

Sunday, October 2, 2022— Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
 Lesson 181 Pre-1611 Evidence for the Text: The General Meeting & The Notes of John Bois, Part 3

Introduction

- In [Lesson 180](#) we continued our study of the General Meeting and the notes of John Bois by looking at the following points.
 - A Brief History of John Bois' Notes
 - Bois' Notes & The General Meeting
 - Rule 10 called for a “general meeting”
 - Discrepancies regarding how many translators took part (6 or 12)
 - Was there a series of meetings?
 - Bois' Notes only cover Romans through Revelation
 - Translators Present: John Bois, Andrew Downes (mentioned at least 97 times), John Harmer, and William Hutchinson
- Today in Lesson 181 we want to continue our investigation of Bois' Notes & The General Meeting by looking at Extra Biblical References that are found in Bois' Notes. By extra Biblical we mean references to writers and resources outside of the Biblical text itself.

Extra Biblical References in Bois' Notes

- In the famous Preface to the 1611 Authorized Version titled “The Translators to the Reader”, Miles Smith identifies some of the extra biblical sources that the translators utilized while doing their work.
 - “Neither did we think much to consult the Translators or Commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek, or Latin, nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch; neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see.”
- John Bois' notes provide a window through which we can view and assess the translators' use of extra Biblical sources. In *Manifold Greatness*, Moore and Reid comment upon the scope of the extra Biblical resources utilized by the translators as evidenced in Bois' notes.
 - “. . . the notes compiled by John Bois of the work done at the General Meeting in 1610 provide substantial evidence of works used by the translators, and the way they were utilized. Precisely the same sorts of books found at Merton, in Bodleian Library, and in the libraries of John Rainolds and Miles Smith were used by the revision committee.

Dictionaries and thesauruses of Greek words and phrases were examined for meaning and nuance, including the lexicon of obscure Greek words compiled by the fifth-century grammarian Hesychius of Alexandria. Church Fathers, early and late, were scrutinized for their interpretation of the epistles. John Chrysostom in particular was appealed to, and where volumes had already been published, it was the Eton edition masterminded by Henry Savile that was consulted. Theophylact of Orchid was once again consulted, and references made to Theodoret of Cyrhus, a fifth-century Syrian theologian whose works included commentaries on the epistles. Other authorities from the ninth and tenth centuries, in the persons of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople, and Arethas, Archbishop of Caesarea, informed the translators deliberations. Arethas's works include a commentary on the book of Revelation." (Moore & Reid, 102)

- As part of my due diligence in preparation for these Lessons, I prepared a list of all the extra Biblical references in Boise' notes. I do not claim that this list is complete or exact as some of the material is a bit hard to make out sometimes. Some of the names are abbreviations for the names of the full authors. Moreover, Boise utilized many older spellings. The following table is a presentation of my findings.

Extra Bible Source	Number of References
Chrysostom	14
Beza	12
Scholia	6
Plato	3
Anatanaklasis	2
Arethas	2
Camer	2
Casaubon	2
Constantinus (Lexicon of)	2
Hesych	2
Old Latin Version	2
Photius	2
Pindar	2
Scalig. Jos	2
Theophylact	2
Aristotle	1
Ausonius	1
Budaeus	1
Camerar	1
Complutensian Polyglot	1
Demosth	1
Erasmus	1
Hermogenes	1
Homer	1
Hypallage	1
Italian Version	1
Juvenal	1
Manilius	1
Mercer	1

Pollux	1
Piscator	1
Portus	1
Rheims New Testament	1
Septuagint (LXX)	1
Strigelius	1
Tertull	1
Thucydides	1
Ulpian	1
Xenoph	1

