

## The Application of Biblical Exegesis to Political Treatises Regarding the First Book of Juan de Mariana's *De Rege et Regis Institutione*

A aplicação da exegese bíblica aos tratados políticos relativa ao primeiro livro do *De Rege et Regis Institutione* de Juan de Mariana

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**Abstract:** The following paper analyses the common phenomenon of biblical exegesis among biblical humanists, focusing on the work *De Rege et Regis institutione* by the Spanish humanist Juan de Mariana. After a brief introduction on Humanism and the importance of the study of the Holy Scripture, the author provides relevant information about Mariana. Then, the paper proceeds with an analysis of the presence of biblical explanations and interpretations included in the first book of *De Rege et Regis institutione*, as applied to Juan de Mariana's ideas on statecraft and the legitimacy of deposing unjust rulers.

**Keywords:** Juan de Mariana; *De Rege et Regis institutione*; biblical exegesis; Spanish Humanism; *speculum principis*.

The links between the biblical texts and the humanists are quite self-evident, as Jozef IJsewijn points out in his monumental study of Neo-Latin literature when making a historical survey, or Sarah Knight in her synthesising approach to Early Modern Education regarding Neo-Latin literature<sup>2</sup>. This paper will not address this issue but examine how the biblical texts could have favoured the expansion of political treatises. The pedagogical take the humanists had regarding their production has also been widely evidenced, especially when it comes to political theories. Excellent studies by various authors account for decades of research about the ties between the educational and political project the humanists devised for Europe<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> IJSEWIJN (1990) 41-49; KNIGHT (2017).

<sup>3</sup> BORN (1928a, 1928b); GILBERT (1939); GALINO (1948); KRISTELLER (1979); BIGALLI (1985, 1988); SOARES (1990, 1994, 1999, 2020); CANTARINO (1996).

We will nevertheless analyse one of the mechanisms which humanist writing appreciated the most, that is, biblical exegesis. Our aim is to describe and observe how the vision of a particular humanist, Juan de Mariana, shapes the exegetical process and accommodates it to the purposes of his treatise *De Rege et Regis institutione*. Although the scholarship on Mariana has evidenced the bonds between religious thought and political theory in his works, we have not found yet any study on the importance of biblical exegesis from a philological perspective. The relevance of this particular text lies in the fact that it has been historically considered a book advocating for tyrannicide. In fact, as we will explain later, this work underwent a severe trial in France after the assassination of Henry IV of France and due to its depiction of the assassination of the predecessor of that ruler.

The humanist movement has been extensively characterised by scholarly research as an aesthetical shift, in which the perception of the world gradually focused from communities to individuals and was motivated by the cultural and technological progress achieved by the invention of the print. This allowed a wider distribution of texts, as well as it was accompanied by a previously neglected need of going *ad fontes*, which has become a rather cliché expression.

Thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) had already expressed the necessity of reading through the original texts (Aquinas's commentaries on Aristotle illustrate well enough). However, it was during the full humanist period that Greek and Hebrew were encouraged to pursue a proper formation in the so called *studia humanitatis*<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, the study of both languages was fuelled by the impulse of what has been labeled "Biblical Humanism"<sup>5</sup>. As W. Lourdaux sharply points out<sup>6</sup>:

*Il n'est plus question ici d'un mouvement intellectuel ne quittant pas le domaine de la pure philologie, mais il s'agit d'une vie, d'une spiritualité qu'on qualifie de chrétienne et d'humaniste. Cette vie et cette spiritualité sont humanistes d'abord par le souci constant de voir Dieu et le monde dans leurs relations avec l'homme. Les humanistes chrétiens ne considèrent pas Dieu « en soi » comme une entité métaphysique, un objet de*

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<sup>4</sup> TAYLOR and COROLEU (2010) 2; NIETO IBÁÑEZ (2015) 67.

<sup>5</sup> SMOLINSKY (1988) 117-119.

<sup>6</sup> (1972) 57.

*spéculation abstraite, étrangère à l'homme et à son destin. De ce retour à l'homme, ou mieux à sa relation concrète avec Dieu, qui préoccupe les humanistes, ils trouvent les traces dans l'économie du salut, l'histoire sainte telle qu'elle est consignée dans l'Écriture.*

*It is not a matter of an intellectual movement that does not leave the domain of sheer Philology anymore, but it is about a type of life and spirituality that we qualify as Christian and humanist. This life and spirituality are humanist first by the preoccupation of regarding God and the world within their relationship with man. Christian humanists do not consider God as a metaphysical entity per se, an abstract object for speculation, estranged from man and his fate. They find in the plan for salvation, the history of saints according to how it was recorded in the Scriptures, the traces of this return to man, or rather to his concrete relationship with God, something about which humanists care.*

