

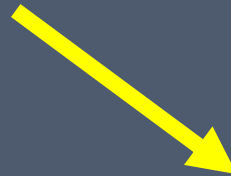
HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

*LESSON 9 – TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE
(LATIN AND OTHER EUROPEAN LANGUAGES)*

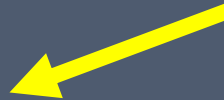
Dan Leiphart

FROM GOD TO US

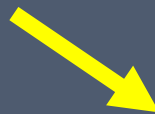
INSPIRATION



CANONIZATION



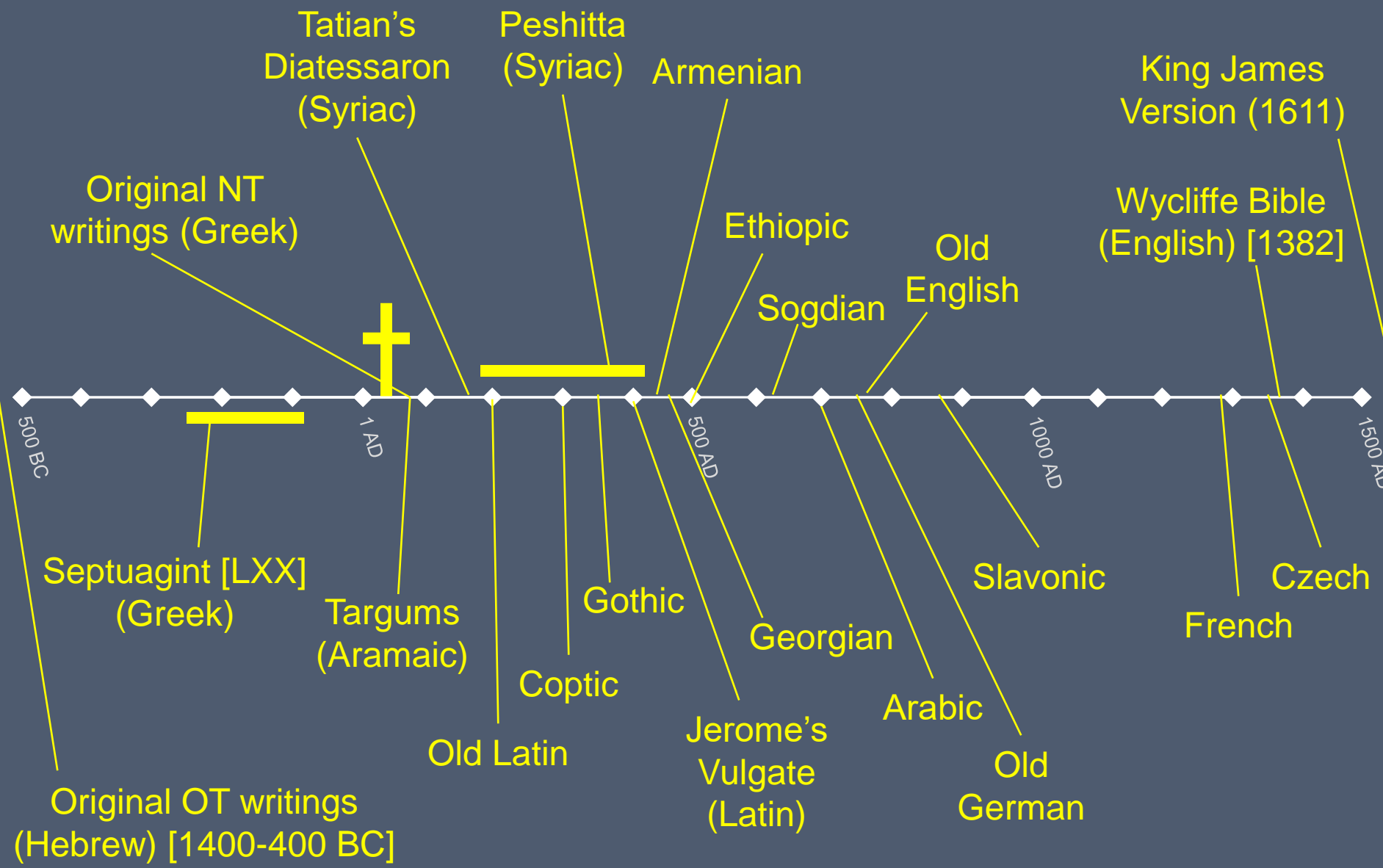
TRANSMISSION



TRANSLATION

Translation of the Bible

Timeline of Bible Translations



Coptic Versions

1. The Coptic language
 - A. The latest stage of the Egyptian language
 - B. The Egyptian language for over 3500 years before Arabic took over
 - C. Uses an adapted Greek alphabet plus 6-7 demotic symbols
 - D. Several dialects according to location along Nile River

