

FAITH AND FEMINISM IN  
NINETEENTH-CENTURY  
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

SBL Press

# THE BIBLE AND WOMEN

An Encyclopaedia of Exegesis and Cultural History

Edited by Christiana de Groot, Irmtraud Fischer,  
Mercedes Navarro Puerto, and Adriana Valerio

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Nineteenth-Century Religious Communities

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NINETEENTH-CENTURY  
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*Edited by*

Michaela Sohn-Kronthaler and Ruth Albrecht

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## Preface

The present volume is the result of an initial inquiry, which occurred from 2008 to 2014, into Bible reading or Bible interpretation by women during the long nineteenth century. The women studied represent very different approaches to the Bible and come from Europe and North America. In addition, the contributors also stem from several countries and language contexts. This publication presents some previously unpublished source material from representatives of different Christian confessions as well as Judaism. New perspectives shed light on people and traditions hitherto not noticed in the field of biblical reception studies.

The international research colloquium featured scholars from four continents who explored this subject. It occurred at the University of Graz and at the Cultural Center at the Minorites from December 4 to 6, 2008, in Graz. The title of this colloquium was “Departing for Modernity versus Clinging to the Outdated: Women’s Biblical Hermeneutics in the Context of Modern Times.”

Our thanks go to all those who made this volume financially possible, especially to the vice-rectorate for research and continuing education (University of Graz) and to Renate Dworczak, vice rector for human resources, personnel development, NAWI Graz and gender equality (University of Graz), as well as Abbot Bernard Lorent von Maredsous (Belgium). To all of them our warmest thanks, including Irmtraud Fischer, who always was willing to answer any questions and provided support in many areas, especially in financing. We also thank above all Markus Zimmermann and Stephanie Glück for their editorial cooperation as well as Christine Schönhuber for her support in layout. A special thank you goes to Andrea Taschl-Erber and Herbert Meßner who helped us meticulously in proofreading the articles. We also thank warmly Nina Kogler and Christian Blinzer for their assistance in organizing the research colloquium. Antonia Schmidinger incorporated the illustrations into the art history article.

The German edition of this volume was published in 2014, and we now present the English version. We would like to thank the translators who faithfully conveyed the meaning of the original languages into English. These include Dennis Lee Slabaugh, Gabriele Stein, Dana Sophie Brüller, and Annemarie del Cueto Lopez-Mörth. The Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship contributed to the cost of translating, as well as to the support of a student assistant, Erin Tanis. In addition, the Gender Studies program at Calvin College underwrote the assistance of Alyssa Gagnon. The general editor, Christiana de Groot, is very grateful to Calvin College and to these undergraduate students for their careful attention to detail and commitment to this project.

We hope these publications will inspire international researchers to do further studies in these subject areas. We could include here only their first endeavors. In our opinion, however, it has become obvious that there are many further aspects that have not yet been sufficiently studied.

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Graz and Hamburg

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## Abbreviations

Add MSS	British Library Additional Manuscripts
ADK	Archiv der Diakonie Kärnten
AF	<i>Altkatholisches Frauenblatt</i>
AFP	<i>Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum</i>
AGAJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AGP	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Pietismus
AHSI	<i>Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu</i>
AIA	<i>Album Ibero-americanum</i>
AISP	<i>Archivio Italiano per la Storia della Pietà</i>
AM	<i>Arminian Magazine</i> (later <i>Bible Christian Magazine</i> )
AngSS	Anglican Studies Series
AR	Ancien Régime: Aufklärung und Revolution
ASMSA	Archivio Storico della Congregazione delle Suore di Mara SS. Addolorata
ATL	Ästhetik–Theologie–Liturgik
ATLAMS	American Theological Library Association Monograph Series
<i>Ath</i>	<i>Athenaeum</i>
ATV	Archive of the Tavola Valdese
AV	Akademie-Vorträge
AW	America in the World
b.	Babylonian Talmud
<i>Bail</i>	<i>Bailamme</i>
BBB	Bürgerbibliothek Bern
BBCom	Blackwell Bible Commentaries
BBKL	<i>Biographisch-bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon</i>
BCR	Blackwell Companions to Religion
Ber.	Berakot
BET	Beiträge zur Evangelischen Theologie