Furthermore, estranging works from a Christian context turns out to be difficult to researchers of Humanism, even though there are pure philological works devoted to Greek and Latin texts. This occurs especially when it comes to deal with important figures such as Erasmus (1466-1536), Luther (1483-1546), Melanchton (1497-1560), Thomas More (1478-1535), Antonio de Nebrija (1441-1522), Benito Arias Montano (ca. 1525/1527-1598) or Lorenzo Valla (1407-1457). In Northern Europe, for example, Christian Humanism can be regarded as one of the main propellers of Protestantism<sup>7</sup>, when its main figures, Luther, Melanchton or Matthias Flacius (1520-1575) among others, sought independence from the Apostolical Church's biblical hermeneutics<sup>8</sup>. And this *sola scriptura* which Luther proposed can only be understood with the support of the humanist spirit of exploring the original sources.

*Die Reformation hat die enge Verbindung von Gotteswort in der Bibel und Tradition als Grundlage der kirchlichen Lehre aufgebrochen. Luther hat mit seinen Schlagworten sola scriptura und scriptura sui ipsius interpretes die Auslegung der*

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<sup>7</sup> Christian Humanism can be hardly distinguished from the concept of Biblical Humanism we previously mentioned. As C. G. Nauert illustrates, beyond Italian borders there was a necessity of making humanist works "something more than a literary enthusiasm" (2007) 158. The humanist approach to the intellectual task then required a higher Christian influence, and thus the insistence on Greek and Hebrew as ways of strengthening and deepening the level of understanding of the biblical texts. As we can infer from both Kristeller and Nauert, there is almost no difference between these tags, both being aspects of the same intellectual pursuit.

<sup>8</sup> SCHINDLER (2004); ILIĆ (2015).

*Bibel durch die Tradition abgelehnt und seine Theologie aus der Schrift erarbeitet. [...] Dabei unterschied Luther zwischen Bibel und Gottes Wort, dem inneren und dem äußeren Wort.*

*The Reformation broke the relationship of God's word in the Bible and tradition as the bases of church knowledge. Luther rejected the exegesis of the Bible through tradition by means of his slogan of sola scriptura and scriptura sui ipsius interpret, as well as he elaborated his theology from the text. [...] Then Luther differentiated between Bible's and God's word, as inner and outer word<sup>9</sup>.*

European Humanism adopted a peculiar vision of reality by means of keeping a balance between the ancient Pagan wisdom contained in Latin and Greek texts before their cultures were christianised, and religious, biblical knowledge<sup>10</sup>. However, it was not an easy task as it posed some issues to scholars in the 16th century regarding the common division that had been established between scholastic procedures and humanistic procedures<sup>11</sup>. Scholasticism was then considered rather preposterous:

*[T]amen hi quoque non mediocribus nominibus obstricti sunt, dum felices sua Philautia perinde quasi ipsi tertium incolant coelum, ita reliquos mortaleis omneis ut humi reptantes pecudes, e sublimi despiciunt, ac prope commiserantur, dum tanto magistralium definitionum, conclusionum, corollariorum, propositionum explicitarum et implicitarum agmine septi sunt, [...] Praeterea dum arcana mysteria suo explicant arbitrato, qua ratione conditus ac digestus sit mundus.*

*However, these are also not oppressed by regular names, while they in their self-love live as though they lived in the third heaven, thus they look down from the sublime on every mortal as beasts crawling on the ground, and they even pity them, while they are surrounded by such troop of magistral definitions, conclusions, corollaries, explicit and implicit propositions, [...] Especially while they explain the arcane mysteries according to their thoughts, under which measure was the world conceived and formed<sup>12</sup>.*

Erasmus sarcastically expresses a necessity which is symptomatic to Humanism. Humanists need to reconfigure knowledge, *videlicet* biblical knowledge, in order to transfer it to a wider space in which the individual

<sup>9</sup> KLEIN (2014) 337.

<sup>10</sup> TAYLOR and COROLEU (2010) 1; PHÉLIPPEAU (2013) 160-161.

<sup>11</sup> NASCIMENTO (2017) 57-59.