S = Sahidic

B = Bohairic

F = Faiyumic

M = Mesokemic or Oxyrhynchite

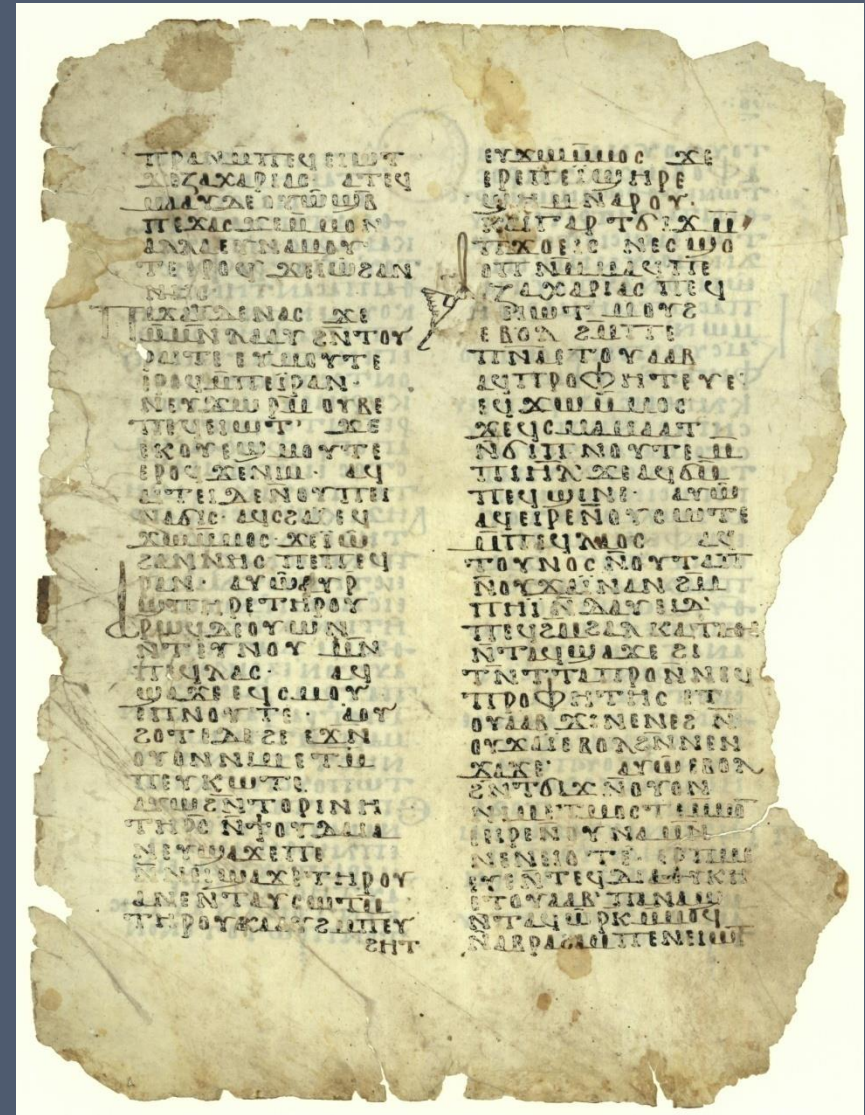
A = Achmimic

L = Subachmimic or the dialect of Lycopolis



Coptic Versions

1. Coptic versions
 - A. Translated from Alexandrian Greek texts into all four major dialects
 - B. Sahidic
 - i. First translation in 2nd century
 - ii. mss extant from 4th
 - C. Bohairic
 - i. First translation early 3rd century
 - ii. Very literal translation
 - iii. Most helpful in reconstructing original Greek text
 - iv. Over 100 manuscripts extant



Uncial manuscript 0177 (10th century) of Luke 1:59-73
A Greek-Coptic diglot

Ethiopic Versions

1. The Ethiopic language
 - A. Actually the correct name is Amharic which is the national language of Ethiopia. The manuscripts are in an old version of Amharic called Ge'ez.
 - B. A Semitic language that already had developed writing by the time Christianity arrived
2. Ethiopic manuscripts and versions
 - A. Christianity reached Ethiopia to stay ~4th century
 - B. Version probably appeared in the 5th century
 - C. Likely translated from the Greek or Coptic
