-censorship due to fear; (7) Criminalizing the visiting of

certain websites;[39] (8) Cyberattacks; (9) Physical and emotional attacks, such as

intimidation, arrest, and murder.

Rather than moving in a positive direction, according to the 2013 Freedom House

Report, the trend is toward greater loss of Internet freedom:

> "In fact, global internet freedom has been in decline for the three consecutive years tracked by this project, and the threats are becoming more widespread.
> "Of particular concern are the proliferation of laws, regulations, and directives to restrict online speech; a dramatic increase in arrests of individuals for something they posted online; legal cases and intimidation against social-media users; and the rise of surveillance. In authoritarian states, these tools are often used to censor and punish users who engage in online speech that is deemed critical of the government, royalty, or the dominant religion."[40]

As regards my experience in Togo, the Freedom House 2013 reported that all 10 of the

African countries that they surveyed had stepped up the internet surveillance.[41]

Therefore, the volatility of the Internet needs to be kept in mind, even as it is used

as a media platform from which to provide Bible publishing. It may very well be that

---

[35]"Over the past year, governments in this group have continued to refine their censorship apparatus and devoted greater energy to frustrating user attempts to circumvent official blocking" (Ibid.).

[36]Ibid., 4.

[37]Restrictive laws led to the "deleting tens of millions of messages or search results a year." In India, court cases and their legal ramifications have resulted that "large swaths of online content are disappearing" to avoid court battles over interpretations of the law ("Freedom on the Net 2012," 5, 7).

[38]"Julian Assange: The people who control the interception of the internet and, to some degree also, physically control the big data warehouses and the international fiber-optic lines. We all think of the internet as some kind of Platonic Realm where we can throw out ideas and communications and web pages and books and they exist somewhere out there. Actually, they exist on web servers in New York or Nairobi or Beijing, and information comes to us through satellite connections or through fiber-optic cables.

"So whoever physically controls this controls the realm of our ideas and communications. And whoever is able to sit on those communications channels, can intercept entire nations, and that's the new game in town, as far as state spying is concerned – intercepting entire nations, not individuals" ("Assange to RT: Entire nations intercepted online, key turned to totalitarian rule"; available at: http://rt.com/news/assange-internet-control-totalitarian-943/; accessed 1 Dec 2012; Internet).

[39]French President Nicolas Sarkozy, "announced his intention to create criminal penalties for habitually visiting websites that advocate terrorism or hate crimes" ("Freedom on the Net 2013," 288-89).

[40]Ibid., 1.

[41]"All 10 of the African countries examined in this report have stepped up their online monitoring efforts in the past year, either by obtaining new technical capabilities or by expanding the government's legal authority" (ibid., 8).

printed editions of Bibles will still need to be a staple of future Bible translation, even as the Internet is used to its fullest potential.

(3) The continued need for a "Federal Model" of unity in maintaining administrative control of the text of Scripture

A great strength of the Bible Society movement prior to the forming of the United Bible Society was the comity agreements developed between societies as they sought to accomplish their goals while maintaining their distinctive doctrinal and practical differences. Once the UBS was formed in 1946, it appears that a Federal Model of unity was achieved. E. Stanley Jones defined it this way, "In a federation, the two entities uniting each retain its own identity. …their purpose of uniting is to achieve some mutually agreeable common purpose."[42] Surely, the Federal Model has been the model used as the UBS has promoted the work of national Bible Societies.

However, significant changes have taken place in the UBS since the four major Bible societies came together in 1946.[43] There is great pressure to move from the Federal Model to the Organic Union Model. In this model, "The parts or members of the organism receive their identities from the principal entity, and their identities have no meaning except in reference to the principal."[44] The first big test of its model of organizational unity came in 1964.

In November 1964 three men met "informally" at Crêt-Bérard (Lausanne, Switzerland) to discuss the issue of cooperative Bible translation. They were Eugene Nida of the American Bible Society (ABS), Olivier Béguin of the UBS, and Agostino

---

[42]See Jude Weisenbeck, S.D.S, S.T.L., "Conciliar Fellowship and the Unity of the Church." Ph.D. dissertation, University of St. Thomas, Rome, 1986, pp. 62-104.