<sup>12</sup> ERASMUS (1979) 146. The translation is provided by the author of the paper.

should be regarded<sup>13</sup>. And it could be achieved by means of Greek and Latin culture and languages<sup>14</sup>. Language became furthermore a popular debate, as scholastic authors were criticised due to their obscure use of Latin language:

*Nam cum omnis eorum virorum, qui in Hispania Theologiae nomen dederunt, exercitus in duas classes divisus sit; alteram eorum, qui scholasticis exercitationibus contenti stationes partesque suas tuentur; alteram vero eorum qui ulterius etiam progressi ad sacrorum Biblicorum lectionem sese contulere, eamque variorum expositorum scriptis, explanationibus & sentiis muniendam duxere, evenit ut alteri praeter pressum illum scholasticae disputationis sermonem elocutionis omne genus aliud respuant, & quidquid uberius linguae offenderint, negligant ac pene condemnent.*

*For the army of those men who in Spain gave name to Theology is divided into two classes; one of them, that, satisfied with scholastic exercises, protect their prescriptions and targets; the other of them, that took themselves even more devotedly towards the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and were led to reinforce it with writing on different matters, explanations and orations. It happens to the former that except from the pressing nature of the language of scholastic debate they would reject any kind of elocution, and should they find any trace of a more abundant language, they would ignore and wholly condemn it<sup>15</sup>.*

Humanism defended then a more polished usage of the Latin language which could bring clarity to texts. And thus, Pagan authors became an indisputable source from which humanists could enrich their use of Latin<sup>16</sup>. But it also established a rather peculiar relationship between them and the Holy Scriptures. Some sort of hybridised culture began as humanists started inserting ideas, excerpts or lines from ancient Greek and Latin authors into their writings about biblical passages.

Regarding Spanish humanists, Arias Montano has been widely considered the father of biblical exegesis among Renaissance thinkers in the Iberian Paeninsula<sup>17</sup>. His works are devoted to the amplification of the biblical know-

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<sup>13</sup> GÓMEZ CANSECO (2012) 134-139.

<sup>14</sup> BONMATÍ SÁNCHEZ (2007).

<sup>15</sup> ARIAS MONTANO (1583) 3. The translation is provided by the author of the paper.

<sup>16</sup> HASKELL (2017).

<sup>17</sup> However, Spanish Humanism was due to Erasmian influence from the very beginning heavily influenced and focused on Christianity and its relation to the individual, as Antonio de Nebrija shows throughout his work. TAYLOR and COROLEU (2010) 4.

ledge by means of its application to different fields<sup>18</sup>. Moreover, one of his most famous works is the *Antwerp Polyglot*, a collection of the whole of biblical texts in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Aramaic and Syriac. The task of editing a multi-language Bible had also been illustrated by the work of the *Políglota Complutense*, by Cardinal Cisneros (1436-1517) in the University of Alcalá de Henares<sup>19</sup>.

Montano's Bible was subject to trial due to accusations of being heterodox in certain passages where he took from rabbinic works<sup>20</sup>. The analysis of the text and censorship was assigned then by the Inquisition to the Jesuit priest Juan de Mariana, who was increasingly becoming an important figure within the *Respublica Litterarum*. He delivered a report in which he accepted the work as valid but offered numerous corrections and observations to the text<sup>21</sup>.

### Juan de Mariana and his Political Engagement

Juan de Mariana (1536-1624) was born in the Spanish village of Talavera de la Reina, information which he himself reveals through epigrams located at the beginning of his works. They serve for the purpose of briefly explaining (Mariana's writing style expresses his preference for brevity) his career:

*Elbora mi genitrix. Complutum mystica nutrix.  
Romae et Lutetiae dogmata sacra diu  
Sat iuuenis docui. Multo inde labore Toletum  
Conscripsi Hesperiae tempora prisca redux:*

<sup>18</sup> DURÁN GUERRA (2008); NIETO IBÁÑEZ (2015).

<sup>19</sup> NOCOÑ, (2005); NIETO IBÁÑEZ (2015).

<sup>20</sup> The *Polyglot* of Cisneros (issued in Alcalá de Henares) became a rare product, due to many of its volumes being lost in a sea travel to Italy. However, Christophe Plantin made a reprint proposal to the King of Spain, who accepted the philological endeavour and sent Arias Montano to supervise the project. One of the main issues was whether substituting the Latin text of the Vulgate with the more literal version of the Hebrew text, translated by Sanctes Pagnino. This caused quite a controversy and Montano was dispatched to Antwerp with the instruction of keeping the Vulgate text, but there was no real instruction regarding Pagnino's translation. This translation appeared then as the interlinear Latin literal version of the Hebrew text, which caused great controversy, as it was understood that Plantin and Montano had flouted the Tridentine decree that established the Vulgate as the only valid Latin interpretation of the Bible. This was then added to the accusations of heterodoxy. For a splendid account of the editing process and controversy regarding the *Polyglot*, see DÁVILA (2019) XXXIX-CLXXIV.

<sup>21</sup> BALDOMERO (1998).

