

Alternative revisions of the *American Standard Version* (1901) and retranslations within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition



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In this essay, we demonstrate that in addition to the *Revised Standard Version* and its revisions as part of the linear emergence of the Tyndale–King James Version tradition in the 20th and 21st centuries, there are also alternative revisions and retranslations of the *King James Version* (KJV) of 1611 as literal or word-for-word translations, which emerge as divergent branches. The revisions of the *American Standard Version* (ASV) (1901) emerged in the following branches, namely the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB) and its revisions, *The Amplified Bible* (AB) and its revisions, as well as *The Living Bible, Paraphrased* and its retranslation, the *New Living Translation* (NLT). Then there are revisions that emerged as alternatives to the *Revised Standard Version* (1946–1952/1971) by reverting to the *King James Revised* (Blayney) *Edition* (1769) as their incipient text rather than the ASV, namely *The Modern King James Version* (MKJV) (and similar revisions), *The New King James Version* (NKJV) and the *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. Finally, there are retranslations within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition, namely the *Contemporary English Version* (CEV), and the *Common English Bible* (CEB). The diversity reflects the search for individual identity to satisfy particular reader expectations in an age of digital-media interpretive culture featuring broad universal values.

Contribution: Instead of viewing the revisions and retranslations within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition since the second half of the 20th century as new and independent, it is demonstrated that the various branches and their versions rather continue the emergence of the pre-20th century translation complex within this tradition to satisfy particular reader expectations.

Keywords: *King James Version; American Standard Version; Contemporary English Version; Common English Bible; Living Bible; New Living Translation; New American Standard Bible.*

Introduction

As demonstrated in Naudé (2022) and Miller-Naudé and Naudé (2022), the history of English Bible translation emerged as a translation complex from its inception with the oral–aural Bible in Old English, its continuation as handwritten manuscript Bibles in Old and Middle English as well as in print in Modern English to form the Tyndale–King James Version tradition. This powerful tradition continued through the revising and retranslation of the *King James Version* (or *Authorised Version*) of 1611 and its successors into the 21st century as literal or word-for-word translations, despite the remarkable number of new independent versions in contemporary, accessible English (see Naudé 2021). In Naudé (2022), it is shown that the *King James Version* of 1611 eventually replaced all its predecessors but was itself never fully replaced for the next four centuries – not even by its revisions. In Miller-Naudé and Naudé (2022), it is demonstrated that the *Revised Standard Version* of 1952 and its revisions were intended to emerge as the linear continuation of the Tyndale–King James Version tradition and specifically of its main predecessor, the *American Standard Version* (ASV) of 1901. However, unlike the *King James Version*, the *Revised Standard Version* and its revisions failed to achieve widespread approval from satisfied readers, thus opening the door to alternative revisions.

This essay provides a historical narrative of these alternative revisions of the ASV (1901), as well as of retranslations within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition in the great age of Bible translation that began after World War II (Naudé 2005; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2016; Orlinsky & Bratcher

Note: Special Collection: Septuagint and Textual Studies, sub-edited by Johann Cook (Stellenbosch University).

1991:29–154). This age resulted from new developments in the fields of philosophy, religion and linguistics, as well as a move to electronic and media communication, which can be typified as a digital-media interpretive culture (see Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2022). The development of digital technology influenced the media culture of Bible translation by its promotion of globalisation, its capacity for the rapid interchange of ideas and its ability to make them universal. The digital media culture also involves the search for local identities and their protection. Furthermore, in the digital-media interpretive culture, both sound and visuality have gained prominence as a contextual supplement to words.

This essay creates new knowledge concerning the sociohistorical and translational context of these alternative revisions (in terms of their relationship to denominations and the ecumenical movement), their usage of emergent incipient texts (especially the new critical editions of the Hebrew and Greek incipient texts), the translation process and strategies employed in these alternative revisions (especially to establish the nature and style of the language of the translations by removing archaic and foreign language as well as the employment of gendered and inclusive language), the nature of their translations (in terms of form and meaning to fulfil the demand of making the plain meaning of the incipient texts accessible to readers by retaining the alterity but not the foreignness), their content (in terms of doctrine and academia), their reception (in terms of the satisfaction of reader expectations) and their contribution. The analysis of the various revisions and retranslations will demonstrate the ways in which these aspects are reflected in a specific revision or retranslation.

