



# The trout and the milk: An ethnobibliographical talk

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## The Trout and The Milk: An Ethnobiographical Talk

*Hugh Amory*

*With regards to Professor D. F.  
McKenzie, on his retirement.*

HUGH AMORY is now an  
independent scholar.

The title of my talk has two *bêtes noires* in view. It refers, mockingly, of course, to *The Raw and The Cooked*, a book by a French Academician who, pursuing an enterprise founded by Bishop Wilkins, Leibniz, and Rousseau, holds that the knowledge to be derived from the oppositions between things is more fundamental than the knowledge founded on structures of words. Writing, which distinguishes “civilized” from “primitive” logic, may thus be seen as a colonialist instrument of enslavement, together with the falsely impressive heaps of books “entassés dans nos bibliothèques,” as Lévi-Strauss invidiously describes them in *Tristes tropiques*. This position cannot fail to enrage librarians like myself, and I trust, you.

On the other hand, my title invokes Thoreau’s proof of the occasional value of circumstantial evidence: the material origins of the trout and the milk are such that their conjunction should, on mere inspection, expose the human agency that brought them together. This *mot* I take to be paradigmatic of a certain view of bibliography, as a discipline dedicated to the accumulation of “facts,” but impervious to the social and linguistic contexts that generated them. I am thinking here, of course, of Sir Walter Wilson Greg, who famously described our subject as “pieces of paper or parchment covered with certain written or printed signs,” adding, “with these signs the bibliographer is concerned merely as arbitrary marks; their meaning is no business of his.” Henry Bradshaw had a similar formula, “arrange your facts vigorously and set them plainly before you, and *let them speak for themselves*, which they will always do.” Unlike Thoreau, who correctly assumes that such conjunctions are only rarely telling, the “New Bibliography” championed by Greg, R. B. McKerrow, and Fredson Bowers places them at the center of their methodology. And they posit a firm, but quite unexamined and unjustified distinction between the “bibliographical facts” constituted by the discipline itself, and other kinds of fact, for which the non-bibliographical world is more or less responsible—often less, in the dim view that these bibliographers take of their neighbors.

Not surprisingly, practitioners of neighboring disciplines in their turn have questioned, rejected, or more commonly ignored the findings of these bibliographers: even in library cataloguing, the “New Bibliography” has yet to win general acceptance after some seventy years, and its eminence within the study of literature is under challenge from a “newer” and more broadly conceived

bibliography, the History of the Book. I should add, to prevent misunderstanding, that I would in no way deprecate the careful description of the material objects to which I have devoted much of my life; only insisting that the “contents” of a book extend far beyond “certain written or printed signs”; and that the collection and arrangement of facts is not as value-neutral as Bradshaw supposes. Raw data must be “cooked,” as it were, before it can ever “speak.”

Ultimately, I propose to pursue what I have called “ethnobiography,” an attempt to align my ideal with the “ethnohistory” of James Axtell and others, and to distance it slightly from what McKenzie has called a “sociology of texts.” A “text,” particularly the mental kind favored by French theorists, has no real location, crossing readily from one culture to another, as when Roland Barthes “reads” the *absence* of street signs in Tokyo. Books, on the other hand, are almost always individual or tribal objects and as such are far more amenable to cultural or social definition. The few books that have achieved iconic status, such as the First Folio, the Gutenberg Bible, and the Bay Psalm Book, are, of course, another matter. Perhaps my profession is showing, but as a librarian I am conscious that perhaps the majority of the books ever printed have rarely been read: libraries have much in common with Grandmother’s Attic, and a good thing too, but this fact, which forbids us to think of books as texts, in no way exhausts their cultural significance.

The occasion of my talk is a medicine bundle about the size of the bowl of a tablespoon, excavated from the grave of an eleven-year-old girl in a seventeenth-century Mashantucket Pequot cemetery in Ledyard, Connecticut. The bundle, which was associated with a bear’s paw, consisted of a piece of fine woolen cloth and a page from a Bible, folded and rolled together. It was preserved by contact with an iron ladle, which converted the cloth and paper to a lump of iron salt known as a pseudomorph, because it exactly reproduces the form and structure of the original in a different material. This is my trout. The milk is the seventeenth-century culture or cultures represented by the object and the grave, which was a pagan burial. The child was laid in a flexed, fetal position, facing southwest, in the direction from which the Algonquian creator Cautantowwit or Kiehtan sent the first corn and beans, and in which he rules the underworld. What is a page from the Bible doing in this pagan site?

Bibliography, as Greg defines it, to be sure, would have no difficulty with this question: the collocation would be as meaningless as the discovery of a Bible in a trash basket, or its use as a doorstop. In much the same spirit, such bibliography has often devoted itself to erasing the obvious differences created by the provenance of the books “entassés dans nos bibliothèques” in favor of the more or less invisible similarities imbued by their original manufacture. Interest might, perhaps, center on the fact that I have been able to identify only one other copy of the Bible, at Pennsylvania State University, so that volume 1 of the Wing Revision could, if it had wished, have listed two locations, one copy at University Park, Pa., and the other, imperfect, in private hands, at Ledyard, Ct., where the pseudomorph has been reburied. These “solutions,” I submit, tell us a good deal about the limitations of Greg’s definition, but little else.

Beyond such responses or evasions, one might point out that the object is, or was, after all, a medicine bundle, not a Bible, and as such is not a bit out of place in a Pequot grave. The Indians, indeed, rather favored European objects for their grave goods. Just as the Iroquois might cut and forge an Iroquois breastplate from

a European brass kettle, so the Pequot might use a Bible as the raw material for a Pequot object; so, in his turn, the Englishman placed the Koh-i-noor diamond in his Crown jewels and the Frank attached Roman cameos to the covers of his Gospel Book. From the European viewpoint, the Koh-i-noor and the Roman cameos are imperial objects, whose associations fit them for their new uses; the Moguls and the Romans, on the other hand, might well analogize their reuse to the top hat sported by a stereotypical cannibal king in a European cartoon. Such “entangled objects,” as Nicholas Thomas calls them, have separate functions from either cultural perspective; but there is also a shared perception of the special value of the object.

