

Forgiveness of the Renaissance kings The perspective of King David in the Old Testament

Mémoire réalisé par
Thibaud Stevens

Promoteur
Prof. Guido Latré

Année académique 2016-2017
[ROGE2MD] - Master [120] en langues et lettres modernes, orientation générale, à finalité didactique

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Latré for his inspiring advice and guidance, Désirée Kinoo for the KULeuven sources, and finally Audrey Devillers and the Devillers family for their support.

Table of Contents

Note to the Reader	9
Introduction	11
Chapter One: King David from the Bible to the Renaissance	13
1. Saul and monarchy in the Bible	13
2. David’s representation: the figure of anointed king.....	18
3. David’s sins and punishments: from repentance to forgiveness	21
4. Responsibility and ambiguity in David’s story	28
5. An insight of David’s representation in the Renaissance.....	33
Chapter Two: Tyndale’s approach to morality, anointed kings and the role of the people	39
1. Concepts of sin and forgiveness in the Renaissance	39
2. Tyndale’s <i>Obedience of a Christian Man</i> : defending the principle of anointed king.....	43
Chapter Three: The cases of Mary Queen of Scots and Elizabeth I	59
1. John Leslie’s defence of Mary Queen of Scots.....	59
2. Mary and Elizabeth I: failure against success	74
Conclusion	91
Bibliography	93
Online resources	95

Note to the Reader

The Bible references in these pages are based on *The Oxford Bible: Authorized King James Version with Apocrypha* (Oxford University Press, 2008). The authorized King James Version is in a way the descendant of the Coverdale Bible which took much from William Tyndale's own translation. However, this version has to be handled with care as there can sometimes be much lost in translation; from the original Hebrew through the Greek, Latin and the various vernacular languages.

Introduction

Asking the question if a king can be forgiven is not exactly asking if a man can be forgiven. This would rely too much on philosophy, which is not the objective of this study. The sole consideration of the identity of king is enough to consider it a special case limited by precise factors. They are historical, spanning from the Biblical times to the Renaissance, but also religious, political and legal. The religious aspect is crucial as these are not mere rulers who are concerned but rather God's anointed monarchs. The basis on which all divine monarchies are built originate in the Book of Samuel with Saul and David as the first kings anointed by God. They have to be the starting point of any study on the topic.

Their history as it is was perceived by scholars in the era concerned is the second step. The perspectives chosen are the ones emanating from two theologians belonging respectively to different branches of the Christian faith: reformer William Tyndale and Catholic bishop John Leslie. Tyndale's *Obedience of a Christian Man* is in a way a defence of anointed kings in general. Leslie's *Defence of Mary Queen of Scots* is rather self-explanatory. It seeks to defend Mary against supposedly slanderous accusations. The analysis of these two texts bring a contrasted perspective to the subject at hand, from a reformer on one side and a Catholic on the other.

After an overview of theoretical morality from both sides, the analytical pattern needs to be furthered with a concrete approach, hence the development of Renaissance anointed monarchs' cases anchored in their historical settings - from a biographical point of view - as the last part of this study. Mary Queen of Scots through Leslie is a first ideal example. The point of comparison is her cousin Elizabeth, as their cases make more sense in a contrasted approach. They do in fact complement and interact with each other. Indeed, seeking to know if an anointed monarch was forgiven or could have been forgiven irremediably leads to the reasons why one queen failed and the other succeeded.

Chapter One: King David from the Bible to the Renaissance

1. Saul and monarchy in the Bible

To understand David as a king, his image through his actions and his sins, it is crucial to first know about his predecessor Saul, who was the first king anointed by God. This enquiry leads to the monarchical system as it appeared in the Old Testament.

In 1 Samuel 8, God tells Samuel to warn his people on the matter of the decision to have a king as a ruler instead of judges. Apparently, God does not really approve of monarchies, considering that having a judge to give His word to the people ought to be sufficient. Indeed, no one should usurp God's place. Nevertheless the people do not hearken and decide that they still want a king so that they be like all the other nations....

In their *Literary Guide to the Bible*, Alter and Kermode talk about monarchy as it appears in Samuel, arising from a will of the people. After Samuel consults YHWH at the request of the people: "now make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (8, 5), YHWH reluctantly concedes to Samuel's request. This reveals two important points according to Alter and Kermode.

