

THE PSALMS AS "MIRROR OF PRINCES" IN THE SIGLO DE ORO

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The relatively scant attention paid to the genre of metrical psalms in Golden Age Spain has focused primarily on issues of prosody, and previous analyses have overlooked any political overtones behind these translations.¹ While not as obvious or compelling as Protestant Europe's use of the Psalms as a poetic shield in its struggle with the forces of Catholic reaction, there is indeed a political dimension in the numerous versions of the Psalter produced in Imperial Spain, especially those published during its era of decadence in the reign of Philip IV. This essay will address a recurring phenomenon uncovered in research on lesser-known seventeenth century editions of the Davidic psalms in Castilian: the use of these poems as a "mirror of princes" (or *privados*) in Imperial Spain. Many of the seventeenth-century nobles (including the King himself) to whom these versions are dedicated are openly identified, in prose prefaces, with King David, and clear attempts are made to edify the monarch or *grande* with the moral teachings of the Psalms. Whereas poetic versions of the Psalms are normally, and rightly, treated as the artistic manifestation of a religious agenda, it is important to explore the political ramifications of such an agenda, particularly in the age of *desengaño* and decline.

The well-documented vogue for metrical psalms in the vernacular took root throughout Europe in the early sixteenth century, prompted by humanist concern for philological and theological rigor in Biblical translation and encouraged by imaginative metrical experimentation at the hands of both major and minor poets. England saw a veritable explosion of psalm-translating activity during this time; the British scholar Rivkah Zim has noted the appearance of more than seventy different versions—scholarly, devotional, and literary—in English from 1530 to 1600, not including those that survive only in manuscript (Zim 2). Convinced, like Thomas Becon, that "the Psalmody of David maye well be called the tresure house of the holye Scripture" (Becon, *David's Harpe*, cited in Zim 31), translators and poets as diverse as Miles Coverdale, Thomas Wyatt, Thomas Sternhold, the Earl of Surrey, and Mary and Philip Sidney dedicated themselves to capturing, in English meter and verse, the spiritual riches of Davidic meditation, suitable for congregational worship but also private devotion and even popular song.²

The identification of the poet's individual voice with that of the Prophet King had important repercussions for Protestant poets in the bloody age of reform. Bible and Psalm translation could be a highly subversive activity, depending on who was on the throne and what side of the English channel you happened to find yourself. Controversy surrounds the redaction of the Geneva Bible of 1560, made, in part, by William Whittingham, Calvin's brother-in-law. Considered the leading Bible of the Elizabethan age (Shakespeare, Donne, and Spenser's Bible), its Psalter carries a dedication to the Queen, comparing her to King David, Zerubbabel, Jehosaphat, Josiah, and Hezekiah and exhorting her to uphold and defend the Protestant Church (Barnstone 209; Hannay 26).

During the religious and political upheavals in England between 1534 and 1559, it was not unusual for prisoners in the Tower of London to compose psalms of supplication to Heaven and vengeance against their tormentors, imaginatively recasting the Protestant plight under the repression of Mary Tudor as that of a beleaguered Israel, and labeling the Roman Catholic Church Philistine or worse (Zim 81). Elizabeth's champions merged their voices with David's in his tribulations, seeing the hated Papists as enemies of the new Israel, that is, the reformed Church. The influence of the Geneva Bible, the Marot/Bèze or Huguenot psalter of 1562, Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms in Arthur Golding's translation, and the Sternhold/Hopkins psalter used by the Marian exiles in Geneva upon the magnificent Sidney-Pembroke psalter (which circulated in manuscript by the late 1590's), and the political origins of this influence in the Dudley/Sidney alliance, have been thoroughly discussed (Hannay 22-31; Zim 139). Although too complex to present here in its entirety, the political backdrop behind the development of the metrical psalms in England and the Huguenot psalter on the Continent makes fascinating literary history, and shows how the individual lyric voice can sometimes have far-reaching, collective consequences.