The Pequots’ reuse of the Bible for “medicine,” indeed, has a certain eerie appropriateness. “The most common native perception of arriving Europeans,” James W. Bradley observes, summarizing the work of George R. Hamell, “was that of returning culture heroes, supernatural man-beings originating from beyond the world’s rim and offering the substances of ‘power’ from the Under(water) World.” In particular, the natives were aware of and impressed by the power of print. In Rhode Island, among the Narragansetts, Roger Williams reported their awe: “when they talke amongst themselves of the *English* ships, and great buildings, of the plowing of their Fields, and especially of Bookes and Letters, they will end thus: *Manittôwock* They are Gods.” “We who take literacy and printing so much for granted,” adds James Axtell, “may have difficulty recapturing the sense of wonder, the almost totemic reverence, engendered by a tribal, exclusively oral person’s first encounter with a book”; and he cites Father Sagard, reporting how the Hurons lingered over the Jesuits’ books: “they were satisfied with counting the leaves of our books, and admiring the pictures in them, and that with such close attention that they paid no heed to anything else, and would have passed whole days and nights over them if we had allowed them to do so.” Father Sagard might almost be describing an Anglo-American bibliographer. Don McKenzie notes reports of similar cases from among the Maori: “Many people who know not a letter wish to possess themselves of a copy of the translated Scriptures because they consider it possesses a peculiar virtue of protecting them from the power of evil spirits.” Few seventeenth-century persons, whether European or Indian, indulged the view, so popular in the nineteenth century, that the invention of printing promoted the diffusion of useful knowledge and innocent pleasure. For most of them, as for our present-day literary theorists, print was about power: God invented writing, says Father Sagard, when He handed down the Law. A New Englander who believed that the possession of a Bible made him invulnerable to Indian attack was unwise, as it proved, but not, I think, unrepresentative.

We need not doubt, then, that the makers of the Pequot medicine bundle might attribute a sort of talismanic power to the printed or written word. Here I am irresistibly reminded of Lévi-Strauss’s little “Leçon d’écriture” in *Tristes tropiques*, adduced to prove his belief that writing is an instrument for enslaving helpless illiterates, to which I have already alluded. You will recall that he tells of a Nambikwara chief who intuited this truth and seized on it to enhance his power. First the chief drew a series of squiggly lines on a piece of paper, anxiously testing their effect on the anthropologue, who “innocently” pretended to understand. Thus primed, the chief proceeded to “read” his document to the tribe, as a record of a series of gifts that he had elicited from Lévi-Strauss; who, of course,

then failed to deliver. Jacques Derrida has demolished this anthropological man of straw in his *De la grammatologie*, and there is no need to repeat his criticisms here; but surprisingly, neither he nor Lévi-Strauss notice that the chief was trying to enslave the colonialist. The anthropologue's perfidious refusal to honor the power of the squiggly lines is a piece of Eurocentric arrogance: the Nambikwara chief actually lost status by his little fraud, when his colonialist "friend" failed to play the game.

In short, and obviously enough, one would have thought, the power of writing rests on a social pact: it is not inherent in technology. The Indian perceives writing as "medicine" or pure, undifferentiated power, because he does not grasp the European pact that creates it, but to exercise power over the Indians requires another, separate pact that is invisible to Europeans in their turn. The European and Indian cultures are intricately entangled, and to make sense of them would require more than the Musée de l'homme in Paris, where Lévi-Strauss deposited his loot. One would need a museum with separate entrances and exits for every culture in it, connected by a maze of exhibitions whose only clue was an ever-changing concept of cultural authenticity: something akin to a library, I believe. Such I cannot provide, but it is time to take a closer look both at the materials represented by the pseudomorph, and at the cultures that produced them.

#### 1. THE MILK

The history of the Pequots is an astonishing tale of genocide and reintegration. They are often remembered today as the earliest of the New England tribes that the Europeans extirpated. In reprisal for the mysterious death of a wampum trader, the Europeans attacked in 1637, slaying some four hundred women, old men, and children when the warriors were away. Such captives as they took were sold into slavery in Bermuda, or to the more cooperative tribes of the Narragansetts and the Mohegans. The Treaty of Hartford in 1638 officially ended the "war," imposing a heavy tribute of wampum on the remaining Pequots, and suppressing the very name of the tribe, who would henceforth be known as the Mashantucket or "Western" Indians. As a people who were legally as extinct as the ancient Medes, their suppressed identity would later provide Herman Melville with a splendidly poignant name for the doomed vessel of Captain Ahab.

In 1656, Governor Winthrop settled the remaining Mashantuckets on a reservation of about 2,000 acres near New London, in what is now Ledyard, Connecticut. There they have remained ever since, in dwindling numbers, at first producing wampum for the colony, and later farming. The size of the reservation steadily diminished until 1856, when the State of Connecticut sold off 600 acres for a trust fund, leaving only 204 acres for the Pequots to live on. By the twentieth century, the numbers of the tribe were reported as between 26 and 40, and their trust capital amounted to only a few thousand dollars, but they hung on, led by two determined half-sisters, until 1970, when the victory of the Penobscots against the State of Maine finally changed the odds. The reservation then had only nine full-time inhabitants. Since that time, they have vindicated their tribal status in the federal courts, which renders the sale of their land illegal and exempts them from the jurisdiction of the State of Connecticut. The main advantage of this ruling is that Connecticut law forbids gambling, which thus

becomes an Indian monopoly: in the first twenty-eight months of its operation, Foxwoods, the Pequot casino, grossed over thirty million dollars. With \$900,000 compensation for the land that Connecticut illegally sold in 1856, the tribe has now enlarged the reservation to its original size, their numbers have grown to over 150 persons, and they have reassumed their original name. More important for my talk, they have launched a project to recover their history and archeology under the direction of Professor Kevin McBride of the University of Connecticut, who turned up the pseudomorph that I am hoping to explain.