As defined and explained in Naudé (2022), in this essay, we employ the following terminology: *incipient text(s)* are used instead of *source texts* to refer to all of the multifaceted, complex and emergent features that provide input into the translation process. Similarly, *subsequent text(s)* are used instead of *target texts* to include all of the texts that emerge out of the translation process (see also Marais 2019:53, 72, 74–75, 123–125). The term ‘revision’ refers to the process of editing, correcting or modernisation of an existing translation for republication, which may lead to retranslation (see also Mossop 2011). The term ‘retranslation’ refers to multiple translations of an incipient text into one language (see also Koskinen & Paloposki 2010). In retranslations, both the incipient text and the subsequent texts are not stable and may vary. The incipient text may stay within a tradition or vary from it. The subsequent text(s) may display more than one variety of the target language.

For this essay on alternative revisions, it was possible to select only the most important (authoritative, influential or innovative) revisions and retranslations in order to explain how and why they were produced. Some important revisions and retranslations are described elsewhere and so are excluded here. The *Revised Standard Version*, which is a revision of the ASV as the linear emergence of the Tyndale–King James Version tradition of this age, was already analysed

together with its revisions in Miller-Naudé and Naudé (2022) and is not repeated here. This essay does not provide an account of new translations that are *independent* of the Tyndale–King James Version tradition, for example, the *New International Version of the Bible* (1973); these were dealt with previously (Naudé 2021). The translations and revisions within the Roman Catholic tradition (e.g. the *New Jerusalem Bible* [1985]), translations by Jewish scholars (e.g. *New Jewish Publication Society Version* [1985]) and new translations for special purposes (e.g. *The Bible for the Deaf* [2019]) will be dealt with in separate essays.

The essay is organised as follows: firstly, we describe, analyse and explain the nature of the various branches of the revisions of the ASV, namely the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB) and its revisions, *The Amplified Bible* (AB) and its revisions, as well as *The Living Bible, Paraphrased* and its retranslation, the *New Living Translation* (NLT). Secondly, we describe, analyse and explain the nature of the revisions that emerged as alternatives to the *Revised Standard Version* (1946–1952/1971) but use the *King James Revised* (Blayney) *Edition* (1769) as an incipient text rather than the ASV, namely *The Modern King James Version*, *The New King James Version* (NKJV) and the *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. Thirdly, we describe, analyse and explain the nature of the retranslations within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition, namely the *Contemporary English Version* (CEV) and the *Common English Bible* (CEB).

Revisions of the *American Standard Version* (1901)

New American Standard Bible and its revisions *New American Standard Bible* (1971)

In the second half of the 20th century, the Lockman Foundation sponsored the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB) (1971) as an update of the ASV of 1901 while preserving its values (NASB Preface:v). The NASB is a translation from the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek incipient texts, based on the same principles of translation and wording as the ASV of 1901 (NASB Preface:v). It offers an alternative to the *Revised Standard Version* (1946–1952/1971). The project started in 1959.

According to the preface of the NASB, the translators had a fourfold brief, namely to be true to the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, to be grammatically correct, to be understandable (‘to the masses’ – this phrase was omitted in the 1995 brief) and that ‘no work will ever be personalized’ (NASB Preface:iv). The translators sought to produce a contemporary English Bible while maintaining a word-for-word translation style (NASB Preface:v).

The latest version of the third edition of *Biblia Hebraica* was the incipient text for the Old Testament; for the New Testament, the 23rd edition of Nestle was followed (NASB Preface:vi). It is a literal translation, which italicises English words that do not have direct Greek or Hebrew parallels.

Where there are differences from the Tyndale–King James Version tradition because of updated incipient texts, the NASB committee decided to leave the wording in the text, but bracketed it, for example, John 5:3–4:

In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, (waiting for the moving of the waters; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.)

Instead of 'Jehovah' as in the ASV of 1901, the rendering is LORD (in capital letters) for the Hebrew YHWH (except GOD in capital letters is used for Hebrew YHWH in the phrase יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, e.g. Gn 15:2) for the NASB. The NASB also introduced the term 'bond-servants' instead of 'servants' as used in the ASV and *Revised Standard Version* as the translation of δοῦλος ('slave') to stress that one is bound to service without payment (Rm 1:1, Phlp 1:1). Instead of 'bishops' of the ASV, the Greek term ἐπίσκοπος ('bishop') is translated as 'overseers' (Phlp 1:1), a more general term resulting in theological neutrality (Wehrmeyer 2009:106–129).