*Pondera, Regemque et scenam, de morte, Iacobo,  
Pascha, Egira, nummis, in Biblicosque libros.  
Est Mariana domus, Iesu inter vita sodales:  
Multiplicis sophiae cultus, amica quies.  
An dabis extinctus tarda ut post fata quiescam,  
Octo novemque, Deus, quem fere lustra premunt?*

*Talavera was my mother. Alcalá my mystic nourisher,  
In Rome and Paris the sacred dogmas for long  
Enough as a young man I taught. Then after much work  
I wrote back in Toledo about the great times of Hesperia;  
And about the weights, the King and the scene, death, St. James,  
The Passion, the Hijra, the coin, and commentaries on the Bible.  
Mariana has a house, the Company of Jesus,  
The cultivation of multiple knowledge and friendly rest.  
Will you grant, God, that he rests after a late death,  
Whom almost eighty-five years do burden? (Mariana 1619)*

Mariana continued his studies in Alcalá de Henares (*Complutum*) and he followed the Jesuit member Jerónimo Nadal, which had been sent by the founder of the order, Ignatius of Loyola, who died in 1556, when Mariana was twenty. Once he was ordained priest, he began his career in Sicily, Rome and Paris. After his time in Paris he came back to Toledo, near his birthplace, where he started writing his own works. Previously, his texts had been motivated by his work in the Company of Jesus<sup>22</sup>, which included his censorship report on Montano's *Polyglot Bible* above mentioned<sup>23</sup>.

His *magnum opus* was his *Historiae de rebus Hispaniae*, which he himself translated to Spanish as *Historia general de España* (*General History of Spain*). However, his most polemic works came under the title of *De Rege et Regis institutione* (*On the King and his Education*) and his *Tractatus VII*, published in Cologne in 1609, that comprised a series of treatises in which *De monetae mutatione* (*On the Modification of the Coin*) is included. It caused his imprisonment

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<sup>22</sup> OLMEDO RAMOS (2011) 7-10.

<sup>23</sup> Mariana's first important task was writing the report on Montano's and Plantin's edition of the Bible, which was accused of being heavily influenced by heterodox visions of Christianity. This edition included a great presence of Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac texts and, according to Mariana himself, neglected the Vulgate. However, Mariana solved the matter in favour of the editors. About Mariana's report, see CIROT (1904) 5-16; ASENSIO (1955); and DÁVILA (2019) CLIX-CLXXX.

during the trial to his work by the Duke of Lerma, minister of King Philip III and against whom Mariana had allegedly directed heavy accusations<sup>24</sup>. He was nevertheless acquitted after an unorthodox process which led to no formal statement by the judge<sup>25</sup>. *De Rege and Regis institutione* underwent a trial in France after the assassination of King Henry IV by François Ravaillac. The accusation was that the assassin had read Mariana's work, which included ideas on the killing of tyrants that had been considered dangerous. The book was solemnly and publicly burnt in Paris<sup>26</sup>, although Ravaillac denied having read it. Probably the book went under trial after the assassination of the king due to its introduction of the episode of the assassination of King Henry III of France by Jacques Clément, as part of chapter 6, titled *An tyrannum opprimere fas sit* (If it is legitimate to kill a tyrant). Mariana faced another trial in Spain by the Inquisition, for which he had already worked when establishing the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*<sup>27</sup>.

His disenchantment about the rather negative impact of his works caused Mariana to retire from public life and devote the rest of his time to the

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<sup>24</sup> The seven treatises were about various matters (spiritual, economical and such). Both *De monetæ mutatione* and *De morte et immortalitate* caused a great stir in some spheres of the Spanish court, which led to the accusation and trial. It was especially due to Mariana's illustration of the modifications done in the coinage in the kingdom of Castille, in which he pointed out the rather inconsistent and dubious practices of the authorities in charge of such modifications. Another issue of relative importance to the matter is the fact that there is an extant translation of the Latin treatise to Spanish. However, as CIROT (1904) 100 points out, it must be examined whether the translated work was penned by Mariana or not.

<sup>25</sup> The trial on Mariana can be considered an example of a rather dubious process, due to the numerous abnormalities and transgressions that characterised the whole process. Mariana, who was a member of the Church, was to stand trial before a non-ecclesiastical judge, something directly against the Jesuit's prerogatives. For a complete account of the process including excerpts from Mariana's statements, see FERNÁNDEZ DE LA MORA (1993).

<sup>26</sup> The details about the trial can be found in M. Roussel's work *L'Antimariana ou refutation des propositions de Mariana* (1510. Chez P. Mettayer: Paris), in which a handful of arguments against Mariana's book are exposed in a spirited defence of the sacred nature of the monarchy. For a detailed exposition of the event, see CIROT (1904) 111-116.

<sup>27</sup> OLMEDO RAMOS (2011) 18.



study of the Holy Scriptures<sup>28</sup>. His *Scholia in Vetus et Novum Testamentum* represent this last stage of his production, as well as his life.

