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Genesis: The Creation and The Fall

La Salle University Art Museum

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בראשית
GENESIS

GENESIS: THE CREATION AND THE FALL

Selections From

The Susan Dunleavy Collection
Of Biblical Literature

La Salle College Art Gallery

September 26 - October 17, 1980

GENESIS: THE CREATION AND THE FALL

The Book of Genesis speaks of much more than beginnings. Its major concern, in fact, developed in the later accounts of Abraham and his descendants, is with the formation of God's People and his Covenant with them. But the opening chapters, the book of origins that deals with the creation of the world and the fall of "the man" and "the woman" in the Garden -- these are what spring to the popular imagination in any reference to Genesis. And justly enough. For few books of the Bible can match the first for psychological insight, for high drama or theological depth. The issues, too, are fundamental: our ultimate origins and our relation to our Creator, the relation of man and woman, the thrust of human aspiration, the source of evil in mankind.

It was natural enough, then, that these themes should attract the early illustrators of the Bible in the first generations after Gutenberg. But, as even our small exhibit of prints and of illustrated Bibles from the Susan Dunleavy Collection suggests, their fascination took somewhat different forms within the general conventions established early in the Cologne Bible of Heinrich Quentell (c. 1478) and the Nuremberg Chronicle of Hartmann Schedel (1493). The notion of creation ex nihilo was, of course, an inherently puzzling one to represent. The early illustrators, hence, attempted to harmonize the process they portrayed simply with accepted medieval notions of the universe's structure as a series of concentric spheres. The other pattern which naturally suggested itself was a series of scenes following the six days described in the first chapter of Genesis. Full-page woodcuts of the six scenes thus became a standard introduction to the Book of Genesis and to the whole Bible, as can be seen in our Latin Bible by Jacques Sacon (Lyons, 1518).

The climactic scene in such series, of course, is the creation of man. As in Genesis, the Creator is conceived of anthropomorphically as a sculptor or a potter, forming his chief work from the clay of the earth, giving him the breath of his spirit, or, as in Michelangelo's supreme portrayal in the Sistine Chapel, touching him with the power of life. The creation of Eve from the side of Adam presented, perhaps, greater difficulty for the illustrator. But even in the naively literal representations of early woodcuts, there are implications of more abstract ideas. Thus as Eve arises fully formed from Adam's side, there are suggestions, admittedly among other notes of male dominance, of Eve's equality with Adam. As medieval theologians observed, she comes not from his head to be his superior or from his feet to be his inferior, but from his side to be his equal. And there is implied another commonplace of medieval commentary -- that Eve comes as a symbol of the Church to be born from the pierced side of the Second Adam.

The treatment of the life of Adam and Eve in the Garden (as in scenes of naming or blessing the animals) and their eventual Fall has an interesting range and depth. There is, in particular, the masterpiece of Dürer's engraving of Adam and Eve, 1504 (see No. 23, Fig. 1), perhaps the finest engraving of any artist, which stresses the perfection of existence in Eden before the Fall. Here the elk, rabbit, cat, and ox signify the "humors" of the human personality (melancholic, sanguine, choleric, and phlegmatic), now in perfect balance but on the verge of disorder. In a similar fashion, the series of complementaries -- Adam and Eve, cat and mouse, parrot and serpent, ash tree and fig tree -- are about to collapse into evil confusion. But in this instant, however, we have a last glimpse of man and woman as the image of God in primitive innocence, as the crown of creation celebrated by Renaissance humanists like Pico della Mirandola and artists newly enthusiastic about classical figure studies of the nude.

More typical in later treatments is the intrusiveness of consequent evil and of the punishment of death. The "knowledge of good and evil," however, need not in itself be interpreted as evil, in particular as the sexual sin which artists like

Hans Baldung Grien seem to assume, as for example in his woodcut of Adam and Eve with The Serpent, (see Fig. 2).

Some interpreters assert that it is actually a positive value, an experience or wisdom about the ultimate answers to human existence which, however, properly lies beyond the power of man. For the author of Genesis, as Bruce Vawter suggests, "the only proper posture of man if he would be truly wise and lead a full life is faith in God and not a professed self-sufficiency of knowledge."

