About the Political Dimensions of the Formation of the King James Bible

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Abstract: Michael G. Rather Jr., examines in his article "About the Political Dimensions of the Formation of the King James Bible" the politics surrounding the formation of one of the most influential text in culture and politics in England and later in English-speaking countries. The translators and King exhibited a duality of beliefs emblematic of Jacobean society. These dualities of hierarchy and commonness, ceremony and purity, clarity and majesty were instituted in England followed by the Australian, US-American, and Canadian cultures. A better understanding of the people who were a part of this translation and the King who commissioned the translation will help literary historians better understand the text's enduring popularity. The King James Bible was designed to bring conformity and to support the hierarchical structures within the English monarchy and Anglican Church. Rather's analysis of the political perspectives and personalities involved in the formation of the King James Bible illuminates how a text designed to support institutions of the state came to be influential text stretching to contemporary times in English-speaking countries.

Michael G. RATHER, Jr.

About Political Dimensions of the Formation of the King James Bible

The King James Bible can be considered the most influential of English language texts. King James I and VI had numerous motives for calling for an updated translation of the Bible. The King James Bible represents politically and spiritually traditional views of hierarchy and ceremony associated more with autocratic societies than with the rugged individualism of the United States. The question arises then, why has this text been so influential and considered the "only true translation" until recent times? The translators and King exhibited a duality of beliefs emblematic of Jacobean society. These dualities of hierarchy and commonness, ceremony and purity, clarity and majesty were instituted in England followed by the Australian, American (US and Canada) cultures. A better understanding of the people who were a part of this translation and the King who commissioned the translation will help literary historians better understand the text's enduring popularity.

In the last years of Queen Elizabeth's reign England was a restless place. England in 1603 was ripe with possibilities and eager to move beyond the Elizabethan era. Adam Nicolson opens his book *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* with a chapter discussing the tumultuous undercurrents of English society under a dying Queen Elizabeth I: "The country felt younger and more vital than its queen. Cultural conservatives might have bemoaned the death of old values and the corruption of modern morals … but these were not the symptoms of decline. England was full of newness and potential: its population burgeoning, its merchant fleets combing the world, London growing like a hothouse plum, the sons of gentlemen crowding as never before into the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, plants and fruits from all over the world arriving in its gardens and on its tables -- but the rigid carapace of the Elizabethan court lay like a cast-iron lid above it" (2). The English were ready for change. Queen Elizabeth I's death held in it the prospects of peace with Spain, a new openness to religious toleration, and a resolution of the differences between the established church and both Catholics and Puritans (Nicolson 3). James Stuart carried these heavy burdens upon his regal back and felt them enormously. The man who would become King James I of England -- already King James the VI of Scotland -- was a complicated mix and representation of burgeoning new perspectives being held down fast by old fears.

James Stuart's own biography may reveal some of the reasons for his duplicity: he was born to Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots and Henry Stuart (Lord Darnley) in 1566; his early life was plagued with intrigue with his mother's lover killing his father and a coup by reformed church rebels that placed him on the throne in 1567. He ascended the throne of Scotland barely out of infancy, knew little of his mother (who was a Catholic), and was a king only in name during this time. Nicolson writes that James was placed in the care of "terrifying Presbyterian governors, in particular George Buchanan, a towering European intellectual, the tutor of Montaigne, friend of Tyco Brahe, who considered the deposing of wicked kings perfectly legitimate" (7). James spent his boyhood being used by various factions of Scottish nobility and religious extremists to advance their interests, and he could not be secure in his Scottish throne. To add to the pressures of being a pawn, tutored by brilliant but brutal men, and a childhood of constant upheaval, James was also the heir to the English throne. England was a far richer state than Scotland in this time. England also held a union between church and crown, established by Henry VIII that would address the clear issues of authority James Stuart dealt with in Scotland. In short, James hungered after the apparent stability England would offer. Through a destabilizing life, James found himself constructing the identity of a peacemaker. He even adopted from the Sermon on the Mount the motto, *beati pacifici*, "Blessed are the Peacemakers" (Nicolson 3).