### *De Rege et Regis Institutione*

The text on which I will focus my attention was first published in 1599 in Toledo by Pedro Rodrigo, the owner of the royal print. It was composed after Garcia Loaysa, friend of Mariana's and teacher to King Philip III, asked him for advice on the education of kings. During the following years Mariana prepared a second edition that was to be published in 1605 in Mainz. This edition included minor changes and a chapter on the modification of the coin, which would be extended later in the treatise *De monetae mutatione*, included in his *Tractatus VII*. A new edition by the publishers was issued in 1611 in Hanau, by the heirs of Johann Aubry, bearing the distinctive of *edition secunda*<sup>29</sup>.

The text is divided in three books organised by chapters and a preface at the beginning of the first book. This first book —the shortest— contains ten chapters. The second book comprises fourteen chapters, whereas the last book raises the figure to seventeen. In the first book Mariana aims at explaining the nature of government and monarchy, as well as he devotes some chapters to the figure of the tyrant, including the famous chapter we have already mentioned about the possibility of dethroning an unjust ruler, even violently. An extended discussion is added on the assassination of the tyrant and the consequences of being an excessively authoritarian ruler<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> FERNÁNDEZ DE LA MORA (1993) 49.

<sup>29</sup> This text was subject to numerous translations starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the most famous is the one included in Francisco Pi y Margall's *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* in 1854. Written in Latin, it should have been excluded from the collection, but Pi y Margall decided to publish a translation of the text due to its being "a work of utmost importance" MARIANA (1854) XLIX. It was, however, first translated in 1845, and knew many other translations both to Spanish and other languages. Some of them were partial, as the edition of 1930, which features only the first book of the whole work. The latest Spanish translation was in 1981, by Luis Sánchez Agesta, with includes an extended introduction dealing with aspects of *De Rege* and Mariana's political theories.

<sup>30</sup> In this paper we propose a philological view of Mariana's text and therefore we will not include a deep discussion about the author's political views. For an account of the scholarship on Mariana's political theories, see ZANOTTO (2003); MEJÍA (2007); BRAUN (2007, 2008, 2011, 2013, 2018); MARTÍNEZ-SICLUNA SEPÚLVEDA (2011); MERLE (2014);

The second book is then devoted to the education of the King, including chapters relating to literature, exercise, governance or nourishment. Mariana vehemently exposes the dangers of following the advice of courtiers who are interested in self-promotion. This criticism is extended to the third book, which approaches issues related to the government of the Kingdom, such as economy, ministries, war... Furthermore, the conclusion to each of the three books always deals with religion; Juan de Mariana emphasises the role of the king as secular ruler and the Pope as religious ruler and advises the monarch not to meddle in religious issues or try to establish any kind of religious ruling on the people.

### **Biblical Exegesis in *De Rege et Regis Institutione*<sup>31</sup>**

My attention shall focus on the first book, due to the polemics surrounding its content about the justification of killing monarchs. The first chapter, which holds the title of *Homo natura est animal sociabile* ("Man is by nature a social being"), devotes its paragraphs to an explanation much drawn from Aristotle about the beginning of society (the famous *state of nature* about which Thomas Hobbes would later write). In the second chapter (bearing the title *Vnum reipublicae praesse, quam plures praestantius est*, that is, "It is better for the State to have only one ruler than many") the first quotation from the Bible can be found:

*Ipsi etiam diuini libri regiae potestati parum fauent iudicibus initio constitutis, qui Iudaeorum rempublicam gubernarent. Quam reipublicae formam ad ciuilem spectasse declarat, quod ad eum honorem electione, atque ex omnibus tribubus qui uidebantur idonei, sumebantur, nulla praeterea facultate leges gentis aut mores mutandi: uti illa Gedeonis uerba declarant. Non dominabor ego neque filius meus, sed dominabitur uestri Dominus.*

*Even the Holy Scriptures themselves scarcely favour the royal power as, at first, they constituted judges to rule the State of the Jews. It shows that this form of State*

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FERNÁNDEZ DELGADO (2017); CONTRERAS & MIRANDA (2017); CENTENERA SÁNCHEZ-SECO (2018).

<sup>31</sup> I will use the edition published in 1611 already compared with the previous editions for quotations from the text. We will provide our own translation, instead of using published versions, due to the fact that we are already preparing a critical edition and translation of Mariana's complete work. For the biblical references, I will use the *New King James Version* for the English text and the *Vulgata* for the Latin text.