 - D. Most extant manuscripts are from the 11th century or younger, most from 14th century on



*Gospel of Matthew from Ethiopian Manuscript
59874 at the British Library*

Ethiopic Manuscript: Garima Gospels

Date: late 5th – 7th Century
Text: Gospels



- Two ancient manuscripts in Ge'ez (Ethiopic) of the gospels
- Likely the earliest surviving illuminated Christian manuscript
- Some of the earliest witnesses to the Byzantine text type
- Possibly copied by Abba Garima who traveled from Constantinople to Ethiopia in 494 AD
- The oldest known book with original binding in the world
- First became known outside Ethiopia in 1950

Garima Gospels



Gothic Versions

1. The Gothic language
 - A. An extinct language
 - B. The first Germanic language
 - C. Known from *Codex Argenteus* (a 6th century copy of a 4th century translation of the Bible from Greek into Gothic by Wulfila)
 - D. Alphabet created by Wulfila
2. Manuscripts & versions
 - A. Only a half-dozen survive in fragments
 - B. Wulfila faithfully translated from the Byzantine Greek texts about 350 AD into the Gothic written language he created

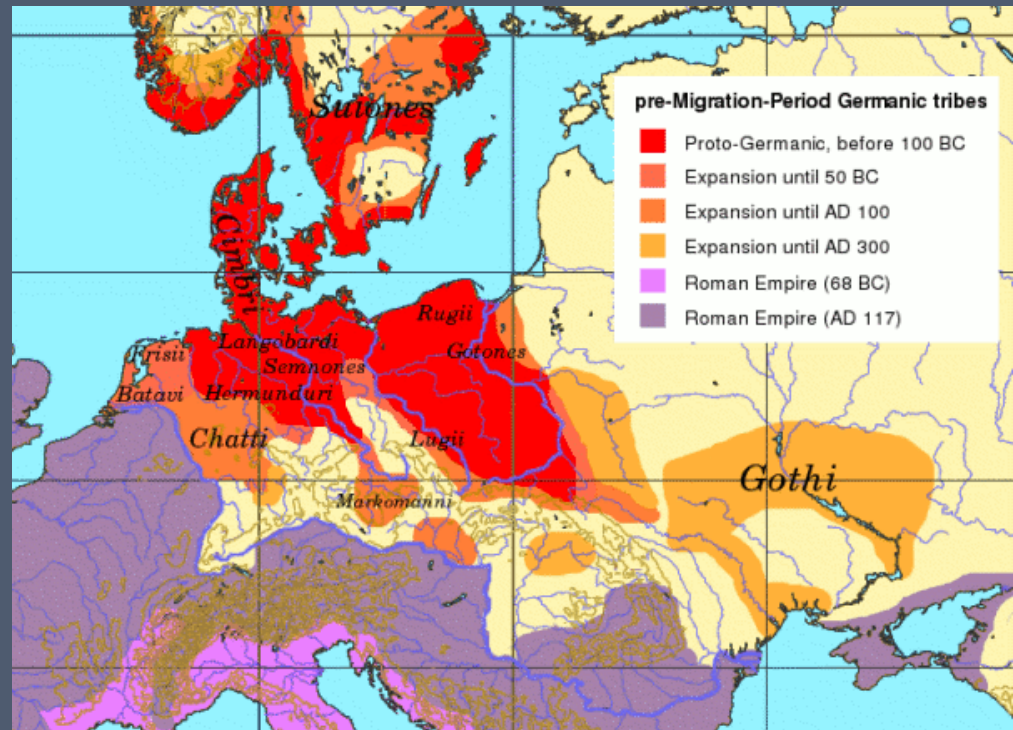
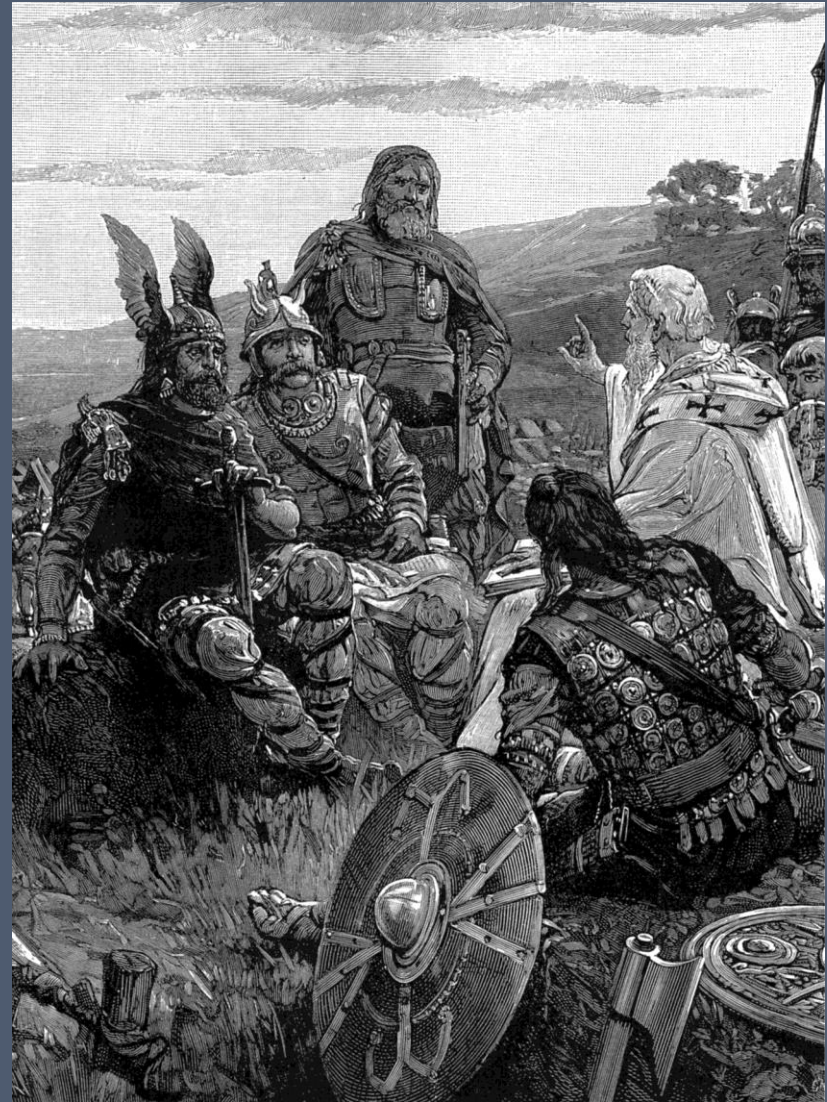