The first point is that monarchy is a request by the people as a whole. A king represents his people and they tend to be remembered by history as one. It would be a way for the Israelites as a people, and each individual belonging to their community, to have their own place in history, represented through their king.

The second point is the Israelites' request to have an international status among the other nations as their equal. Their former 'extraordinary' position in the world relied too much on the prophetic genius of YHWH's might and had become in a way quite 'cumbersome'.¹

It was, as far as God seems to be concerned, a decision of the people to have a king. Thus it can be assumed that they would share a certain degree of responsibility in the matter of his

¹ ALTER Robert and KERMODE Frank, *Encyclopédie littéraire de la Bible*, Paris, Bayard (trad. DAUZAT Pierre-Emmanuel), 2003, p. 168.

actions and perhaps even his sins. Yet God has his part of responsibility as well as it is He who chooses the king.

In comes Saul, and it is particularly interesting to note the choice of words used by God to introduce him to Samuel before they actually meet in person. In the words of the Lord:

To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him *to be captain* over my people Israel (...) (1 Samuel 9: 16)

Saul is indeed anointed by God, he was chosen by him, but presented as a *captain* and not as *king*. Yet God says that he *shall reign over my people* (1 Samuel 9: 17). Saul will obviously be king of Israel later on, the word *captain* is understood simply as the title denoting the highest position, the head of a state in this case. It seems to be a more transitional term used here in the King James Authorized Version before Saul is officially identified as king and his name associated with the regal title. Interestingly there has been an array of terms used in this particular verse to define Saul in the various versions of the Bible over the centuries and the numerous translations.

In the Latin Vulgate, the term used is “ducem” from *dux*, which can be translated as *guide*, *leader*, *general* or even *shepherd*.² Interestingly, it was not the word *rex* which was used, as its primary meaning is quite unequivocal and in a grand majority of cases will mean *king*, *monarch*. The ambiguity of the word *dux* indubitably led to different interpretations from subsequent translators into their vernacular. In Latin, the point of focus of the word used in this context is its meaning of leadership through guidance rather than sovereignty or reign. Diodati’s Italian translation follows the same idea with the word perhaps the closest to the literal meaning of *dux* in Latin but the farthest from other terms used in other translations; “conduttore”. Its meaning is simply *conductor*, which can be understood again as *guide*.

From the modern translation of the Septuagint in English, the word used is “ruler”, which also remains quite general and can be understood as having different connotations as well. The Douay-Rheims Bible does also use the same word. The idea of *reign* is perhaps more salient in this case. In the original Greek the word is ἄρχοντα which is a declension of the stem ἄρχων. The term denotes a figure of authority for the Israelites and can mean *ruler* (from *Father*),

² GAFFIOT Félix, *Le Gaffiot de Poche, Dictionnaire Latin-Français*, Paris, Hachette, 2001, p. 249.

prince and *governor*.³ A note of interest is that *Father* also evokes etymologically the idea of *elder*, which is used many times in the Bible to denote figures of authority for the Israelite people. Notably in Genesis 50:7, but also in Numbers 22:7 as well as Deuteronomy 31:28. Obviously in context, it would not have made much sense to call Saul an anointed *elder*, the position already existed and would not have indicated the appearance of a new position in the Israelite society.

In the Luther Bible, which was used by several reformers including Tyndale, the word is “Fürsten”. It can be translated from German as *prince* or *lord*. Once again the conveyed meaning evokes more the idea of *reign* but with a term closer to *king*. In the Complete Jewish Bible, it is the word “prince” which is used as well. Those two versions appear to be the ones approximating the concept of king the most even though the word *king* itself is not used.

In conclusion, no version whatsoever uses the word *king* and instead always keeps a sense of ambiguity, in particular the Vulgate. The King James Version is the only one using the word *captain* in this verse to describe Saul. It takes from the Coverdale Version, which took from the Vulgate and from Tyndale, apparently even for the Books of Samuel. Even though they are not generally referred among the Old Testament books Tyndale translated, David Daniell argues that he did in fact translate them. This is mentioned in Edward Hall’s Chronicle, which is apparently in Daniell’s words a work worth of trust. It can also be deduced from several translation patterns in said Books in the Matthew Bible and the Coverdale Version.⁴ Tyndale himself did also take from Luther, who took from the Septuagint. Yet there seems to have been much lost in translation, which seems rather obvious considering the succession of translators referring solely to the vernacular versions or the Vulgate instead of referring to the Hebrew and Greek directly, which Tyndale apparently did nevertheless for most of his translation. In the case of the King James Authorized Version, it appears that for this particular verse of the First Book of Samuel, the origin of the translation be found more in the Vulgate than in the Septuagint or Luther or Tyndale Version through the remaining ambiguity of the term used, *captain* or *guide*. This version does not in fact render the Ancient Greek correctly. Whereas it

³ LAMPE G.W.H. (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1968 (first printed 1961), p. 241.