Apart from some half-hearted attempts by the Mayhews from Martha's Vineyard, no one evangelized the Pequots before about 1720. Sarah Kemble Knight, travelling from Boston to New York in 1704, reported that they were "the most salvage of all the salvages of that kind that I had ever Seen: little or no care taken (as I heard upon enquiry) to make them otherwise." Like the "praying Indians" of Massachusetts Bay, New Plymouth, and Martha's Vineyard—variously known as Massachusetts, Nipmucks, Pokanokets, and Wampanoags—the Pequots spoke a dialect of Algonquian, and in theory, at least, Eliot's translation of the Bible was accessible to any of them who could read or hear it read. The savage repression they had recently experienced may have been reflected in the wealth of grave goods the Pequots laid in their graves, but it was a practice that continued among the "praying Indians" as well.

Their so-called savagery was not the product of any real isolation from the Europeans, however; on the contrary, the Pequots and other tribes along Long Island Sound were the principal manufacturers of wampum, which served both the English and the Dutch as a local currency. Originally an item of ceremonial or ritual exchange, wampum gradually enabled a triangular trade between the colonists, the Pequots who made it, and the Iroquois, who controlled access to the beaver skins that were North America's most profitable export. The trade was partly driven by ecological change, as the beaver along the Merrimac and in Maine were hunted out, and the free-range cattle and swine introduced by the colonists replaced the deer that had once provided the Pequots with clothing; but the Indians also actively sought European products: iron tools and weapons, copper pots, glass beads, and cloth. Not all the wampum, moreover, was an article of trade. Under the Treaty of Hartford, and by other forms of extortion, the tribe paid over 21,000 fathoms of wampum in tribute and fines between 1661 and 1664: that is almost seven million beads, worth £5,000, for which the Pequots received nothing in exchange.

The presence of woolen cloth, iron ladles, and other such European trade goods in a pagan Indian grave should therefore come as no surprise, unless it be that the exploited people were able to afford them: the ritual animal hide that had formerly covered the deceased had become a woven blanket. The Bible fragment, however, is highly unusual: the only New England parallels I know of are a fragment of an engraved "Ecce Homo" (figure 1), and some leather book covers, both from Narragansett graves. The image, about the size of a quarter, had probably been cut from a larger engraving, and was bound between two pieces of mica, apparently for use as a locket; it was found in the grave of a Narragansett child in North Kingston, Rhode Island (RI-1000). Versions of the scene were engraved after Lutherans like Matthaeus Merian as well as Catholics like Josse Andries during the seventeenth century, but New England's iconoclasts would have had no truck with either. Like the so-called "Jesuit rings" found in

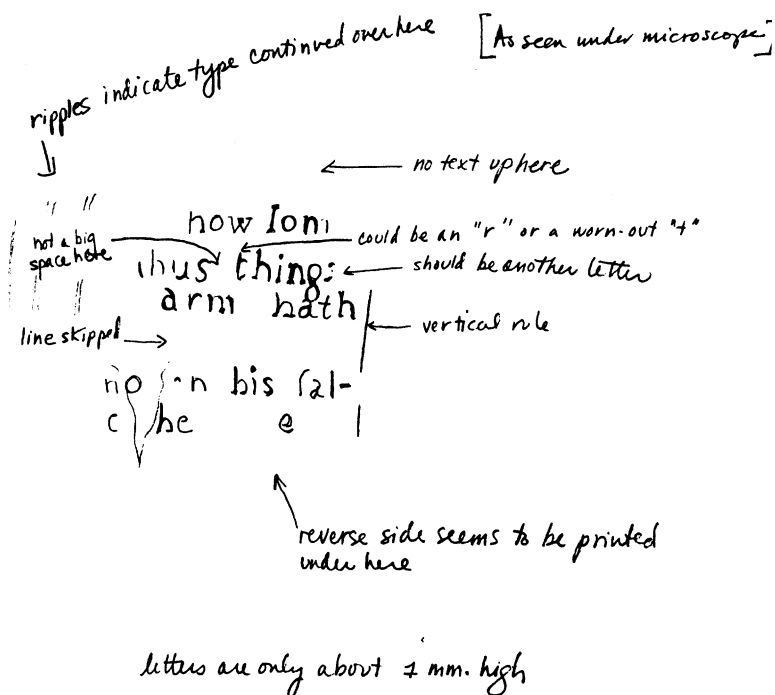


Figure 1. "Humilitas," by Matthaeus Merian; detail of the title page of *Nouitestamenti D. N. Iesu Christi . . . historiae* (Frankfurt, 1627). Courtesy of the Department of Printing & Graphic Arts, Houghton Library. The approximate extent of the Narragansett fragment is indicated by the superimposed oval, but the original was cut from a different engraving of the same subject, which I am unable to identify. "Christ is invariably represented wearing the emblems of kingship with which the mocking soldiers had earlier invested him: the crown of thorns and a purple or red cloak; he may also hold a reed sceptre. His wrists, often crossed, are usually tied with a cord or chain and he may have a rope knotted round his neck"—James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*, rev. ed. (London, 1979), "Ecce Homo." The similar iconography of "The Man of Sorrows" adds stigmata; the bucket at Christ's feet, containing the instruments of his torturers (the "arma Christi"), is Merian's embellishment of the tradition.

the same sites, the image probably came from Catholic missions in Maine, New York, or Canada.

Though scanty almost to vanishing, the evidence enforces the connection between print and religion that has been a constant in European contact with exotic cultures, and which is largely "overwritten" by the more abundant, muter evidence of cloth, beads, and pots—objects that do not "speak" to us, though they may have been equally vocal to the Indians. Wooden horses of all kinds there have always been, such as the clocks and astronomy that the Jesuits dangled before the Chinese in the seventeenth century, but the earliest wholly sincere attempt to interest an alien in secular Western intellectual culture is probably the musical offerings dispatched aboard the space probes *Voyager I* and *II* (1977). Our two examples are additionally important because, for once (or twice), they bear on how the Indians appropriated the Bible, not on the more familiar tale of how the missionaries imposed it on their alien subjects. The finely-woven cloth and the printed fragment of the Pequot girl's medicine bundle have Indian as well as European "powers," though their Indian "power" is less obvious to us than that of the bear's paw buried with them. But it is time to examine the pseudomorph itself: we have some idea of the milk; let us catch our trout.