*looks to a civil one, the fact that the ones that looked as best fitting this honour from the all the tribes were picked up in elections; and they had no possibility of changing the laws or customs of the nation. Like Gideon's words state: "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you" <sup>32</sup>.*

This biblical quotation is used in this case by Mariana to emphasise arguments against one ruler within the State<sup>33</sup>, as well as it also can be related to Mariana's ideas on how the government should be divided between secular and sacred government. And he continues as follows:

*Regiam potestatem in eam gentem tempus inuexit, et malitia atque improbitate. Heli primum, deinde Samuelis filiorum irritati populares Regem sibi dari extorserunt, multum quamuis reclamante Samuele, atque imminentes ex eo calamitates seuera denunciatione praedicente: foreque ut accepta potestate Reges abuterentur ad tyrannidem. Quo argumento efficitur, aut regiam potestatem ciuili praestantior non esse, aut illius certe populi moribus, atque eo praesertim tempore non satis fuisse accommodatam. Quod enim in aliis rerum generibus contingit, ut quae praestantiora sunt et elegantiora non omnibus conueniant.*

*Time brought to this nation the royal power, with malice and dishonesty. First the citizens, irritated by the children of Eli and after him of Samuel's strived to give a King for themselves using force, although Samuel highly rejected it and predicted incoming disasters with severe warning, that Kings would exceed in the power they received to the degree of tyranny. With this argument it can be achieved that whether the royal power is not better than the civil power, or that it was not sufficiently suited, especially at that time, to the customs of that people. It of course happens in the rest of things, that what is best and finest should not fit with everybody <sup>34</sup>.*

Mariana then recalls the biblical text from 1 Samuel, especially 1 Samuel 12 when talking about Samuel's scepticism towards the idea of having a King. Therefore, it becomes clear that for Mariana the Bible can be interpreted in a way suitable to his political intentions. Generally, he uses three main sources

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<sup>32</sup> MARIANA (1611) 24.

<sup>33</sup> It is not uncommon for Mariana, a trained rhetorician, to discuss matters by means of contraposing different points of view. His commitment to rigorous writing includes trying to give an objectivist vision of all the possible sides for an issue.

<sup>34</sup> MARIANA (1611) 24-25.

in his purpose of giving *exempla* and explaining them to the reader. Classical Antiquity, biblical excerpts (almost exclusively from the Old Testament) and Spanish history, about which he wrote, as it was previously pointed out, his greatest work. Mariana underlines the importance of a hybrid use of sources, as he interprets the biblical sources the same way he does when it comes to Greek and Latin ones.

Then, in the third chapter, which deals about the hereditary nature of the kingdom, he traces the beginning of the issue as far back as the book of *Genesis*, as well as *1 Kings*, when he elaborates on the choice of an heir within the children:

*Porro moribus nationum uideo susceptum ut maiores natu filii caeteris praeferantur, foeminis mares: tametsi Dauidem uidemus Salomoni minimo omnium filio regnum de manu dedisse, maiori abdicato. Quod non negabo ab aliis Regibus fuisse in ea gente factitatum Dauidis exemplo. Et primis temporibus constat Iacobum Patriarcham iura primogeniti Rubeno ablata in Iosephum transtulisse, uti diuini libri testantur. Verum Rubeni flagitium impietasque grauis eo supplicio est uindicata. Dauidem non sine diuino instinctu et inflatu crediderim id exemplum reliquisse, quod Principes alii aliquando imitati sunt: nostri etiam imitentur, cum aut maior natu filius faedus flagitio est, neque recipit sanitatem omnibus remediis tentatis, aut minor natu excellenti prae caeteris uirtute est, non arbitror iniquum aliquando fore, si fratribus maioribus praeferatur, modo sine motu contingat contentioneque: pater Princeps haerede instituendo non priuatis affectibus ducatur, sed publicam salutem respiciat.*

*Furthermore, I see that in the customs of nations it is undertaken that the oldest of the children should be preferred, and the males before the females; even though we see that David gave the kingdom to his youngest son Solomon by his own hand, refusing his oldest. I will not deny that this was also done among this people according to the example of David. Also, from the beginning the patriarch Jacob transferred to Joseph the rights he took from Reuben, as the Holy Scriptures attest. Certainly, Reuben's flaw and severe impiety were vindicated by this punishment. I am inclined to believe that David left this example not without some divine instinct and inspiration, example which other Princes have sometimes also imitated. Our Princes should even imitate it, whether when the oldest son possesses some flaw and do not comes to sanity after every remedy, or when the youngest surpasses the rest in virtue; I do not regard it as dangerous sometimes, if he is preferred to the older brothers, so long as it happens without instability and argument. The father Prince should not be led by private affects when it comes to establishing heredity, but he should observe public welfare<sup>35</sup>.*

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<sup>35</sup> MARIANA (1611) 35-36.

