

Institution: University of Oxford
Unit of Assessment: 029 English Language and Literature
Title of case study: Enhancing Public Understanding of the King James Bible
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>This case study describes contributions to the public understanding of the King James Bible in the UK and US, achieved through organisation of public exhibitions marking the 400th anniversary of publication, a mobile app, educational and cultural events. 'Manifold Greatness', exhibited first at the Bodleian Library, told the story of the commissioning of the KJB and how the many translators working 'by committee' achieved its famous 'perfection of style'. The exhibition debunked myths about the KJB, educated school and adult audiences, and informed and energised public debate in 2011-13 about the place of the Bible in British and American culture.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The Manifold Greatness project, an interdisciplinary project of communication about the KJB that spans the Anglophone world, was led from within the English Faculty by Helen Moore, drawing on research conducted in the Faculties of English (by herself, Valentine Cunningham, Peter McCullough, Elizabeth Solopova), Theology (Diarmaid MacCulloch, Christopher Rowland), and History (Judith Maltby) with archival assistance from Julian Reid (Merton and Corpus Christi Colleges). Moore's research lies in the literature of early modern England, especially the history and cultural significance of translation (she is the author of a chapter in the early modern volume of the <i>Oxford History of Literary Translation in English</i>). Her work on secular translation into English from vernacular and classical languages in the C16 and her experience in editing translated texts and adaptations underpinned this project, as did her expertise in the overlapping cultures of the 'medieval' and the 'early modern' periods. One Tudor translator on whom she has worked, Thomas Paynell, provides a good example of the interlocking characteristics of biblical and secular, medieval and early modern, translation in the period and demonstrates the range of socially-inflected uses, to which translation could be put in the generations immediately preceding the KJB. Moore's commitment to the study of the early modern book as a material artefact is visible in the exhibition, which draws attention to physical books used by the translators and physical objects employed in the course of their intellectual endeavours.</p> <p>Cunningham's scholarly writings on the Bible as a work of rhetoric and poetry informed the exhibition and website's treatment of the cultural afterlife of the KJB, as did his expertise in cultures of dissent. Both strands of research informed his contribution to the public lecture series.</p> <p>McCullough is an expert in the early modern sermon and the various physical and cultural settings influencing the use of the Bible in the work of early preachers, including Lancelot Andrewes and John Donne. His expertise fed into the exhibition's treatment of manuscript evidence for the practices of translation and scholarly debate, and into its presentation of the KJB's literary afterlife.</p> <p>Solopova's research focuses on the records of manuscript production, ownership and use that reveal much of what is known about the cultural context of the Wycliffite Bible, the medieval precursor to the KJB. Her knowledge informed the exhibition's explanations of English bible culture before the KJB, and its presentation of the material history of biblical scholarship.</p> <p>Diarmaid MacCulloch is Professor of Church History, a leading authority on the Reformation and on the history of Christianity generally. His influence can be seen across the exhibition, not least in its presentation of the long history of intellectual, theological and political wrangling and tinkering involved in a work of translation by many hands. He played a major role alongside Moore in making <i>Manifold Greatness</i> accessible to the public, and provided the narration for the mobile app.</p> <p>Christopher Rowland is a scholar of the New Testament, and has published extensively on the history of its interpretation, including its treatment by different forms of English radicalism. He helped to shape the exhibition's treatment of the theological and literary decisions underpinning the KJB New Testament translations, and of the cultural afterlife of the Bible.</p> <p>Judith Maltby has special expertise in the early history of Anglicanism and the role of the prayerbook in English Christian culture. She contributed especially to the interpretation of the fraught political culture out of which the KJB grew.</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <p>Helen Moore, 'Gathering Fruit: The "Profitable" Translations of Thomas Paynell', in <i>Tudor</i></p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

Translation, ed. Fred Schurink, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

———, *Classical Literary Careers and their Reception*, ed. with Philip Hardie, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Valentine Cunningham, 'The Novel and the Protestant Fix: Between Melancholy and Ecstasy', in *Biblical Religion and the Novel 1700-2000*, ed. Mark Knight & Thomas Woodman (Ashgate, 2006), 39-57.