Whatever the source of mankind's failure, its consequences are presented, by many of the illustrators, as immediate. They are evident in the coarsening of facial expressions as in Lucas van Leyden's engraving of Original Sin, 1529 (see no. 25), in the "neanderthal" bodies of Rembrandt's Adam and Eve, 1638 (see Fig. 4), in the introduction of a skull or a skeleton or even in the skeletonizing of the Tree itself, as in the engraving of Adam and Eve, 1543, by Hans Sebald Beham (see no. 32, Fig. 3). But the idyllic emphasis on pre-lapsarian innocence also continues as in the graceful illustrations of Bernard Solomon or of Romeyn de Hooge, and even in the anonymous frontispiece of the Berriman Bible (Philadelphia, 1796), one of the earliest of American illustrated Bibles. (see no.'s 10, 16, 4).

Among the books in the present exhibit, special attention should be drawn to two very rare items: the Coverdale Bible (Cologne, 1535), the first complete Bible printed in English, with 158 illustrations by an unknown, presumably German woodcut artist, and the first edition of Luther's Low-German Bible (Lubeck, 1533), with splendid illustrations by Erhard Altdorfer.

Br. Daniel Burke, F.S.C.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

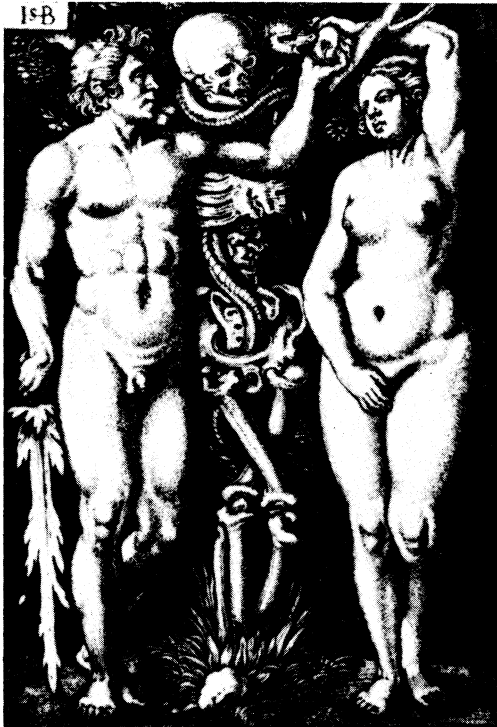


Fig. 3



Fig. 4

We wish to extend our grateful appreciation to the following persons at the lending institutions whose very prompt interest provided a considerable extension of our small exhibition:

Mr. Sylvan Cole, Jr., Director of
Associated American Artists, New York.

Dr. Richard Field, Curator of the
Department of Prints, Drawings and Photographs,
Yale University Art Gallery.

Mr. Joseph A. Seraphim, Olympia Galleries,
Ltd., Philadelphia.

The Rev. David J. Wartluft, Librarian,
Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

Print Study Room

1. The Holy Bible (Authorized King James "she" version)
Conteyning the Old Testament and The New: Newly translated
out of the Originall Tongues: and with the former Translations
diligently compared and revised by his Maiesties speciall
Commandement.

Printed by Robert Barker, London, 1613, 1611.

First folio edition.

(Contains presentation inscription to the Earl of Buckingham.)

The woodcut genealogies, maps, and Adam and Eve image here
illustrated (purchased separately and bound into the earlier
versions) are by the historian John Speed (1552?-1629).

77-B-76

This version of the Bible is said to be the foundation of all
English prose as the Luther Bible was for the German vernacular.
Under the leadership and sponsorship of James I, forty scholars,
organized into six companies, began the task of translation in
1607. Influenced by numerous former English translations such
as Tyndale, Coverdale, and especially the Geneva and Douay-
Rheims New Testament, this translation became the sole recog-
nized version of the Bible in English for the Anglican Church
until the revised version of 1881-1885. It is thought that
the use of two printing offices, set up to produce as large an
edition as possible, accounts for the slight editorial and
typographical differences between the "she" and "he" version.
The former reading in Ruth III:15: "She went into the city,"
the latter reading: "He went into the city."

D. & M. 246

B. 209

ABS pp. 26-30

2. The Holy Bible (Authorized King James "He" version)
Conteyning the Old Testament and the New: Newly Translated
out of the original tongues ...

Printed by Robert Barker, London, 1611.

First folio edition.

