

7. Sekundärliteratur

Halle Pietists in England. Anthony William Boehm and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

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The Arabic Psalter and New Testament

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in "Vulgar Greek".²¹ The SPG's Committee for Receiving Proposals took up this request but rendered the cautious opinion that such a publication might appear provocative and

... that no Private Person is fitt to be Entrusted with the Care of such a Translation which shall afterwards be sent from the Society to the Gracian [*sic*] Churches, and that no such Translation be sent unless it be approv'd of by the Governour of the said Churches.²²

Ludolf remained unperturbed and began raising money to publish the New Testament. In a handwritten account he listed some of the contributors to his project: they numbered not only Anglicans – Charles Bridges, Woodward, Thomas Bray, J.E. Grabe, Dr. Slare, and Archbishop Sharp of York – but also Edmund Calamy, the most celebrated Nonconformist leader.²³ Archbishop Tenison also gave his blessing to the project.²⁴ In 1703 the New Testament was finished at a total cost of about £150²⁵ and Ludolf set about the difficult task of propagation.²⁶ His New Testament was poorly received in the Levant and ordered to be burnt by the Patriarch of Constantinople, apparently because of a Preface written by Seraphim, Ludolf's friend, who was an unfrocked Greek priest; a new edition was published in 1705 without the scandalous Preface, the contents of which are unknown.²⁷

Though in this initiative Ludolf was unsuccessful in eliciting a response from either the SPCK or the SPG, he had nonetheless planted a seed which would bear fruit two decades later.

The Arabic Psalter and New Testament

In 1720 Boehm returned to the theme, laying before the Society

... a proposal for printing the New-Testament in Arabick for the use of the Christians in the Eastern Countries, where Arabick is used, but for want of *printing*, Books of any sort and especially of the Holy Scriptures cannot be obtained but at such prices as very few can reach to.²⁸

This time the project had a very different response. In the interim, knowledge of Halle's work with the *Collegium Orientale* and Bible distribution, coupled

21 SPG *Journals* 1, 1 May 1702 (p. 60) (ArUSPG).

22 SPG *Journal of the Committee for Receiving Proposals* 1, 5 May 1702 (p. 20) (ArUSPG).

23 "Account of the Moneys received and disbursed about printing the New Testament in Vulgar Greek", n.p., n.d. (ArFrSt D 23:8-9).

24 Ludolf to Francke, London, 8 July 1702 (ArFrSt D 71:109-10).

25 T.H. Darlow and H.F. Moule, *Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture*, 2 vols. (London, 1911), ii.680, incorrectly state that this edition was printed at the expense of the SPG.

26 Ludolf to Mr. de Lente, n.p., 6 Feb. 1703; to Mr. Williams at Constantinople, London, 16 Apr. 1703; to Mr. Clutterbock, [Rotterdam,] 15 June 1703 (ArFrSt D 23:121f,9-10,139).

27 Darlow and Moule, *Historical Catalogue*, ii.680.

28 SPCK *Minutes*, 24 Mar. 1720 (ix.92).

with the SPCK's experience of mission in the East Indies, had helped to produce a greater optimism in the Society, an optimism which is that much more remarkable given the generally low Anglican interest in Greek Orthodoxy at this time.²⁹ When Archbishop Wake himself urged that the SPCK "should cheerfully go on with that Design" and when the Society learned that Arabic was indeed widely read by Christians in Palestine, it agreed that printing and dispersing both the New Testament and the Psalter would "answer the pious and charitable design of the Society".³⁰

To encourage benefactions, the Society sent out a tract, transcribed and prepared for the press by Boehm, containing extracts from letters in favour of the project and a proposal for raising subscriptions.³¹ In this tract the SPCK printed letters of support, including one from Solomon Negri, a native of Damascus living in England, who drew attention to the scarcity and high cost of the New Testament among Christians in Eastern Churches and to the proselytizing efforts of Rome.³² Former Anglican chaplains in the Levant and India lent their approval, as did the Rev. Gennadius, Archimandrite of the Convent of Greeks at Alexandria, who had written enthusiastically, "I can't express to you the Joy which I felt, when I heard that such a design was beginning to be put in Execution."³³