Despite the modernisation of language, John 3:16 still reflects the exact wording of the ASV of 1901: 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life'. A further difference is that capitalised personal pronouns are used where they refer to God.

New American Standard Bible (1972, 1973, 1975, 1977)

There were minor text modifications reflected in the 1972, 1973 and 1975 editions. A major text revision was published in 1977 but still reflects 'thee' and 'thou' of Elizabethan English in the language of prayer when addressing God. However, it highlights citations from the Old Testament in small caps, for example, Hebrews 1:5:

For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE'? And again, 'I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME'?

Updated New American Standard Bible (1995)

In 1992, the Lockman Foundation commissioned a limited revision of the NASB, which was released in 1995 as the *Updated New American Standard Bible* (NASB95). The *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and the 26th edition of Nestle's *Novum Testamentum Graece* served as incipient texts. Terms found in Elizabethan English such as 'thy' and 'thou' have been modernised, while verses with difficult word order are restructured. In John 3:16, 'should' is replaced with 'shall' to read 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life'.

New American Standard Bible (2020)

The 2020 edition of the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB 2020) is a revision of the 1995 edition to modernise the language and to improve readability. The revision work was

done by a committee sponsored by the Lockman Foundation, consisting of people from Christian institutions of higher learning and from evangelical Protestant, predominantly conservative, denominations.

Key differences include the addition of 'or sisters' in italics to the term 'brothers' to convey the mixed-gender meaning that might otherwise be misunderstood as only speaking of men, a shift from 'let us' to 'let's' (to disambiguate an 'imperative' rather than a seeking of permission) and a repositioning of 'bracketed text' (i.e. verses or portions of verses that are not present in earliest biblical manuscripts and thus printed in brackets in previous NASB editions) to footnotes.

The Amplified Bible and its revisions

Based largely on the ASV, with reference to Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*, the Greek text of Westcott and Hort (1881) and the 23rd edition of Nestle's *Greek New Testament*, the Lockman Foundation and Zondervan Publishing House jointly published the one-volume *Amplified Bible* (AB) in 1965. Hebrew and Greek lexicons, cognate languages, the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Greek works were also consulted, and the Septuagint and other versions were compared. The process of expansion and amplification was done by Frances E. Siewert (1881–1967) and a committee (AB Introduction:viii). Revisions took place in 1987, now known as the *Amplified Classic Edition* and again in 2015, now known as the *Amplified Holy Bible*.

The product is an expanded translation, which provides numerous synonyms and explanations in brackets and parentheses within the text for a single key term in the Hebrew or Greek in order to clarify meanings of words in the *King James Version* (AB, Preface:vii). It provides readers with a smorgasbord of possible English words from which to choose a particular nuance. Footnotes provide concise historical and archaeological information as well as devotional insights. The 2015 revision includes more amplification in the Old Testament and refined amplification in the New Testament. Additionally, the Bible text has been improved to read smoothly with or without amplifications, so that the text may be read either way. The same feel and style of amplification have been maintained.

The translation of John 3:16 in the 1987 revision reads:

For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (*unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life.

The footnote reads: ^bJames Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary*.

The translation of John 3:16 in the 2015 revision reads:

For God so (greatly) loved and dearly prized the world that He (even) gave up His (One and) only begotten Son, so that whoever believes and trusts in Him (as Savior) shall not perish, but have eternal life.

In Isaiah 7:14, the translation 'virgin' (= the Septuagint reading, ASV) and 'young woman' (= Masoretic reading, *Revised Standard Version*) are linked together – 'the young woman who is unmarried and a virgin shall conceive' – in order to force only one interpretation. Concerning the use of gender-inclusive terms, the outdated term 'brethren' in the ASV (1901) and the 1987 revision is replaced in the 2015 revision as follows: 'believers' (Ac 28:14), 'brothers and sisters' (Ac 28:15), 'kinsmen' (Ac 28:17), '[Jewish] brothers' (Ac 28:21), 'countrymen' (Ex 2:11) and 'relatives' (already in the 1987 revision) (Ex 4:18). However, 'fathers' of the ASV, which is revised as 'forefathers' in the 2008 revision, is 'fathers' in the 2015 revision (Ac 28:17, 25). Revision for gender inclusivity is thus uneven.