- John Chrysostom the patriarch of Constantinople (398-404) is the most referenced extra Biblical writer (16 references) by Bois in his notes. Ward S. Allen comments upon the significance of this in terms of dating Bois' notes in *Translating for King James*.
 - "Throughout the Fulman manuscript of the notes there are references to St. John Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople [398-404] and one of the Fathers of the Greek Church. Some of the references include pagination; some do not. Of those which do include pagination, all save one refer to the 1610 volume of Sir Henry Savile's edition of St. John Chrysostom's works, an edition to which both John Bois and Andrew Downes contributed their labors. All of the references to St. John Chrysostom which do not show pagination refer to material printed in the volumes which appeared between the years 1611-1613. The one reference which has pagination but which does not refer to the 1610 volume occurs in the Epistle to Titus 3:14, "Chrysostom in Romans 16, Homily 30, p. 312." This homily is printed in Sir Henry Savile's 1611 volume, but the pagination cited in Bois's notes is not a reference to that volume: it refers, instead, to a volume printed in Heidelberg in 1596. This argues two points: Bois made the notes after the printing of Sir Henry Savile's 1610 volume but before the printing of the 1611 volume; and a later hand did not insert the pagination of the references to the 1610 edition. Had such an editing occurred, it seems likely that all the references to St. John Chrysostom would have been inserted to fit volumes in Sir Henry Savile's edition. Thus, the pagination offers a reliable witness, and that witness furnishes for the notes which Fulman copied a *terminus a quo* [earliest possible date] of 1610 and a *terminus ad quem* [the point at which something ends or finishes] of 1611. The space of nine months which Walker records for this work is, then most likely correct. Furthermore, the falling out of these nine months between 1610 and 1611 makes likely that the company of revisers must, to all intents and purposes, have been solely responsible for the composition of the final version of the Authorized Version, for this computation leaves almost no time for Bishop Bilson and Dr. Smith's finishing touch. It is possible that the finishing touch may have been no more than the assembling of the prefaces." (Allen, 9-10)
- While many of the names in the table above are probably unfamiliar to some, there are some well-known historical figures that cannot be overlooked. The names Plato (3), Casaubon (2), Aristotle (1), Erasmus (1), and Thucydides (1) indicate the level of scholarly learning that the King James translators were familiar with. Likewise, with the foreign language translations and linguist reference works utilized by the translators: Old Latin Version (2), Complutensian Polyglot (1), Italian Version (1), Septuagint (at least 1 reference) and the Rheims New Testament

(1). The list found within the table above does not include what the various companies may have looked at when doing their company work before the general meeting. The King James translators truly left no scholarly stone unturned when doing their work.

- The reference to the Septuagint or LXX in Bois' notes is interesting to consider. Scholar Nicholas Hardy has uncovered a copy of the Septuagint annotated in Bois' own handwriting. Jeffrey Alan Miller's essay "The Earliest Known Draft of the King James Bible: Samuel Ward's Draft of 1 Esdras and Wisdom 3-4" in *Labourers in the Vineyard of the Lord: Scholarship and the Making of the King James Version of the Bible* touches upon this in two different places.
 - "Most famously, two manuscript copies have been discovered of the notes taken at the general, revisory meeting in London by John Bois, one of Ward's colleagues from the Second Cambridge Company. The notes span Romans to Revelation, and they provide invaluable insight into the kinds of discussions that went on at the general meeting and the rationale for some of the changes to the translation made there. They do not, though, represent a draft of the King James Bible, but rather Bois's personal record of part of the general meeting's proceeding. Furthermore, unfortunately, both extant versions of the notes stand only as a copy (at one, in fact, being a copy of a copy, and neither perhaps the full one) of Bois's original notes themselves, which surely would have been in Bois's own hand and which have never been found. The notes also, of course belong to an even later stage of the Bible's composition process, the general meeting, than at least two of the drafts already discussed: namely, the Bodleian's annotated Gospels and the Lambeth Palace draft of the New Testament Epistles.

The last item that bears noting here has only recently been identified, and it likewise goes back to Bois, in this case even more directly. Once more in the Bodleian, there exists a heavily annotated copy of the 1587 Roman Septuagint, a landmark edition of the Greek text, and thanks to the work of Nicholas Hardy we now know this to have been Bois's own copy, with the annotations being in Bois's own hand. Moreover, it appears to have been used by Bois during his work as a translator both with the Second Cambridge Company and as a later member of the general, revisionary meeting. Bois's Septuagint represents a treasure trove for scholars not just of the King James Bible but of early modern theological and intellectual history as a whole. Again, however, it does not stand as a draft itself of the King James translation, but rather as something—even the most important thing—that Bois used in the process of his work as a translator on the various portions of the text with which he was involved." (Miller, 221-222)