77-B-75

D. & M. 240

3. Die Gantze Bibel ... (The Complete Bible)

Edited by Edm. Cam. Rudolphi

Printed by Christoffel Froschauer, at Zurich, 1556

78-B-97

One of the twenty-seven editions of the Bible printed by Froschauer who, after 1521, was the chief printer for the Protestant Swiss Reformer, Huldreich Zwingli. The text is based on Martin Luther's translation of the Bible of 1534 but adapted to the Swiss dialect. Many of the 320 woodcut illustrations are attributed to Veit Rudolf Specklin (monogram VS) after designs by Hans Holbein the Younger. The latter originally executed such Biblical drawings to illustrate Froschauer's large folio edition of the Bible in two volumes of 1531; sixty-eight of these were later used to illustrate Melchior and Trechsel's Historiarum Veteris Testamenti: Icones ad vivum expressae of 1538.

Strachen pp. 54-56

4. The Holy Bible

Philadelphia, printed for Berriman & Company by Jacob R. Berriman, 1796.

Engraving by F. Shallus (1774-1821), American.

80-B-196

4A. The Holy Bible containing The Old Testament And The New;...

Birmingham, Printed by John Baskerville, 1769, 1771, 2nd edition

Engraving by J. Moreau, The Younger (1791-1814), French

80-B-262

Known for his simplicity of typography, Baskerville was one of the most influential printers of the 18th century. He set a new standard of design and "modern" type face. Although "laid" paper has been used for this edition of the Bible, Baskerville was one of the first to introduce the use of "wove" paper (devoid of laid lines on the screen of the mold).

5. The Coverdale Bible

The Byble that is, the holy scrypture of the olde and new testament, faythfully translated into Englyshe by Miles Coverdale.

Koln, Eucharius Cervicornus and Johannes Soter, ? 24 October 1535.

First folio edition.

Anonymous woodcut illustrations, possibly crude copies of the work of Hans Sebald Beham (1500-1550), German.

80-B-271

This publication was the first complete Bible printed in English. Dedicated to Henry VIII, though not published under royal license, it is thought of as more of an editing of former versions rather than an original translation. The New and much of the Old Testaments are thought to be Tyndale's translation, but he also relied on the Vulgate of Pagninus' Latin Bible (1527/28), Luther's German Bible of 1534, and the Swiss-German version of Zwingli and Juda (1527-1529). Coverdale's version of the Psalms is still used by the Anglican and Episcopal Church in the Book of Common Prayer. It has been said that perhaps "no subsequent version, ... has surpassed the Coverdale Bible in beauty of language."

N. 10
D. & M. 7
H. 18
ABS pp. 12-13

6. De Biblie Vth der Vthleggine Doctoris Martini Luthers yn
dyth dudesche ...

Printed by Ludowich Dietz, Lubeck 1533, 1534

Woodcut illustrations by Erhard Altdorfer, (1512-1561), German

78-B-181

The first Low German edition of Luther's Bible, translated by his colleague, Johann Bugenhagen, and issued just before Luther's own first complete edition of 1534.

D. & M. 4198
Berkowitz 185

Case II

The Creation

7. Biblia Germanica

Anton Koberger, Nürnberg, 1483

Volume I

Lent by the Library of the
Lutheran Theological Seminary

This is one of the earliest printed illustrated Bibles. The first illustrated Bible was published by Jodocus Pflanzmann around 1475 with only historiated initials for illustrations. For this Bible in High German, Koberger used the woodcuts of the Anonymous illustrator of Heinrich Quentell's Cologne Bible of c. 1478. These woodcuts became the prototype for most Bible illustrations of the next several generations, though oftentimes the cuts were reduced in size. The text of this Bible became the standard for all High German Bibles until the production of the Luther Bibles of the Protestant Reformation.

B. 113

8. Biblia Cum Tabula Nuper Impressa et Cum Summariis Noviter Editis

Venice, Simon Bevilaqua, 1498

Woodcut by the Popular Illustrator of the Malermi Bible of 1490.

79-B-205

D. & M. 6089

9. Biblia Sacra (Bible in Latin)

Printed in Lyon in 1518 by Jacques Sacon for Anton Koberger of Nuremberg, Germany.

Anonymous Woodcut of the Six Days of Creation.
(Re-drawn on a larger scale from the first edition of 1512.)