A desire for stability and wealth were planted in James's psyche by none other than Queen Elizabeth herself. She teased the young man, sending him a yearly gratuity or annuity. The Scots believed it was a payment due every year. The English carefully called it a gratuity, a way to show kindness to the possible future (Nicolson 9). In this environment, with his future uncertain, James had to learn to lie and compromise, to be cunning and dissemble (Nicolson 6). It should not be forgotten that Elizabeth had James's mother locked in the Tower of London and eventually beheaded, and here she was sending him money and taunting him with his claim on the throne of England. Thus the child that grew

up under these circumstances developed not only cunning, but an opening to manipulation through beauty and comfort. He desired comfort because he had lacked comfort. James became enamored with richness and delicacy, and both attributes became a major aspect of Jacobean culture. He was a reformer and a traditionalist.

This same dichotomy existed in England's state church. Like its new ruler, the Church of England combined traditionalism with reform. The hope of the Anglican faith was to somehow create a middle road between the radicalism of Calvinist doctrine and the conservatism of Catholicism. The Church of England itself was primarily a state institution designed to uphold the English monarchy. Anglicanism's true roots were not in the Protestantism of the continent, but in the political and romantic interests of Henry VIII. Shortly before his break with Rome, Henry VIII had written a book defending Catholicism and his closest advisor was Sir Thomas Moore, a staunch Catholic. When Henry VIII did break with Rome he changed almost nothing about the practices of his church, he changed almost nothing about ceremony, and he only began closing down the abbeys and monasteries when they became a financial issue or a hotbed of revolutionary ideas (see, e.g., Fincham and Lake). England was essentially still Catholic. Edward VI's, Henry VIII's son, rule was far too short for his reformist handlers to affect the whole country. When he passed and his sister Mary became Queen Mary I, she brought Catholicism back to England. Mary was not successful in her attempts to return England to the fold of Catholic nations because England's Protestantism had coincided with a growing surge of nationalism. The English had come to understand themselves as a people apart from the continent, and the emphasis that Protestantism placed on the individual matched better with the English temperament. A national identity had developed that saw Catholicism as a political tool for colonial Spain. Even if the accepted and recognized Church of England still maintained Catholic rituals, the population had begun to embrace Calvinist doctrines.

A few changes did take place during Queen Elizabeth's reign, but the majority of these changes were consolidating what was wrought in Edward VI's name and stabilizing Elizabeth's own reign. Queen Elizabeth restored royal supremacy in the church and ended Latin liturgy through instituting a vernacular book: *The Book of Common Prayer*. *The Book of Common Prayer* went through numerous revisions throughout her reign, but overall the Anglican Church held too many vestiges of Catholicism for some ministers. When James came to the throne in 1603 there were effectively two Bibles used in England: the English translation of the Geneva Bible and the Bishops Bible. The Bishops Bible was a translation by Anglican Bishops during Elizabeth's reign. The Geneva Bible was an English translation of the Bible that had been created by Protestants exiled in Geneva during Queen Mary's reign. The Geneva Bible was the "most widely read Bible of the Elizabethan, and subsequently the Jacobean, era (McGrath 127). This translation was done with the explicit intent of including notations and commentaries to help readers better understand the more opaque scriptures. It was widely believed as the reformation progressed that "Translation of the Bible was not enough; this needed to be supplemented by explanation. A work that offered the benefits of both accurate biblical translation and interpretation had the potential to be hugely influential" (McGrath 114). The Geneva Bible included the necessary explanations for the layman. The only problem with the explanations was that they reflected the radical Protestantism of John Calvin's Geneva Republic. England under Elizabeth was sympathetic to Protestantism, but by no means would Elizabeth destabilize her country to argue over what she saw as, "a few trifles."

Anglican bishops, frightened by the radicalism in the Geneva Bible, decided that an English translation of the Bible needed to be adopted that was more in line with *The Book of Common Prayer* and *The Book of Homilies*. From this group came the Bishops Bible. The Bishops Bible was the de facto authorized Bible of the Anglican Church from its publication until the publication of the King James Bible in 1611. What is remarkable about the Bishops Bible was that it was widely detested by clergy and laymen alike (see McGrath). It held to the religious settlement of Queen Elizabeth I, however, and allowed for certain Catholic practices to continue within the Anglican Church. One of the cornerstones of Protestantism was the supremacy of the Bible as the word of God. Ideas and practices the Bible could be made to support were given new authority and this was not missed by either radical Protestants or establishment Anglicans.