BGAMB	Beiträge zur Geschichte des alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinerordens
BKK	Beiträge zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte
BLT	Broadview Literary Texts
B. Metz.	Bava Metzi'a
BNGO	Beiträge zur Neueren Geschichte Österreichs
BonB	Bonifatius-Broschüren
BR	Beck'sche Reihe
BSF	Bund Schweizerischer Frauenvereine
BSJW	Brandeis Series on Jewish Women
BT	Die bibliophilen Taschenbücher
CBS	Collana La Bibbia nella storia
CCR	Cambridge Companions to Religion
CFTL	Clark's Foreign Theological Library
<i>CJSLH</i>	<i>The Canadian Journal of Science, Literature and History</i>
COT	Commentary on the Old Testament
CQS	Chapman's Quarterly Series
CSSV	Collana della Società di Studi Valdesi
<i>DM</i>	<i>Deutscher Merkur</i>
DPJA	Archive of the German Province of the Jesuits, Munich
Dracma	Dracma: Collana di Testi su Donne e Cristianesimo
DRV	Douay-Rheims Version
<i>EB</i>	<i>Extrablatt der Berna</i>
EBT	Elberfeld Bible Translation
EDB	Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Bible
EK	Europäische Kulturgeschichte
<i>ELThG</i>	<i>Evangelisches Lexikon für Theologie und Gemeinde</i>
<i>ENPJ</i>	<i>The Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal</i>
<i>ET-S</i>	<i>ET-Studies</i>
EW	Europäische Wallfahrtsstudien
Fem	Feminae
Femin	Feminismus
GAC	Gender & American Culture
GG	Geschichte und Geschlechter
GH	Gender in History
GKL	Geschichte des kirchlichen Lebens
GP	Geschichte des Pietismus
GRLH	Garland Reference Library of the Humanities
GT	Gesellschaft und Theologie

GW	Gender Wissen
HBGHS	Historische Bibliothek der Gerda Henkel Stiftung
<i>HC</i>	<i>Historia Contemporánea</i>
HE	Historische Einführungen
HS	L'Homme Schriften: Reihe zur feministischen Geschichtswissenschaft
HTG	Historisch-theologische Genderforschung
<i>HWP</i>	<i>Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie</i>
<i>HZFG</i>	<i>L'Homme: Zeitschrift für feministische Geschichtswissenschaft</i>
<i>IKZ</i>	<i>Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift</i>
IS	Italia Sacra
ITL	International Theological Library
IW	Industrielle Welt
<i>JE</i>	<i>Jewish Encyclopedia</i>
<i>JHMT</i>	<i>Journal for the History of Modern Theology</i>
<i>JPRS</i>	<i>Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies</i>
<i>JSL NS</i>	<i>Journal of Sacred Literature New Series</i>
KADOC	KADOC Studies on Religion, Culture and Society
KG	Konfession und Gesellschaft
KIG	Die Kirche in ihrer Geschichte
KJV	King James Version
KK	Klassiker der Karikatur
<i>KKF</i>	<i>Kvinder, Kønog Forskning</i>
KLA	Kärntner Landesarchiv
KM	Kirchengeschichtliche Monographien
KSGW	Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft
LB	Lutherbibel
LBS	T&T Clark Library of Biblical Studies
<i>LCI</i>	<i>Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie</i>
<i>Leu</i>	<i>Leuchtfleur</i>
LHB/OTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
<i>LQR</i>	<i>London Quarterly Review</i>
LSVB	Literature and Society in Victorian Britain
<i>LThK</i>	<i>Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche</i>
LV	I Libri di Viella
<i>MCSR</i>	<i>Monatsschrift für christliche Sozialreform</i>
MHS	Mainzer Hymnologische Studien
MSt	Mariologische Studien
NASB	New American Standard Bible