Image from

<http://www.proto-germanic.com/search/label/ancient%20germanic>

Wulfila (or Ulfila) (c. 311-383 AD)

- Known as “the apostle to the Goths”
- His Cappadocian Greek parents were enslaved by the Goths (~264 AD)
- Raised in captivity as a Goth and became proficient in Greek and Latin
- Converted many among the Goths and preached an Arian Christianity and moved towards the western Mediterranean (and orthodox Christianity and persecution)
- Ordained as a bishop and returned to his people as a missionary
- In 348 AD he and his converts escaped to Bulgaria where he devised the Gothic alphabet and translated the Bible from the Greek
- His translation is the earliest known literary piece in a Germanic language



Wulfila sharing the gospel with the Goths
Image from Wikipedia

47

Ag

Silver
107.868

Codex Argenteus

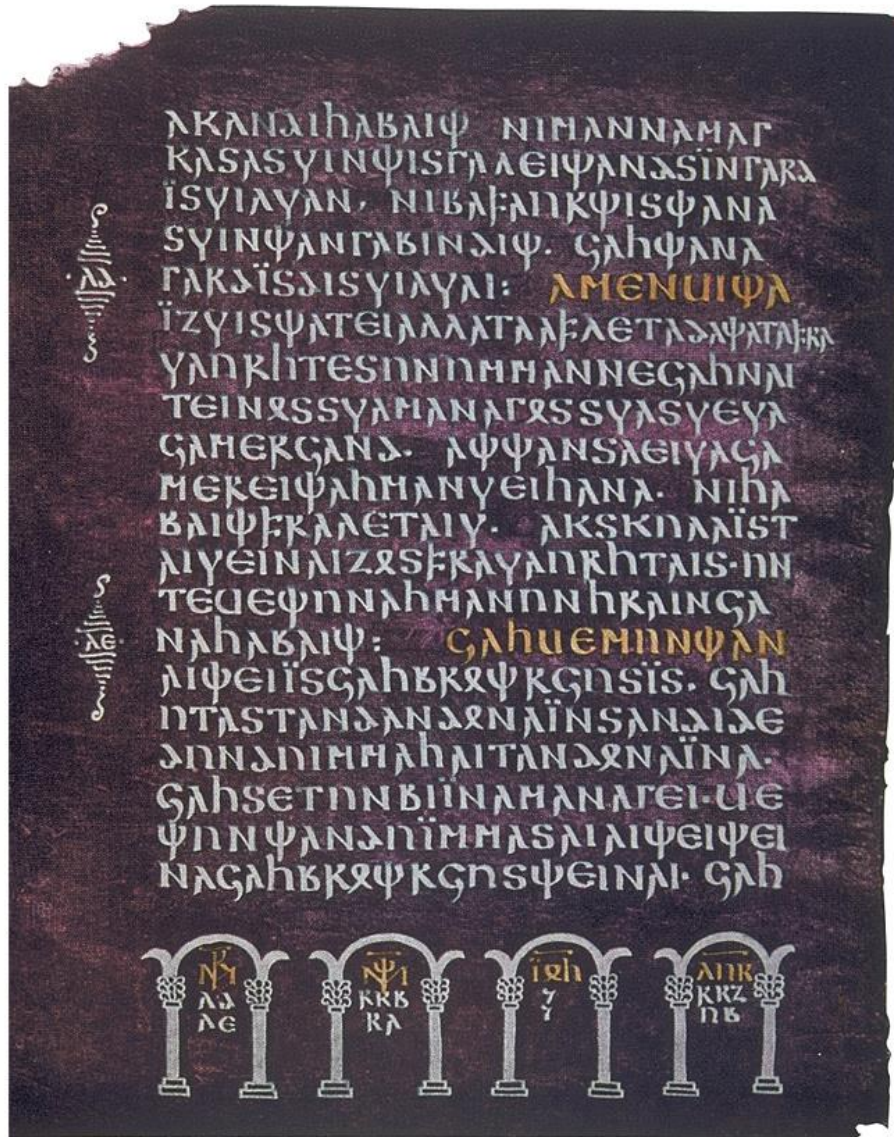


Image from <https://ub.uu.se/about-the-library/exhibitions/codex-argenteus/>

Gothic Manuscript: Codex Argenteus

Date: 6th Century

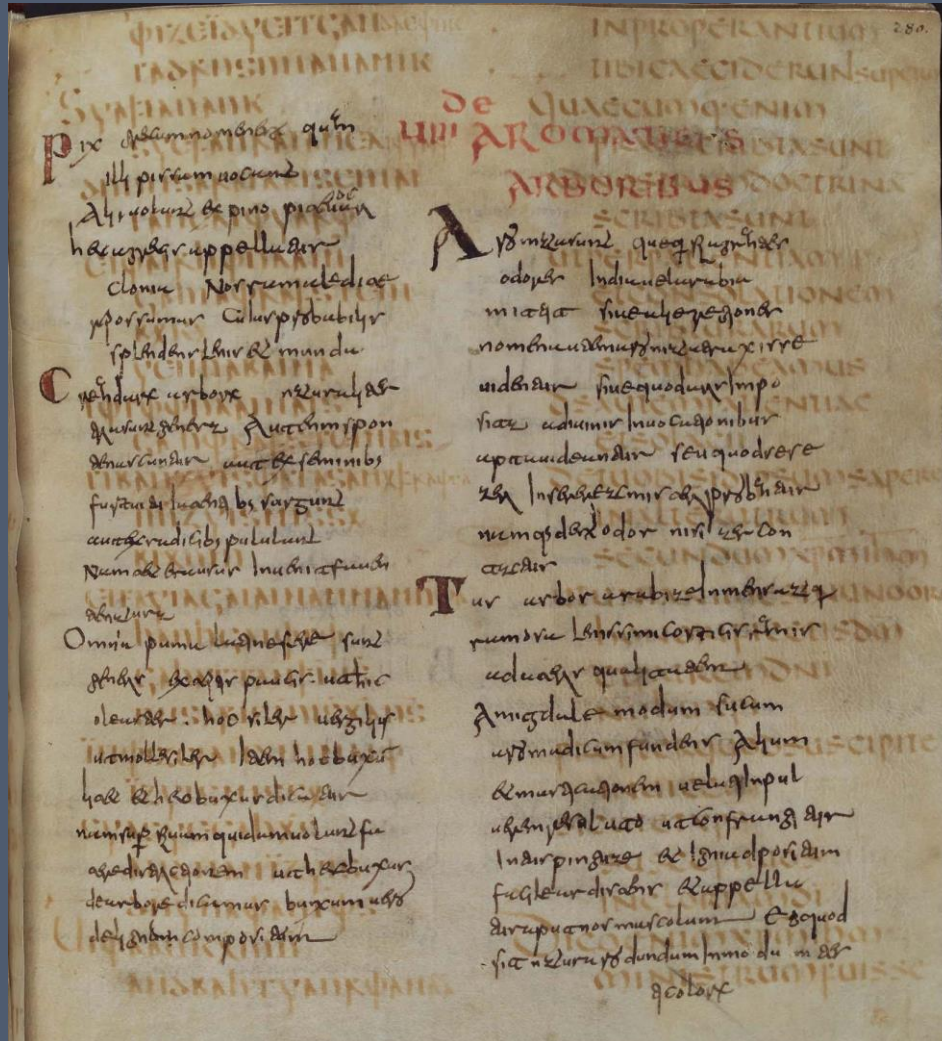
Text: Gospels



- A copy of Wulfila's original 4th century translation into the Gothic language, which he created
- Written on purple vellum in large silver (hence the name "silver codex") letters, the first line of each section are in gold
- Copied in Ravenna (northern Italy) possibly for the Gothic King Theoderic the Great
- Presented to Uppsala University in Sweden in 1669

Gothic Manuscript: Codex Carolinas

Date: 6th – 7th Century
Text: Romans 11-15



Romans 15:3-8

- Probably written in Italy in the 6th century
- A Gothic-Latin diglot palimpsest (overwritten with Latin text in 12th – 13th century)
- Gothic gets the place of importance in the left column. Old Latin is in the right column

Slavonic Versions

1. The Slavonic language
 - A. An Indo-European language
 - B. Old Church Slavonic is the earliest Slavic language with any literary remains
 - C. Around 860 the brothers Methodius and Constantine were sent to evangelize the Slavs
 - D. Constantine (later named Cyril) developed the Slavic alphabet and worked on the translation of the Bible
 - E. But there are 2 Slavic alphabets (Glagolitic & Cyrillic)



Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius

1. Cyril (826-869); Methodius (815-885)
2. Brothers and Byzantine Christian theologians and missionaries
3. Called the “Apostles to the Slavs”
4. Devised the Glagolitic alphabet, the first alphabet for the Old Church Slavonic translation of the Bible in 863
5. Cyrillic is a descendent script still used today, developed after Cyril’s death by their disciples in the First Bulgarian Empire

"Saints Cyril and Methodius holding the Cyrillic alphabet," a mural by [Bulgarian](#) iconographer [Z. Zograf](#), 1848, [Troyan Monastery](#)



Image from Wikipedia

Slavonic Versions

1. The Slavonic Bible
 - A. Still the Bible of Slavic Orthodox church
 - B. Translators were venerated but not scholars of Jerome's caliber
 - C. Has received little critical attention
 - D. Around 860 the brothers Methodius and Constantine (Cyril) were sent to evangelize the Slavs
 - E. Oldest manuscripts are 10th century in the Glagolitic alphabet, but Cyrillic followed soon after
 - F. Later recensions include Bulgarian, Bohemian, Russian, Croatian & Serbian



A late text of the Slavonic version:

The Gospels of Tsar Ivan Alexander, Tsar of Bulgaria 1331-1371

British Library Add. 39627, commissioned 1355

A copy of the Bulgarian recension.