Such consequences are rarer, but not impossible to find when we consider the varied fortunes of the Psalms in the Iberian peninsula. In sixteenth century Spain, the composition of metrical psalms was simultaneously an attractive poetic activity and one that was deeply suspect, a fertile ground for humanistic experimentation with Italianate meters and a source of censure by the ever-vigilant Inquisition. Commenting on the suddenly slow trickle of Psalm translations in Castilian after the appearance of Jorge de Montemayor's *Exposición moral sobre el salmo LXXXVI del real profeta David* (Alcalá, 1548), *Devota Exposición del Salmo Miserere Mei Deus* (Antwerp, 1554), and the *Paraphrasi en el Salmo Super flumina Babylonis*, included only in his *Segundo cancionero espiritual* (Antwerp, 1558), Alberto Blecuá attributes this temporary lull to the paralyzing effects of Valdés's 1559 *Index*. He notes:

A partir del Índice de Valdés, el sabor herético que se presumía en los poetas inspirados por las musas davídicas hizo enmudecer a hombres que, como Cabrera, querían llevar a la práctica las aspiraciones paulinas. Fernando de Valdés no estaba para otros cantos celestiales que no fuesen los de una poesía de devoción popular. Los poetas profanos siguieron su vida impresa sin apenas censuras, la poesía de devoción pudo circular en manuscritos y cantada, pero la poesía de inspiración bíblica fue arrancada, como cizaña, cuando comenzaba apenas a germinar. (96-97)

Biblical vernacular translation is under strict interdiction and poets, like Montemayor, who dare to insinuate a dangerously heterodox "mysticism of omnipotent grace" in their recreations of David's songs, are likely to find their harps confiscated (Creel, *The Religious Poetry* 114). Any literature that can be remotely identified as Erasmian, Lutheran, or *iluminista* is branded as heretical and duly censored. Although the heterodox religious ideas circulating in the Peninsula in the early to mid-sixteenth century are scarcely systematic enough to warrant a charge of full-fledged, doctrinal Protestantism (Bryant Creel has shown that Montemayor's paraphrase of *Super flumina* is an expression of "Catholic reformist spirituality" - hardly a strident call for justification by faith alone [Creel, "Reformist Dialectics" 87]), the Inquisition in its zeal succeeded in eliminating "las semillas de la herejía antes de que se pudieran sembrar" (Kamen, *Una sociedad* 198).

It is in this restrictive environment that Fray Luis de León composed his magistral versions of the Psalms, generally recognized as being the finest of Spain's contributions to the genre. No stranger to Inquisitorial persecution of Biblical translation, Fray Luis emerged from his ordeal³ determined to offer a sacred alternative to "estos libros perdidos y desconcertados," that he held to be responsible for "gran parte de los reveses y perdición que se descubren continuamente en nuestras costumbres" (*De los nombres de Cristo*, O.C.C., I, 406). Psalms 10 and 44 appeared in print in 1583, with the publication of the first edition of *De los nombres de Cristo*, and later editions of 1585 and 1587 include two different versions of Psalm 102 (Núñez, 351-52). Translations of Psalms 1, 4, 6, 9, 12, 17, 18, 24, 26, 38, 41, 71, 87, 106, 109, 113, 124, 129, 136, 145, and 147 circulated in manuscript, some of which bear the prologue that Fray Luis wrote for his *Traducciones sagradas* (O.C.C., II, 970). His stated intention, in this brief introduction, is important, for it contains echoes of Erasmus' *Paraclesis*, in which the Dutch humanist defends making Scripture available to the unlettered public in vernacular translation (Asensio 51-52). Fray Luis transmits the oft-cited image of housewives and children (and in Erasmus' passage, artisans and laborers) singing David's verses in the street, in place of popular song: "Y pluguiesse a Dios que reinase esta sola poesía en nuestros oídos, y que sólo este cantar nos fuese dulce, y

que en las calles y las plazas . . . no sonasen otros cantares" (O.C.C., II, 970).

English Protestant translators of the Psalms were fond of prefacing their books with almost identical statements, finding in Erasmus and his translation of St. Jerome's eighteenth Epistle a handy defense of their own attempts to popularize the Bible among the great masses of untutored Christendom. Again, this is a potentially inflammatory (though not unusual) remark for a humanist who found himself, like Fray Luis, in the midst of "las calamidades de nuestro tiempo." (O.C.C., I, 403)