NBEC	Nueva Biblioteca de Erudición y Crítica
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NZZ	Neue Zürcher Zeitung
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
Paed	Paedagogica: Testi e Studi Storici
Par	<i>Paradigm</i>
PBG	Paderborner Beiträge zur Geschichte
PCI	Post-Contemporary Interventions
PKV	Politik- und kommunikationswissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Görres-Gesellschaft
PL	Pietas Liturgica
Pro	<i>Protestantesimo</i>
PTHe	Praktische Theologie Heute
PuN	<i>Pietismus und Neuzeit: Ein Jahrbuch zur Geschichte des neueren Protestantismus</i>
QAMK	Quellen und Abhandlungen zur mittelhheinischen Kirchengeschichte
QFESH	Quellen und Forschungen zum evangelischen sozialen Handeln
QR	Quaderni della Rassegna
RF	Reihe Frauenforum
RGG	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>
RHE	<i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i>
RKM	Religiöse Kulturen der Moderne
RomQ	<i>Romance Quarterly</i>
RQ	<i>Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte</i>
Sag	Sagardiana: Estudios Feministas
SBWS	<i>Schweizerische Blätter für Wirtschafts- und Socialpolitik</i>
SCH	Studies in Church History
SD	Soggetto Donna
SKK	Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
SPR	Archives of San Paolo fuori le Mura, Rome
SQWFG	Studien und Quellen zur westfälischen Geschichte
SRS	Studi e Ricerche Storiche
S/S	Sacro/Santo
SStor	Studi Storici
SGKG	Sankt Galler Kultur und Geschichte

Stor	Storia
STPS	Studien zur Theologie und Praxis der Seelsorge
SymS	Symposium Series
TA	Theologische Akzente
TEM	Textos y Estudios de Mujeres
ThkD	Theologie im kulturellen Dialog
<i>Tra</i>	<i>Trajecta</i>
<i>TRE</i>	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>
TSR	Text and Studies in Religion
<i>TTZ</i>	<i>Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UTB	Uni-Taschenbücher
UTR	Utrechtse Theologische Reeks
VGMK	Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte der Mitteldeutschen Kirchenprovinz
VHKT	Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission für Thüringen
VKZG	Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Zeitgeschichte
<i>VP</i>	<i>Victorian Poetry</i>
Vulg.	Vulgate
WCA	Women and the Church in America
<i>WestF</i>	<i>Westfälische Forschungen</i>
WF	Wolfenbüttler Forschungen
<i>WMM</i>	<i>Wesleyan Methodist Magazine</i>
WR	Women's Rights
<i>WWLOU</i>	<i>Worte der Wahrheit und Liebe für Österreich und Ungarn</i>
YESWTR	Yearbook of the European Society of Women in Theological Research
ZGG	Zeugen des gegenwärtigen Gottes
ZSR	<i>Zeitschrift für schweizerisches Recht</i>

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## Introduction

*Ruth Albrecht and Michaela Sohn-Kronthaler*

*The Transformation of the World* was the title given by Jürgen Osterhammel, historian from Constance, to his voluminous history of the nineteenth century, which reached five editions within a short period.<sup>1</sup> In spite of all the changes that characterize the epoch between 1789 and 1914/1918, the permanent elements should not be overlooked. Among the characteristics of the so-called long nineteenth century is the fact that the Christian confessions and milieus became, to a considerable extent, more and more diversified. This internal differentiation was accompanied at the same time by tendencies toward secularization, which, however, did not lead, as was assumed for a long time by research, to a decrease in the significance of religious interpretive systems as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

All the Christian churches and also the denominations that originated during the course of this century, whether through separations or new beginnings, attributed a decisive significance to the biblical texts, yet careful examination reveals great differences. Bible reading and the interpretation of biblical texts were influenced by disparate currents. The simple reading and hearing of Holy Scripture in worship services and private devotions continued to have their place. Along with this, however, critical exegetical consideration of the biblical tradition increasingly gained ground during the course of the long nineteenth century. The diverse approaches to the Bible are reflected, among other ways, in the many different Bible editions and Bible translations, a small portion of which are reflected in the essays gathered here. The established Bible editions—especially the Vulgate used

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1. Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt: Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, HBGHS (Munich: Beck, 2010). A further special edition was published in 2011.

2. Osterhammel, *Verwandlung*, 1239–78.

by the Catholic Church and the translation by Martin Luther used by the Lutheran churches—retained their significance, of course, but new editions and translations heralded the replacement of authoritative exegetical traditions through a broad range of different approaches to Scripture. Not every group or current in the nineteenth century availed itself of its own Bible edition; however, new ways of approaching biblical tradition also were connected with some new beginnings.

The transformations that took place in the long nineteenth century were felt in all areas of life and thought. Men as well as women stood before new challenges, though as a rule they were different for the two sexes. Women acquired areas of freedom greater than ever before; thus the following statement applies to the female gender as a whole but not to each individual woman.