77-B-77

Sacon, a printer of Lyons, produced many editions of the Bible between 1506-1522, some for himself and others for the printer, Anton Koberger. The earliest one produced for Koberger appeared in 1512 followed by editions in 1513, 1515, 1518, and 1519. This edition contains some 140 woodcuts thought to be by the Lyonnaise illustrator, Guillaume Le Roy, adapted from illustrations in the Malermi Bible of Venice, 1490, printed by Giovanni Ragazzo for Luc Antonia Giunta. Other woodcuts illustrations in this Bible have been ascribed to the 16th century Nuremberg pupils of Dürer, such as Erhard Schon and Hans Springinklee.

D. & M. See notes under 6101
Mortimer 64 (1521 edition)
Strachan p. 17-35 (reproduc.)

10. Biblia Sacra

Edited by Robert Estienne (Robert Stephanus)

Published by Jean de Tournes, Lyons, 1554.

First octavo edition.

77-B-24

The first de Tournes Bible to contain 198 woodcut illustrations by Bernard Salomon, called "Le Petit Bernard," a popular painter at the court of Henry II of France. These woodcuts had first

appeared for the Old Testament in Claude Paradin's Quadrins historiques, 1553 and the rest in a French New Testament of the same year. The Biblical text of Robert Estienne, an outstanding French printer and scholar, greatly influenced later texts, and became the foundation of the official Roman Vulgate.

B, 154A

Brunet vol. 1, p. 876

Mortimer vol. 1, 81

Farmer 79

11. A Compleat History of The Holy Bible

In 3 volumes.

By Laurence Howel. London, 1718

Engravings by J. Sturt (1658-1730), English

77-B-88(1)

12. The Holy Bible (Authorized King James version)

Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, London, 1669.

Engraving by Frederick-Hendrik van den Hove (c. 1628-1695), Dutch.

77-B-11

Case III

Garden of Eden
and
The Fall of Man

13. Biblia das ist: Die gantze heilige Schrift Deutsch. D. Mart. Luth.

Printed by Hans Luft, Nuremberg, 1572.

Woodcut illustrations by Hans Brosamer (c. 1506-1554), German

80-B-248

14. The Bible (Geneva version)

Translated according to the Ebrew and Greeke, and conferred with the best translations in divers languages ...

Printed by the Duptyes of Christopher Barker, London, 1589, 1599.

80-B-256

Queen Mary I, daughter of Henry VIII and a militant Catholic, was successful in restoring relations between the Church of England and the papacy. The resulting persecution led a group of exiled English Protestants to gather in Geneva to produce a revision of The Great Bible, 1539 and various other translations, under the guidance of the Reformed Church of Geneva. The translation was largely the work of William Whittingham, assisted by Thomas Sampson and Anthony Gilby. In spite of its Calvinist prologues and annotations, which made it suspect to Church officials, its popularity and use as a portable family Bible produced no less than 150 editions between 1560 and 1640 after which time the authorized King James version became the standard for English Protestants. The Geneva Bible is sometimes

referred to as the 'Breeches' Bible due to the reading in Genesis Chapter III:7 as: "... and they sowed figge tree leaves together and made themselves breeches." (instead of "aprons")

D. & M. 153
H. 199
ABS pp. 20-22

5. Biblia Ad Vetvstissima Exemplaria ...

Nicolas Bevilaquae, Venice, 1578

80-P-286

The artist for the woodcut illustrations is unknown but it is felt that they show the influence of Biblical illustrations by Hans Holbein, Bernard Solomon and Pierre Eskrich.

Mortimer: Part II, vol. I - see no. 62

6. Histoire Du Vieux et du Nouveau Testament

By Mr. Basnage

Amsterdam, chez Pierre Mortier, Libraire, 1706

Illustrated with engravings by Romeyn de Hooge (Dutch, 1645-1708)

77-B-87

Brunet: I p. 691

Case IV

The Fall of Man
and
The Expulsion

17. The Holy Bible (Authorized King James version)
Conteyning the Old Testament and the New ...

Printed at London by Robert Barker, 1639 and by the Assigns
of John Bill.

Anonymous woodcut of the Garden of Eden.

77-B-62

H. 338

18. Biblia Sacra

Lugduni, Gulielmus Roullius, 1588

The Louvain edition of The Vulgate, edited by Johannes
Hentenius, Lovanij, 1547.

77-B-240

Sanctioned by the Theological faculty of Louvain and protected
by imperial privilege, the Louvain edition of the Bible (for
the most part a re-print of R. Stephanus' Bible of 1538-40)
became the authorized edition of The Vulgate until publication
of the Sixtine Bible of 1590.