The enterprise did indeed seem to have strong support. Writing to Henry Newman, Archbishop Wake expressed his hope that it would arouse public interest: "I think there is enough to Satisfy any reasonable man of the Charity and Usefulness (so I would rather have it, than necessity) of such a Design."³⁴ Hearty recommendations for the proposal came from Francke in Halle, Sir John Philipps, and Bishop Tylor of Llandaff, a former chaplain in India, who sent the princely sum of £100, remarking that "he could not better contribute to so Christian a Design".³⁵ Even the King promised £500, though it took four years and the intercession of Sir John Philipps, uncle to Sir Robert Walpole's wife, to extract the money from him.³⁶

29 John Covell, *Some Account of the Present Greek Orthodox Church* (Cambridge, 1722), confirmed Anglican mistrust of Orthodox superstition. Cf. Runciman, "The Church of England and the Orthodox Churches", p. 17.

30 SPCK *Minutes*, 30 June and 24 Nov. 1720 (ix.112f,127). The only detailed treatment of the Society's involvement in this project is: Cowie, *Henry Newman*, pp. 67-71.

31 *An Extract of several Letters Relating to the Great Charity and Usefulness of Printing the New Testament and Psalter in the Arabick Language* (London, 1720); Boehm to Newman, Strand, 4 July 1720 (ArSPCK, *Arab Bible* [CS2/1.No.8:14]).

32 *Extract of several Letters*, pp. 4-6.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

34 W. Cant. to Newman, Lambeth, 10 Oct. 1720 (ArSPCK, *Arab Bible* [CS2/1. No.8:43]).

35 Francke to Archbishop Wake, Halle, 4 Jan. 1722 (ArSPCK, *Original Letters* [CR2/5:414]); Sir John Philipps to SPCK, Picton Castle, 10 Sept. 1720 (abstract); Bishop of Llandaff to SPCK, Hereford, 4 Jan. 1721 (abstract), printed in: Clement, p. 109-10.

36 SPCK *Minutes*, 6 Apr. 1721 (ix.165); Sir John Philipps to SPCK, Picton Castle, 9 Sept. 1725 (abstract), printed in: Clement, pp. 134f. Cf. Cowie, *Henry Newman*, pp. 69f.

The task of preparing the Psalter and New Testament for the printer was turned over to Solomon Negri, a Syrian and old friend of Ludolf,³⁷ who, at Ludolf's suggestion, had travelled to Halle in 1701, where for a short time he taught Arabic at the *Collegium Orientale*.³⁸ By 1719, after itinerant wanderings over Europe, he had returned again to London with John Xeres, a Jewish convert to Christianity: both men were in such financial straits that the Society took a collection and divided it among them.³⁹ Negri had a warm recommendation from Francke:

Salomon Negri, a Man I highly respect, is a Person in my Opinion very well qualify'd to be entrusted in this laborious work and through God's assistance may bring it fair Conclusion: He for some Time ... taught the Arabick language in this University.⁴⁰

The work was to prove laborious. The *Minutes* and correspondence of the Society and its standing Committee give evidence of the many difficulties involved with this project, due in part to the "narrowness of the Fund" and the "niceties" of the Arabic script.⁴¹ It was four years before the Psalter was finished. When at last the Society printed 6,000 copies, 2,000 were immediately sent to an English merchant at Aleppo for distribution.⁴² The New Testament was an even more extensive and expensive effort. Considerable delays were incurred because of "various sharp disputes" in the Society over whether orthographical notes should be used in the New Testament in order to make it "more intelligible to the Common People".⁴³ Eventually 10,000 New Testaments and 5,000 catechisms were printed to go with the 6,000 Psalters.⁴⁴ The catechism, a short account of the chief truths of the Christian religion, was amended by Archbishop Wake before being translated into Arabic.⁴⁵ It was printed at the request of C.M. Rodde, a Lutheran pastor at Narva in Russia and corresponding member of the Society.⁴⁶ Once a prisoner in Russia for twelve years, Rodde had studied under Negri at Halle in 1716 and then returned to Narva where he worked among prisoners who spoke

37 [H.W. Ludolf,] "Nomina nonnullorum amicorum meorum", n.p., [c.1699-1700] (ArFrSt B 71a:2-4). On Negri, see G.A. Freylinghausen, ed., *Memoria Negriana* (Halle, 1764).