It was only the modern age at all that opened up the possibility that women could claim a place as subject, as an independent individual, as a political actor and citizen of the state. In spite of the extreme normative codification of their daily lives, the area of what was possible for women expanded in this period, and new, bold prospects became a distinct possibility.<sup>3</sup>

These sentences from the introduction to the volume titled *19. Jahrhundert* in the five-part *Geschichte der Frauen* stand under the leitmotif “Orders and Freedoms.” With these two concepts, the editors of the book attempt to describe the contradictory tendencies of the century from the perspective of women. The treatment of the nineteenth century belongs among the principal areas of women’s historical research, which in the 1970s began to apply feminist theories to the past. Religious aspects found little consideration at first, but since then a reconstruction of this century is no longer possible without regard for the religious orientations, which in many respects determined the life plans of many women.<sup>4</sup> The *Geschichte*

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3. Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot, “Einleitung,” in *19. Jahrhundert*, vol. 4 of *Geschichte der Frauen*, ed. Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot (Frankfurt: Campus, 1994), 11–17. The original edition of this work appeared in 1991 in Italian.

4. The series *Women and Religion in America*, which was published in three volumes from 1981 to 1986, begins with the nineteenth century. See Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller, eds., *The Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1 of *Women and Religion in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981).

*der Frauen* devotes three of its twenty analytical chapters to this aspect and analyzes in turn Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism.<sup>5</sup>

The Bible as the fundamental written document of Christianity unites all Christian confessions, but different approaches to the Holy Scriptures at times create disjunctions between the members of this confessional family. However, differences in regard to the reception and interpretation of the biblical tradition also divide the opposing currents in the major Christian branches from each other. In the nineteenth century, these contrasts clashed sharply with each other and gave rise to vehement confrontations.

Apart from individual investigations, there appeared in 2006 and 2007 two volumes of essays devoted to the relationship of women to the biblical tradition: Marion Ann Taylor and Heather E. Weir edited a volume that presented women and their reception of the book of Genesis; Christiana de Groot and Taylor (both authors in the present volume) edited another volume that makes female interpreters of the Bible from the nineteenth century better known; further works have been added since then.<sup>6</sup>

*The Handbook of Women Biblical Interpreters*, published in 2012 in the United States and edited by Taylor with Agnes Choi, presents for the first time a compilation of works by women from all centuries as interpreters of biblical texts. This volume comprises altogether 180 essays, more than a third of which are devoted to female writers from the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> While this handbook presents, above all, major representatives

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5. Michela De Giorgio, "Das katholische Modell," in Fraise and Perrot, *19. Jahrhundert*, 187–220; Jean Baubérot, "Die protestantische Frau," in Fraise and Perrot, *19. Jahrhundert*, 221–36; Nancy Green, "Die jüdische Frau: Variationen und Transformationen," in Fraise and Perrot, *19. Jahrhundert*, 237–52.

6. Marion Ann Taylor and Heather E. Weir, eds., *Let Her Speak for Herself: Nineteenth Century Women Writing on Women in Genesis* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006); Christiana de Groot and Taylor, eds., *Recovering Nineteenth Century Women Interpreters of the Bible*, *SymS* 38 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007). See, in addition, Nancy Calvert-Koyzis and Weir, eds., *Strangely Familiar: Protofeminist Interpretations of Patriarchal Biblical Texts* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009); and Calvert-Koyzis and Weir, eds., *Breaking Boundaries: Female Biblical Interpreters Who Challenged the Status Quo*, *LHB/OTS* 524, *LBS* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2010). For the individual studies, see, for example, Anne Loads, "Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *The Woman's Bible*," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception History of the Bible*, ed. Michael Lieb et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 307–22.

7. Marion Ann Taylor, ed., with Agnes Choi, *Handbook of Women Biblical Interpreters: A Historical and Biographical Guide* (Grand Rapids: Academic, 2012).

of the various currents of Bible reading, the focus of the present volume is on the diversity of women's understanding of the Bible and their biblical interpretations. The different Christian confessions thus show different opportunities for action for women. Protestant females had a different type of freedom than, for example, Catholic females, whose autonomous exegesis of Scripture was fundamentally limited or regulated through the church hierarchy, apart from special exceptions, as Adriana Valerio's essay in the present volume shows.

