

<b>Institution: University of Leicester</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: UoA 29 English Language and Literature</b>
<b>Title of case study: The King James Bible in a post-Christian Society</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>2011 was the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, one of the most significant documents in the history of the English language. In 2010, Professor Gordon Campbell published a monograph on the history of the KJV and an edition of the 1611 text. These two books played a central role in the process whereby the KJV moved from being the private possession of believers and students of literature and achieved renewed significance as the cultural property of the wider Anglophone world. In England, the KJV became the property of school children when the British government bought 21,144 copies of Campbell's edition of the Bible, and presented a copy to every primary and secondary school in the country. Campbell's books generated income that ran well into six figures, and an extensive series of lectures and discussions have deepened understanding of the KJV throughout the world.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The underpinning research, conducted in 2008-10, draws on Campbell's body of work on historical theology and Biblical scholarship in Early Modern Europe, carried out during his career in the School of English at University of Leicester. He joined the University in 1979.</p> <p>Original material on these subjects was published in Campbell's single-authored <i>Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance</i> (3), in his sections of the multi-authored <i>Milton and the Manuscript of De Doctrina Christiana</i> (4), and his contributions to the recent scholarly edition and translation of Milton's <i>De Doctrina Christiana</i> (2012). Research materials for the Bible projects included printed sources in more than 20 ancient and modern languages, a wide range of manuscripts (mostly in Latin, but also Greek and occasionally Hebrew and Syriac). In the case of manuscripts, Campbell made some transcriptions using a lightbox (to read under corrections), others from digitised reproductions (to enable superimposition of words), and others from the crevices of tightly bound volumes (notably a volume of Bible translators' annotations in the Bodleian).</p> <p>The <i>Bible</i> monograph (1), a biography of the Bible's first 400 years, was designed as a trade book for a general readership to create impact beyond universities. For this reason Campbell's original scholarship underpins a narrative that is uncluttered by quotations in foreign languages and not weighed down by scholarly apparatus. The research included careful examination of manuscripts that have never been edited or reproduced, and the hunt for sources of particular phrases in a variety of ancient and modern languages.</p> <p>The accompanying edition of the Bible (2) is more scholarly, and innovative. The edition comprises a transcription of a single manuscript that produces the original reading and subsequent layers of correction as the document is redrafted; it captures exact lineation, relative letter size, orthographical variants and paralinguistic markers. It is the only so-called 'diplomatic edition' since 1833, in that it preserves the preliminary pages and uniquely reintroduces every printer's error in the original text.</p> <p>The transcription is supplemented by records of variants and alternative readings, an account of the work's codicology and palaeography, and of the sources of quotations and allusions used by the author, and a translation. The scholarship appeals beyond an academic readership to KJV devotees who want to get as close as possible to the original text. An essay by Campbell at the back of this edition mediates the text to the general public. The essay approaches the King James Bible as a physical object (not a text) that differs greatly from modern editions of the same text. Here Campbell explains the 70+ pages of preliminaries in the original edition, and explains why the spelling and punctuation, and sometimes the text, differ from modern editions of the KJV.</p>

### 3. References to the research

- (1) Gordon Campbell, *Bible: the Story of the King James Version 1611-2011* (OUP, 2010), xiii+354pp.
- (2) Gordon Campbell, ed. *The Holy Bible: Quatercentenary Edition* (OUP, 2010) 1518 pp.
- (3) Gordon Campbell, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of the Renaissance* (OUP, 2003), xlvi + 862pp.
- (4) Gordon Campbell et al., *Milton and the Manuscript of De Doctrina Christiana* (OUP, 2007), xii + 180pp.
- (5) John K Hale and J Donald Cullinton, eds, Additional material by Gordon Campbell and Thomas Corns, *Milton's De Doctrina Christiana*. 2 vols (OUP, 2012), xc + 1263.

### 4. Details of the impact

The King James Bible is the founding text of the British Empire (including breakaway countries such as the United States), and was carried to every corner of the English-speaking world by migrants and missionaries. It matters now, both as a religious text and as the finest embodiment of English prose. Campbell's research into the KJV has impacted on public awareness of the cultural significance of that version of the Bible, and has engaged with issues concerning Biblical literacy and the place of the Bible in a society that is at once post-Christian and multi-faith.

#### Economic Impact

[text removed for publication] Sales figures of the Bible were boosted by the decision of the Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove and the DES to buy a copy of Campbell's edition for distribution to every school in England and Wales. When news of this decision was leaked to the press (May 2012), a debate was initiated about whether the distribution of the KJV was an embodiment of a nostalgic Tory vision of a Christian England, or an enlightened move to acquaint the English with a literary and spiritual resource that lies at the heart of British history.

#### Changing Public Perceptions of the Bible in the UK

The wider significance of Campbell's research is indicated through worldwide media interest and public lectures (over 60 invitations in 2011-13, all for public audiences). Media exposure has included an interview on BBC Radio 4's Today Programme (6.5 million listeners, 23 November 2010), a BBC World Service interview (10 million listeners, 31 December 2010), participation as consultant and contributor to 'The Story of the King James Bible', a three-part series on Radio 4 hosted by James Naughtie (3.5 million listeners, 3-5 January 2011) and participation as consultant and contributor to 'When God Spoke English: the making of the King James Bible', hosted by Adam Nicolson broadcast on BBC4 (June 2011) and BBC2 (July 2011). On BBC local radio Campbell gave interviews at 10-minute intervals to 23 BBC local radio stations (9 January 2011), in each interview adducing Bible translators associated with the region in which the station was broadcasting.