⁴ DANIELL David, *William Tyndale: a biography*, (printed in the U.S.A.), Yale Nota Bene, 2001 (first printed Yale University, 1994), pp. 333-339.

is not the case for the Douay-Rheims and Luther versions, which are less unequivocal and closer to the Septuagint in their use of *ruler* and *prince, governor*.

The word used to describe the anointed-to-be is of importance as far as the implication of God and the people in the naming of a king are concerned, as will be seen later with David who, even more than Saul, seems to be remembered as the “first true king of Israel” if one such academic speculation can be advanced. Indeed in the Septuagint, Saul is first called to be the ἄρχων of the people and not *king*, which would have been in Ancient Greek ἀναξ, of God.⁵ Yet one might wonder which the intended original meaning of ἄρχων was: *elder, ruler, prince* or *governor*. This also proves the discrepancies between the Vulgate trusted by many and the Greek Bible, as pointed out by Werner Schwarz in his 1955 work *Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation: Some Reformation Controversies and their Background*.⁶ The use of the word *captain* is not accurate at all, the original *prince* or *ruler* would certainly have been more adequate. If one were to work mainly with the King James Authorized Version or versions closer to it, even in the Renaissance, this particular choice of term would become rather problematic. This was the first word used to describe Saul, it would be greatly influential on his future representations. The use of *prince* would certainly have brought him closer to the position of *king*.

Clearly, it was the people who decided that they wanted a king, but it was still God who decided who the king was going to be; only He could anoint the king of His people, and his choice was Saul. Samuel shows Saul to the Israelites only for them to **confirm** God’s choice and that “there is none like him among the people” (1 Samuel 10: 24). The people do “make” Saul king but he was not their choice in the sense of an election or political process, simply a confirmation of God’s choice with the push of Samuel. Notably, the people are still the ones who **make** Saul king, even though it is “before” the Lord, in the sense that it was God’s decision (1 Samuel 11:15).

Even though Saul is God’s anointed, Samuel warns the Israelites that they, their new king included, should still fear and obey God. God alone remains the true king of the Israelites, and it is only because God loved His people and was pleased with them - not in small part due to

⁵ LAMPE G.W.H. (ed.), *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁶ DANIELL David, *Ibid.*, p. 395.

Samuel's guidance - that He allowed them to have a king. The fact that they asked for a king is in a way, and particularly in Samuel's mind, a "great wickedness" (1 Samuel 12: 15, 17, 22, 25).

Later, Saul would betray God's trust a first time and not keep His commandment as he launches an assault against the Philistines. The Israelites do not follow Saul in unity, some stay with him but in fear, others even hide... The new king is not able to be a true *captain* over his people and to truly bring them together, which was God's will (1 Samuel 13).

God also orders Saul through Samuel to destroy the Amalekites utterly and completely, which Saul does not do as he decides to spare their king Agag, as well as all their animals: oxen, sheep... This is the second time the new king betrays God's trust. God becomes rather displeased with Saul, who does not follow his commandments, and the Lord regrets that he made Saul king over Israel (1 Samuel 15: 11, 35).

Thus comes God's decision to have a new anointed king: David, the son of Jesse. The spirit of God is not upon Saul any longer but upon David. Instead an evil spirit now troubles Saul. It is only through David's intervention and harp playing that the evil spirit departs from him (1 Samuel 16: 13, 14, 23).

Saul's story compared to David's relates differently to God's reaction when they both eventually sin. In the case of Saul, God Himself repents of his decision to anoint him. He admits His part of the responsibility. God then decides to find a new anointed, David. The main difference between Saul and David, who both sinned, is that David is shown as being more **repentant**. Also, quite simply, Saul does not accomplish the task for which he was anointed king: to unite the peoples of Israel. He did not at all follow the commandments of the Lord, which should have been his first duty as anointed king.