Language use to accommodate contemporary sensibilities is still inadequate. For example, the term 'maidservant' in the 1987 revision of Mark 14:69 becomes 'servant girl' in the 2015 revision, without concern for the use of 'girl' as a negative term for a grown woman in the language of enslavement (contrast instead 'female servant'). In Galatians 4:22, the 1987 has 'bondmaid' and the 2015 has 'slave woman' instead of 'an enslaved woman'. The term 'bond-servant' is used in 1 Timothy 6:1 in the 1987 and 'bond-servant (slaves)' in the 2015; in Titus 2:9, 'bond-servants' is used in both editions. In referring to persons with disabilities in Matthew 4:24, the 2008 has 'those afflicted with various diseases and torments, those under the power of demons, and epileptics, paralyzed people', whereas the 2015 has 'those suffering with various diseases and pains, those under the power of demons, and epileptics, paralytics'. The use in the 2015 of 'epileptics' rather than 'persons with epilepsy' and 'paralytics' rather than 'paralyzed people' does not reflect the view that persons should not be characterised by their disabilities. The masculine reference to 'wise men' (Mt 2:1) in the ASV is repeated in the 1987 revision (with 'astrologers' as an alternative) but was replaced in the 2015 revision with the original Greek word 'magi' as used by the gospel writer, with 'wise men' as an alternative.

***The Living Bible, Paraphrased* and its retranslation**

The Living Bible, Paraphrased

Beginning with the Epistles published as *Living Letters* in 1962, *The Living Bible, Paraphrased* (LB) (1971), was created by Kenneth N. Taylor (1917–2005). Taylor was a Baptist layperson employed by the publishing house of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and later founded Tyndale House Publishers for the purpose of publishing his paraphrase. The *Living Bible* began as a rephrasing or rewording of the text of the ASV of 1901 in simplified everyday English, with the intention of making it clearer and more easily understood, especially for use during family devotions. His goal was to reword the basic message of the Bible into modern language so that it could readily be understood by the typical reader without a theological or linguistic background (LB, Preface:v). The translation of John 3:16 reads: 'For God loved the world so much that he gave his only^c Son so that anyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life'. The

footnote reads: 'Or, 'the unique Son of God'. Philippians 1:1 reads: 'From: Paul and Timothy, slaves of Jesus Christ. To: The pastors and deacons and all the Christians in the city of Philippi'.

The evangelist Billy Graham endorsed and utilised Taylor's paraphrase, which brought the project into prominence. As a best-seller in 1972 and 1973, *The Living Bible, Paraphrased* captured 46% of the total sales of the Bible in the United States of America (USA) during this period. By the close of the 20th century, 40 million copies had been printed and it had served as the incipient text for Bible translations into nearly 100 languages (NLT Note:vii).

New Living Translation

In 1989, Taylor and his colleagues invited a team of 90 evangelical Hebrew and Greek scholars to participate in a project of retranslating *The Living Bible* (NLT Note:vii). In 1996, Tyndale House Publishers issued the retranslation as the *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (NLT). The second edition, published in 2004, was a major revision for the purpose of improving its accuracy in reflecting the incipient Hebrew and Greek texts. Further revisions were published in 2007, 2013 and 2015, which include minor textual or footnote revisions.

The brief was to prepare a retranslation (not a new paraphrase) while retaining as much of the colloquial flavour of *The Living Bible*

that would make the same impact in the life of modern readers that the original text had for the original readers ... by translating entire thoughts (rather than just words) into natural, everyday English ... a translation that is easy to read and understand and ... communicates the meaning of the original text. (NLT Note:vii)

The translation methodology reflects a dynamic or functional equivalence approach (NLT Introduction:ix). As in biblical times, where texts were written to be read aloud, more people will hear the Bible read aloud in a church service than are likely to read it or study it on their own (NLT Introduction:ix). For this reason, 'a new translation must communicate with clarity and power when it is read aloud' (NLT Introduction:x). The incipient Hebrew and Greek texts were the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977), the 1993 fourth revised edition of the *Greek New Testament* and the 1993 27th edition of Nestle-Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece* (NLT Introduction:x).