38 Ludolf to Francke, London, 10 Mar. 1701, printed in: Nebe, p. 83; Francke to Spener, Halle, 2 July 1701, printed in: Kramer, p. 470; cf. Jacob Turner to Francke, London, 24 Feb. 1702 (*Nachlaß* 30.X.387).

39 SPCK *Minutes*, 22 Jan. 1719 (viii.225).

40 Francke to Archbishop Wake, Halle, 4 Jan. 1722 (ArSPCK, *Original Letters* [CR2/5:414]).

41 Newman to Sherman, Middle Temple, 23 Dec. 1724 (ArSPCK, *Soc Lett* [CS2/15:28-29]).

42 SPCK *Minutes*, 22 Dec. 1724 (xi.95).

43 "Über den druck des Arabischen N. Testaments sind unterschiedene scharffe disputen in unserer Societaet entstanden." (Ziegenhagen to Francke, London, 21 July 1724 [*Nachlaß* 30.FMZ.ii/13]); Newman to Sherman, 23 Dec. 1724 (ArSPCK, *Soc Lett* [CS2/15:28-29]).

44 *Account of the ... SPCK* (1737), p. 7.

45 SPCK *Minutes*, 10 Sept. 1728 (xii.288).

46 Ziegenhagen to G.A. Francke, London, 24 Sept. 1728 (*Nachlaß* 30.FMZ.ii/46).

Arabic, Turkish, or Persian.⁴⁷ During his stay at Halle he had helped with the printing of Luther's catechism in Russian.⁴⁸ Rodde became the Society's key link with Russia.⁴⁹

The final task was that of disseminating the Arabic impressions. Though the SPCK had the approval of the Archbishop of Aleppo and contacts in that city willing to offer their services, distribution did not go well in Palestine.⁵⁰ The SPCK sent copies to the missionaries in the East Indies, to Rodde for use with Persian prisoners in Russian garrisons, and to the pastor of the German Lutheran Church in St. Petersburg. Rodde reported how well the prisoners received the literature and asked for a fresh supply.⁵¹ Copies were also sent later to James Oglethorpe, founder of the Georgia colony, for distribution to Muslim slaves, the "Mohametary Africans in Carolina", and some even reached Africa, at a later date, through the Sierra Leone Company.⁵²

In the end the whole project cost the Society about £3,000. It was the largest venture of its type which the SPCK attempted and absorbed a large share of the Society's energy and correspondence. Not only was it far more expensive and time-consuming than expected, but the distribution in Palestine was poor. Ziegenhagen was frustrated because the frequent debates in the Society over the Arabic New Testament had set back interest in the East India

47 D. Tschizewskij, "Die 'Russischen Drucke' der Hallenser Pietisten", *Kynos: Vierteljahresschrift für Kirchen- und Geistesgeschichte Osteuropas* 3 (1938), p. 69; Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, pp. 301f; Benz, "Beziehungen des August-Hermann-Francke-Kreises", pp. 81-84.

48 Rodde to J.H. Callenberg, Narva, 29 June 1725 (extract), printed in: Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt*, p. 365; Tschizewskij, "Die 'Russischen Drucke'", p. 69; *idem.*, "Zu den Beziehungen des A.H. Francke-Kreises zu den Ostslaven", *Kynos: Vierteljahresschrift für Kirchen- und Geistesgeschichte Osteuropas* 4 (1939/40), pp. 297ff.