Much of the battle between the two Bibles was played out through publishing rights granted by the queen, but by the time James ascended to the throne the Geneva Bible had won the hearts and minds of most English readers. In comparison, the Bishops Bible was "translated (rather badly) by a team of fourteen bishops, appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury" (Nicolson 68). The key note in the previous quote is the comment, "rather badly." The Bishops Bible was a Bible of authority, but of little artistry. It attempted to stay close to a much earlier English translation. In contrast, the Geneva Bible was the Bible of the Puritans, printed in quarto editions, read in homes, and studied. The Bishops Bible was read to the audience by an Anglican priest. Thus, the two existed simultaneously for many years, widening a rift under the surface of complacent Elizabethan England.

James's ascension was seen as a possible triumph for the Geneva Bible and Puritanism in England. He was the king of a firmly reformed nation (Scotland) that had adopted the Presbyterian system used in Geneva. He had ruled Scotland under these conditions for over thirty years. To Puritans, it seemed their time had finally come. No more prayer books, no more kneeling at communion, and altogether no more vestiges of Roman Catholicism.

James was well-versed in theology and the teachings of both the reformist sects and the Catholic church. While he was not entirely opposed to Roman Catholicism or Puritanism, he was opposed to extremism and saw the Church of England as a middle way. Dorothy Boyd Rush in her article "The Religious Toleration of James I" states James's beliefs as follows: "According to James, religious moderates, whether they were Catholics of Protestants, obviously had more in common with each other than they had with extremists of their respective faiths" (106). James's hope was that as the English monarch he could lead Europe to a lasting peace and agreement concerning religion. To this end, James called for an ecumenical council lead by the Pope and himself. It is stated in more than one correspondence that, "if the Pope could be persuaded to renounce his claims of temporal authority and the militant political methods of the Jesuits, whom James came to scorn as 'Puritan-Papists,' James would be willing to denounce the Protestant extremists who 'infected' his own realm, whether they were Scottish Presbyterians or English Puritans" (Rush 106). The political benefits of peace for a king who saw himself as a peacemaker cannot be underestimated. If the major religious divisions of the day could be addressed and satisfactorily resolved, than a lasting peace would be achieved: there would be no threat of insurrection from disenfranchised Roman Catholics and the threat of an invasion from a Catholic nation and the intervention of Spain and France in the constantly destabilized nation of Ireland would disappear. James hoped that such a stabilized Europe would create prosperity and peace for his kingdom and reinforce the temporal authority of monarchs against the republicanism of the Geneva Protestants.

Further, James had never quite gotten over his experiences with the Presbyterian ministers of the Scottish Kirk. Their dismissal of his authority had only caused him to seek for formal legitimacy of the church and the Bible. In a paradoxical sense, the Scottish ministers' insistence of the separation of church and state led James to distrust any extreme movement that directly interfered with the authority of the crown. This played out in his political interactions as well as his religious views. The king saw himself as a true member of the primitive church, and he saw England as the bastion of this primitive church. He "generally used the year 500 as a rough dividing line between the era of the primitive church and the emergence of the Bishop of Rome as Pope" (Rush 108). He used this as a model for the practices of the Anglican Church, but his views on Anglicanism were a delusion as major divisions existed in the Anglican Church between Puritans and Anglicans. The Anglicans were intent on maintaining the trappings of priestly office and the ceremonies of the church. Many of them held a firm belief that ceremony helped a person grow closer to God. Chief among these was a man who also played an important role in the translation of the King James Bible: Lancelot Andrewes, who like King James, is emblematic of the Jacobean era in this duality where he is both a servant of the church and a purveyor of power, happy in using it for personal gain: "It is easy to portray him [Andrewes] in an unflattering light, as a machine politician, crushing the spirit of individualists such as Henry Barrow [a Puritan extremist]. But there is far more to Andrewes than that, a depth and a delicacy beyond the sometimes violent polarizations of the age. His sermons were famous at the time and, after his death. At the command of Charles I (James's heir), they were published in a handsome folio volume" (Rush 187). Andrewes was a firm supporter of the crown and of the bishops. His well-being and station de-

pended on the continued status of priestly office existing in the Anglican Church. As a symbol of the establishment, Andrewes would help convince the king that the more puritanical ministers of England were a dangerous threat to stability and helped maintain ecclesiastical superiority in the Church of England.