Figure 2. Transcript of the pseudomorph's text by Linda Welters.



7/1/91

Linda Welters

## 2. THE TROUT

On the back of the pseudomorph we may distinguish some four layers of the original bundle, the bands of light and dark, corresponding, I suppose, to the dark cloth and white paper that were folded together. The manner of folding remains obscure—whether quarto, accordion, or some other pattern—but certainly the bundle was not just crumpled together. The original investigator, Dr. Linda Welters, an authority on textiles at the University of Rhode Island, was examining the bundle under a microscope when a piece of the “cloth”-layer broke away, revealing about six partly legible words. These she drew and sent this remarkably faithful drawing (figure 2) with a murky microphotograph to the American Antiquarian Society, who referred the problem to me (I had recently given a talk there on American copies of the Bible). Responding to the syllable “sal-,” which she correctly guessed was the first syllable of “salvation,” Dr. Welters proposed that the text was Biblical, but she was unable to identify it further. Luckily, I happened to read the first two words as “new song,” and this directed my attention immediately to the Psalms, where, with a concordance, I fairly soon identified the text as the opening of Psalm 98. In the Authorized version, as here, it reads “O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things.” After Dr. Welters announced her discovery at a Wintherthur conference, the assembled congregation rose and chanted the entire text. This response may be prematurely Eurocentric in its assumption that the significance of the discovery lies in its textual contents. More important than the text, at least



to a bibliographer, is the edition; Greg got that much right, at least, though he strangely ignores the inquirer's ordinary point of departure.

The apparent size of the type is nonpareil, i.e. 20 lines of it, if we had them, would measure about 41 mm. This size normally appears in Bibles of octavo or under, which we may call "small-format Bibles" for short. The text of such Bibles has been regularly laid out in two columns since the twelfth century, and in seventeenth-century English Bibles these columns are usually separated by a rule. Part of such a rule appears to the right of the text, facing the last two lines (the upper half being hidden by a deposit of calcite). Two line-endings are visible, and one may be confidently inferred. My initial assumption, then, which turned out to be false, was that we had a fragment from the left-hand column of a page; I was uncertain of the "rule" at first, which I supposed might equally well be the two-line initial "I" at the beginning of Psalm 101, in the second column. On that assumption, one could readily infer the layout of the whole page. The size of the type was also doubtful, since it seemed to me that the paper might well have expanded or stretched in the presence of moisture and its metamorphosis into iron oxide. 20 lines of pearl, the next size smaller type, measure about 32 mm., and the difference over the few lines preserved by the pseudomorph would only amount to 2 mm. With these misgivings, I prepared a reconstruction of the text, indicating missing or obscured letters (figure 3), and circulated it to the hapless librarians of the principal Bible collections: Ms. Katharine Kominis, of the Zion Research Collection, at Boston University; Dr. Peter J. Wosh, of the American Bible Society, in New York; and the Rev. Alan F. Jesson, of the British and Foreign Bible Society, whose collections are now housed in Cambridge University Library. I also dunned Dr. Brian McMullin of Monash University (Victoria), who was then at work at Cambridge University Library on a bibliography of early English Bibles.

*Ex ungue leonem*, says the proverb. It is an article of faith among bibliographers that you can identify even a fragment of an edition during the hand-press period (ca. 1450-ca. 1820) by its "setting," i.e. the position of the words and letters relative to one another and to the page. The severest test of this dogma comes in frequently-printed books like the Bible, where whole editions may be line-for-line the same, and individual copies often intermix the sheets of different editions. Such *Zwitterdrucke* or "hybrid editions," as they are known, come about when the original publisher adds fresh stock to the solera of sheets in his warehouse, or when some later second-hand bookseller "perfects" an imperfect copy (Francis Fry, whose collection came to the British and Foreign Bible Society, was famous for this). When a fragment consists of only six words, one

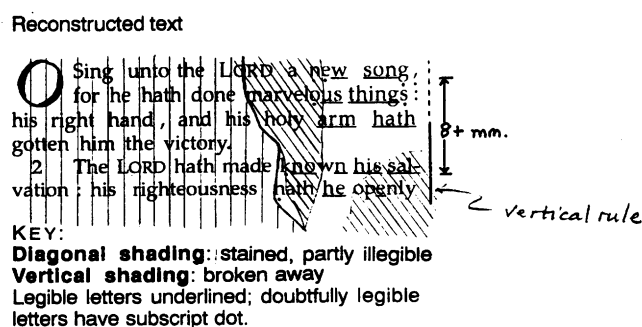
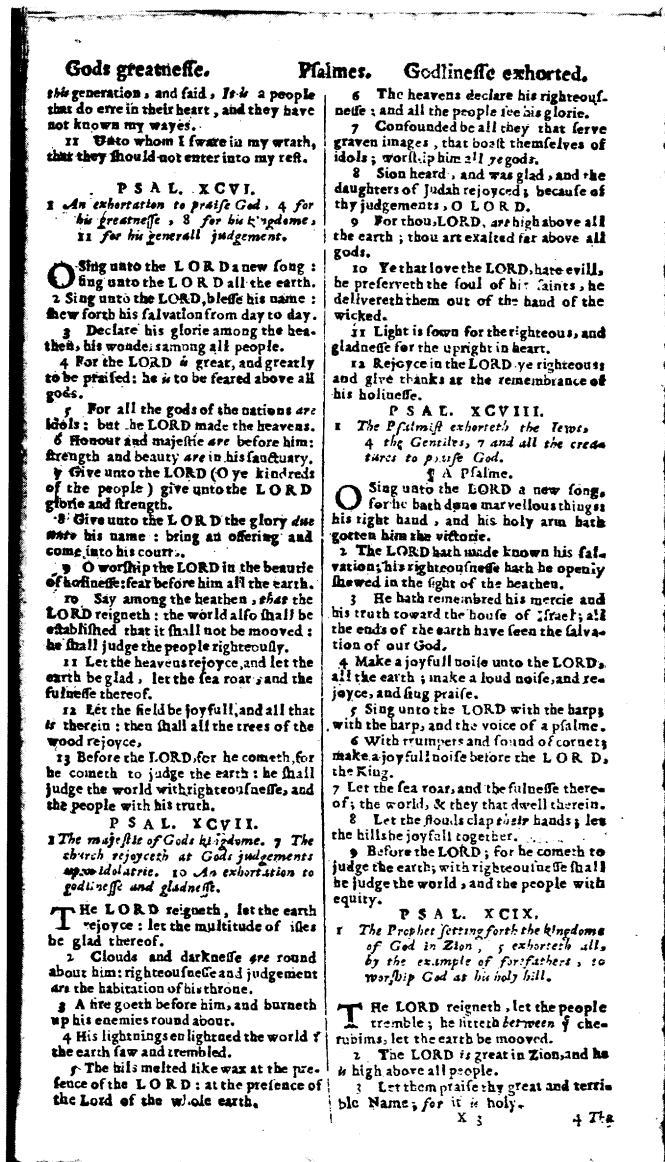