To address the issue of gender-excluding language, 'brothers and sisters' is used where all believers – male and female – were addressed (NLT Introduction:xi). Where the text applies to human beings or to the human condition, plural pronouns ('they', 'them') are used instead of 'he' or 'him' (NLT Introduction:xi). Weights and measures, money, dates and times, etc., are described in modern terms, with footnotes giving the literal translation (NLT Introduction:x–xi). Words and phrases with cultural meaning and metaphorical language are expanded to illuminate the expression. For

example, 'they beat their breasts' (Lk 23:48) is expanded as 'they went home in deep sorrow' (NLT Introduction:xi). Except for the Psalms, which are represented in poetic lines, other poetry is translated as prose (NLT Introduction:xi). Theological terms are avoided, for example, 'justification' is translated as 'we are made right with God' (NLT Introduction:xii). Philippians 1:1 is retranslated as follows:

This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. It is written to all of God's people in Philippi, who believe in Christ Jesus, and to the elders (footnote: Greek *overseers*) and deacons.

John 3:16 reads as follows: 'For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life'.

In July 2008, the NLT gained the No. 1 spot in unit sales, unseating the *New International Version* for the first time in over two decades. According to the Christian Booksellers Association (as of March 2014), the NLT is the second most popular Bible translation based on unit sales. In the first 10 years of publication, more than 14 million copies of the NLT were sold. However, a survey of Bible usage, published in 2014, found that only 5% of Americans who claim to read the Bible regularly use the *Living Bible* (Goff, Farnsley & Thuesen 2014:12), as compared to the *King James Version* (55%), the *New International Version* (19%), the *New Revised Standard Version* (7%), the *New American Bible* (6%) and other translations (8%).

Revisions of the *King James Revised (Blayney) Edition (1769)*

Modern King James Version (1962–1990)

The revision work on the *Modern King James Version (MKJV)* was done by Jay P. Green between 1962 and 1998, with several editions being published. The viewpoint of Green was that since the advent of the Septuagint no other version has held the prime position among Bible translators as has the *King James Version* (MKJV Preface:vi). Avoiding reproducing the language of the *King James Version* in new translations, even when it is perfectly intelligible, results in a loss, according to Green (MKJV Preface:vii–viii). Green's goal was to remove the archaic language of the *King James Version* in order to account for changes in the meanings of some English words as the *King James Version* was translated, to correct some poor renderings and to revise the text where the *King James Version* translators paraphrased the Hebrew or Greek text instead of translating it literally (MKJV Preface:x–xi).

In addition to the revisions and retranslations analysed, in this essay, there have been numerous other attempts to modernise the language used in the *King James Version*, namely. the *21st Century King James Version*, the *Third Millennium Bible*, the *American King James Version*, the *Updated King James Version*, the *New Authorised Version*, the *King James Version – Corrected Edition*, the *Modern English Version* that was released in 2014 and many others.

New King James Version

Arthur Farstad, a Baptist and former editor, initiated a direct revision of the revised *King James Version* of 1769. The 1769 revision was edited by the Hebrew scholar, Benjamin Blayney (1728–1801). It achieved status as the standard revision of the *King James Version* and was also known as the standard Oxford edition. The 20th century revision initiated by Farstad became the *New King James Version (NKJV)* (1982) and was produced by more than 130 evangelical scholars working over a seven-year period, sponsored by Thomas Nelson Publishers. A committee of reviewers chaired by Farstad slightly revised it in 1984. Unlike the *King James Version* of 1611 or its 1769 revision, no deuterocanonical books were included. The condition of participation in the project is described as follows:

In faithfulness to God and to our readers, it was deemed appropriate that all participating scholars sign a statement affirming their belief in the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture, and in the inerrancy of the original autographs. (NKJV Preface:v)

The brief was to follow 'the principle of complete equivalence ... to preserve all of the information in the text, while presenting it in good literary form' (NKJV Preface:iv).