On the other side of the argument were those ministers that used the Geneva Bible and believed the Church of England should become more like the Scottish Kirk. John Reynolds best represents this group, although it should be noted that Reynolds was by no means an extremist and he was not part of the Scrooby Separatists. Reynolds was president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and a man dependent on the crown for his well-being. His views were moderate, but for the bishops those views were dangerous. His requested changes were well worded not to offend the king and he set forth four points of reformation for the Church of England, namely that the doctrine of the church might be preserved in purity, according to God's word; that good pastors might be planted in all churches, to preach the same; that the church government might be sincerely administered according to God's word; and that the Book of Common Prayer might be fitted to more increase of piety. (see McGrath 159-60). One must read between the lines to see why the establishment bishops would be frightened by these four requests submitted to the king. The first request asks for the doctrine to be "preserved in purity" and the bishops might ask what Reynolds means by "purity." If one were to read this fundamentally, Reynolds is stating the Calvinist doctrine that the Bible is the only source of pure doctrine and that the traditions of the Anglican Church are thus forfeit. To modern readers the wearing of surplice is a small thing, but this simple act angered Puritans and was held by bishops like Andrewes has no basis in scripture and is based purely on tradition. The next request that "good pastors might be planted in all churches" implies that the current bishops are not "good pastors." Reynolds is implying the need for Biblically trained pastors in the English church. Such a transition would lead to ministers who study the Geneva Bible and support Puritanism. The third request Reynolds makes is another implication that the church does not follow God's word as God's word was synonymous with the Bible and for the Puritans the Bible represented ultimate authority. The fourth request hit right at the heart of the bishops because it was the Book of Common Prayer that was the standard from which they taught each Sunday.

On 24 October 1603, James issued a proclamation stating that he had convened a conference to be attended by himself, the Privy Council, and various "bishops and other learned men" to deal with these (Puritan) issues at the palace of Hampton Court in January of the following year (Rush 155). The Hampton Court conference is an example of James's desire to unify Christendom. In order for his calls of a general European ecumenical council to be taken seriously, he had to first stabilize the extremes in his own church and thus he called the conference after receiving a petition from 1000 ministers (called the Millenary Petition) during his month-long tour of his new realm. However, some see the conference as a tactical blunder on James's part: "Yet it was unquestionably a tactical blunder, one that alarmed his bishops and created false hopes within the Puritan faction. Nothing ferments rebellion more than frustrated hopes. James's incautious decision must be seen as having created a serious tension between what the Puritans anticipated, and what they actually got. Puritan hopes for the Hampton Court Conference were high. James had agreed to consider their complaints -- something that Elizabeth had resolutely refused to do" (McGrath 155). But one must remember that James wanted a middle way between the Andrewes and the Reynolds of his realm, and in order to understand the complexities of the Anglican faith and the incomplete reform of four monarchs James opted to call in the experts. He also made certain that the conference was peopled in his favor and the very involvement of the Privy Council, that included Robert Cecil and other men that depended on the king for their place, shows that James was slyer about this conference than Allister McGrath for example gives him credit for. McGrath argues that "The conference was heavily weighted toward the establishment church" (156) and James called the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of Carlisle, Chichester, Durham, London, Peterborough, St. David's Winchester, and Worcester. In all, nineteen representatives of the establishment were present for the conference but only four Puritans were admitted. McGrath quotes the speech that opens the Hampton Court Conference to illustrate how James saw himself as having the decisive voice in church affairs: "It is no novel device, but according to the example of all Christian princes, for Kings to take the first course for the establishing of the Church both