49 Ernst Benz, "Beziehungen des August-Hermann-Francke-Kreises", pp. 78-90, overstates the Society's importance in Halle-Russian relations. He misreads an abstract of a Rodde letter referring to London editions of Arndt's *True Christianity*, which Benz assumes incorrectly are Russian translations. The SPCK was not the centre which Benz claims for sending books off the Halle presses around the world. In 1731 Rodde asked the Society if it was willing to contribute towards publishing his Russian translation of Francke's catechism and part of Arndt's *True Christianity*. The Society responded that it would be glad to "if the present Demand from the Mission in the East Indies and other Branches of their Designs did not disable them from it". Later, Newman questioned G.A. Francke about the cost of this printing. Francke assumed that the Society would support this project, causing some confusion in the Society which resolved: "To inquire which Promise was made to Professor Franck that this Society would aspire in publishing Arndts True Christianity in the Russian Language." No money was sent for this design. (Rodde to SPCK, Narva, 21 June 1731 [ArSPCK, *ALB* (CR1/16: 11414)]; SPCK *Minutes*, 14 Sept. 1731 (xiv.85f); Rodde to Ziegenhagen, Narva, 6 Sept. 1733, and Newman to G.A. Francke, London, 21 Dec. 1733, printed in: *Letterbook*, pp. 87, 355f; G.A. Francke to SPCK, Halle, 28 July 1735, with Society response [ArSPCK, *ALB* (CR1/18:13293)])

50 Newman to Sir Gerard Conyers, Bartlet's Buildings, 9 July 1736 (ArSPCK, *Misc. Letters* [CN2/2:41]).

51 SPCK *Minutes*, 6 Feb. 1728 (xii.187); *Circular Letter* (1 May 1735); Newman to Rev. Mr. L.O. Trefurt, London, 31 May 1737 (ArSPCK, *Misc. Letters* [CN2/3:36]).

52 Newman to Oglethorpe, Bartlet's Buildings, 13 Apr. 1738 (ArSPCK, *Misc. Letters* [CN2/4:50]); *General Account of the SPCK* (1813), p. 17.

mission.⁵³ Why did the SPCK get involved in such an ambitious project as publishing the Arabic Psalter and New Testament? The impetus was largely religious, since many in the Church of England were undoubtedly concerned for the survival of the Orthodox Church against the onslaughts of Islam and Catholicism. The circulation of the Scriptures was seen – as later by the British and Foreign Bible Society – as a counter-attack against Rome, which feared the power of an “open Bible”. Boehm felt that the Jesuits would seek to undermine their efforts and defame the publication.⁵⁴ Because of “the Vigilance of the Papists to defeat the Work”, Newman said that the Psalter and New Testament should be published anonymously and dispersed quietly.⁵⁵ The project was also concerned to raise morale and the level of faith among Middle Eastern Christians, by providing religious reading for the “Poor Christians destitute of Books” in the Levant.⁵⁶

The driving force behind this particular venture was undoubtedly the vision of the Hallensians. After the SPCK had turned over its West Indies library work to the SPG, it was Halle which turned the SPCK's gaze back overseas, to the wider world, first with the East India mission work and then with the printing of the Arabic Psalter and New Testament. Boehm, Negri, and Rodde were closely associated with Francke at Halle, as was Ludolf whose care for the Greek Church was still remembered by the Society.⁵⁷ The Pietists had already put out editions of the New Testament in modern Greek and Bohemian and the Bible in Hebrew and Bohemian.⁵⁸ When the SPCK expressed interest in printing the Bible and other religious books to sustain the beleaguered Protestants in Hungary and Transylvania, it was to Francke that Archbishop Wake suggested that they should turn for advice.⁵⁹ In 1715 when Negri was in England, Boehm had expressed to Francke his hope that “the existing Turkish and Arabic versions of the New Testament would be revised by him [Negri] and issued in a more convenient edition”.⁶⁰ Although the

53 Ziegenhagen to A.H. Francke, London, 22 Feb. and 9 Dec. 1726 (*Nachlaß* 30.FMZ.ii/38,44).

54 Boehm to [Halle], London, 29 Dec. 1721 (extract) (*Nachlaß* 30.FMZ.ii/15a).

55 Newman to Rev. Mr. Bedford, Middle Temple, 2 Jan. 1724 (ArSPCK, Soc Lett [CS2/14]).

56 Salomon Negri to [Boehm], n.p., 28 Mar. 1720 (copy) (ArSPCK, *Arab Bible* [CS2/1.No.8:1]). One of Ludolf's major frustrations was that the ruling Ottoman power would not allow printing in the Orthodox Church. (Ludolf to Francke, 30 Aug. 1699 [ArFrSt D 71:20–21])

57 Henry Hoare had £10 left from Ludolf's legacy and asked the Society if the Arabic Psalter and New Testament “would not, in their Opinion, be conformable to the Inclination of the late Mr. Ludolf”, to which the Society agreed. (SPCK *Minutes*, 18 Dec. 1722 [x.113])

58 K. Aland, “Der deutsche Pietismus als Wegbereiter für die Arbeit der Bibelgesellschaften”, in: *On Language, Culture, and Religion: In Honor of Eugene A. Nida*, ed. M. Black and W.A. Smalley (The Hague/Paris, 1974), pp. 3–21; cf. idem., “Bibel und Bibeltext”, pp. 119–27.