Figure 3. Reconstruction of the Bible fragment, identifying the text (Ps. 98: 1-2), by Hugh Amory.

Figure 4. The Holy Bible (1669), O.T. sig. X3r, showing the setting (without rule) of Ps. 98:1-2; in this state, it is without rules. Courtesy of the New York Public Library.



may well be diffident of one's trade. Furthermore, as Brian McMullin informed me, Bibles were already being printed by a stereotype process in the seventeenth century. If my Bible had been so produced, I could only hope to identify the plates, with some chance of knowing the period of their use; a very chancy proposition, since the plating of the text often meant that the imprint date itself remained unchanged.

I accordingly launched my plea without much hope of success, and spent the interim examining Bibles at Harvard, the Boston Public, and the New York Public libraries. My colleagues nobly reported back, confirming my pessimism: they had examined a total of some hundred small-format editions printed between 1660 and 1720, none of which matched my reconstruction. I am particularly grateful for the assistance of Dr. McMullin and the Rev. Alan Jesson, who had the heaviest burden. In fact, these findings proved more material than any of us suspected. Our *sondage* into the ocean of print represented by these libraries established, I believe, that Bibles with the line-endings represented by

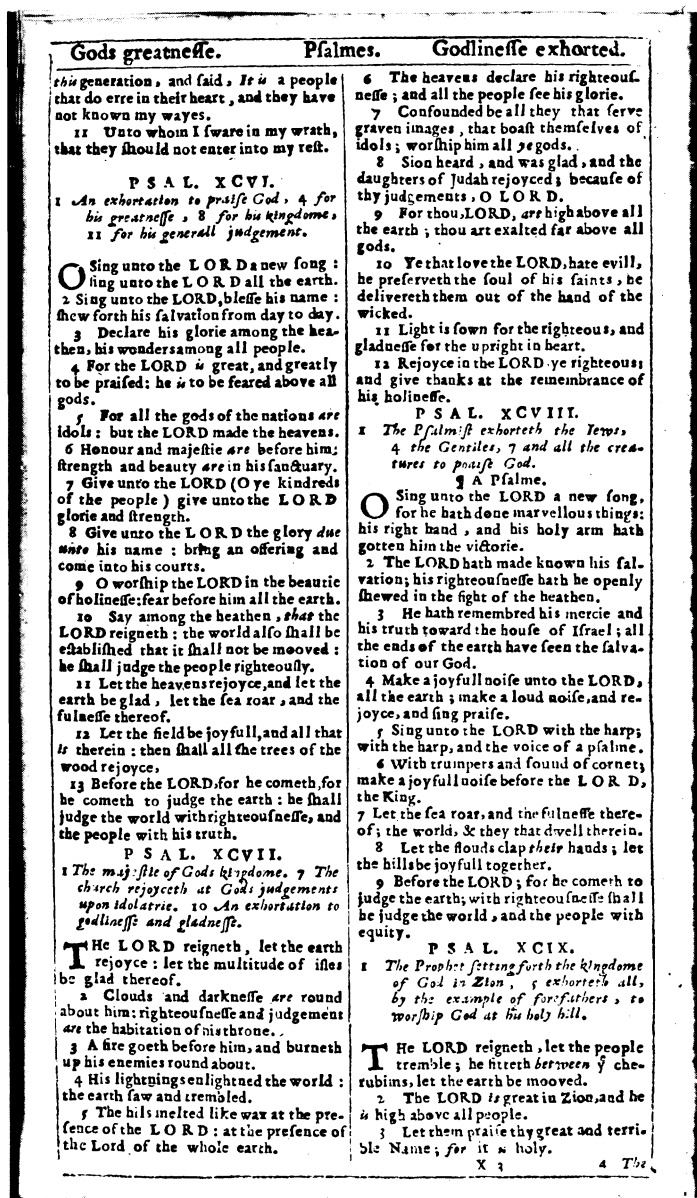


Figure 5. The Holy Bible (1669-80), O.T. sig. X3r, showing the setting of Ps. 98:1-2; in this state, it is enclosed in rules. Courtesy of Pennsylvania State University.

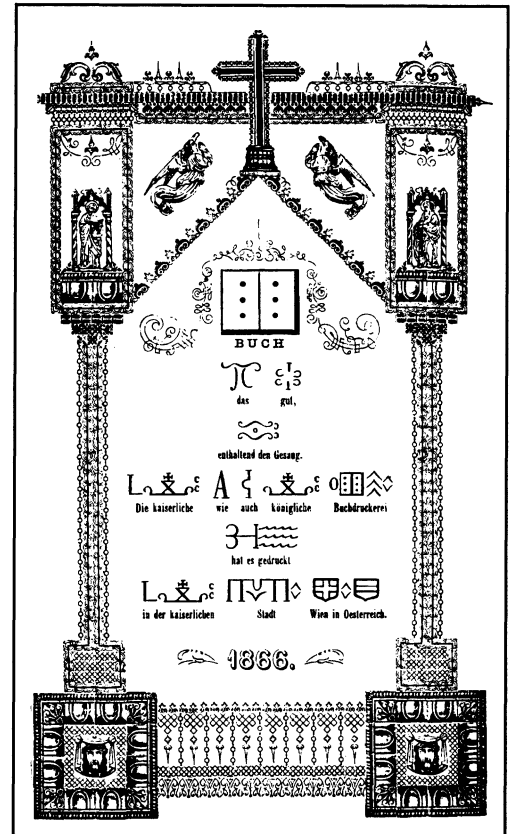
my reconstruction were surprisingly rare. In fact, my own research initially encountered only two such Bibles: one, whose type and columniation did not match my reconstruction; and another, at the New York Public (figure 4), where Psalm 98 was set in the right-hand column, so that there was no rule to the right. The New York Public edition is not in the revised edition of Wing, but the pre-1956 *National Union Catalog* reported another copy at Pennsylvania State University (NBI 0002965). On the off-chance that the second copy might be wanting leaf X3, containing Psalm 98, I wrote off to Penn State, and the librarian, Charles W. Mann, reported that it was, in fact, another edition, with a border of rules around the pages. This is the only exact match I have found to date (figure 5).