doctrine and policy. To this the very heathen related in their proverb a Jove principium. Particularly in this land, King Henry VIII towards to the end of his reign altered much, King Edward VI more, Queen Mary reversed all, and lastly Queen Elizabeth (of famous memory) settled religion as it now standeth. Herein I am happier than they, because they were feign to alter all things they found established, whereas I see yet no such cause to change as confirm what I find settled already" (157). James was not going to give the bishops any ground, nor was he going to give such to the Puritans. He was stating his divine right as king and head of the church to dictate what path the Anglican faith would take. In the initial organization of the conference no call for a new Bible translation was made. The three general topics of the discussion were "First, concerning the Book of Common Prayer, and divine service used in this church. Second, excommunication in the ecclesiastical courts. Third, the providing of fit and able ministers for Ireland" (McGrath 158). Scholars agree that neither the bishops nor the Puritans in attendance at the conference saw a need for a new translation, but they did see a need for basic issues of doctrine and ceremony to be addressed. James was not sympathetic to most of Reynolds's aforementioned proposals, yet he was not altogether dismissive. James wanted to unify Scotland and England and his church (Puritan and Establishment). He saw much of the religious debate over ceremony as unimportant. What did it matter if a bishop wore a surplice? What did matter were order, continuity, and peace.

The Puritans wanted a major revision of the Book of Common Prayer. James saw this as dangerous as it would "lead to a new period of religious infighting within his realm" (McGrath 160). James could not bend and play Solomon for any of the demands of his Puritan subjects because to him all their demands would undermine the authority of the bishops and James had come to see the bishops as part of a necessary hierarchy. He felt he had to keep England from following the model of Presbyterianism at all cost, both because of his childhood and the reality that the monarchy would truly be weekend by such a move. In the end, it was Reynolds who gave James an out. According to McGrath, "The Puritan agenda on the matter of English Bibles was limited to a hope that the Geneva Bible might be authorized for use in churches and public worship, thus reversing the prohibitions introduce by Archbishop Whitgift" (160). As we know, the Puritans at the Hampton Court conference had not discussed the need for a new translation and almost unanimously they supported the Geneva Bible because of its commentaries and its marginal notes. In fact, James despised the Geneva Bible for specifically the same reasons that the Puritans appreciated it and he associated it with the Presbyterian culture of Scotland where it had become the mainstay of Scottish Protestant church life (see McGrath 160). Reynolds may have had a divine inspiration, he may have had an ulterior motive to get the Geneva Bible at least recognized, if not authorized, but James took his request that "one only translation of the Bible" was to be "declared authentic and read in the church" to mean a new translation" (McGrath 161).

James's ego and intense need to see himself as a Solomon figure had at last found something which could theoretically unify his church and people. It would also rid the realm of the Geneva Bible and replace the poorly translated Bishops Bible. Thus he embraced the translation of the Bible, but not in the way that Reynolds or the Puritans envisioned. The new authorized Bible of the Anglican Church was intended to not be open to commentary. James, intentionally, wanted his authorized Bible to be free of the marginal notes that traditionally explained the meanings of texts. In short, as planned by James and placed primarily in the hands of the bishops, the text would require the interpretation of learned men and thus it would reinforce the position of the bishops and the state. In consequence, the King James Bible was designed for political purposes, created with politics in mind, and published through political avenues. Hence my thesis that it is impossible to separate politics, religion, and art in Jacobean England where the early years of reformation, the wars with Spain, the pendulum-like movement between Catholicism and Puritanism, and the hierarchical nature of the society were at stake. James was a well-read man, with an understanding of the power of the printed text and thus, being raised with Calvinist principles, this most likely reinforced his perspective. James did not deny that the Bible was the word of God, but he did recognize that the way that word was interpreted, translated, and commented upon had bearing on his rule and the very notion of monarchy and the authority of the state. It is almost impossible to support the argument that James, a ruler that would claim godhood under God, could commission a translation of the Bible without that belief somehow

seeping into the text. James disliked the marginal notes in the Geneva Bible because they were written by translators and commentators influenced by republican values in Geneva. It mattered not that the Bible had expressions in it stating the "meek would inherit the earth." Stability and peace required order and unity could not exist without hierarchy. The Geneva Bible's commentaries were dangerous, "By James I's measure, the Geneva glosses far exceeded permissible limits, going so far at one point as to condone rebellion against a lawful king" (Slights 265).