It is testimony to his artistic strength and influence (the *estrofa alirada* adopted by the master became the definitive paradigm for most future versions of the Psalms) that Fray Luis had so many followers and imitators in the genre of metrical psalms, many of them members of his own Augustinian order. Jeronimite monks of El Escorial, following the example of its distinguished librarian, Benito Arias Montano (who had written a seminal Latin verse translation, the *Davidis regis*, in 1572) also incorporated Psalm translations in their devotional works, which survive today mainly in manuscript. Fray José de Sigüenza, the most outstanding of these disciples and Montano's successor as librarian of El Escorial, also made a significant contribution to the genre, translating Psalms 18, 44, 50, 67, 71, 90, 131, and 137 (Núñez 357-68). Although not penalized specifically for his translations, in 1592 Sigüenza ran afoul of the Holy Office, just as Fray Luis had done some twenty years earlier. Denounced by those hostile to Montano's Hebraic studies, he was acquitted after three months. (Kamen, *Inquisition*, 126) In the cases of both Fray Luis and Sigüenza, we can see that the combination of learned cleric, objective philological inquiry, the *hebraica veritas*, and poetic talent was a recipe for suspicion and persecution.

This harsh religio-political repression, strange as it may seem, did not succeed in stemming the flow of metrical psalms from the pens of Spanish poets. On the contrary, versions of varied merit proliferated throughout the late sixteenth and well into the seventeenth century. Whether complete (José de Valdivielso's *Exposición paraphrastica del Psalterio y de los cánticos del Breviario*, 1623), partial (Hernando de Jesús's *Exposición de los siete psalmos penitenciales del real propheta David*, 1632 and Antonio de Peralta Croi Velasco Hurtado de Mendoza's *Exposición de los Siete Salmos Penitenciales*, 1662), or fragmentary (Lope de Vega, Juan de Jáuregui, and Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola's translations of individual Psalms), experimentation with the Psalms as odes, *villancicos*, *romances*, and *silvas* was an accepted form of poetic expression. Stanzaic form and textual treatment varied considerably. Some translations, following Fray Luis's model, preferred faithful paraphrase of the Biblical psalm and employed the *estrofa alirada* (in imitation of the Horatian ode)

developed by the Augustinian master. Others, like Pedro Espinosa, whose *Psalmo de penitencia* will be examined later, used the less-restrictive *silva* in original re-creations of Davidic themes, without attempting to literally reproduce any particular psalm. Francisco de Quevedo's *Heráclito cristiano y Segunda arpa a imitación de David* (1613) belongs to the latter category (Núñez 377-80).

The gradual movement from innovation and suspicion in the sixteenth century to established convention in the seventeenth should arouse our curiosity as to what, if any, ideological changes accompanied the accommodation of the metrical Psalter in Golden Age Spain. In the seventeenth century, as Spain was both consolidating and struggling to maintain her status as the preeminent world power (these are years of unrest marked by fiscal crisis, war in France, Italy, and Flanders, revolt in Cataluña and Portugal, and a host of social problems in Castilla), a subtle shift in orientation, as revealed in the poets' prefaces to their work, can be detected in published editions of the Psalter (Elliott, *Imperial Spain* 317-345). Whereas sixteenth century versions are only occasionally addressed to powerful patrons (Jorge de Montemayor dedicated his 1562 *Cancionero* to Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, Duque de Sessa, and his *Segundo cancionero espiritual* of 1558 to Jerónimo de Salamanca, of a noble Burgos family, XVIII-XIX, *Cancionero*, ed. González Palencia), seventeenth century editions, often published separately rather than as parts of larger collections, are almost always directed to or commissioned by a noble *mecenas*. This indicates that, as crucial military, political, and moral leadership, traditionally provided by the Castilian aristocracy, declines to disastrous levels—the Count-Duke of Olivares' pet peeve was the *falta de cabezas*, or lack of leaders (Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 338)—some poets, whether attempting to remedy this sorry state of affairs or perhaps to ingratiate themselves with the reigning Habsburg monarch, increasingly employ the convention of temporal Christian sovereign as Davidic King. Along with Quevedo's prose treatise *Política de Dios, gobierno de Cristo y tiranía de Satanás* (Zaragoza, 1626) and Diego de Saavedra Fajardo's *Idea de un príncipe político-cristiano* (1640), these works can be considered part of the flourishing literature of moral edification for rulers or "mirror of princes."⁴ Let us examine the evidence.

In 1625, at the outset of Philip IV's reign, the Antequeran poet and anthologist Pedro Espinosa dedicated his *Psalmo de penitencia, importantísimo para alcanzar perdón de los pecados* to his patron, Manuel Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno, eighth Duke of Medina Sidonia and scion of one of Spain's richest families. (Kamen, *Una sociedad* 390). He was the son of Alonso, the commander-in-chief of the ill-fated Armada, and father of Gaspar, the ninth Duke of Medina Sidonia, who in 1641 conspired with the Marqués of Ayamonte to create an independent

Andalusian state (Kamen, *Una sociedad* 385; Elliott, *Imperial Spain* 344).