Peter McCullough, 'Andrewes & Donne: Using Bibles in the Age of Translation', *Lambeth Palace Library Annual Review 2011* (2012), 67-88.

Elizabeth Solopova, *Latin Liturgical Psalters in the Bodleian Library: A Select Catalogue* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2013).

Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: a Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

———, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London: Penguin Allen Lane, 1999).

Judith Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and early Stuart England*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

All available on request.

Indicators of quality

MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*: winner of the Whitbread prize, the James Tait Black prize and the Duff Cooper prize.

Maltby: 'a work of scholarship which lights up dark corners far beyond its apparent specialism' (Robert Runcie, *The Daily Telegraph*); 'No historian of the Reformation, of the rise of Anglicanism, or of popular religion in the localities, can afford to neglect her work' (*The Church Times*).

Moore and Hardie: 'an important point of reference...will no doubt occupy a distinguished position in the academic *curricula* for a long time to come' (*Journal of Hellenic Studies* 132 (2012)).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The main UK impact of Oxford research on the King James Bible, gathered and put collaboratively to work by Moore to mark the quatercentenary of the Bible's publication, occurred in the anniversary year, 2011, with further impact in the US continuing into July 2013. The exhibition produced immediate **benefits for Oxford city by informing cultural history teaching for local schools and enriching the city's summer cultural programme**. It **increased cultural and historical understanding of the KJB** for the record number of visitors to the Bodleian and those who accessed it virtually via the mobile phone app, and achieved significant **economic benefits** for the Bodleian Library. Extensive press coverage assisted further impact in the way of **informing and enlivening public debate about the importance of the KJB in British history and its ongoing significance**. The reach of impact extended when the exhibition transferred to the US, with the focus widened to reflect the **cultural significance of the KJB in America**. Financial backing from the National Endowment for the Humanities, supported the educational and cultural work of these American exhibitions, and enabled a panel exhibition touring 40 US sites.

'Manifold Greatness: Oxford and the Making of the King James Bible' was the Bodleian Libraries' Summer Exhibition for 2011, with free admission for the public 7 days a week for 4 months. It brought together a vast resource of original manuscripts, books and material objects never before displayed to the public or reunited since 1611, and it told, in scholarly but accessible form, the story of religious fervour, intellectual conviction, technical skill and political will that produced the 'Authorized Version'. An initial proposal was put to the Bodleian in 2010 by Moore, following discussions with archivist Reid. Moore then devised the narrative, ethos and themes of the exhibition and book, and assembled and led the curatorial committee (section 2) who, through their wider subject-specific expertise in theology, history, and literary criticism decided how to deliver the overarching aim of demolishing the myth that the KJB 'descended from the sky', selecting texts and objects to demonstrate the polymathic intellectual interests and labours of the translators, and providing interpretative materials to draw out (inter alia) the strikingly 'modern' nature of a collective enterprise in which translations were argued over academically, crafted as rhetoric and poetry, and fiddled with endlessly in committees. Over 58,000 visitors attended the exhibition between 22 April and 4 September—a Bodleian record. They ranged from the Paulton Junior School children who attended as part of a classics visit, to the Archbishop of Canterbury who took time out from a

diocesan visit to study the exhibition. The website (<http://www.manifoldgreatness.org/>) and a blog (<http://manifoldgreatness.wordpress.com/>), live from March 2011 until 31 July 2012, attracted 199,464 page views (41,004 unique visitors) and 67,227 page views respectively. The mobile phone app, 'The Making of the King James Bible', was a first venture into app design for the Bodleian. It made virtual coverage of the exhibition available for download to iPhone, iPad and Android devices at a cost of 69p. Featuring more than 60 items from the exhibition, it replicated electronically the exhibition's work in reuniting books and documents behind the *KJB* translation. Michael Heaney, executive secretary of the library, commented that 'The app is a great way of reaching people around the world ... who can't visit the exhibition in person.' The app was downloaded 998 times between 3 August 2011 and 9 July 2013 when it was retired.