The text of the two editions seems to have been printed from the same setting of type, apart from the border of rules, but their title pages are entirely reset, within different woodcut borders. The New York Public edition has an illustrated title-border signed "Ioh. Pistorius" (a Dutch engraver), showing Moses, Aaron, and a view of London fallaciously designed to support the truth of the



Figure 6. "Richardus Mather," by John Foster (ca. 1675). Courtesy of The Houghton Library.

Figure 7. *Buch das gut* (Wien, 1866); a printed version of Micmac hieroglyphs devised for the Franciscan Recollect missions in the seventeenth century. Courtesy of the Houghton Library.



imprint; the Penn State edition has an architectural title-border, with the engraved motto "Cor mundum crea in me Deus Ps 51." Both editions were ostensibly printed in London by Christopher Barker in 1669 and 1669-80, respectively, but since Barker had died in 1599, these imprints are transparently false; both were probably printed in Holland. The signature of "Adam Ouldham 1679" on the front flyleaf of the Penn State edition presumably represents his date of purchase, in 1679 or early 1680 (Old Style). I have not been able to identify either Adam Oldham or the next possessors of the Bible, the Ferrer family.

Piratical Dutch editions were common in the English trade before the emergence of the Oxford Bible Press in the 1680s, and a date around 1680 corresponds well with the date of burial, which at present is estimated between 1660 and 1720. Mercy Bruyning (or Browning), one of the main Dutch distributors of these editions, had a son selling books in Boston. We know that the Boston merchant John Usher was importing Dutch editions of the English Bible ca. 1675-80, including some stereotyped 18mos with an engraved imprint "Cambridge 1648," but printed by Joachim Nosche of Amsterdam in the 1670s. Copies are found bound with editions of the Bay Psalm Book printed "for Hezekiah Usher of Boston [or 'Bostoo']," evidently a false imprint, since Hezekiah, John's father, had left off trade in 1669. The importation of these editions into New England, then, is certain, though how the Pequot fragment came into their hands can only be conjectured, and the rest of my talk must be largely, as is now the fashion, historical fiction.

## 3. ETHNOBIBLIOGRAPHY

Small-format Bibles have a well-established pattern of use and possession that bears significantly on the meaning of our fragment. The Bible is one of the few seventeenth-century texts available in multiple formats and sold at a wide range of prices, which makes the format an expressive index of the text's reception. In general, folios were designed for liturgical use, on a lectern. Since New England Congregationalists did not read Biblical "lessons," however, their folios tended to be used for study and annotation, for which the ampler margins suited them. Their expense restricted this application to the wealthy and powerful, typically ministers, who were among New England's elite. Quartos were the format of choice for family Bibles: they were large enough to be visible to the neighbors in the downstairs parlor, as proof of the family's godly status; their glosses and illustrations (particularly in the Geneva version) benefited the uninstructed paterfamilias; and they were regularly used to record the success of the husband and wife's sexual activity. By 1640, the modern, authoritative text of the King James Version was available in all formats, whereas the older (and thus more familiar and beloved) Geneva Version was restricted to quarto.

Small-format Bibles, on the other hand, are typically personal possessions. They rarely have the marginal apparatus found in the larger formats, and the text usually omits the Apocrypha, which Calvinist theologians had rejected. How much these Bibles were actually read is certainly a question: pearl and even nonpareil type is wearisome in quantity; spectacles were primitive; and candlelight was dim. Their cheapness, portability, and small print was better suited to the junior members of society, whose eyes were good, or to "preachers' Bibles" for the brief citation of the minister's text. A well-known seventeenth-century portrait of Richard Mather shows him holding a small-format Bible in one hand and grasping a pair of spectacles in the other, having just announced his text to the congregation (figure 6). Incidentally, the portrait also demonstrates how easily one may recognize a Bible, even if the text (here represented by cross-hatchings) is quite illegible. The Bible is one of the few small books in the seventeenth century that is regularly printed in two columns; not, as Roger Stoddard annoyingly points out to me, that anyone has ever doubted what Richard Mather was holding, but it is nice to be able to show that even pre-literates could be certain of what they had. They might even have distinguished a Protestant Bible, in two columns, from a Catholic Bible, in one, as portrayed in a Micmac hieroglyph (figure 7).

The bindings of small-format Bibles also reflect their use. Particularly on the smallest, in 18mo and 24mo, we find red or black morocco, gilt, with silver clasps and gilt or gilt-and-gaufered edges. Such splendid objects are obviously meant for show, as part of Sunday go-to-meeting dress; indeed the binding is more valuable than the book. The owner may dutifully open them to the preacher's text, but then, having read or heard read the verses to be expounded, he or she will close and clasp the volume until the next Sunday. So, one imagines, will the preacher, who has probably recited his text from memory in any case. As we would expect, multiple copies of the Bible are often recorded in seventeenth-century New England inventories, because the various formats serve for different occasions. The family Bible is really too cumbersome to take to church, the red morocco binding may be too painfully gaudy for poor Aunt Hester, and Mr.

Chillingworth seems to have misplaced his, dear. For literate and pre-literate alike, then, small-format Bibles serve as tokens of Biblical knowledge, acquired for the most part in the larger formats or orally.