59 SPCK *Minutes*, 15 Jan. 1723 (x.122).

60 “... daß die verhandene [*sic*] Türkische und Arabische Versiones des Neuen Testaments, durch ihn revidiret, und in einer bequemen Edition, zum Druck ausgefertigt würden.” (Boehm to Francke, London, 14 June 1715, printed in: *ErBrief*, p. 429)

Society had previously committed itself to Bible distribution, having prepared the Portuguese New Testament for the East India mission – at the suggestion of Boehm – and having subscribed in 1714 for 100 copies of the Welsh Bible,⁶¹ the Arabic Psalter and New Testament was a scheme far outside the scope of its normal *modus operandi*. The mainspring of this venture came from Boehm and Negri, who persuaded the SPCK to take on and pay for a project designed in Halle.

Epilogue: Callenberg's Judaico Institute

Shortly after the completion of the Arabic impressions the SPCK took an interest in another Halle project: J.H. Callenberg's mission to the Jews. The idea of the conversion of the Jews – “God's ancient people” – was one which periodically troubled missionary-minded Christians, especially those who saw it as one of the prophesied preliminaries to Christ's millennial reign.⁶² The orthodox Christian mind oscillated between dislike of the Jews as aliens and outsiders, and recognition that they possessed a role in the redemptive processes set out in the Scriptures. P.J. Spener's own chiliastic eschatology had stirred up hope for the conversion of the Jews within German Pietism.⁶³ At Halle in 1727, Johann H. Callenberg (1694–1760), who was taught Arabic at Halle by Solomon Negri⁶⁴ and later became Professor of Oriental Languages at the University, initiated a mission to the Jews, or Judaico Institute. The design was simple: using his own printing press at the *Waisenhaus*, Callenberg issued books in Yiddish for the conversion of the Jews and works in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Hindostani for the conversion of the Muslims. Travelling candidates in theology at the University would distribute these books in their various journeys around Europe.⁶⁵ It was largely through Sir John Philipps that the SPCK took an interest in this enterprise.⁶⁶ In 1731 Ziegenhagen had a letter from Callenberg translated and read before the Society, which approved it sufficiently to have fifty copies made and disseminated in England.⁶⁷ In the

61 Allen and McClure, *Two Hundred Years*, p. 203.

62 See M. Vereté, “The Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought 1790–1840”, *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972), pp. 18f.

63 Wallmann, *Spener und die Anfänge*, pp. 307, 316ff.

64 F.T. Adler, *Mittheilungen aus Johann Heinrich Callenberg's Briefen* (Halle, 1898), pp. 11–16.

65 Förster, *Uebersicht der Geschichte der Universität zu Halle*, pp. 112f. See J.H. Callenberg's *Short Account of an Essay to Bring the Jewish Nation to the Knowledge & Practice of the Truth of the Gospel & his Endeavor to Promote the Conversion of the Mohammadans to Christianity . . . done into English* (n.p., 1751). Unfortunately, since the only extant copies of this work of which I am aware are in Philadelphia, I have been unable to consult it.

66 Sir John Philipps to [Halle], n.p., 16 Mar. 1731 (copy) (ArFrSt K 21:239); cf. Ziegenhagen to Callenberg, London, 13 Aug. 1731, and Kensington, 30 Aug. 1734 (ArFrSt K 7:240; K 19:24).

67 Ziegenhagen to Callenberg, London, 23 Apr. 1731 (ArFrSt K 6:273–74); cf. Ziegenhagen to G.A. Francke, London, 24 Sept. 1728 (*Nachlaß* 30.FMZ.ii/46); to G.A. Francke, London, 5 Nov. and 10 Dec. 1728 (ArFrSt K 2:136, 150).