- "To begin with, given the recent identification of John Bois's aforementioned copy of the 1587 Rome Septuagint, heavily annotated in Bois's hand and seemingly used by him in working on the King James translation, one might have expected this to have been the version of the Septuagint from which Ward himself worked in translating 1 Esdras and Wisdom. The 1587 Rome edition was the first—and, through the time of the King James Bible, the only—edition of the Septuagint to be based upon the manuscript known as Codex Vaticanus. In the years when Bois and Ward would have been working as translators and for decades thereafter, many considered Codex Vaticanus to be the best manuscript witness known to survive of the Septuagint's original Greek and this accordingly gave the Rome edition of the text a strong claim to being the most

authoritative edition of the Septuagint available. It would be, for example, the version of the Septuagint printed in the London Polyglot Bible of 1653-1657. At least with respect to 1 Esdras, however, Ward appears not to have used the Rome Septuagint as his primary Greek text.” (Miller, 230)

- The references to Codex Vaticanus (B) are interesting to say the least. It is important to note that all the printed editions of the LXX are based upon Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus or some combination thereof. Furthermore, it was only the Old Testament and Apocryphal sections of Codex Vaticanus that could be found within this Rome edition from 1587. Put another way, the New Testament section of the controversial Roman Codex was not in print until the 19th century. This does not mean, however, that Protestant Scholars of the late 16th and early 17th centuries were wholly unaware of the Codex’s controversial New Testament readings. In the 1520s and 30s, via correspondence with his friends Bombasius and Sepulveda, Erasmus had been made aware of some important textual variants (1 John 5:7 & 365 other readings) found within Codex Vaticanus. Erasmus views B as part of a Medieval move (Council of Florence 1431-1499) to conform Greek MSS to the Latin Vulgate. Consequently, most of the variant New Testament readings found in B were left out of the printed editions of Textus Receptus.

Influence of Theodore Beza

- Second only to Chrysostom (14) in Bois’ notes, in terms of references, is the Genevan Calvinist Scholar and editor of the Greek New Testament Theodore Beza with 12 mentions. Irena Backus devotes an entire chapter of her monograph titled *The Reformed Roots of the English New Testament: The Influence of Theodore Beza on the English New Testament* to discussing Bois’ use of Beza in his notes.
 - “Bois in his notes refers to a wide range of scholarship, Classical, Patristic and Contemporary. Mostly the scholars in question are referred to by name only with no mention of the work or page number. The only work to receive precise references including page numbers is the first volume of Sir Henry Saville’s edition of Chrysostom. This came out in 1610, just before the Committee assembled, and so would not have been familiar to the Revisors, in the same way, for examples as the editions of Camerarius, Augustine or Heyschius which they were using. Beza is probably mentioned more often than any other single scholar but Bois does not say which edition of Beza is being used. However, Bois’ references at 1 Cor. 10:30 (“This interpretation rejected by Beza A.D. deemed worthy of his advocacy. . .”), 1 Tim. 1:5 (“ . . . not however of the Law in general as Beza has annotated incorrectly in this place. . .”), James 1:3 (“For what the difference is, however, between [mention two different Greek words], look in the writings of Beza at Rom. 5:4. . .”), show that Beza’s annotations as well as his text were being consulted.” (Backus, 110)
- As her title suggests, Backus seeks to prove the influence that Beza had upon the King James Bible translators specially and the English New Testament more generally. Backus goes on to catalogue all of the references to Beza found in Bois’ notes and clarify them into different categories.

- “Of the instances where Beza is specifically referred to by the Committee (Rom. 5:12, 11: 31, 13:1; 1 Cor. 10:10, 17; Eph. 1:13; 1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 4:1; James 1:3, 2:22; 1 Pet. 1:20, 2:5), five (1 Cor. 10:17, 1 Tim. 1:5, Heb. 4:1, James 2:22, Rom. 5:12) provide an occasion for either a rejection or criticism of Beza. In five cases (Rom. 11:31, 1 Cor. 10:30, Eph. 1:13, 1Pet. 1:20, 1Pet. 2:5) Beza’s opinion is merely quoted and in two cases (Rom. 13:1, James 1:3) Bois approves Beza’s translation and explanation respectively.