Such considerations are our only guide in conjecturing how an English Bible came into Indian hands. Bibles were certainly not ordinary items of trade, and it is hard to imagine the motives for a gift: the object was personal to its European owner, and the language, script, and ideology were all potential obstacles to Indian interest. The cloth with which the leaf is folded, moreover, is not the coarse duffle that the Europeans ordinarily sold to Indians; it is the finest bit of web in the cemetery. Its color can no longer be determined, but it is dark, and the Indians preferred to trade for bright colors, usually red or blue. The association of the cloth and the leaf, then, rather tells against a commercial origin.

If we can rule out gift or purchase, the initial transfer of these goods to Indian hands was probably hostile. By 1660, the Pequots were “pacified” and no longer raided their European neighbors or counted coup by taking their possessions, apart, perhaps, from the odd stray damage-feasant cow or hog that invaded the Pequot crops (of which, indeed, they complained to the Connecticut authorities). One rather suspects that the materials were looted by Mohawk war parties or bands of Wampanoags during King Philip’s War. A Narragansett Indian, for example, supplied Mary Rowlandson with a Bible he had taken in a raid on Medfield, “a wonderful mercy of God” to her in her captivity. I like to think that the cloth originally belonged to the sleek black pelt of a beast like Richard Mather, who urged Saul’s slaughter of Amelek as justification for the Pequot “war.” You may remember that the Lord, or rather his prophet Samuel, commanded Saul to “slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (1 Sam. 15:3); and when Saul temporarily demurred at this senseless destruction, the Lord repented that He had ever made him king of Israel. Well! Not that the Pequots were necessarily aware that the Bible was so intimately connected with their destiny, but the cloth is as central a feature of Mather’s portrait as the Bible: not for nothing were the English clergy commonly designated as “the cloth” or the Jesuits as the “black robes.” Black had long been the color of high-status clothing.

However the Indians may have acquired their copy, they proceeded to incorporate it into their culture by sharing it about. Unlike the Europeans, who could share the Bible by reading it aloud, the Indians—excluded by the double barrier of language and script—could only pass the leaves around; so today, some European bibliophile may fondle an illegible leaf from an Eliot Indian Bible, acquiring its mana. Don McKenzie cites examples of Maoris who rolled up leaves of the Bible and stuck them in their ears or used them for wadding in muskets, as an extra bit of power behind the shot. The merely personal religious token becomes a communal possession: the insulation is stripped from the religious wires so that a number of individuals are empowered.

Part of the cultural baggage we inherit from the Reformation is the assumption that one must be literate to “know the Bible”; which can be true, at best, only at the level of an individual. A culture is not “literate” or “illiterate” as such: though we are accustomed to speak of “print culture” and “book culture”; these compounds are best understood (like “printing press” or “bookshop”) as summarizing the effect of the culture on its own creations. The “uses of literacy,” in Richard Hoggart’s phrase, are various and unevenly distributed among

Europeans and Indians alike according to their own cultural norms. Mary Rowlandson's captors included some who quoted the Bible in English (the only language she understood) and one who had printed it in Indian; others, perhaps, knew only what it was for or what it looked like. In these respects, Nov-England and Algonquia differed only in degree. We need not understand a technology in order to "make it work," as our experience of an "electronic revolution" should remind us: the mere possession of a Bible or a part of a Bible "worked" for Christian and pagan alike, even if the Christians demanded literacy and the pagans did not.

More is involved here than a contrast between Puritan *Gesellschaft* and Pequot *Gemeinschaft*. Private property, indeed, never had much meaning for the Indians (hence the proverbial "Indian givers"), and we should not even assume that the medicine bundle belonged to the Indian girl during her life. On the contrary, it was probably given after her death, but grave goods, which are permanently withdrawn from social exchange, are about as personal as property can get. The Pequots, I think, knew what a Bible was: pieces of paper printed in two columns, folded and bundled together for durable bulk in a valuable covering. This is a perfectly adequate description of our medicine bundle which, like a small-format Bible, was also a personal possession. Both cultures recognized its decorative, talismanic function: the Europeans by wrapping it in morocco and clasping it in silver; the Pequots by covering it up tight in the best cloth they had. On some level, it matters little whether we describe small-format Bibles as European medicine bundles, or this medicine bundle as an Indian Bible. The two are culturally congruent, in their respective cultures.

My colleague Roger Stoddard has propounded the paradox that "authors do not write books," which I would take one step further, "nor do printers print them." Properly speaking, books are made by folding and binding sheets that may or may not contain printing; our medicine bundle, with its interleaved binding or doublures, is an extreme example. As such, books need not be uniquely associated with literacy or a text, nor should codicology be restricted to manuscripts. Formats have expressive functions that bibliography, as conceived by Greg, ignores to its cost; English books circulated and communicated in ways that the Stationers' Company never cared to imagine. I regret that such truisms have been considered a threat to "bibliography": indeed, Fredson Bowers in his 1957-58 Sanders Lectures might well be seen to have argued for a wider cultural role for the discipline, but unfortunately he made such excessive and exclusive claims that he alarmed esoterics like Alice Walker, offended exoterics like Edmund Wilson, and in the end probably persuaded no one but his own coterie.

Over and above these considerations, I would ask, quite practically, how anyone could determine the source of the Pequot fragment without recourse to "meaning?" In theory, one might run the typeface against the entire corpus of nonpareil type printed down to 1720, and this patient investigation would in time—no little time—produce more reliable, impartial, and scientific results than any I can boast of. But has any bibliographer ever proceeded in this blinkered fashion? As G. Thomas Tanselle rightly points out, Greg often violated his own dictum, as did other eminent practitioners of the "New Bibliography." When Charlton Hinman moved from the identification of type to the examination of spelling preferences, for example, he abandoned physical for socio-cultural evidence. Such, however, was never the pretense. When McKenzie tested

Hinman's assumptions from the evidence of printers' records, and found them wanting, he was only pursuing Hinman's inquiry by other means, and it is literally preposterous of Tanselle to object that McKenzie was therefore "denigrating analytical bibliography." Nor is it much of a recommendation for the discipline. There are plenty good fish as ever came out of the sea, says the proverb, and the same is equally true of milk.

