

King of Books, Book of Kings.

Early Printed English Bibles from the Carothers Collection

What Bibles did English people read in the time of Shakespeare, Spenser or Milton? Why did they view the events of the Reformation or the Civil War as biblical episodes? In occasion of the fourth centenary of the first edition of the King James Bible, in 1611, the Strozier Library's Special Collections Department presents a selection of 27 treasures from the collection of early printed Bibles bequeathed to the library in 1982 by Milton Stover Carothers, Director of FSU's Presbyterian Center, in memory of his parents Julia Stover and Milton Washington Carothers

Under a title borrowed from Andrew Marvell *King of Books*, *Book of Kings* revisits the role of Bible publishing in early modern England. Stemming from a rigorous analysis of Bibles as material objects it emphasizes the international nature of the first English Bibles whose original synthesis involved Parisian typefaces, Auvergne paper, German or French illustrations of Venetian origin, and commentaries drawing on the Flemish Desiderius Erasmus or the French John Calvin. Beyond the history of Biblical artifacts it also highlights the political figure of English kings as biblical sovereigns, from Henry VIII to James I, constantly compared to the good kings of the Old Testament, David, Solomon or Josiah, or to Jesus-Christ himself.

King of Books, *Book of Kings* offers a new example of the multi-faceted collaborative effort between the Strozier Library and the History of Text Technologies (HoTT) program as its direct origin is the graduate seminar "The Bible as a Book (13th-18th c.)" that François Dupuigrenet Desroussilles, professor in the Religion Department and HoTT faculty, has been teaching every year in Special Collections since 2009.

The exhibition is open free to the public in the Special Collections Gallery during the Spring term.