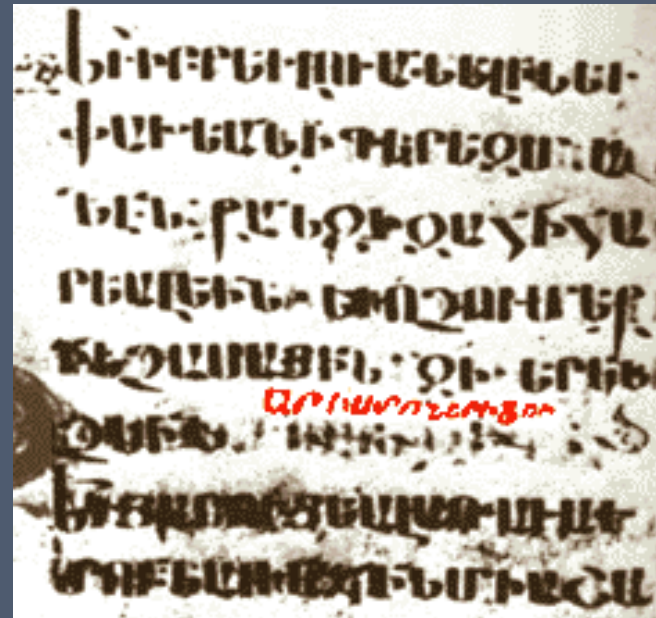
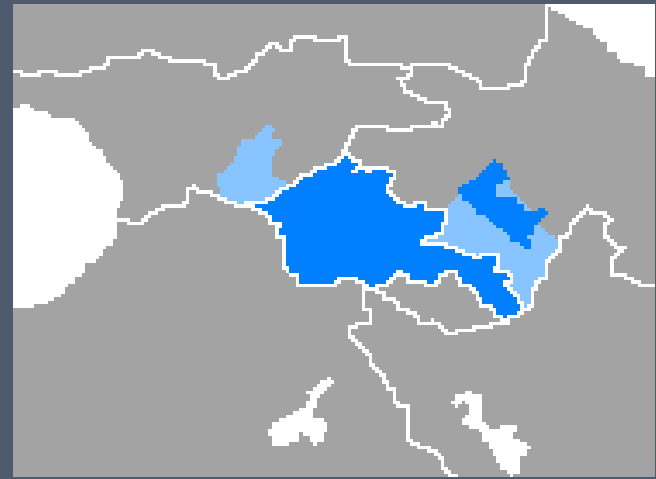
Shown is folio 88, the beginning of the Gospel of Mark

Image from

<https://www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Versions.html>

Armenian Versions

1. The Armenian language
 - A. Indo-European language
 - B. Spoken in the area between the Black and Caspian Seas
2. Manuscripts and versions
 - A. One of the most beautiful and accurate of all early versions
 - B. More manuscripts extant (1,244) than all other versions but Latin
 - C. Translated by St. Mesrop hastily from the Syriac (~411 AD) and then by Sahak from the Greek (~434 AD)
 - 1) Mesrop created the Armenian alphabet for his translation ~405 AD
 - 2) The translation now in use by the Armenian church dates from 434 AD, revised in the 8th century from Greek



A portion of one column of the famous Armenian MS. Matenadaran 2374 (formerly Etchmiadzin 229), dated 989 C.E. Mark 16:8-9 are shown. The famous reference to the presbyter Arist(i)on is highlighted in red.

St. Mesrop (362-440 AD)

- Mesrop Mashtots was an early medieval Armenian linguist, statesman & theologian
- Invented the Armenian alphabet around 405 AD
- 1st Armenian Bible translated hastily from Syriac in 411 AD, then from Greek, which the Armenian Church still uses, by 434 AD
- Armenians celebrate him every February 19th, and virtually every town has a street named after him

The first sentence written in Armenian...

“ Ճանաչել զիմաստոսութիւն եւ զխրատ, իմանալ զբանս հանճարոյ:
Čanač'el zimaštut'iwn ew zxrat, imanal zbans hančaroy.
«To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding.» ”

— *Book of Proverbs*, 1:2.

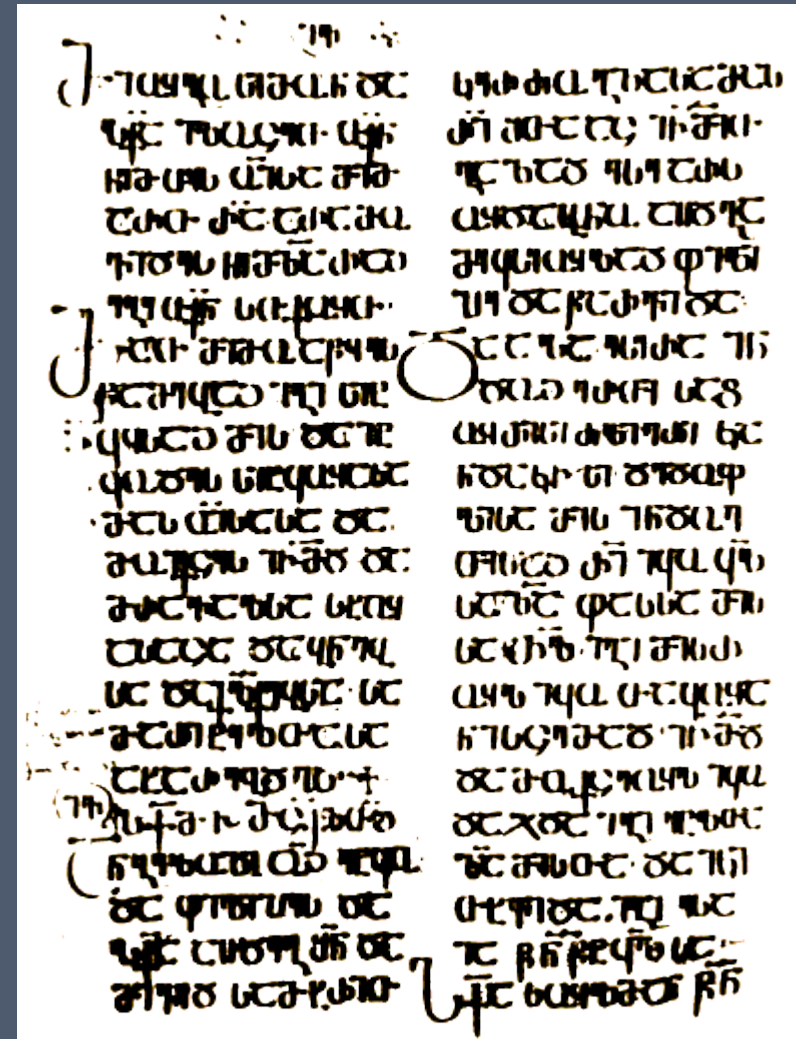
Image from Wikipedia



Illustration of Mesrop Mashtots from a 1776 Armenian manuscript

Georgian Versions

1. The Georgian language
 - A. Spoken in the mountainous region between the Black and Caspian Seas
 - B. Neither Indo-European nor Semitic language
 - C. Written language was likely a consequence of Christianity and the need for a Bible translation in the first half of the 4th century
 - D. Had first translation by the 5th century from the Armenian text
2. Manuscripts and versions
 - A. Oldest non-fragmentary manuscripts are the Adysh (897 AD), Opiza (913 AD) and the Tbet' (995 AD)
 - B. Base text was probably Armenian and later revised towards Greek