The NKJV preserves the Byzantine textual basis of the *King James Version*, namely the Textus Receptus for the *New Testament* of 1516 (NKJV Preface:iv, vii–viii). In the 1982 and 1984 editions, footnotes alert the reader to significant readings in the Critical or Eclectic Text (Alexandrian tradition; 26th edition of Nestle-Aland [1979] and the third edition of the United Bible Societies [1975]) as well as the Majority Text (see Hodges and Farstad 1982) that vary from those in the Received Text (the incipient text of the *King James Version*), but they are formulated to authenticate the textual base of the Tyndale–King James Version tradition. No other English Bible translation has such a complete set of text-critical notes (NKJV Preface:ix). However, in some editions (e.g. 1990), the textual apparatus was deleted, which leaves the impression that there are no textual problems in the translation. For example, 1 John 5:7–8, the Johannine Comma, which is absent in the Critical Text and Majority Text, is kept in the translation of both the 1982/1984 and 1990 editions. In the 1982/1984 edition, it was accompanied by a note that:

NU-Text [= Critical Text] and M-Text [Majority Text] omit the words from *in heaven* (verse 8) through *on earth* (verse 8). Only four or five very late manuscripts contain these words in Greek.

The note is deleted in the 1990 edition. The same pertains to the pericope on the adulteress (Jn 7:53–8:11), which is absent from ancient versions. The note in the 1982/1984 edition (absent in 1990) reads: 'are bracketed by NU-Text as not original. They are present in over 900 manuscripts'.

While the translators of the *King James Version* used the second Rabbinic Bible as the source text for the Old Testament,

the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977) was used for the NKJV with frequent comparisons to the second Rabbinic Bible (NKJV Preface:vii).

Although language and spelling were modernised, it retains the style and idiom of the *King James Version*. Doctrinal terms used in the *King James Version*, for example, 'propitiation', 'justification' and 'sanctification' have been retained, but pronouns addressing a special relationship to human as well as divine persons ('Thee', 'thou' and 'ye' as well as 'thy' and 'thine') are replaced by the simple 'you' as well as 'your' and 'yours' (NKJV Preface:vi). The translators strove to preserve the literary style of the *King James Version*; the result was that traditional sentence structure was preserved (NKJV Preface:v).

The revision of the NKJV as a new revision of the *King James Version* within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition did not satisfy readers' expectations (The Holy Bible 1611, Preface:xii).

New Cambridge Paragraph Bible with the Apocrypha (2005)

Cambridge University decided to modernise the text of the *King James Version* by a revision of the *Cambridge Paragraph Bible* of 1873, which was edited by Frederick H.A. Scrivener (Naudé 2022). David Norton, an English language scholar from New Zealand, supervised the project of the *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (2005). The brief was 'to remove all unnecessary appearance of oddness in the Bible's English without changing the English itself' (The Holy Bible 1611, Preface:ix), that is, to create a new text that would reflect the 1611 translation and not subsequent revisions. Revisions should relate only to spelling, punctuation and vocabulary (Brake 2011:224) to comply with 21st century standards. However, the product still has archaic words; for example, 'dureth' for 'endures' in Matthew 13:21 (Brake 2011:225). The incipient text for the New Testament is still the traditional Textus Receptus. There are changes in the textual presentation (in line with its name) – single columns that allow plenty of room in the margin for the translator's notes, paragraphs and poetic lines are used, which are absent in the edition of 1611 where there are line breaks after every verse. The typesetting convention used since the 1560 Geneva Bible (and also in the ASV and NKJV) to mark words added in italics is not followed (The Holy Bible 1611, Preface 'The Translators to the Reader':ix).

Retranslations within the King James Version tradition

Contemporary English Version

The *Contemporary English Version* (CEV) (1995) by Barclay M. Newman as editor is not a paraphrase or modernisation of any existing traditional version, but rather it was translated from the incipient texts 'to capture the spirit of the King James Version by following certain principles set forth by its translators' in the original preface of *The King James Version* of

1611 (CEV Preface:i–vi; see also Newman et al. 1996:1–14). Two additional editions, an anglicised version with metric measurements and one with deuterocanonical books, were published in 1996 and 1999, respectively.

The translation brief is described as follows:

As more people *hear* the Bible read aloud than read it for themselves ... a contemporary translation must be a text that an inexperienced reader can *read aloud* without stumbling, that someone unfamiliar with traditional biblical terminology can *hear without misunderstanding*, and that everyone can listen to *with enjoyment* because the style is lucid and lyrical ... it would be suitable both for *private* and *public* reading, and for *memorizing*. (CEV Preface:ii)

The Old Testament was translated directly from the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (fourth edition corrected) and the New Testament from *The Greek New Testament* (1975, third edition corrected compared with the fourth edition) (CEV Preface:i).