In Leicester Campbell contributed to a three-part 'Faith' radio programme (November 2010); he also recorded several radio pieces for BBC Ulster (January-February 2011), which broadcasts to a constituency in which Christianity has been a divisive force. Behind the scenes he gave a talk (26/1/11) to some 30 faith producers and presenters at the BBC Centre in Bristol, where they were encouraged to investigate new areas, notably Black Majority Churches, where the KJV is often used. Ashley Peatfield, the BBC's editor of Religion and Ethics for the English Regions notes of Professor Campbell's work with BBC producers and presenters that it was:

instrumental on two levels. Hearing from a recognised academic expert allowed our team to have a full grasp of the subject area and its relevance and significance [which] then allowed our presenters to convey that knowledge and understanding to a wider audience and to make their questioning and exploration of the subject matter credible

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

and meaningful [. . .], bring[ing] audiences to a subject area they might initially consider dry or irrelevant. BBC local radio religious broadcasting reaches 1.5 million people on a Sunday morning and enjoys the highest share of listening of the week on BBC local radio. This topic was discussed elsewhere on the radio stations too with a combined reach of about 8 million people. The majority of the audience is older and largely from social groups who might not regularly access stations like Radio 4 which would routinely cover these types of areas. Indeed, a significant section of the BBC local radio audience does not access other BBC content. So, this was not only helpful in reaching a wider audience but in reaching one that might not encounter this subject area anywhere else.

*Worldwide Impact and Engagement with Difficult-to-reach Groups*

This work has achieved audiences world-wide that academics would not ordinarily reach: fundamentalists, the religious right in the US (there was even a review in Glocktalk, a leading on-line firearms forum), the black community, members of more marginal Christian groups (Mormons, Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses), and new secular constituencies such as the readers of GQ Magazine, for which Ed Vaizey (then Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries) reviewed the Bible book (February 2011).

The project has also contributed to interdenominational, interfaith, and intercultural understanding. This is illustrated by a visit to the Vatican (1 March 2012) to speak at an exhibition of manuscripts which led to Pope Benedict XVI asking the church in Cuba to invite both exhibition and speakers to the country; and a lecture on the King James Bible at Aligarh Muslim University in India (5 February 2013).

In the United States, Campbell gave two extended interviews to National Public Radio: a 30-minute interview with 'the Book Show' on WAMC Northeast Public Radio was broadcast in February 2011 on more than 100 stations in the region, and material from another interview was used extensively on a programme that was broadcast nationally to some 900 stations which have a total listenership of 26 million. On Christian radio, Campbell gave interviews to Transworld Radio (January 2011) and the TruNews Christian Radio Network (2 November 2010). One reason for this attention is that, in the words of the TLS reviewer, 'Campbell has the edge ... in his account of the reception history of the KJV in the United States' (9 February 2011).

This exposure in the US has led to an invitation for Campbell to act as senior scholar (together with Alistair McGrath of KCL) on a project mounted by the Green Scholars Initiative that aims to explore the sources for the KJV and the most important revisions made until the modern text was established by OUP in 1769, work that will feed into the establishment of the Museum of the Bible near the National Mall in Washington DC in 2016. As a direct result of his research, Professor Campbell has been appointed to the planning committee of the Museum, and is charged with responsibility for the History floor of the Museum, which includes Biblical archaeology and the history of the Bible.

As part of his work for the Green Scholars Initiative, Campbell has given lectures at their travelling exhibition of Biblical manuscripts and books, two of which lectures are now available on video. The Association for Christian Schools International (ACSI) is using the videos both for continuing education for its tens of thousands of teachers at 24,000 schools globally, and to supplement course resources.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

47 world-wide reviews of *Bible: the Story of the King James Version 1611-2011*, including:

(1) *BBC History Magazine*: <http://www.historyextra.com/book-review/bible-story-king-james->

## Impact case study (REF3b)

[version-1611%E2%80%932011-begat-king-james-bible-and-english-language](#)

(2) *The Independent* (Best Books of 2010): <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/the-guest-list-best-books-of-2010-2169413.html>

(3) *NBC New York* (Television Review): [http://www.nbcnewyork.com/on-air/as-seen-on/Bills\\_Books-4\\_16\\_2011\\_New\\_York-119990409.html](http://www.nbcnewyork.com/on-air/as-seen-on/Bills_Books-4_16_2011_New_York-119990409.html)

(4) *The Washington Post*: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/08/AR2010100802795.html>

12 radio and TV events, including:

(5) BBC Radio 4, 23 November 2010 interview with Andrew Motion on Today Programme: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid\\_9218000/9218861.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_9218000/9218861.stm)

(6) BBC local radio: On 9 January 2011 interviews with Gordon Campbell were broadcast at ten-minute intervals to 23 BBC local radio stations (Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Coventry and Warwickshire, Devon, Gloucestershire, Guernsey, Humberside, Jersey, Kent, Leeds, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottingham, Sheffield and South Yorkshire, Shropshire, Solent, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, Tees, Three Counties Radio, York and North Yorkshire).

35 events and appearances world-wide, including:

(7) 2 May 2011, Harvard Club, New York City, a talk to members of the Harvard Club.

(8) 8 June 2011, Wrexham Public Library, a lecture at Wrexham Public Library on 'The King James Bible as Literature'.

For further details of reviews of Campbell's edition of the King James Version, public and press discussions of it, author events, appearances and videos, see:

<https://swww2.le.ac.uk/departments/english/ref-impact-data/ref-impact-data-page-2>