In the individual studies of this volume, our concern is to document, in word and image, both well-known and largely unknown women and their relationships to the Bible. Women authors from the late eighteenth century up to the beginning of the twentieth century are presented along with their explanations and interpretations. Even the relatively few exemplary investigations gathered here demonstrate the diversity of feminine reading of the Bible. In spite of the necessary limitations to a few detailed analyses, one can recognize that a broad range of the treatment of the Holy Scriptures can be documented. This range extends from the application of biblical figures as models for the structuring of one's own life to participation in academic exegesis. The literary genres in which women's occupation with the Bible finds expression extend from letters, diaries, and autobiographical records to stories, novels, songs, and poems and to specialized exegetical treatises and commentaries on individual books of the Bible. Women spoke and wrote about their understanding of the Bible in distinctively varied contexts, from the smallest private circle to mass public meetings. A few were concerned through their own exegesis only to confirm and to testify to the interpretation of biblical texts found in their own ecclesiastical tradition; for others, the express intention to change the prevailing interpretations of the Bible through their own contributions stood in the foreground. Scripture remained an important frame of reference, even if women distanced themselves from its claim to validity. The diversity of biblical receptions by women is astounding, but until now that diversity has not been so portrayed. Confessional paradigms are broken apart, as Jewish women, Christian women, and women at the edge of the Christian tradition read biblical texts in part from comparable impulses. They are thereby encouraged to speak out for equality and educational opportunities for women because they find models in the biblical tradition for their action. However, confessional characteristics also distinguish the female authors: a Russian Orthodox recluse or abbess of a cloister reads the Bible with a perspective different from that of an American Method-

ist woman or a German female evangelist of Lutheran background whose impulses stem from the Anglo-Saxon Holiness Movement.

Most of the essays in this volume can be assigned to large regions. The analyses by Paul W. Chilcote, Taylor, de Groot, Elizabeth M. Davis, and Pamela S. Nadell contain perspectives on the Anglo-American sphere.

Chilcote devotes himself to the Methodism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a period of the unwritten history of Methodist women and their relationship to the Bible. He discusses how Methodist women in this phase dealt with Holy Scripture, which stood at the center of their lives, and shows how these women interpreted the Bible in innovative ways and used it for the transmission of their own experiences of faith in order to justify the Wesleyan vision of Christian life.

Taylor's essay illuminates a forgotten chapter of the history of critical biblical exegesis in England in the nineteenth century. She investigates women's reactions to the ideas and results of historical-critical exegesis, as well as their role in the dissemination of those results. Did the biblical interpretations by these women reflect the general tendencies of biblical studies? What role did privileged, well-educated women, only a few of whom dedicated themselves explicitly to academic research, play in the transformation leading up to the triumph of historical-critical exegesis? Taylor devotes herself especially to women who took an exemplary part in this movement, such as Sarah Trimmer, Florence Nightingale, Constance and Henrietta de Rothschild, Elizabeth Rundle Charles, and Christina Rossetti.

The varied history of the reception of the Deborah narrative is analyzed by de Groot in extracts from six female writers of the nineteenth century. She explains how these women read the Bible in the light of their own experiences and how they found echoes of the themes of their own times in the book of Judges. De Groot investigates in what ways these female authors interpreted the Deborah narrative and Deborah's song insofar as their positions in the women's question or in the relationship of the sexes in the private as well as the social realm are concerned.

Roman Catholic nun Davis deals with Catherine McAuley, the founder of Davis's own community of sisters. This Irish woman started a religious congregation of women in the nineteenth century that today is found around the world and thus contributed to social change. Davis shows the influence of McAuley's biblical exegesis upon the community she founded. Although McAuley interpreted Holy Scripture intuitively and without critical self-reflection, she nevertheless used the Bible selectively and with

authority in order to have a part in effecting social change. In so doing, she anticipated currents in biblical hermeneutics. McAuley was primarily a Bible reader whose texts on Holy Scripture were disseminated far and wide and were read for decades by religious communities around the world. With her study, Davis aims to debunk the assumption that the Bible was completely alien to Catholic women in the early nineteenth century.

Nadell's essay directs our attention to a group of American Jewish women who in 1893 at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago publicly claimed the right to interpret the Bible and postbiblical Jewish texts. They read these sources against the backdrop of their own biographies and their own epoch; later they even published their results. At the World Parliament of Religions, which took place in temporal proximity to the Exposition, Josephine Lazarus and Henrietta Szold not only made clear how broad Judaism was in the nineteenth century; they also presented their own interpretations of Jewish tradition and contemporary existence. Women demanded for themselves the right to help shape Judaism as well as to reinterpret its past. With their own biblical exegeses, they underscored their demand to read rabbinical texts and to apply their understanding of this holy literature to the great questions of their time. Nadell draws a direct line of connection from the women speakers at the congress of Jewish women and the World Parliament of Religions to those women who eventually used the Bible and the holy texts of Judaism to demand further rights for women, such as education, admission to university study, and the right to become rabbis and thereby set in motion a process of change within Judaism.