The organising committee also assisted the educational and promotional work of the exhibition. Maltby and Cunningham organised a series of 4 public lectures in the months leading up to the opening. These lectures were supplemented by a special Choral Evensong to commemorate 'President John Rainolds and the King James Bible' (Rainolds was the original proposer of the translation and led the translators responsible for the prophetic books). Between 100 and 200 people attended each lecture; the Evensong in Corpus Christi College Chapel attracted a capacity congregation of 80. Moore briefed the volunteer docents, equipping them to answer questions about objects on display, and contributed regularly to the exhibition blog. Feedback from school pupils included (from a 6th form History student): 'thank you for producing such an interesting book which has led me to become totally engrossed in the world of biblical translations and ... encouraged me to pursue studies into the topic next year when I will read history at university' (June 2011). The 'thrill of encounter' was equally evident in the verbal testimony of adult visitors for whom the exhibitions made visible a vital element in the history of their faith. They included people in their 80s and beyond who found it physically difficult to get to the Bodleian but wanted to seize a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' (Ref. 2). Moore was interviewed on several occasions during the exhibition run for BBC Radio Oxford, *BBC South Today* and the *Oxford Times*.

Significant economic benefits accrued to the Bodleian Library. *Manifold Greatness*, the book edited by Moore and Reid to accompany the exhibition (Ref. 3) garnered reviews such as 'A fine example of how scholarship can serve the interests of the wider public' (*Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 63 (2012)). It outsold its first print run of 4,074 copies more than four times over, achieving sales of 19,857 copies by the end of the exhibition run (far outstripping any other exhibition book since the Bodleian Shop began keeping records), and made a profit of £7,629. Other items on sale (Moore provided text descriptors for the postcards) produced net sales to the value of £36,291 (£16,427 profit) (Ref. 4). Popular items included Bibles and bookmarks. Some Bodleian merchandise was sold in the States, with further items including leather embossed bibles, imprinted with a cover design copied from one of the Folger exhibits.

The transfer of 'Manifold Greatness' to the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC (23.9.11-16.1.12) and the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin (28.2.12-29.7.12) was enabled by a **major NEH grant of \$626,964** to the Folger, for which Moore and Maltby acted as scholarly advisors. The grant covered the cost of the exhibitions, a travelling panel exhibition, and expansion of the website and blog. More than 58,200 visitors saw the exhibition at the Folger; a further 25,592 at the Harry Ransom. A preview for members of Congress was hosted at the Folger by the NEH. Moore delivered public lectures (sponsored by the *Wall Street Journal*) at the Folger and the Harry Ransom Center, assisting the educational and promotional work. The Harry Ransom lecture was posted on the University of Texas website and on Youtube where it has had 1302 views. The website for the Texas exhibition attracted 60,616 views by the close of the exhibition, including 46,306 for the family guide (Ref. 5). The Folger's video channel for the exhibition (<http://www.youtube.com/user/ManifoldGreatness>) hosts 15 videos, some of which have attracted very large audiences ('Mistakes and Misprints: The KJB's Bloopers', 1,233 views; 'Making a Quill Pen' 9,823 views; 'Making a Ruff' 6,830; 'Making Ink' 21,366). From the closure of the Texas exhibition to 12 July 2013, the touring panel exhibition took the interpretative work of *Manifold Greatness* to 40 educational and civic venues including the Tuscaloosa Public Library, Alabama, and the Nancy Guinn Memorial Library, Conyers, Georgia (Ref. 6). The retired panels remain on display at the Cary Graphic Arts Collection, Rochester Institute of Technology, New York, until the

autumn. The expanded Manifold Greatness blog proved exceptionally successful in hosting and enabling a developing public conversation about the history, technologies, and continuing cultural importance of the KJB in the US. By the time of its closure, it had 'debunked myths about the KJB', enhanced public understanding of many 'milestones' in the American story of the bible ('from Jamestown and the Mayflower to the speeches of Martin Luther King'), brought to light rare historic materials, including a KJB given to a Civil War prisoner by the US Sanitary Commission as part of its relief efforts with rebel prisoners. The blog had also recorded the experiences of numerous young visitors entertained and educated (their activities viewable in the Youtube videos).