#### FOR FURTHER READING

This talk was originally delivered for the amusement of my colleagues in Houghton on 12 December 1991: though I have substantially revised and updated it, I have tried to preserve its informal character, and offer these references only as an acknowledgement of my debts. The illustration of the text of the medicine bundle was drawn by Dr. Linda Welters, of the University of Rhode Island, and I am grateful for her permission to use it here; for information on the image of *Ecce Homo*, I am indebted to Dr. Paul Robinson of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, to Marjorie B. Cohen of the Harvard University Art Museums, who identified the subject, and to Terry Dzilenski, of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum, who brought it to my attention. Regrettably, the original fragments may not be reproduced here.

1. SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY: Roland Barthes, *Empire des signes* (1970; English trans., 1982); William Cronon, *Changes in the Land* (New York, 1983); Jacques Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (1967; English trans., 1976); Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes tropiques* (1955; English trans., 1961); Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991). *Spaceflight: A Smithsonian Guide*, by V. Neal et al. (Washington, D.C., 1995), 175-79, describes attempts to communicate by space probes with trans-solar skrælings. John Harvey, *Men in Black* (London, 1995) gives a useful account of the social history of black cloth.

2. INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE: for regional overviews, see Bruce G. Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 15: Northeast* (Washington, D.C., 1978), and James Axtell, *The Invasion Within* (Oxford, 1985); for archaeology, see Susan G. Gibson, ed., *Burr's Hill* (Providence, 1980) describing the finds (with many illustrations) in seventeenth-century Wampanoag graves at Warren, R.I., including a "Jesuit's ring" and some leather book covers; Stuart John Tuma, Jr., "Contact Period (1500-1675) Burials in Southeast New England" (Master's thesis, Univ. of Mass., Boston, 1985) has a cumulated catalogue of finds to date. On the Pequots, see the classic, but highly polemical work of Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America* (New York, 1976) and *The Pequots in Southern New England*, ed. L. M. Haupt and J. D. Wherry (Norman, Okla., 1990), which also includes a preliminary analysis of the archaeology by Kevin McBride. Nathan Cobb, "Betting on the Future," *Boston Globe Magazine* (1 March 1992) is a useful journalistic account of recent developments. Paul A. Robinson, et al. give a preliminary report on the Narragansett graves at North Kingston, R.I. in *Cultures in Contact*, ed. William W. Fitzhugh (Washington, D.C., 1985); and I have also profited from James W. Bradley, *Evolution of the Onondaga Iroquois: Accommodating Change, 1500-1655* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1987). Lynn Ceci, *The Effects of European Contact and Trade on the Settlement Pattern of Indians in Coastal New York, 1524-1665* (New York, 1990), is the standard account of wampum.

3. BIBLIOGRAPHY: on the general controversy mentioned at the beginning of my talk, see D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (London, 1986); Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago, 1983); and the characteristically lengthy response of G. Thomas Tanselle, "Textual Criticism and Literary Sociology," *Studies in Bibliography* 44 (1991): 83-143. The ultimate *casus belli* is D. F. McKenzie,



“Printers of the Mind: Some Notes on Bibliographical Theories and Printing House Practices,” *Studies in Bibliography* (1969): [1]-75; see also Roger E. Stoddard, “Morphology and the Book from an American Perspective,” *Printing History* 17 (1987): 2-14. On the bibliography of the Bible, see Christopher De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (Boston, 1986), chap. 4; M. H. Black, “The Printed Bible,” in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 3, ed. S. L. Greenslade (Cambridge, 1963), chap. 12; Worthington C. Ford, *The Boston Book Market, 1679-1700* (Boston, 1917); Paul G. Hoftijzer, *Engelse boekverkopers bij de Beurs* (Amsterdam & Maarssen, 1989); and two articles by Brian J. McMullin, “The Bible and Continuous Reprinting in the Early Seventeenth Century,” *Library*, 6th ser., 5 (1983): 256-63, and “Joseph Athias and The Early History of Stereotyping,” *Quaerendo* 23 (1993): 184-207. On print and illiteracy, see James Axtell, “The Power of Print in The Eastern Woodlands,” in his *After Columbus* (Oxford, 1988), 88-99, summarized in his *Invasion Within*, above, and D. F. McKenzie, *Oral Culture, Literacy, & Print in Early New Zealand* (Wellington, N.Z., 1985).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Old Testament only, without Apocrypha: within an architectural woodcut border, showing, in ascending order, King David praying, a heart burning on an altar, and the Tetragrammaton in glory; inscribed “Cor mundum crea in me Deus Ps 51”:

THE HOLY | BIBLE, | Containing the Old | Testament and the New: ¶ Newly translated out of the Ori- | ginall Tongues : and with the former | translations diligently compared | and revised by his Majesties | speciall Commandement. | Appointed to be read in Churches. | [rule] | London | Printed by Christopher Barker, | Printer to the Kings most | Excellent Majestie, | [rule] | Anno Dom. 1680.

12mo: A-Gg12 = 360 leaves.

Second title page, within the same border:

THE NEW | TESTAMENT | of our LORD and SAVIOUR | JESUS CHRIST. | ¶ Newly translated out of the Ori- | ginall Greek : and with the former | translations diligently compared | and revised by his Majesties | speciall Commandement. | [rule] | LONDON, | Printed by Christopher Barker, | Printer to the Kings most | Excellent Majestie, | [rule] | Anno Dom. 1669.

12mo: (A)-(I)12 (K)6 = 114 leaves.

*Locations:* PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY, University Park, Pa.: bound in original (?) black morocco, traces of ties; with a 1638 edition of Sternhold and Hopkins' Metrical Psalms (STC 2680.6). Imperfect: leaves Z2.11 wanting; V12 slightly mutilated; imprint date on first title page barely legible, altered in manuscript to 1669 (but cf. Herbert 754, dated 1680 and 1669). (John) Farrer family birth records, 1693-1710, on verso of N.T. title page.