Next, I discuss briefly the marginal notes referred to above, because it is in the marginal notes that we first get a glimpse at the political mind of James when commissioning his Bible. James resolved that "A translation be made of the whole Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek; and this to be set out and printed without any marginal notes, and only to be used in all the churches of England in time of divine service" (McGrath 163-64). The emphasis on "no marginal notes" is a key point here as this represented James's and the bishops' major issue with the Geneva Bible as I introduce above. Why the concern over the marginal notes?

Marginal commentary had long been a practice of Bible translators and literary persons of the age. Marginal commentaries allowed for understanding of riddles and the "unlocking" of meaning. In an age when people could be put to death for little more than an angry look or the pretense of heresy, it is little wonder that language would be referential and dense. The natural language of the Jacobean age and court is conflated; multiple meanings and interpretations are natural when language is not plain; Jacobean language, like its architecture, has "certain antiquarianism" (Nicholson 139); and it is packed with meaning and image. As Nicholson argues, there was an "early Modern lust for substance … The country and the world were growing and bursting at the seams" (139-40). Language had to contain this growing and bursting, and the Bible is the perfect medium for that containment. The choice to leave out marginal commentary disenfranchises those who cannot understand referential and elusory writing and thus the King James Bible was not intended for an average audience but to be used only in church service. Divine knowledge would not be gained from democratic discussions of the text and differing opinions, as the Puritans initially wanted. Divine knowledge would come from the king through the Bishops and out of their interpretation of the Bible.

Textual commentary was traditional prior to the King James Bible. William W.E. Slights explains:

The fragmentary but heavily glossed (annotated) New Testament produced by William Tyndale (1525) and his complete New Testament (1534) were followed by the Coverdale Bible (1535) with no notes, the Matthew Bible (1537) with very few, and the Great Bible (1540) with fairly extensive cross-references to other parts of the Bible but no interpretative glosses. The most controversial of earlier bibles had been somewhat contained by these three volumes, but equally distressing claims were rigorously put forward in the Geneva Bible (1560). Next the Bishops' Bible (1568) was approved for use in English churches, through preachers, including such prominent ones as Dean John Donne of St. Paul's, continued to draw their texts from the Geneva version and the Vulgate. The Roman Catholic Bible translated and elaborately notated at Rheims (1582), though it was rather widely know, was not in the mainstream of English Bibles. Still, its glossarial fervor, along with that of Tyndale and Geneva Bibles, did much to convince the makers of the Authorized Version (1611) that its notes should be confined to cross-references and alternate translations of tricky words. (270)

The understanding of the King James Bible translators was that the marginal notes would muddy the text; however, the language of Jacobean England was already muddied and cluttered. At the same time, it seems the translators understood the king's distrust of marginalia. Further, they understood the king's approach that if the bishops kept the language of an authorized Bible unclear, then interpretation would remain in their hands and out of the hands of an increasingly literate underclass.

The nature of the Rheims Bible's existence should not be taken lightly either. Rheims's New Testament was published in 1582 and was based on the Roman Catholic Vulgate rather than on the Greek original (see McGrath 163). It, like the Geneva Bible, was heavily annotated, but its annotations gave a Catholic slant and interpretation to the New Testament and such a translation was a threat to established order in Jacobean England. Both the Rheims and Geneva Bibles were annotated for political purposes: if the translators could manipulate the reader to their interpretation through marginal notes then they could control the readers' opinions. James and the translators understood that part of religions mystery and power was in the readers' inability to fully understand God's word. So what if sec-

tions of the Bible seemed to contradict? Let the bishops explain it and let the commoners hear their take on it. For James, as long as his royal authority and divine right remained unquestioned the bishops could interpret the text as they liked. Further evidence of James's political vision of his commissioned translation is in the rules he gave Richard Bancroft for the translation: Bancroft was one of the establishment bishops at the Hampton Court Conference and he was the member of the conference most adamantly against a new translation, but as soon as the king came down in favor of it, Bancroft was determined to be a part of the process. Nicolson describes Bancroft as "politician and monarchist enough to see that when James responded to the idea, the church should take the initiative and mould the new Bible to its own purposes"(65). But behind Bancroft and the church was the King who it can be assumed saw this as an opportunity. A single Bible translation equaled a unified church and a unified church was the first step to a unified country.