2. David's representation: the figure of anointed king

Contrary to Saul, David is not first presented to the people as God's anointed. His feats speak for him and he has the approval of the people through his actions and his wise behaviour. The fact that he has the spirit of God over him does help him, but it is not the apparent reason why the Israelites support him (1 Samuel 18). He is close to the people, also in particular through his position of shepherd, which in the opinion of Anne Lake Prescott makes him an excellent candidate to be God's anointed king:

While already anointed but waiting for his throne David at least had his sheeppook, and shepherds themselves are another part of this topic, not least because God and Christ are themselves shepherds.⁷

(...)

In any case, shepherds, biblical shepherds, David and Mosaic shepherds, make good model for both crozier-bearing and scepter-wielding kings, although there was deep disagreement in Europe as to whether one ruler should hold both crook and scepter: is it legitimate for the pope, to take the obvious example, to lust after the imperial scepter?⁸

Prescott questions the matter of monarchy in general as a system under divine right and vice versa, if divine right should imply a position of king. The shepherd seems to be the ideal crossroads image between both ideologies, involving both religious guidance and political guidance of the people. As David was a shepherd, he was the ideal candidate for God's anointment.

Even when Saul is jealous of David and wants to kill him, David shows great mercy and wisdom by sparing him even though the Lord has delivered the king into his hand. He simply cuts off a piece of the king's skirt and still feels remorseful, he will not *put forth his hand against the Lord's anointed* (1 Samuel 24: 5,6). After sparing the king's life, David also swears

⁷ PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *The 2011 Josephine Waters Bennett Lecture: From the Sheeppook to the Scepter: The Ambiguities of David's Rise to the Throne* in *Renaissance Quarterly* n°65, University of Chicago, 2012, p. 10.

⁸ PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 15.

that he will not destroy Saul's house and his descendants (1 Samuel 24: 21, 22). David later spares Saul a second time, the reason still being that he is God's anointed (1 Samuel 26). As a matter of fact, David makes an investment in the stability of the future monarchy of Israel when he spares Saul. The tradition of the anointed king as practically untouchable had not yet been proper to the Israelites.⁹

David has a transcendent vision of kingship, he sees it as an outsider and a description of a particularly humble character, even though tradition suggests that he is already considering himself as a king.¹⁰ This reveals a most positive aspect of David but also would already hint at a certain ambiguity in his behaviour, coupled to his decision not to kill Saul as a stratagem that would serve him later. As the idea of kingship was more concrete for David, he was perhaps already making decisions which would benefit his future royal position. Hence his sparing of Saul as a ploy to build the image of untouchable anointed monarch.

After Abner's death, David washes his hands of his murder and appears to the people once more as an unflinching servant of God (2 Samuel 3: 35 – 37):

35 And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was not yet day, David swore, saying, So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down.

36 And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.

37 For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.

David truly gains the approval of the people by showing wisdom, selflessness and piety in times where others might have acted selfishly or against the Lord's wishes and directions, like Saul himself during turning points of his people's history. David does quite the opposite, proving to the people as well that he is indeed God's anointed. The people do play an important role in the status of a king, as well as the strength and validity of his reign. Being God's

⁹ ALTER Robert and KERMODE Frank, *Encyclopédie littéraire de la Bible*, Paris, Bayard (trad. DAUZAT Pierre-Emmanuel), 2003, p. 172.

¹⁰ ALTER Robert and KERMODE Frank, *Ibid.*, p. 172.

anointed is the most important factor in a king's making but it is not the only one. A king is also defined by his actions and by the way he respects his anointment by God.

Contrary to Saul, David is represented as God's true captain, he is the king who *reigns over all Israel and executes judgment and justice* (2 Samuel 8: 15). As David himself executes "judgment and justice", the matter of his own judgment and the justice he might give can be problematic. Yet in the Old Testament, it is rather simple and straightforward, only God can judge him.

The *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible* by Bogaert et al. summarises David's figure in its entry of the same name :

L'A.T. Les traditions concernant D. ont été rédigées dans l'ensemble comme une apologie. Une critique littéraire rigoureuse discerne cependant de divergences de sentiments au sein des rédacteurs de ces traditions. Les faiblesses du souverain ne sont pas partout cachées. On s'est même interrogé sur l'attitude réelle de D. face aux deuils dans la maison de Saül, qui ont si bien servi ses ambitions politique. L'impression d'ensemble n'en reste pas moins celle d'un être loyal, sensible, innocent des crimes qui l'ont favorisé. Par-dessus tout, les rédacteurs ont vu en lui l'élu de Dieu, un serviteur selon le cœur de Dieu, le modèle de tous les souverains dignes de ce nom.¹¹

David is first introduced as a true model of God's servant and as a model of king for all kings to follow. In the end, with the psalms it is also this image that remains. Yet the first anointed king of Israel was also a sinner, which should not be forgotten.