[43]Edwin H. Robertson, "Author's Preface," in *Taking the Word to the World: 50 Years of the United Bible Societies* (Nashville: Nelson, 1996), 1.

[44]See Weisenbeck, "Conciliar Fellowship," 62-104.

Cardinal Bea, S.J., of Rome's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU). At this meeting Nida drafted what was to become the "Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible."[45] Robertson noted that the first draft of 1964 Guiding Principles was "largely from the pen of Nida."[46]

On 18 November 1965, the Vatican II affirmed the Constitution *Dei Verbum* on the Bible. Following this decision, SPCU and UBS committees reworked Nida's "Guiding Principles" for two and a half years until it were officially adopted on Pentecost Sunday, June 2, 1968. The shocking surprise of this document was the "guiding principle" to add Roman Catholic translators as half of all future UBS Bible translation committees:

> "C. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
> "For the most adequate development of a translation program, there is need for three groups: 1. a Working Committee, 2. a Review Committee, and 3. a Consultative Group.
> "1. *Working Committee*
> "Consisting of 4 to 6 persons equally divided between Protestant and Roman Catholic constituencies and possessing four essential characteristics:
> "a. equal standing,
> "b. complementary abilities,
> "c. mutual respect, and
> "d. capacity to work together."[47]

The mixed reception of this decision in a Federal Model was documented in the 1980 Chiang Mai UBS General Committee Minutes stated that out of the 751 translation projects in their report, only "140 have the full participation of Roman Catholic translators and reviewers."[48] Perhaps the "Federal Model" allowing individual Bible

---

[45]"In 1968, the United Bible Societies (UBS) and the Vatican entered into a joint agreement to undertake hundreds of new interconfessional Bible translation projects around the world, using functional equivalent principles. Again, Nida was one of the principals on this collaborative work" ("Brief Biography of Eugene Nida"; available from: http://nidainstitute.org; accessed 2 Mar 2007; Internet).

[46]Robertson, 114.

[47]"Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible" [Pentecost, 1968], from Thomas F. Stransky, C.S.P., and John B. Sheerin, C.S.B., eds. *Doing the Truth in Charity: Statements of Pope Paul VI, Popes John Paul I, John Paul II, and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity 1964-1980.* (New York: Paulist, 1982), 166.

[48]Robertson, 221.

Societies to decide for themselves if they wanted to follow the "Guiding Principles." Also determined was the revision of past versions so that the translation can be "understood in terms of contemporary culture."[49] Soon after the 1968 "Guidelines" decision, Carlo M. Martini, S.J., who became Cardinal Martini in 1983, was added to the Editorial Committee of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*—the foundational text of almost all modern English translations of the New Testament.

In September 1978, Harold Lindsell published *Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978). And in October 1978, over 300 Evangelical leaders met to clarify and defend the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. They adopted the "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy" which had 200 signatories.[50]

On Nov 16, 1987, a revision of the 1968 "Guiding Principles" was approved in Rome with a new title, "Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible, the New Revised Edition Rome."[51] The surprise addition of half Protestant and half Catholic on all translation committees was further modified as follows:

"2.3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
"For the most adequate development of a translation program, there is need for three groups: 1. a translation team, 2. a review panel, and 3. a consultative group.
"2.3.1. *Translation team*
"Consisting of not more than six persons of high competence from the Roman Catholic and other Christian constituencies and possessing four essential characteristics:
"a) comparable qualifications,
"b) complementary abilities,

---

[49]"The experience of the UBS so far has shown the value of 'dynamic equivalent translations' which were not only accurate but understood in terms of contemporary culture. Many translations still remained in the languages of an earlier generation or in a remote 'religious' language. The objective now was clearly defined as 'all languages with more than one million litterates, and all officially designated national languages' should have a whole Bible in 'clear and comprehensible versions' within a decade. Portions and Selections should be available for 'new readers' in all major languages, enabling them to move towards common language translations. For this, 1985 was the target date" (Robertson, 228).
[50]"Records of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy"; available at: http://library.dts.edu/Pages/TL/Special/ICBI.shtml; accessed 16 Nov 2013; Internet.
[51]"Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible: The New Revised Edition Rome"; available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_ councils/chrstuni/general-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_ 19871116_guidelines-bible_en.html; accessed: 8 Sept 2007; Internet.