There are fifteen rules James transmits through Bancroft and each rule comes in on the side of established order and unity. The first rule states that "The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit" (Norton 7). This rule is a clear gift to the bishops of the Anglican Church, one which they were most connected and familiar with. Rules eight through fifteen are especially revealing as they address the organization of the translating committees according to whom the translation of the Bible would act more a revision. Numerous translators would be involved and unlike the Geneva, Matthews, Coverdale, Bishops, or Rheims Bibles, the new translation would be the work of more than a handful of people. The rules are often clear on the job of each translator in each committee and rule eight is that "Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters, and having translated or amended them severally by himself where he think good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their part on what shall stand" (Norton 8). James has made sure no single voice is more prominent than others and that no name will be attributed to this translation but his own. Rules nine through eleven make the system of the checks and balance of translation even more apparent: each committee's work will be checked over by other committees and none will fully be accepted until all are in agreement. Also, James allows for the contact of "any learned man in the land" when places of special "obscurity" are encountered (Norton 8). Perhaps the most James gives to the Puritans in these rules is rule fourteen: "These translations to be used where they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible, viz: Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's, Geneva" (Norton 8). This inclusion of the Geneva Bible with the other translations is important and it can account for some of the dualistic nature of the King James Bible. It can also account for the inter-text commentary sometimes revealed through close reading. The uneasiness with the sometimes conflicting nature of God as expressed in the Bible is often glossed internally within the King James text. James's allowance of the earlier Protestant translations ensured that some of those views would seep through the editorial process.

The King James Bible became the standard, the authorized work of English Protestantism. It was adopted by almost all sects of Christianity in English-speaking nations and is still upheld by some fundamentalists as the pure word of God. How can we explain the popularity of this text even until our modern age where the vast majority of nations that use this text are democratic? I postulate that this adherence is based on the concept of duality. The environment of Jacobean England that produced the King James Bible, and James himself, exhibited a duality that was both majestic and earthy. James was a well-respected author in his time writing collections of poetry, criticism, political treatises, and publishing much of his writing. He was a literary sponsor of Ben Jonson and John Donne, a scholar-king. In much of his writing he calls for straightforwardness: "I study clearness not eloquence," he declared to Parliament in a speech in 1607 (James qtd. in Akrigg 122). And in his instructions to Prince Henry on writing James states: "In your language be plain, honest, natural, comely, clean, short and sententious [i.e., having something to say], eschewing both the extremities, as well in not using any rustical corrupt leide [speech], as book-language and pen and inkhorn terms; and least of all mignard and effeminate terms. But let the greatness of your eloquence consist in natural, clear and sensible form of delivery of your mind, builded ever upon certain and good grounds; temporing it with gravity, quickness or merriment according to the subject and occasion of the time" (James qtd. in Akrigg 124). While the King James Bible allowed for opaqueness and conflicting views of God, its lan-

guage did lean toward forthrightness, as James understood the function of poetry: "And if ye write in verse, remember that it is not the principal part of a poem to rime right and flow well with many pretty words. But the chief commendation of a poem is, that when the verse shall be shaken sundry in prose, it shall be found so rich in quick inventions, and poetic flowers, and in fair and pertinent comparisons as it shall retain the luster of a poem, although in prose" (James qtd. in Akrigg 124). It is clear that the King was in favor of clear language, even if the language led to multiple interpretations.

It is clear that James's intentions to employ the Bible in its new translation, the process of the translation, and thus the making of the Bible as a unifying text for the establishment of the authority of state and church constitutes a remarkable act of politics: as literacy grew in England and in the English-speaking world, the King James Bible would become a tool of language, literature, altogether a major and incisive text of culture in all its dimensions. In many homes it was the only book and US-Americans carried it West with them, the same with Canadians and Australians. Its language entrenched itself long ago in the creative writing of the English-speaking world.

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