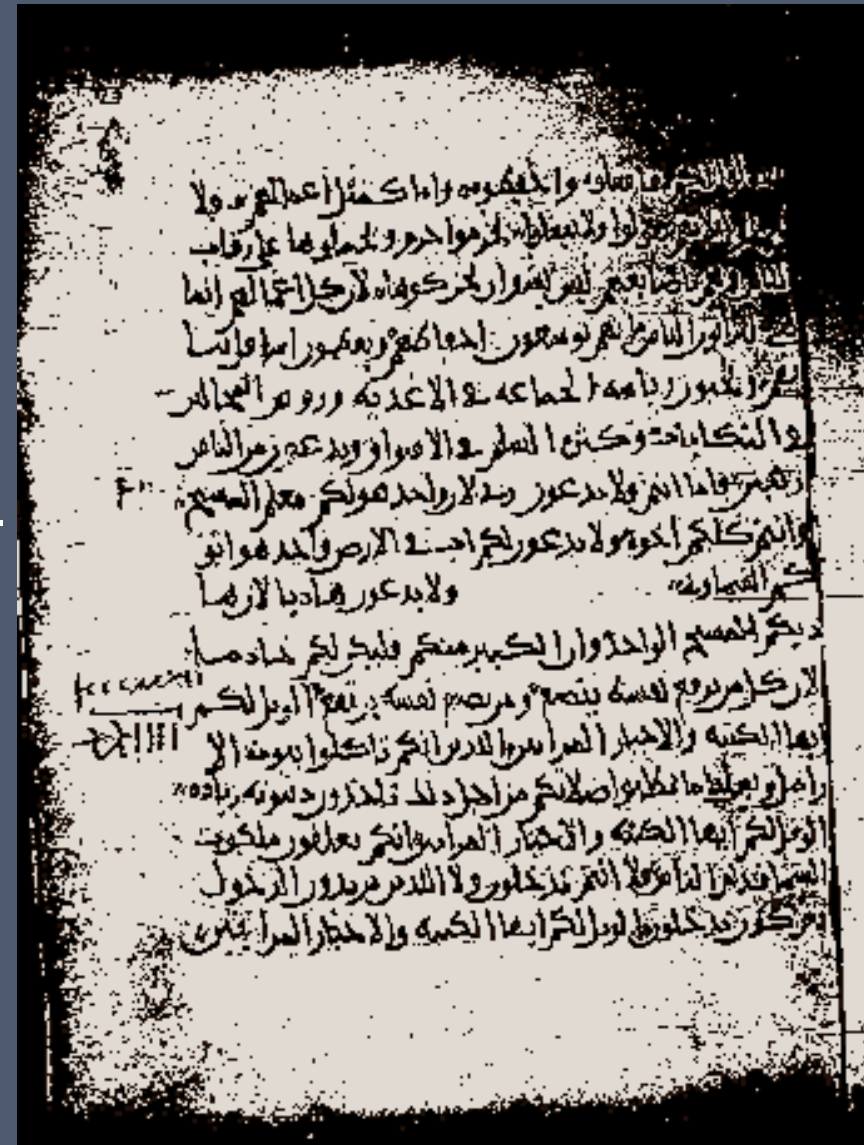


Sinai Georgian 31, dated 877, folio 54
verso, Acts 8:24-29.

Image from
<https://www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Versions.html>

Arabic Versions

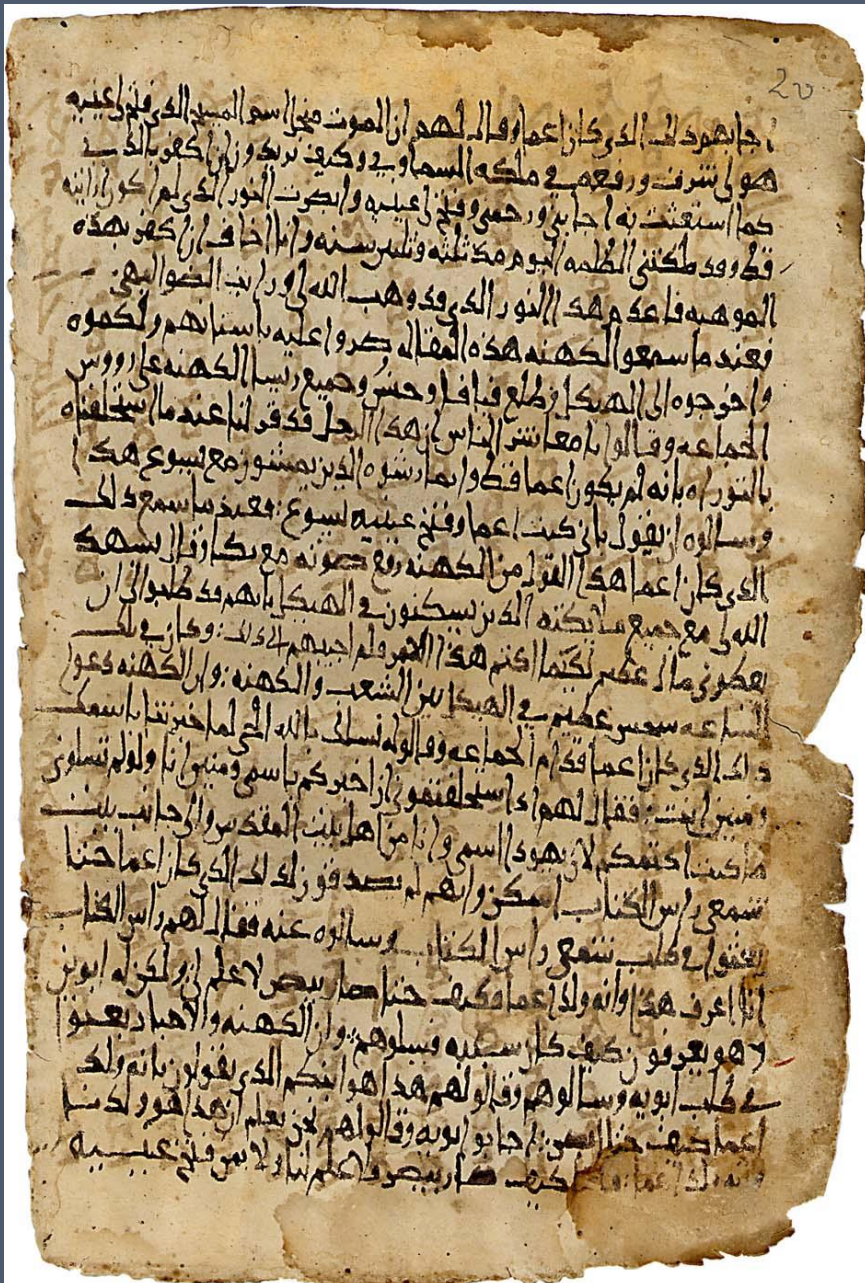
1. The Arabic language
2. Arabic versions
 - A. Translated from Greek, Syriac & Coptic
 - B. Oldest dated manuscript is Sinai Arabic Codex 151 dated 867 AD.
 - C. First translation into Arabic likely a century or two before that



Folio 1 recto of Sinai Arabic 71 (10th century), Matthew 23:13-15.

