GEORGE JOYE'S POLEMICAL USE 
OF THE SCRIPTURES* 

by RAINER PINEAS 

York College 
The City University of New York 

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During the Tudor period, Protestant Reformers tended to rely heavily on the Scriptures as a weapon against their Catholic opponents, since they believed that the Scriptures were the ultimate authority on Christian doctrine and conduct. The work of the most important of these, William Tyndale, has already been treated,¹ and it is therefore the intention of this paper to examine the contribution made by one of Tyndale's contemporaries, George Joye.² 

Joye fled to the Continent toward the end of 1527, and between 1529 and 1549 produced a large number of polemical works, among them biblical translations and biblical commentary. It is on this latter aspect of Joye's achievement that the present study intends to focus, specifically on his The exposition of Daniel the Prophete (1545). 

But before one examines Joye's polemical use of the Scriptures, one should appreciate the basic principles of scriptural translation and exegesis on which Joye operated - a procedure which was also necessary in analyzing Tyndale's polemical use of the Bible. 

These principles Joye discusses at some length during his quarrel with Tyndale, a quarrel which originated from Joye's anonymous and unauthorized 1534 revision of Tyndale's 1526 New Testament.³ 

When Tyndale published his translation in 1526, he promised a more accurate version when time permitted. However, he became absorbed 

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² Details of Joye's life and career are to be found in Charles C. Butterworth and Allen G. Chester, George Joye (Philadelphia, 1962). 
³ See George Joye, p. 150.
with other projects, such as a translation of the Old Testament, while there was great demand for his New Testament translation. Consequently, to capitalize on this demand, an Antwerp printer published two unauthorized and corrupt versions in 1527 and 1530. Joye claims that he was asked to supervise a third printing to ensure accuracy, and that he agreed only for the sake of producing a correct text and because meanwhile Tyndale "slept," and did not publish his own promised revision.

Joye's anonymous revision of Tyndale's 1526 New Testament was on the market by the summer of 1534. Among the changes Joye made in the 1526 text, the most important was his frequent rendering of Tyndale's "resurrection" by "the life after this," for Joye did not believe that the souls of the saved slept until the Last Judgement, but rather that they passed immediately from earthly to eternal life.

Tyndale was furious. He thought Joye had tried to "scoop" him for the sake of financial gain, and he charged that because of the anonymity of the translation, it would be taken as his, and that thereby Joye had fathered on him views concerning the resurrection he never held. Butterworth and Chester comment on Joye's practice in this case that, "He insinuated into the text a debatable interpretation which should have been reserved for a marginal note or a commentary." As we shall see, this practice was typical both of Joye's translation and citation of Scripture.

When Tyndale's own 1584 revision of his 1526 New Testament appeared, it was prefaced with a passage attacking Joye on the points discussed. Joye's chief rebuttal was his An Apologye . . . to satisfye (if it maye be) w. Tindale (1535).

Joye attempted to defend his action by attacking the quality of Tyndale's translation, as well as his marginal annotations, commenting,

... I had as lief put the trwthe in the text as in the margent and excepte the glose expowne the text (as many of theirs do not) or where the text is playn ynowng: I had as lief leue siche friuole gloses cleue [sic] out. (Sigs. C7v C8).

Somewhat later in the same work he implies that "many of his friuole notis & gloses in mergents some of thez befownde bothe false & sclaunorous & to litle effect" (Sig. E8).

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4 Ibid., p. 151. 5 Ibid., p. 161. 6 Ibid., p. 166.