"c) mutual respect, and
"d) capacity to work together."[52]

Rome cemented its full participation on all UBS funded translation committees. The subjective characteristic, "persons of high competence," was added to the phrase explaining the essential make-up of the "translation team." "Equally divided between Protestant" was removed. "From Roman Catholic" was listed first. And "and other Christian constituencies" was added. Further "equal standing" on the Translation Team was changed to "comparable qualifications" to allow for the work of a "Translation Consultant" to guide the translation all the way from the training of the translators to the authorizition of the text.[53] Another result of this decision was the inclusion of Johannes Karavidopoulos, presumably a Greek Orthodox, to the editorial committee of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

On 18 November 1994 the Pontifical Commission on Biblical Interpretation, in essence, called the position held by the framers of the 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy pre-critical, naïve, and dangerous. Listen to how the Pontifical Commission described and characterized those who believe in "Fundamentalist Interpretation":

"The fundamentalist interpretation had its origin at the time of the Reformation, arising out of a concern for fidelity to the literal meaning of Scripture. After the century of the Enlightenment it emerged in Protestantism as a bulwark against liberal exegesis.
"The actual term 'fundamentalist' is connected directly with the American Biblical Congress held at Niagara, N.Y., in 1895. At this meeting, conservative Protestant exegetes defined 'five points of fundamentalism': the verbal inerrancy of Scripture, the divinity of Christ, his virginal birth, the doctrine of vicarious expiation and the bodily resurrection at the time of the second coming of Christ.

---

[52]"Guidelines for interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible the New Revised Edition Rome 1987"; From: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_ councils/chrstuni/general-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_ 19871116_guidelines-bible_en.html; accessed: 8 Sept 2007; Internet.
[53]"All conditions of service should, however, be established in consultation with the national Bible Society and the translation consultant involved, as the supervision of the overall program requires that a balance be maintained between members of the translation team, who come from different churches. In most cases also the translation consultant will be the person most directly involved in training translators and proposing the approval of the final text of the translation for publication" (ibid.).

As the fundamentalist way of reading the Bible spread to other parts of the world, it gave rise to other ways of interpretation, equally 'literalist,' in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. As the 20th century comes to an end, this kind of interpretation is winning more and more adherents, in religious groups and sects, as also among Catholics….

"The fundamentalist approach is dangerous, for it is attractive to people who look to the Bible for ready answers to the problems of life. It can deceive these people, offering them interpretations that are pious but illusory, instead of telling them that the Bible does not necessarily contain an immediate answer to each and every problem. Without saying as much in so many words, fundamentalism actually invites people to a kind of intellectual suicide. It injects into life a false certitude, for it unwittingly confuses the divine substance of the biblical message with what are in fact its human limitations."[54]

So once Protestants had lost control of the UBS, it appears that Rome felt free to express their concerns with U.S. Evangelicalism, and in a backhanded way the entire Bible Society movement.[55] It might be helpful to note of whom the Commission was speaking, and who took part in these Niagara Conferences:

"The Conference grew in reputation in 1889, the same year that J. Hudson Taylor spoke. Following were some of the Evangelical theologians involved in the early Niagara Bible conferences:
"'Of organizational significance was the enlarging of the Conference Committee to include the following people: J. H. Brookes [Presbyterian pastor and editor of *The Truth*], President; W.J. Erdman [pastor of Moody's Chicago Avenue Church, 1875-1878], Secretary; H.M. Parsons, Chairman of Local Committee; and L.W. Munhall, G.C. Needham, C.I. Scofield, T.O. Lowe, T.C. Des Barres, J. Denovan, R. Norton, A.T. Pierson [Pastor, New Park Street (Baptist) Church; Editor, "Missionary Review of the World"], W.A. Parlane, J.S. Helmer, S.P. Harbison, J.L. Taylor, H.M. Moore, J.K. Jamieson, H. Foster, R. Wells, and H.L. Porter.'"[56]

It appears that these men of Niagara constituted a conservative cross-section of what was later to be called Evangelicalism in the U.S. and Canada. It is clear that with Rome controlling the revised version of the "Guiding Principles," that the UBS translation program is now overseen by those unfriendly to worldwide Evangelicalism.[57]

---

[54]"The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church"; available at: http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/PBCINTER.htm; accessed 17 Oct 2009; Internet.

[55]The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804 from a discussion in the Board Room of the London Tract Society (that was founded in 1799).

[56]Thomas P. Johnston, "Billy Graham and John Paul II: On the Assimilation of U.S. Evangelicals into the Church of Rome" (Evangelical Theological Society, 2008), 29. The citation came from Larry D. Pettegrew, "The Historical and Theological Contributions of the Niagara Bible Conference to American Fundamentalism" (D. Th. Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1976), 77.

[57]Consider the words of Clement XIII, "2. It often happens that certain unworthy ideas come forth in the Church of God which, although they directly contradict each other, plot together to undermine the purity of the Catholic faith in some way. It is very difficult to cautiously balance our speech between both enemies in such a way that We seem to turn Our backs on none of them, but to shun and condemn both enemies of Christ equally. Meanwhile the matter is such that diabolical error, when it has artfully colored

19

Therefore, although the UBS may have 500 years of combined experience, it is unclear if the experiences of the last 45 years corresponds to the 150 years that preceded them. Because the UBS now "owns" the keys of the digitization project, ETEN, and Paratext, the Bible translation landscape has definitely changed since 1968 and 1987. This author recommends that everyone listening to or reading this paper purchase a copy of the following two ABS Bibles: *Contemporary English Version* (1992) and *Good News Translati*on (1993) complete with apocryphal books and imprimaturs on the copyright page. Consider the sound and feel of these translations, as they are likely right now being replicated in the many UBS language retranslations all across the world.

It may do us well to listen to the concluding remarks of A. T. Pierson as he addressed the 1888 Centenary Protestant Missionary Conference in London:

> "We have spoken a great deal here in this Conference about the unity which has been expressed and experienced here. I want to say that, for myself, I find not the slightest ground for merit or credit in this unity. If in the presence of a gigantic foe that unites all its forces, and masses all its hosts against the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, I did not forget that I was an American, and did not forget the denomination to which I belonged, I should consider myself a fossilised ecclesiastic, and not a disciple at all. When Herod and Pilate are made friends together to crush Christ and Christianity, it behoves all true disciples to gather shoulder to shoulder, and close about the Ark of God. The fact is that our unity is largely the involuntary and unconscious unity of those who, in the presence of gigantic and desperate foes, come together because they cannot help coming together in the realisation of a similar and common danger. I want to say, also, that I think the methods adopted by these gigantic foes remind us that the only true policy of warfare, is a positive aggressive policy. Let us be done with all defensive methods of warfare. A positive aggressive Gospel is the Gospel that is going to win the day."[58]

---

its lies, easily clothes itself in the likeness of truth while very brief additions or changes corrupt the meaning of expressions; and confession, which usually works salvation, sometimes, with a slight change, inches toward death" (Clement XIII, *In Dominico Agro* [in the field of the Lord]—On Instruction in the Faith (Rome: 14 June 1761).

[58]A. T. Pierson, "Closing Remarks," James Johnston, *Report of the Centenary Conference of the Protestant Missions of the World Held in Exeter Hall (June 9th—19th), London, 1888,* Vol. 1 (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1888), 487.