The **cultural value** of the UK and US exhibitions' reinterpretation of the history of the KJB for the general public was widely recognised. *Country Life* called the original exhibition an 'unmissable event'; *The Church Times* praised it for 'pav[ing] the way' in the quatercentenary celebrations, and 'rightly explor[ing] the contribution that the Church of England has made to world literature quite as much as to faith'. 'Pay close attention', the *New York Times* advised, 'you will ... sense the gradual birth of the modern English language and the subtle framing of a culture's patterns of thought'. Salley Vickers, reviewing the exhibition book for *The Times*, described it as 'nourishing...beautifully presented and scrupulously edited', singling out Julian Reid's 'riveting and shaming' essay on 'the 47 fabulously well-informed translators', most of whom 'had finished their degrees ... and were already fellows of Oxford colleges while still in their teens'. The book was *Times*' online bookshop's 'pick of the day' on 18 April 2011 (Ref. 7). The quality of the supporting electronic materials attracted wide acclaim, with the Folger website among 5 winners of the 2012 Leab Exhibition Awards (electronic exhibition category) presented by the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the American Library Association (Ref. 8).

Not least, the exhibitions **provoked vigorous public debate, especially in the UK**, over the value attaching today to the KJB. This disputative dimension of the impact, consistent with the culture of argument surrounding the bible from the first, is well represented by Giles Fraser, speaking on BBC Radio 4 *Today* programme's 'Thought for the Day' (23.3.11) (Ref. 9). Fraser asked whether the popularity of the events celebrating the 400th anniversary of the KJB was not 'some huge expression of cultural nostalgia for a world where it was so much easier to say what it meant to be British' (a view energetically refuted by Moore in the *Oxford Times* (May 2011). Malcolm Barker, writing in the *Yorkshire Post* (7.2.11), wondered (in more conservative vein) whether 'The Book of Common Prayer' is not comparatively 'endangered by indifference and undermined by neglect' in the contemporary Anglican church. *BBC History Magazine* (the biggest selling history magazine in the UK; estimated reach c. 265,000) ran a long discussion piece debating the KJB's status as 'the most important book in the English language' and exploring why it has proved so enduring. Henry Hitchings, in the *London Evening Standard* was one of several writers who meditated on the extent to which the language of the authorized version still permeates written and spoken English, despite huge changes in our religious and political cultures. Emails received and comments left in the Bodleian visitors' book confirm the stimulus to debate on all these topics.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Download, page view and visitor figures from: Bodleian Digital Library Systems and Services; Garland Scott, Folger Library; the Harry Ransom Center final report on the KJB Texas exhibition.
2. Reviews collected in the Bodleian Library record book for the exhibition. Also covers the visits of Paulston School and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and responses to the launch of the app.
3. *Manifold Greatness: The Making of the King James Bible* ed. Moore and Reid, Oxford: Bodleian Library Publishing, 2011.
4. Bodleian Library Shop sales totals and profits document.
5. Final report on *The King James Bible: Its History and Influence* (Harry Ransom Center).
6. Full list of travelling exhibition sites: <http://www.manifoldgreatness.org/index.php/sites-for-the-manifold-greatness-traveling-exhibition/>
7. Reviews collected in the Bodleian Library record book; additional citation, *New York Times*, 29 September 2011.
8. ALA prize: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/awards/publicationawards/leabawards>
9. Giles Fraser, 'Thought for the Day', <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00g0b3v>