Arabic Manuscript: Codex Arabicus (Ms. 579)

Date: ~900 AD palimpsest over 5th
century Syriac text
Text: John 9:16-38



MS 579

Codex Arabicus. Mt. Sinai, Egypt.

Underlying text in Syriac, 5th c. Overlying text in Arabic, ca. 900

Image from Wikipedia

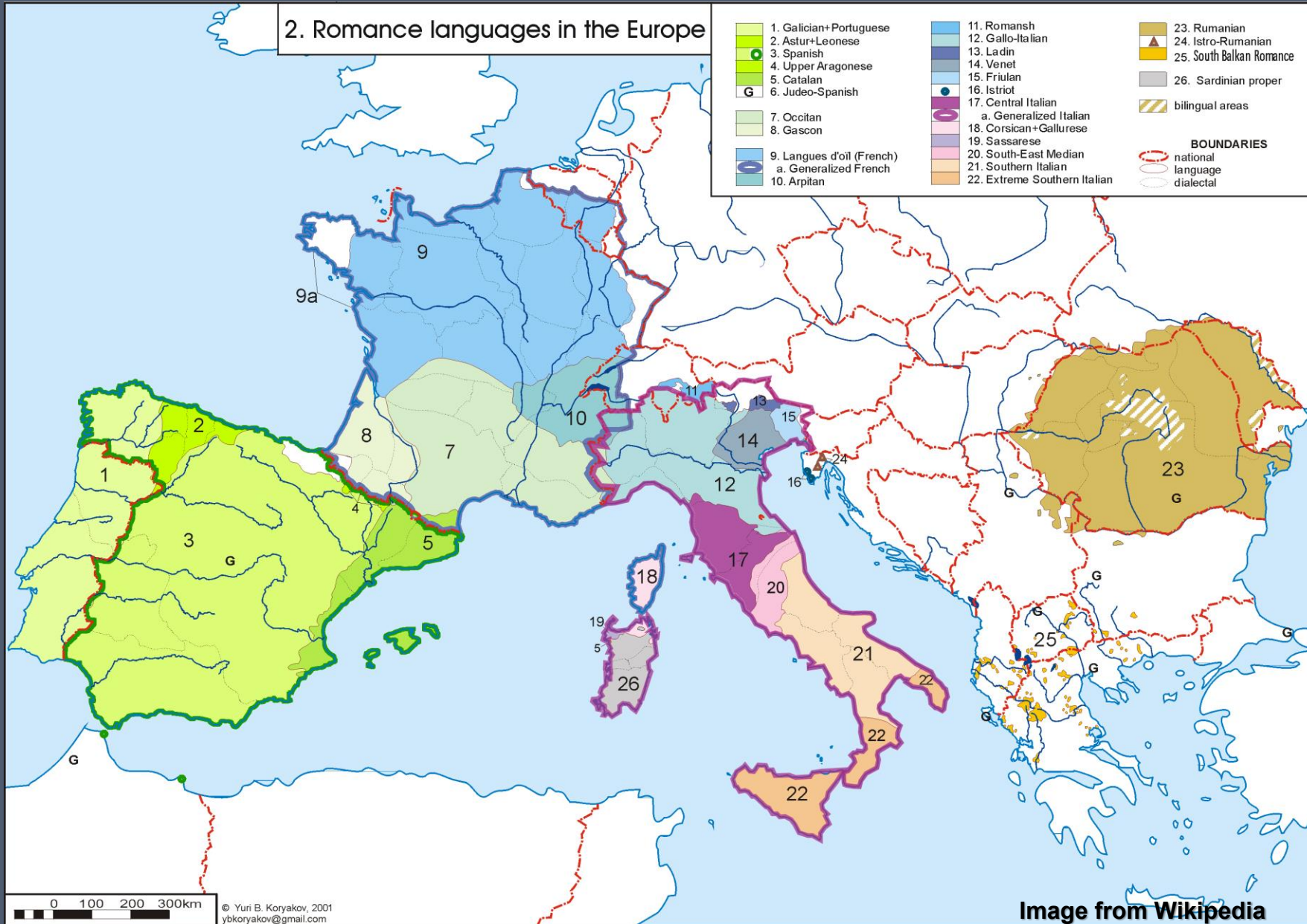
Sogdian Versions

- Sogdia was an ancient Iranian civilization
- Sogdian language is a Middle Iranian tongue, an eastern member of the Indo-European family
- Script similar to Syriac
- Fragments of biblical manuscripts found in Turfan in 1903
 - Gospel lectionary C5 containing Matthew, Luke & John
 - Other bilingual (Syriac & Sogdian) fragments of gospels and Pauline epistles
- Translations probably made during Nestorian mission in the 7th century



Descendents of Latin

2. Romance languages in the Europe



Peter Waldo

(c. 1140-1205)

- A wealthy clothier and merchant from Lyon, later a lay preacher
- Against Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, taught simplicity and poverty and that Catholic dogmas were the harlot of Revelation
- Between 1170-1180, he commissioned a cleric from Lyon to translate the NT into Franco-Provencal
 - Credited with providing the first Bible translation in a modern 'Romance' language outside of Latin



French Bibles

- Bible *Historiale* (image to left) was the predominant medieval French Bible (translated from Latin Vulgate in ~1295 by Guyart des Moulins, a medieval monk)
- 1476 – first printed French NT by Barthelemy Buyer in Lyon, translated from Vulgate
- 1528 – first translation of Hebrew OT into French
- 1535 – first translation of Hebrew and Greek (*Textus Receptus*) into French (Jacques Lefevre d'Etaples)



***Jacques Lefevre d'Etaples* (1455-1536 AD)**

- French theologian and humanist
- Remained Catholic but his ideas anticipated those in the Reformation
- Tense relationship with Erasmus
- Published a French version of the New Testament in 1523 (contemporary with Luther's German version) which has been the basis for all future translations into French
- Complete version of the Bible published in 1530 from Jerome's Vulgate. His revised version of this (1535) was translated from original Greek and Hebrew. These were the first complete Bibles in the French language
- Taught John Calvin in Paris



Image from Wikipedia

LA BIBLIA,
QUE ES, LOS SACROS LIBROS DEL
VIEJO Y NUEVO TESTAMENTO.