After his ordination in 1614 or 1615, Espinosa (already writing religious verse under the name Pedro de Jesús) moved from Archidona to the Duke's court in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, serving Don Manuel faithfully as rector of the Colegio de San Ildefonso and also as *capellán* of the Church of la Caridad until his patron's death in 1636 (*Poesías completas*, ed. F. López Estrada xv-xviii). Espinosa had already composed (probably in 1614) an *Epístola* or *Soledad* to Don Manuel using the latter's poetic name "Heliodoro," inviting the nobleman to join him in solitary religious meditation in the Andalusian countryside: "¡Quién te diera volar con plumas de oro / que David deseó, que batió Arsenio / a estas mis soledades, Heliodoro/Cristo en Sión, no Venus en Partenio!" (*Poesías completas* 126-127). The "Epístola II a Heliodoro o Soledad del Gran Duque de Medina Sidonia" also captures the mystique of the *vida retirada*, with Espinosa writing as "Hortensio, retirado" to his patron "Heliodoro, cortesano." Francisco López Estrada has noted the personal affinities between the Duke and his protegé: "La relación entre el señor andaluz y el poeta se vería . . . favorecida por coincidencias de orden espiritual: afición por la lectura de los libros morales de la Biblia y de las obras de los estoicos, gusto por la soledad, propicios ambos más a la meditación que a la vida activa, e inclinados a la poesía, de la que el duque era muy gran entendedor" (*Poesías completas*, XVI).

The dedicatory lines of the *Psalmos de penitencia* indicate that the work is an *encargo* from the Duke: "Señor Excelentissimo [:] Aviendome V. Ex. mandado, le escribiesse este Psalmos (suyo por mi obediencia, por mis deseos, i por mis obligaciones) se le consagro, por util lisonja de mi voluntad" (*Psalmos de penitencia*, fol. 2). The long poem that follows is a free interpretation, but not a direct translation, of the *Miserere*. It is written from a Christological and eucharistic viewpoint, and addresses "Christo mi Redemptor, Christo mi padre" in complex metaphysical/sacramental *conceptos*. Whereas we have no concrete documentation of the reception of this work, it appears that Medina Sidonia was a willing and appreciative participant in the creation of penitential verse.

Rey pacifico y gobierno de principe catolico, sobre el Psalmos 100 de David (Genoa, 1646), by the Trinitarian Fray Salvador de Mallea, is dedicated to a higher patron "la Magestad Catolica de el Rey de España mi señor Felipe IV." Psalm 100 (101) "Misericordiam et iudicium cantabo tibi, Domine" is traditionally associated with David's aspirations as righteous King of Israel, and was commonly imbued with contemporary notions of proper government by English and French translators (Hannay 37-41). Mallea's prose commentary details the royal responsibilities of justice, mercy, virtue, prudence, and moderation, suggested by the ten short verses of the Vulgate. In Verso Tercero, he speaks "De los inconvenientes, y males que

causa fauorecer el Principe a uno solo, olvidandose de los demas" and in Verso Quarto, he notes that "El Principe ha de ser tan absoluto en su gouierno, que ha de tener a rraya hasta sus mismos pensamientos" (fol. 4). Given the date of publication, it is impossible not to see in these lines a veiled reference to Philip IV's reliance on *privados*. After the fall of Olivares in 1643, Philip tried to exercise his royal mandate alone, but fell back into his old habit of dependency on a favorite by passing political control to Luis de Haro, the Conde-Duque's nephew and inheritor of his title (Kamen, *Una sociedad* 328; Elliott, *Imperial Spain* 346). Nevertheless, the "Intento del Auctor a la obra" is respectful and laudatory, as far as his Catolica Magestad is concerned. Having traveled abroad and become acquainted with the customs and government of "Franceses" and "Florentines," Mallea declares that he wishes to compose a book celebrating the political excellence of the Habsburg monarchy as an example for "todos los Principes de Europa":