This excerpt gives a proper example of how Mariana interprets the Bible and provides an explanation of the passages that fits the ideas he wants to transmit through his text. By means of the example from *1 Kings* 1,28-53 regarding David and Solomon, and the example from the story of Joseph in *Genesis* 37-50, he genuinely establishes precedents regarding the choice of different heirs for the king as it should be expected. Furthermore, he even recommends imitation in case it is needed, making then self-evident the use of biblical exegesis as a political tool.

It is in chapter five, where Mariana distinguishes between the king and the tyrant, where the following excerpt is found:

*Et in diuinis libris Nembrotus, qui primus tyrannidem in terris occupauit, eoque robustus venator dicitur, vt se muniret subditisque extenuaret excelsam turrim magnis molibus et cementis aedificare Babylone est aggressus. [...] Mitto Pharaonis fraude gentem Hebraicam ne ad libertatem aspiraret, malis domitam coactamque suo sudore vrbes in Aegypto aedificare.*

*And in the Holy Scriptures Nimrod, who first occupied a tyranny on Earth, and was also said to be a strong hunter, started to build a great tower with big rocks and stones in Babylon in order to protect himself and extenuate his subjects. [...] I refer that under the Pharaoh's deceit the tamed and forced Hebrew nation, to prevent them from striving for freedom, edified cities in Egypt with great labour<sup>36</sup>.*

It catches my immediate interest the fact that Mariana characterises Nimrod as *tyrannus*, whereas the Latin text from the *Vulgata* (probably the one he used) uses the word *potens*, as an equivalent to the Hebrew גִּבּוֹר *gibor* or the Greek γίγας *gigas* used in the *Septuagint*. Although he keeps the original mention of Nimrod's being a great hunter, he chooses qualifying this character as one of the first tyrants, as an interpretation of him as a king would compromise his characterisation of tyrants as self-devoted despots. It then turns out to be more adequate to his ideas to use a word which he had previously filled with connotative meaning.

However, where biblical exegesis undoubtedly plays a crucial role in the first book of *De Rege et Regis institutione* is in chapter six, in which the main discussion on the legitimacy of assassinating the king takes place. Here

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<sup>36</sup> MARIANA (1611) 49.

Mariana makes use of the episode of Saul and David (located in both 1 *Samuel* and 2 *Samuel*) to express his opinion on the matter:

*Quanta, inquit, Saulis Regis Iudaeorum, antiquis temporibus prauitas fuit, vitaeque et morum conditio quam profligata? Cuius mens malis incursibus agitata, scelerum poenis agentibus scilicet per interualla titubabat: eoque abdicato, Deo auctore, iura regni cum mystica vnctione in Dauidem translata erant. Iniuria tamen regnantem atque ad amentiam prolapsam et scelera, David aemulus redactum in potestatem semel et iterum, violare ausus non est: cum iure posse facere videretur siue vt imperium vindicaret, siue vt tueretur, salutem: quam is nullis prouocatus iniuriis et vitam auferre modis omnibus moliebatur, vestigiis innocentis insistens in quamcumque partem se daret. Neque ipse tantum inimico pepercit, sed Amalechitem adolescentem, qui victum in praelio et gladio proprio incumbentem, eius iussu quamuis, peremisse nunciauit, ferro interfecit quasi impium et temerarium: qui Principem Deo sacrum [...] violare ausus esset.*

*How deep, they say, was the evil within Saul, the king of Jews, in ancient times, and how flawed his way of life and mores? Whose mind, agitated by malign attacks, just hesitated at times when he had remorse for his crimes. After his abdication, according to God, the rights of the kingdom had been transferred to David by mystical anointment. However, David, his rival, did not dare to violate his rights, despite his illegal reigning and fall in madness and crimes, despite his coming back to power once and again. Although it seemed he could by right reclaim his power or look after his own life, which he [Saul] tried to take from him not being provoked by any outrage, following the steps of this innocent wherever he went. He [David] did not only not kill his enemy, but he killed with his iron the young Amalekite who announced he had killed him, even though he had asked for it, when he had been defeated in battle and fell upon his sword. As he considered him ungodly and reckless, who would dare to violate a Prince sacred by God<sup>37</sup>.*

Mariana refers then the story of David and Saul to make a point in his theory that a king could be assassinated, but not freely and recklessly. Juan de Mariana made sure in his text that only a valid and solid reason could justify committing an act that would alter the structure of the State. Again, his explanation and interpretation of the biblical story becomes crucial:

*Dauidi (quod obicietur) interficiendi Saulem Regem idonea satis causa non erat, cum fuga tueri salutem posset: qua ratione Regem praesertim a Deo constitutum si perimeret causa tuendi se, impietas non reipublicae amor fuisset. Neque enim tanta morum prauitate Saul fuit, vt subditos tyrannide opprimeret, diuinas et humanas leges inureteret, ciues praedae haberet. Iura regni in Dauidem translata sunt quidem, vt defuncto succe-*

<sup>37</sup> MARIANA (1611) 54-55.

