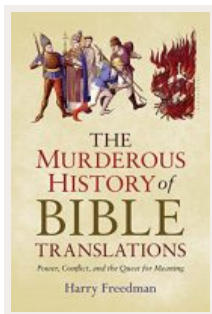


The Murderous History of Bible Translations: Power, Conflict and the Quest for Meaning

BY [HARRY FREEMAN](#)



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This is a fascinating account of how the “Good Book” inspired spectacularly bad behavior. The author writes to make readers aware of the dangers posed by radical fundamentalism and religious extremism. He is adept at untangling the complex history of bible translation from the days of Alexander the Great through today’s controversies regarding gender-neutral bibles.

A whole lot of blood is spilled in these pages. With the exceptions of Martin Luther and King James, bible translators met with very messy endings. The ruthless suppression of vernacular bibles was non-sectarian: both the Spanish Inquisition and the various Protestant denominations burned translators and translations that threatened their authority, for,

as Freedman aptly states, “The Bible which liberates can also be the Bible that controls.” The history of biblical translation is inextricably linked with the rise of a new revolutionary technology – printing. Just as the Internet is turning our world upside down, printing – by making the Word of God available to everyone – undermined the authority of the Church, aristocracy and civil authorities.

A complex and important story told in clear, non-academic language that should appeal to anyone with an interest in history or bible studies.

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