In the case of the first five instances listed above, in three cases (1 Cor. 10:17, 1 Tim. 1:5, Heb. 4:1) the final version of the AV agrees with Bois against Beza. However, it must be born in mind that at 1 Cor. 10:17 no other English version follows Beza’s reading, and at 1 Tim. 1:5 the AV simply follows the earlier English reading thus avoiding commitment on whether τῆς παραγγελίας refers to that particular change or to a Christian teaching in general. Only in the case of Heb. 4:1 does the AV agree with the Final Revision Committee against Beza and English versions from Tyndale to Bishops 1602. In two cases (Rom. 5:12 and James 2:22) the AV agrees with Beza as against Bois. At Romans 5:12 the AV Bezan reading “in whom” is in the margin even though the Final Revision Committee considered it “difficult and unnecessary.” At James 2:22 the AV reads “Seest thou. . . ?” with Beza although Bois had suggested that the interrogative should not have been written.

In the cases where Beza’s opinion is simply quoted the AV is found to follow Beza without exception. Thus at Rom. 11:31 the AV is the only one of the English versions to adopt the Beza/Theophylactus punctuation. At 1 Cor. 10:30 the Bezan interpretation is adopted in the AV text but with the backing of the Geneva and Bishops versions. At Eph. 1:13 where Bois suggests that either [you have trusted] (after Beza) or [you were appointed by lot] from v. 11 should be supplied the AV chooses the former. At 1 Pet. 1:20 the Bezan translation “foreordained” is adopted by the AV, though again with the backing of the previous English versions (e.g. “ordeyned before”: Tyndale). At 1 Pet. 2:5 where Bois suggest that [to build, to found] can be taken either imperatively (after Beza and Downs) or indicatively the AV chooses the indicative reading keeping the Bezan variant as a marginal alternative.

Finally in the two cases where the Bezan reading is actually commended by the Final Revision Committee, at Rom. 13:1 the AV inserts Beza’s translation “ordered” for τεταγμέναι in the margin. And at James 1:11 the AV, in agreement with most other English versions, reads “trying.” (Backus, 110-112)

- The importance of Beza and his 4th edition of the Greek New Testament from 1598 cannot be overstated. Backus explains why in her monograph.
 - “It must be remembered that Beza’s N.T. was the latest edition of the N.T. and so would have been considered the most authoritative. Independent evidence of this is proved by Fulke’s *A defense of the sincere and true translations of the Holy Scriptures*. . . which deals almost exclusively with Beza’s Greek Testament. We can also gather from other sources that Beza was not only extremely popular in late Elizabethan and early Jamesian England but also enjoyed a considerable eminence. His work would have been known to the Final Revision Committee and on some occasions there would have been no need to

refer to the author. Added to this was the fact that John Bois was simply making a record of the Committee's proceedings and so probably had neither the time nor the need for precise references in every single case. And we will see from the detailed examination of Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and Hebrews that quite often Bois' gloss shows the influence of Beza without there being a specific reference to the Genevan Scholar. Moreover, the AV quite often inserts Bezan readings which are completely unacknowledged by Bois. Some of those come from the Geneva Bible; others come into the English New Testament with the AV. The exact proportion of these will be estimated by the following enquiry." (Backus, 112)

- As stated in the above quote, Backus conducted a "detailed examination of Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and Hebrews" on pages 113 through 160 (47 total pages) of her book *The Reformed Roots of the English New Testament: The Influence of Theodore Beza on the English New Testament*. While her discussion is both meticulous and fascinating, it is beyond the scope of this class. Interested parties are encouraged to read Backus' work for themselves to glean these details. We will therefore limit our discussion to some of her conclusory findings and statements.
 - "Generally, there seems to be no doubt that, so far as the Revisers were concerned, Beza's authority completely overshadowed that of any other New Testament scholars of the period. This does not imply that the AV is no more than an English version of the Beza's 1598 New Testament. In matters of text, especially, the Revisers were unwilling to adopt a Bezan reading if it did not have authoritative support. In cases where Beza's text was accepted, the more usual reading was frequently inserted in the margin. Conversely, where a better known reading was adopted, the Bezan version was put in as a marginal alternative." (Backus, 171)
- Backus's monograph offers strong evidence that Beza's Greek New Testament served as the primary original language source for revision of the 1602 Bishops Bible into what would ultimately become the King James Bible New Testament. The notes of John Bois highlight the immense influence of Beza upon the King James translators. I propose that the sources used to create the KJB were as follows.
 - 1602 Bishops Bible compared against
 - Beza's 1598 Greek New Testament compared against
 - Earlier English Bibles (Tyndale, Great, Geneva, & Rheims) compared against
 - Foreign language Bibles compared against
 - Extra Biblical language resources

Works Cited

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