. . . y auiendo visto lo que muchos Auctores suyos auian escrito en sus idiomas, alabando a sus Principes, quise yo manifestarles el Politico Español mio, oponiendome a ellos, y a sus razones de estado que praticauan, y eleji este Salmo de David, por auerlo tomado otros Auctores el mismo (segun vide en Roma) para el intento, poniendo por dechado de sus gouiernos a mis gloriosos Reyes Españoles . . . (*Rey pacifico*, fol. 5)

I believe that this work is a diplomatic attempt to offer moral instruction to the prince, by stating that Philip is already "*solicito* como Tito; *assitente* en el Reyno como Theodosio; *afable* como Augusto; *vigilante* como Vespasiano; *diligente* como Trajano; y *benigno* como Constantino." (*Rey pacifico*, fol. 6) The subtext here is an exhortation to the ruler to act like a Davidic monarch and govern wisely (including the appointment of just and acceptable advisors) or face the possibility of divine wrath and future political unrest.

Also dedicated to the King is the anonymous *Psalmo 19. Victorial contra Portugal por Castilla* (Ecija, 1642). This curious work is a verse by verse prose exposition of the triumphal Psalm 19, in which God's aid in battle to his anointed king is invoked, and also a propaganda piece, written as a defense of Castilla's sovereignty over a rebellious Portugal. The Portuguese revolt had begun with an uprising in Lisbon in December 1640 which placed the Duke of Braganza on the throne as John IV; after numerous conflicts, Portugal would finally win its independence in 1668 (Kamen, *Una sociedad* 384-85). The anonymous author of the psalm identifies Castilla with the Hebrew nation and Portugal with the enemy Amonites, calls Philip IV "nuestro soberano Iacob Castellano," and cites Arias Montano's Hebrew philology in support of his own interpretation

of the Vulgate. He maligns the rebellious Portuguese and predicts their defeat: "Por la maldad hecha contra el Iacob Castellano quitarle con tiranía, lo que es suyo, estarán llenos de vergüenza, y vileça, perecerán y se acabarán para siempre siendo ignominiosamente vencidos . . . que contentos estaban los Portugueses . . . que regocijados del motín de los Catalanes, como festejaban el mal que juzgaban a Castilla" (*Psalm 19*, 20). In a moment of creative exegesis, he asserts that Castilla's claim to Portugal is Biblically mandated: "habló el Propheta de España por la parte de Lusitania, y esso es Sepharat, o Sperida en el Hebreo, parte de España, que está a lo ultimo del Occidente, y el Algarbe parte de Portugal tan considerable, que primero fue de Castilla" (*Psalm 19*, 21). Thus the weak Philip is identified with the patriarch Jacob as well as King David, and is encouraged to defend the integrity of his realm. In the *Victorial*, we can clearly see how far a contemporary political and military agenda has been allowed to affect the exposition of Biblical Psalms.

The career soldier and diplomat Bernardino de Rebolledo, like Mallea, dedicated his *Selva sagrada* (Cologne, 1657) "a la piedad d'el Rey NRO S. D. Filippe III." No stranger to works of poetic propaganda, Rebolledo had composed the *Selvas dánicas* during his years as Spanish ambassador in Denmark (1648-1662), openly criticizing the Danish Protestant confession as contrary to its noble historical tradition (Pfandl 546). This learned didactic work was hardly well received, and the condescending attitudes expressed therein of Catholic *grande* toward Lutheran host country explain Rebolledo's prologue to his *Selva sagrada*. After offering his translation "Fielmente transplantada" to "Vuestra Sacra Magestad," the Count says that its sacred verses may move entire nations to repentance (a departure from the conventional goal of saving individual souls).

Y sea de su piedad fauorecida
 De Ignorantes calumnias defendida:
 Ya podrá ser que d'ella conmouidos
 Los por graues peccados
 Pueblos Seueramente castigados,
 del repetido error arrepentidos,
 La Divina Clemencia
 Con eficaz conquisten Penitencia. (*Selva sagrada*, 1)

The "graues peccados" and "repetido error" may be persistent Protestantism; thus Philip, as Defender of the Faith, is the appropriate patron for a poet who would later be named Count of the Holy Roman Empire (Pfandl 546).