*deret, non tamen ut viuo imperium vitamque eriperet. Quid praeterea, quod Augustinus contra Adiman. Cap. Septimodecimo noluisse ait occidere Saulem, licuisse [sic] tamen.*

*David had, as previously exposed, no reason valid enough for killing King Saul, as he could flee to keep his life. According to this, assassinating a King constituted by God would have been to regard himself and impiety, not love for the State. For Saul was not so depraved that he oppressed his subjects under tyranny, subverted the divine and human laws and preyed on citizens. The rights of the kingdom were transferred to David then to succeed him when he died, not to take his power and life when he was living. That is why Augustin in his Contra Adiman. chapter XVII says he did not want to kill Saul, although he could<sup>38</sup>.*

This fragment therefore gives a clear explanation of Mariana's vision on the assassination of the heads of the State, as it comprises his interpretation of a biblical passage that was common knowledge to humanist readers. The assassination could be committed only when there was a powerful reason to back it. Otherwise, Mariana himself warns about the disastrous consequences of such acts.

## Conclusion

Biblical exegesis was a fundamental tool among works and texts by humanists. It presented advantages such as giving clearer explanations to their own ideas and establishing a common ground for them for communication. But it can be understood also as a way of escaping from the rigidity of Scholasticism and, as it was pointed out at the beginning, approaching the Holy Scriptures in a more useful way. Some sort of link was then established between the Bible and the existence of the humanist thinker in a social context, so that he could apply his knowledge to take part in common affairs<sup>39</sup>.

Furthermore, the application of this idea to Juan de Mariana's work *De Rege et Regis institutione* produces a rich source from which deeper studies can surely arise. This analysis has just comprised the first book of a much longer work, which presents many other controversial issues regarding social and political aspects of the State. Mariana follows the same procedures that have seen when he deals with problems such as corruption among courtiers and ministers, the education of the king and matters of statecraft such as taxes or war.

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<sup>38</sup> MARIANA (1611) 61.

<sup>39</sup> DURÁN GUERRA (2008) 244.

However, this content should not be in any case regarded as restricted to Mariana. Examining further in depth his works, as well as similar works by other humanists in the *Republica Litterarum* would both enrich this field of studies and benefit the knowledge about Humanism and its concerns about society.

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**Resumo:** No seguinte trabalho apresentamos uma análise do fenómeno da exegese bíblica nos humanistas, relativa à obra *De Rege et Regis institutione* do humanista espanhol Juan de Mariana. Atrás de uma breve introdução ao Humanismo e a importância do estudo da Sagrada Escritura, o autor detalha algumas questões relevantes sobre Mariana. Seguidamente continua-se com a análise da presença de explicações e interpretações de passagens bíblicas no primeiro livro *De Rege et Regis institutione* tal como estas se aplicam às ideias de Juan de Mariana sobre o Estado e a legitimidade de depor governantes injustos.

**Palavras-chave:** Juan de Mariana; *De Rege et Regis institutione*; exegese bíblica; Humanismo espanhol; *speculum principis*.

**Resumen:** En el siguiente trabajo analizamos la cuestión de la exégesis bíblica entre los humanistas en relación con la obra *De Rege et Regis institutione* del humanista español Juan de Mariana. Tras una breve introducción sobre el Humanismo y la importancia del estudio de las Sagradas Escrituras, el autor presenta algunos datos relevantes sobre Mariana. A continuación procedemos al análisis de la presencia de explicaciones e interpretaciones de pasajes bíblicos en el libro primero *De Rege et Regis institutione*, tal y como estas se aplican a las ideas de Mariana acerca de la gobernanza y la legitimidad de deponer gobernantes injustos.

**Palabras clave:** Juan de Mariana; *De Rege et Regis institutione*; exégesis bíblica; Humanismo español; *speculum principis*.

**Résumé :** Dans ce travail, nous présentons une analyse du phénomène de l'exégèse biblique chez les humanistes, dans l'œuvre de l'humaniste espagnol Juan de Mariana *De Rege et Regis institutione*. Après une brève introduction à l'Humanisme et à l'importance de l'étude de l'Écriture Sainte, l'auteur aborde quelques questions pertinentes sur Mariana. Ensuite, nous nous intéresserons à la présence d'explications et d'interprétations de passages bibliques dans le premier livre *De Rege et Regis institutione*, et à l'application de celles-ci aux idées de Juan de Mariana sur l'Etat et la légitimité de destituer des dirigeants injustes.

**Mots-clés :** Juan de Mariana ; *De Rege et Regis institutione* ; exégèse biblique ; Humanisme espagnol ; *speculum principis*.