The areas of southern and eastern Europe are illuminated by Marina Cacchi, Adriana Valerio, and Inmaculada Blasco Herranz, as well as by Alexei Klutschewski and Eva Maria Synek.

The essay by Cacchi presents a specific characteristic of Waldensian evangelization in Italy in the nineteenth century. It analyzes the role of Holy Scripture in the official reports of the Biblewomen (*Bibelfrauen, Signore della bibbia*), the female employees of the Waldensian Church who sent their reports regularly to the Committee for Evangelization (*Comitato di Evangelizzazione*) to which they were responsible. These women, for several years or throughout a large portion of their lives, carried out systematic preaching activity within the framework of their home visits. The value that these female Waldensian preachers attached to the biblical text during their evangelization work is shown in concrete ways. In addition, the position and significance the Bible assumed in the formation of their

identities as women, believers, and teachers, as well as the Bible's use by the Biblewomen, is highlighted in these reports.

Valerio, one of the editors of the Bible and Women series to which this volume belongs, investigates the dissemination of the Bible in Italy and the relationship of women to it as reflected in the works of different female founders of Italian religious congregations. What role did Holy Scripture play in the origin of these nineteenth-century women's religious associations? Valerio presents in this context the example of congregational founder Sister Maria Luisa Ascione, who between 1837 and 1865, in a practice of independent biblical exegesis, committed to paper forty-five Bible commentaries in her *Illustrazioni*.

Blasco Herranz provides a Spanish perspective on the reception of the Bible. She looks at the work of writer and journalist María de la Concepción Gimeno de Flaquer, who characterized herself as a conservative feminist. The essay "Evangelios de la Mujer" ("Women's Gospels") is one of Gimeno de Flaquer's most representative works, and Blasco Herranz is able to use it to demonstrate clearly how Catholicism served the writer in substantiating the validity and legitimacy of her feminist demands. This is true not only for the biblical texts but also for the voices of ecclesiastical authority that she put forward. Gimeno de Flaquer used her writings to demonstrate the intellectual equality of women and men as well as the special role played by women in human history and in church history. At the same time, she advocated for better educational opportunities for females with arguments she derived from her historical material.

Klutschewski and Synek concern themselves with access to the Bible for Orthodox women and with the significance of Holy Scripture for the spirituality of nuns and other Russian women who, in various forms, led spiritual and ascetic lives. Just as seen in the essays in this volume on the Catholic Church, the fact that women interacted intensively with the Bible also applies to the Orthodox churches, which until now have been examined under this aspect much less intensively. The results of Klutschewski's and Synek's work will encourage others, we hope, to inquire about Orthodox women in other countries who likewise engaged the Bible in a lively manner within the context of their tradition.

The essays by Angela Berlis, Ruth Albrecht, Doris Brodbeck, Ute Gause, and Michaela Sohn-Kronthaler have women and texts from the German-speaking world as their objects.

Berlis deals with the relationship between women and the Bible in the nineteenth century with respect to liturgy. She directs her view primarily

toward the way in which a group of women who came from the nobility and the bourgeoisie read the Bible in the nineteenth century, interpreted it for their lives, and shaped it into religious practice. Her essay focuses on women who belonged to a spiritual circle in Bonn, who were, as a rule, unmarried (*Bonner Kreuzeskränzchen*); and who can be assigned to early Old Catholicism. Berlis draws upon unpublished letters to celibate male spiritual members of this circle as well as a litany written by the women investigated. The female members of this Bonn circle dealt with the biblical texts in the contexts of catechesis, liturgy, and the (common) reading of the church fathers, but also in reflection and conversation, thereby establishing a connection to their own lives.

Albrecht investigates controversies in the milieu of the Protestant renewal movements. In some of these groups, women established themselves as preachers and evangelists on the basis of new interpretations of biblical texts. Albrecht presents protagonists for whom the Bible was of central significance. They justified their activities by appeal to biblical texts but proceeded in quite different ways. Their varied ways of reading the Bible show many commonalities that rest upon the condition that the texts of the Old and New Testaments contain the revelation of God that speaks directly to individual readers. So, for example, Adeline Duchess von Schimmelmänn was among the few women in the period around 1900 who took an active part within the framework of the new piety movements and openly advocated that both sexes were called to proclaim the gospel.