Sagrada eratos y meditaciones davidicas (Naples, 1657) by Alonso Carrillo Laso de la Vega is an example of a Psalm translation directed not to the King, but to a *grande*. It was addressed to Don Juan de Austria by Fernando

Carrillo, son of the author Alonso, who had been given a mandate to translate the Psalms by the Cardenal Infante Don Fernando de Austria (brother of Philip IV and deceased in 1641) while serving as his mayordomo (Kamen, *Una sociedad* 457). The stated intention of Don Fernando, who goes on to comment on his father's poetic style and erudition, is that Don Juan: "Reconozesse en este poema sagrado, que es imagen de la vida de un Rei santo, y glorioso, la idea; que deue tener un principe, para ser glorioso, y santo; y se que leiendole Vuestra Alteza hallara copiado del, sus eroicas virtudes, y santas obras, y por esto deue ser llamado nuevo Daud" (*Sagrada eratos*, 2).

He goes on to celebrate Don Juan's military prowess in Naples, Sicily, Cataluña, and Flanders, remarking that: "Todos pues conoceran por nuevo Daud a Vuestra Alteza, no menos en las cristianas virtudes, que en las empresas gloriosas. Io como testigo de vista venero unas, y admiro otras" (*Sagrada eratos*, 2). This is a straightforward adulatory preface, using the conventional association of Christian warrior prince with Israel's Prophet King.

Similarly, Luis de Ulloa's *Parafraſis de los salmos penitenciales y soliloquios devotos* (Madrid, 1655) was dedicated to no lesser personage than Don Luis Méndez de Haro Sotomayor y Guzmán, the Count-Duke of Olivares' nephew who collaborated with his uncle, eased his departure from Madrid after the hated *valido's* fall from power, and eventually assumed his predecessor's place in Philip's confidence (Elliott, *Olivares* 642-54). The discreet Don Luis was the "epitome of the suave courtier" (Elliott, *Olivares* 654); he also inherited part of the Count-Duke's library and his papers (Elliott, *Olivares* 672-73). Again, Ulloa's dedication is conventional, but not perfunctory. He expresses a desire to dispense with the usual panegyric: "en mi ha podido mas el respeto de la modestia, que la obligacion de las alabanças; y assi las dexo para ocasion mas oportuna, en que no me olvidarè de la deuda, ni V. Exc. despreciarà este intento, por ser mio; que los animos generosos hazen caudal de las Historias" (*Parafraſis* 3). No attempt is made to compare Haro to King David or otherwise elevate him, but perhaps Ulloa's circumspect introduction is in keeping with the character of his patron. J.H. Elliott says of Don Luis: "It was typical of Haro that he succeeded in making people forget whose nephew he was. All things to all men, modest and friendly, Don Luis shunned the title of *Privado* while discreetly exercising its functions. A friend to the King where Olivares was his master, he had no difficulty in remaining in power until his death in 1661" (*Imperial Spain* 346).

It is hoped that this brief tour of one aspect of Biblical poetry in Golden Age Spain has shed light on the Psalms as a vehicle for political self-examination during the *edad conflictiva*. Although history has proven, time and again, that "poetry makes nothing happen: it survives /In the valley

of its making where executives / Would never want to tamper . . ." (Auden 197), David's songs, and his monarchic example, were seen in Renaissance Spain as a source of moral regeneration for both kings and their busy "executives." It is truly extraordinary that, despite Inquisitorial censure and strict royal control of publication, this unusual genre survived, flourished and came to express not only individual spiritual yearnings, but national concerns and hopes as well.

Notes

¹For discussions of these issues, see Alberto Bleuca, José Manuel Bleuca, "Sobre el salmo 'Super flumina'," and J. Valentín Núñez Rivera.

²The development of English metrical psalms has been analyzed by Hallett Smith, Barbara K. Lewalski, and Rivkah Zim.

³For a detailed discussion of Fray Luis's trial and the accusations against him, see José Manuel Bleuca, "Fray Luis de León y el *Cantar de Cantares*."

⁴J.H. Elliott reminds us that "Where the sixteenth century had produced innumerable 'mirrors' for princes, the seventeenth century devoted its attention to 'mirrors' for favourites, on the assumption that, since, they could not be abolished, they at least might be improved" (*Imperial Spain*, 297). Quevedo's agenda in his *Política de Dios* is quite clear: to offer the monarch a Biblical model of governance, with Christ the King as the ideal and his forerunner King David as a worthy model (see especially allusions to David in Chapters III and XXIII). For a cogent examination of Quevedo's peculiar blend of politics and the Gospel, see Chapter 5 of Clamurro (Chap. 5. For an analysis of Saavedra Fajardo's work, see Dowling.

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