The translation process, extended over 10 years, involved the review of first drafts by a number of biblical scholars, theologians and educators representing a wide variety of church traditions. Further drafts were sent for review to all English-speaking Bible Societies around the world and to more than 40 United Bible Societies translation consultants. On recommendation of its Translations Subcommittee, the American Bible Society Board of Trustees gave final approval (CEV Preface:i). More than 100 people were involved in its creation.

Newman and his colleagues took into consideration the needs of the hearer and set themselves to listen carefully for the way in which each word in their version would be understood when read out aloud. They realised that the inclusion of markers like 'and' can make a significant difference, because the oral reader must pause briefly for a breath before 'and', which will signal to the hearer that a new sentence has begun (CEV Preface:ii). The appearance of the text on the page is also important, as in oral reading there is a tendency to stress the last word on a line and to pause momentarily. Lines are therefore broken properly to assist in easier reading and memorising (CEV Preface:iii). Except for God, gender generic and inclusive language is used, because it sounds most natural to people (CEV Preface:iv). Although the language of the CEV took oral–aural issues into account, theologically it kept traditional interpretations. For example, the term 'virgin' instead of 'young woman' is used in Isaiah 7:14, but an explanation is offered in an extended footnote. In Philippians 1:1, 'servants' is used as in the ASV and *Revised Standard Version* as the translation of δοῦλος ('slave'). The Greek terms ἐπίσκοπος ('bishop') and διακόνος ('deacon') are translated as 'church officials' and 'officers', respectively, with a footnote providing the alternative renderings 'bishops' and 'deacons'.

Common English Bible

The name *Common English Bible* (CEB) (2011) relates to the description 'Common English Bible' given in 19th-century

America to the *King James Version*, which was then the most widely used translation after two centuries of competition with the Geneva Bible (CEB Preface:xiii). However, the *Common English Bible* is a retranslation sponsored by the Common English Bible Committee, an alliance of denominational publishers in the USA called the Christian Resources Development Corporation (CRDC), based in Nashville, Tennessee (CEB Preface:xiii). The brief is to

balance rigorous accuracy in the rendition of ancient texts with an equally passionate commitment to clarity of expression in the target language. Translators create sentences and choose vocabulary that would be readily understood when the biblical text is read aloud. (p. xiv)

The translation team of the CEB consists of a diverse team with broad scholarship, including over 120 scholars – men and women from 24 faith traditions in American, African, Asian, European and Latino communities (CEB Preface:xiii). In addition, the reviews of 77 reading groups from these denominations were taken into account, with the result that more than 500 individuals were involved in the preparation of the *Common English Bible* (CEB Preface:xiii).

The CEB Old Testament was translated from the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (4th edition), *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (5th edition) for those biblical books for which was available, and in some cases the Hebrew University Bible Project. The New Testament was translated from the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (27th Edition). For the Apocrypha, the currently unfinished Göttingen Septuagint was used as the basis. Books that were not available in the Göttingen project were translated from the latest revision of Rahlfs' Septuagint (2006) (CEB Preface:xiv).

The translators decided to explain their textual decisions, ambiguous and alternative translations and indication of quotations. Measurements of capacity and weight as well as monetary values and months in the biblical lunar calendar are transliterated, while footnotes indicate the modern equivalents (CEB Preface:xiv–xv). Gender-inclusive or neutral syntax are used for translating pronouns that refer to humans, unless context requires otherwise (CEB Preface:xv). The term 'son of man' in the Old Testament (e.g. Ezk 2:8) is translated as 'human one'. In the New Testament where Jesus uses the Greek version of this term to refer to himself – probably with messianic overtones – the CEB renders it as 'the Human One' (CEB Preface:xiii). In Philippians 1:1, 'slaves' is used as the translation of δούλος ('slave'), while the Greek terms ἐπίσκοπος ('bishop') and διακόνος ('deacon') are translated as 'supervisors' and 'servants', respectively, with the renderings 'overseers or bishops' and 'deacons' in a footnote.