Trasladada en Español.



דבר אלהינו יקום לעולם

La Palabra del Dios nuestro permanece para siempre. Isa. 40.

M. D. LXIX.

Spanish Bibles

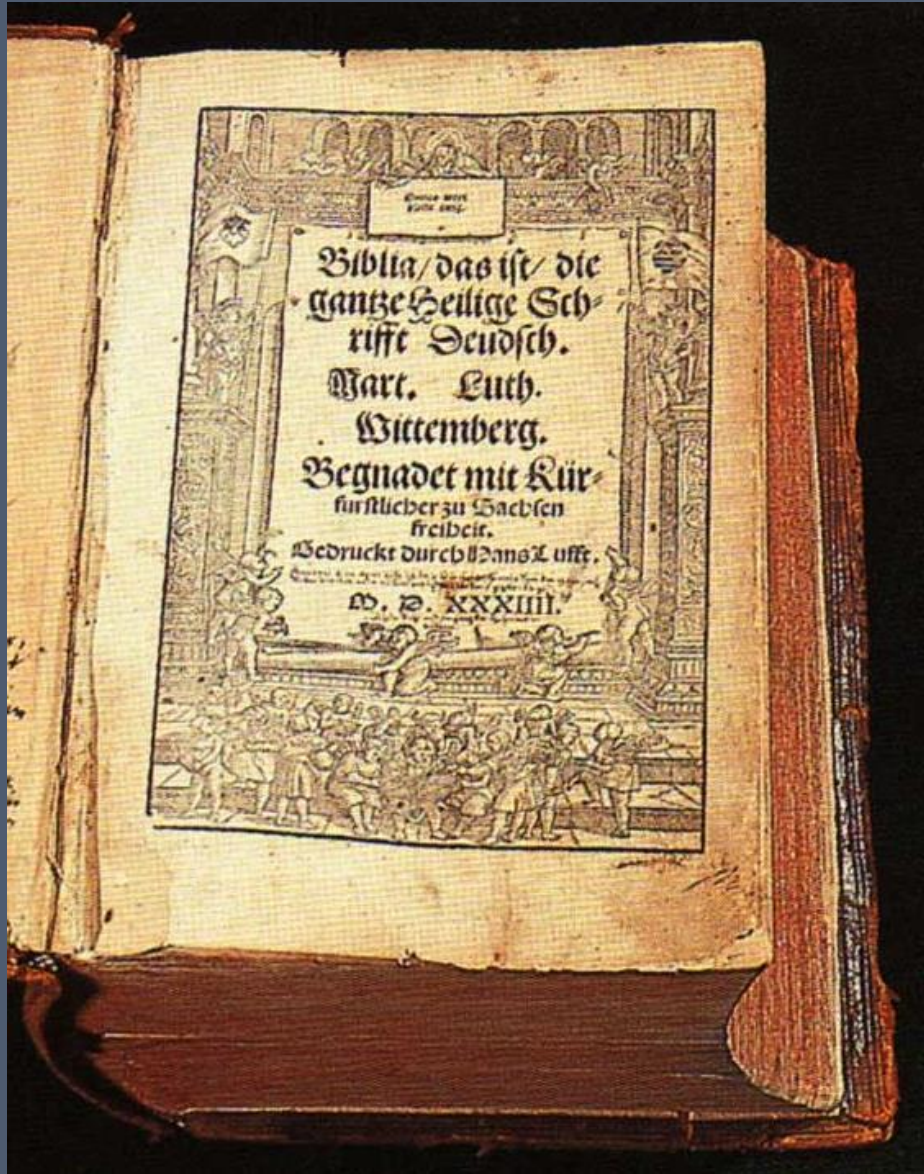
- 1430 – Alba Bible – one of the earliest translations into a Romance language, OT translated from Hebrew into Mediaeval Castilian
- 1553 – Ferrara Bible – a translation of the Tanakh
- 1602 – Reina-Valera (the King James Version of the Spanish language) – image to left
 - A revision of the 1569 translation of Casiodoro de Reina by Cipriano de Valera
 - Most recently revised in 2011

German Bibles

(pre-Luther)

- About 1,000 mediaeval German manuscripts extant
- Earliest Germanic Bible translation was by Wulfila (d. 380) into Gothic
- Charlemagne promoted Frankish translations in the 9th century
- 1350 - Augsberger Bible (OT)
- 1389 – Wenceslas Bible (image to left) – commissioned by King Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia, made in Prague, splendid illuminations, translated from the Latin Vulgate
- 1466 – First printed German Bible by Johannes Mentelin (Mentel Bible) at Strasbourg

German - Luther Bible [1522, 1534]



- 18 German Bibles preceded Luther's, but his was the most influential
- First German translation from the original languages
- The NT was published in 1522, the OT & Apocrypha in 1534
- Luther used Erasmus' 2nd edition (1519) of Greek NT
- Hebrews & James found at the end after Jude and Revelation because of Luther's low opinion of these books
- In the home of nearly every German-speaking Protestant
- Still in use by the Amish in the U.S.

Allein!

“So halten wir nun dafür, daß der Mensch gerecht werde ohne des Gesetzes Werke, allein durch den Glauben.”

- Romans 3:28 (Luther Bible)

“Thus, we conclude that a man is justified without the deeds of the law through faith alone.”

“If your papist wants to make so much fuss about the word sola (alone) tell him this, ‘Dr. Martin Luther will have it so, and says that a papist and an ass are the same thing.’”

- Pelikan, et al., *Luther's Works*, vol. 35, pp. 185-189

Bulgarian: Gospels of Tsar Ivan Alexander (1355-1356)



- Copied by a monk named Simeon in 1355-1356 on the orders of Ivan Alexander
- Illuminated manuscript of the four gospels in Middle Bulgarian
- One of the most important manuscripts of medieval Bulgarian culture
- Contains 366 miniatures and 286 parchment folios
- Located in the British Museum

Other pre-Printing Press Translations

(< 1450 AD)

- **Catalan** – complete Bible translated by the Catholic Church between 1287 and 1290
- **Croatian** – fragmentary translations beginning in the 14th century
- **Czech** – 14th century, including translations of the Latin Vulgate by Jan Hus
- **Polish** – Partial translations beginning in the 13th century
- **Serbian** – Miroslav Gospel book in 1186
- **Slovene** – Freising manuscripts of four parchment leaves between 972 and 1039
- **Uyghur** – early translation of NT and Psalms in 14th century

Timeline of Bible Translations