D. & M. 6129 - see commentary

19. The History of the Old and New Testament

London, 1691.

Translated from the works of the learned Le Sieur De Royaumont
by Mr. John Coughen, and Mr. Joseph Reynor.

Illustrated, with engravings and etchings, by M. vander Gucht,
(1660-1725), Flemish.

77-B-46

20. Index Picturarum Chalcographicarum Historiam vetais et
Novi Testamenti

Augsburg.

Engravings by Philipp Andreas Kilian (1714-1759), German
After paintings by old master artists

80-B-252

21. Biblia Sacra

Palmagvar, 1590

Woodcut illustrations by Tobias Stimmer (1539-1584), Swiss

Lent by the Library of the
Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Print Study Room

22. "The Creation of The World"

From The Nuremberg Chronicle (Liber Chronicarum), 1493
Text by Hartman Schedel

Printed by Anton Koberger, Nuremberg, Germany.

Anonymous woodcut illustrations (hand colored at a later date).

77-G-708b

The Nuremberg Chronicle was the first illustrated printed encyclopedia of world history and geography and includes the earliest printed map of Europe and the first views of many cities. It is thought that the idea for the series of circles was perhaps suggested by the opening illustration in Heinrich Quentell's Cologne Bible of 1478 and the Supplementum Chronicarum of Philip Foresti of Bergamo, Venice, 1483. (See reproductions in books.)

- a. "First Day of Creation" Attributed to Michael Wolgemut (1434-1518), German.
- b. "Work of the Third Day" (Outer ring = primeval matter, "yle," blue ring = water, red ring = fire, white ring = ice, center ring = night and day.
- c. "The Work of the Fifth Day - The Creation of the Birds and Fishes"
- d. "The Sanctification of the Seventh Day" Attributed to Michael Wolgemut and Albrecht Dürer

Wilson p. 81

23. Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), German

The Fall of Man, 1504

Engraving

76-G-646

Possibly an unlisted state coming between the fourth (Meder II c) and the fifth state (Meder III a) with three scribbles heavily marked in upper right sky in front of the mountain goat.

24. Simone Cantarini (1612-1648), Italian

The Fall of Man

Etching

79-G-1031

25. Lucas van Leyden (1494-1538), Dutch

Original Sin, 1529

Engraving

Lent by Associated American Artists,
New York, New York

26. Lucas van Leyden (1494-1538), Dutch

The Creation of Eve, 1529

Engraving

Lent by Associated American Artists,
New York, New York

27. Gillis Claesz De Hondcoeter (c. 1570-1638), Dutch

Eve Blessing the Animals

Oil on panel
9 x 21 ins.

73-P-138

De Hondcoeter's paintings frequently show a meticulous rendition of animals in scenes concerned with Noah's Ark or Orpheus charming the wild beasts with his lyre. The subject of Eve blessing the animals is most unusual and is not a part of traditional Christian iconography in the visual arts.

28. Jan Saenredam (1565-1607), Dutch

Adam and Eve

Engraving

Lent by Yale University Art
Gallery, The Everett V. Meeks,
B.A. 1901, Fund. 1976.9

29. Giulio Bonasone (c. 1498-1580), Italian

Creation of Eve

Engraving

Lent by Yale University Art
Gallery, The Everett V. Meeks,
B.A. 1901, Fund. 1956.9.23

Bonasone executed this engraving after Michelangelo's "The Creation of Eve" on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Over a century later, the Italian Baroque artist, Antonio Molinari, was also influenced by Michelangelo's ceiling figures as evidenced in his painting of The Expulsion from Paradise, in the La Salle College collection (see 17th cen. Gallery). In this painting, Eve seems to derive from the Eve in the Sistine Chapel "Creation of Eve" scene while Adam finds its predecessor in the Sistine Chapel's figure of Noah in the "Drunkenness of Noah" scene.

30. Hans Baldung Grien (1484/85-1545), Alsacien

Adam and Eve with The Serpent

Woodcut

Lent by Yale University Art
Gallery, Frederic George Achelis,
B.A. 1907, Fund.1970.76.1

31. Hans Sebald Beham (1500-1550), German

The Expulsion from The Garden

Engraving

Lent by Associated American Artists,
New York, New York

32. Hans Sebald Beham (1500-1550), German

Adam and Eve, 1543

Engraving

Lent by Olympia Galleries, Ltd.,
Philadelphia

Caroline Wistar
Curator

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