Conclusions

The emergence of numerous Bible translations in contemporary English that are independent from the Tyndale–King James Version tradition since the beginning of the 20th century (see Naudé 2021) put the Tyndale–King James Version tradition under pressure on at least two

frontiers, namely the text-critical aspects in the light of new discoveries of biblical incipient texts and changes in biblical scholarship and translation theory, on the one hand, and changes in English language usage after 1900, on the other hand. However, one can conclude that the numerous revisions and retranslations of the Tyndale–King James Version tradition in the period after World War II, which introduced a next great age of Bible translation, kept the tradition alive amidst significant changes in the theory and practice of Bible translation.

The first generation of revisions in this great age of Bible translation was initiated by the *Revised Standard Version* (1946–1977), which was a revision of the ASV of 1901 (Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2022). In addition to updating the translation in terms of new text-critical evidence as well as the removal of archaic language, the main feature is the ecumenical character that was introduced in the compilation of the translation team, the translation process, as well as the translation product by the inclusion of deuterocanonical and related sources. To fulfil needs not addressed by the *Revised Standard Version* (1946–1977) led to other revisions of the ASV of 1901.

One such revision is the *New American Standard Bible* (1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977) sponsored by the Lockman Foundation, which was translated by conservative Protestants to provide an alternative to the *Revised Standard Version* (1952). In terms of text-critical differences, the wording reflecting the Textus Receptus was left in the translation, but it was bracketed and, where English usage requires a word that does not have a direct Greek or Hebrew parallel, this word is italicised. 'Thee' and 'thou' of Elizabethan English are kept when God is addressed but have been modernised in the *Updated New American Standard Bible* (1995). Another alternative revision to the *Revised Standard Version* (1971) is the *New King James Version* (1982), which is a revision of the *King James Version* of 1769. Following a principle of complete equivalence in the translation, the intention is to preserve the Byzantine textual basis of the *King James Version* by utilising a complete set of text-critical (foot)notes, which are formulated to authenticate the textual base of the Tyndale–King James Version tradition. In the case of *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible with the Apocrypha* (NCPBA) (2005), revisions relate only to updating spelling, punctuation and vocabulary, but the text should still reflect the 1611 translation and not subsequent revisions. A third revision type is followed by the *Modern King James Version* (and numerous others) as a reaction to the new independent English Bible translations that avoid reproducing the language of the *King James Version* in places where it is perfectly intelligible.

The second generation involves simplified revisions with the purpose to fulfil special communication needs as its primary function. *The Amplified Bible* (1965) and *Amplified Bible Classic Edition* (1987) used synonyms as the main mechanism to clarify and to explicate the meanings of the ASV, while the strategy of rephrasing or rewording of the ASV is used by *The Living Bible, Paraphrased* (1971).

The third generation involves revisions of the first and/or second generation of Bible translations of this age mostly for

gender-inclusive language. The *New American Standard Bible* (2020) adds the phrase ‘or sisters’ in italics to the term ‘brothers’ to convey the mixed gender meaning in instances that might otherwise be misunderstood as only speaking of men. Revision for gender inclusivity is sometimes attempted but not thoroughly executed, as in the *Amplified Holy Bible* (2015), which is uneven in its portrayal of gender sensitivity.

The fourth generation includes revisions to bring the translation into conformity with acceptable language use to accommodate contemporary sensibilities, such as the *New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition* (eBible 2021, hardcopy 2022) (Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2022). These revisions are not attested among the alternative revisions of the ASV or within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition.

In addition to preserving the features of the abovementioned four generation of revisions, there are retranslations that also have the intention to preserve alterity, for example orality, namely the CEV (1995), the NLT (1996/2004) and the CEB (2011).

In light of Naudé (2022), Miller-Naudé and Naudé (2022), and this essay, we conclude that the Tyndale–King James Version tradition was kept alive by revisions and retranslations within this tradition that continued into the 20th and 21st centuries as literal or word-for-word translations. Each revision creates a social reality by taking a stance towards interconfessional cooperation, presentation of the plain meaning intended in the incipient texts, the new critical editions of the Hebrew and Greek incipient texts, the removal of archaic language and the usage of gendered and inclusive language, as well as the handling of sensibilities to satisfy a diversity of readers’ expectations within this tradition. The history of English Bible translation within the Tyndale–King James Version tradition emerged as a translation complex, and its history must be understood in this way.

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Disclaimer

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