Brodbeck directs her view toward Helene von Mülinen, who belonged to the Reformed Church in Switzerland. The Bible was important to this patrician daughter from Berne in two ways: it lent her a language for lamenting against ecclesiastical and social traditions and for formulating new visions. Using biblical texts, she expressed her doubts about interpretations of the Bible that, for her, had become hostile to life. But in its texts, too, she found the first beginnings of a strengthening of women's emancipation and of social policy, which she pursued as president of the Alliance of Swiss Women's Associations. In her letters, lectures, and articles, Mülinen often took up biblical images and expressions without making these explicit. Brodbeck's essay also shows how she came to this way of reading the Bible.

Gause deals with Eva von Tiele-Winckler from Silesia, who published numerous biblical interpretations. Her devotional writings, which were widely distributed, were intended above all for the sisterhoods of deaconesses that Tiele-Winckler called into being. This Silesian noblewoman used

an individual interpretation of the biblical texts typical in the revival movements, which assumes the literal inspiration of the Bible: every verse speaks directly to reader, whether male or female, since God reveals himself in his word. The investigation in this essay focuses upon Tiele-Winckler's interpretations of texts from the prophet Isaiah and from the Sermon on the Mount.

Like Tiele-Winckler, Countess Elvine de La Tour is one of the typical representatives of female social welfare work. Sohn-Kronthaler shows in her essay the significance of Bible reading for de La Tour, who on the basis of her revivalist piety created a substantial network of social welfare institutions in Friaul and in Carinthia that still exist in Austria today. De La Tour's existential appropriation of Holy Scripture made active love of neighbor indispensable for the Christian life. She interpreted the growth of her charitable institutions in the light of Holy Scripture; her concern for popular missionary evangelization also played an important role. For this she recruited, on the basis of her international network, female and male evangelists from Switzerland and various German centers of the revival movement for the purpose of proclaiming the message of salvation in her home country.

The subject of (religious) literature and art is treated by Bernhard Schneider, Magda Motté, Katharina Büttner-Kirschner, and Elfriede Wiltschnigg.

Schneider pursues a rather innovative question insofar as he concerns himself in detail with more popular spiritual literature that was explicitly intended for a Catholic female reading public. The authors of this literature were primarily men, especially the clergy. The following aspects guide Schneider's analyses: Can gender-specific differences be determined? What images of women did the authors develop from the Bible? Did they verify their already-existing images of women through the Bible, or did they project the desired conduct of women back upon biblical figures? Upon the basis of his extensive research, Schneider concludes that the Bible represented only one point of reference next to others in the devotional and edificatory literature for women.

Motté analyzes the adaptation of biblical material in the literature of the long nineteenth century. As she explicitly emphasizes, she offers only a summary of the abundant material to a specific complex of questions; the results can be characterized in her view as only meager, since other material stood in the foreground of the chosen literary subjects. Using selected texts from German-speaking female writers, Motté traces out how these writers shaped literarily the biblical traditions regarding Mary

of Magdala, Lilith, and Judith, thus providing the opportunity to discuss unusual gender options.

Büttner-Kirschner presents selected Marian portraits and other biblical pictures by the painter from Constance, Marie Ellenrieder, who, as one of the few female artists of this epoch, took up themes from Holy Scripture. Büttner-Kirschner's analysis deals with unity and difference in the representation of the sexes in Ellenrieder's work. The pictures printed along with the text of the article show how the artist located herself between tradition and innovation when she, for example, portrays Mary as the author of the Magnificat. It is striking that, in Ellenrieder's rendering of women, she emphasizes the aspect of communication.

Wiltschnigg examines the Bible illustrations by two famous artists: Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld and Gustave Doré. She deals first of all with the profiles of the two painters and provides an introduction to the techniques that each used in shaping his artistic interpretation of the Bible. This comparison of the two reveals similarity as well as great differences in regard to conception of biblical themes. Old Testament women in individual and mass scenes, in many instances documented through the reproduction of the woodcuts and wood engravings, are then examined. The tension between traditional gender concepts and individual, unusual interpretations of the conduct of men and women is one of the aspects that Wiltschnigg emphasizes.

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