¹¹ BOGAERT Pierre-Maurice, DELCOR Matthias, JACOB Edmond, LIPINSKI Edouard et al., *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible*, s.l., Brepols, 1987. (Vol. I), p. 333.

3. David's sins and punishments: from repentance to forgiveness

Before analysing the concepts of sins, punishment and forgiveness in a biblical context, one needs to know them as they are actually defined in the Bible.

To sin is of course to go against the laws and commandments of God, and it is quite logical in this case to refer to the laws of God as they are defined in Leviticus. As far as David's sins are concerned, two commandments in particular stand out. The first one deals with *unlawful marriages*, or David's adultery:

Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her. (Leviticus 18: 20)

And the man that comiteth adultery with another man's wife, even he that comiteth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (Leviticus 20: 10)

The second one is of course concerned with murder: "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death". (Leviticus 25: 17)

The other concepts might be more subtle and need a more expansive and synthetic background of research to be properly defined. Biblical encyclopaedias and dictionaries are ideal tools to present such definitions. First, there is punishment, which almost always comes from God and in fact always comes from God in the case of David. It can be more or less severe according to the sinner's degree of repentance. In general when it is God who punishes, his punishment will aim to bring back his people to order and will always have an educative aspect:

CHÂTIER – 1. AT (hébr. *Yāsar* ; LXX, gr. *Paideuô*). **Avertir, donner des instructions, enseigner** (Lv 26, 23 ; Jr 6, 8 ; 31, 18 ; Ps 2, 10 ; Pr 29, 19) ; d'où **remettre à l'ordre, corriger en frappant, châtier** (1R 12, 11.18 ; Pr 19,18), se dit du *mal commis par le peuple d'Israël dont les conséquences douloureuses doivent le corriger = lui permettre de *revenir à Dieu (Jr 2,19 ; cf. Nb 14,34 : Ps 107, 17), de Dieu qui éduque son *peuple comme un père fait l'éducation de son fils, parfois en le frappant (Lv 26, 18 ; Dt 4, 36 ; 8,5 ; Os 10,10 ; Pr 3,11) ; subst. (hébr. *Mousâr* ; LXX,

gr. *paidéia, paidia*) **réprimande, éducation, leçon** donnée par un père à son fils (Jb 20,3 ; Pr 1,8) ; se dit de l'éducation, de la leçon que Dieu donne à *son peuple, parfois en le frappant = **châtiment** (Dt 11,2 ; Es 26,16 ; Jr 2,30 ; 5,3 : 7,28 ; 17,23 ; Pr 3,11 ; etc).

- Le châtiment dont Dieu frappe son peuple a toujours **une fonction éducative** : manifestation de son *amour (cf. Os), il a pour but de l'appeler à se détourner de ses péchés et à *revenir à lui quand bien même, souvent, Israël n'a pas voulu recevoir la leçon des événements (cf. Jr 5,3 ; 7,28 ; 17,23 ; 32,33 ; So 3,2) et a refusé de revenir (Jr 8,5).

- Pour Es2, le **Serviteur du Seigneur* a porté les souffrances de son peuple pour l'en *délivrer, il a été frappé par Dieu, humilié, il a subi le *châtiment* afin que son peuple trouve la *paix et obtienne la *guérison (Es 53,5).¹²

God punishes sinners to have them come back to Him more educated. It is because He loves the Israelites that He punishes them. The Lord always hopes that even though they sometimes do not listen that they will learn in time and be what He hopes they will be: His chosen people.

After God enacted His punishment and if the sinner was repentant enough, He might give His forgiveness:

PARDON Pardonner, c'est remettre une faute quel qu'en soit le contenu ou l'origine ; tandis que la rémission des péchés est considérée surtout comme le fait de Dieu, on peut dire que le terme de « pardon » recouvre aussi bien le p.mutuel des offenses que celui de Dieu envers les pécheurs. Le mot « pardon » a un sens très fort ; il signifie donner ou accorder entièrement ; il implique donc une disparition de la faute, sans réticence de la part de celui qui pardonne et sans laisser de traces chez le pardonné.

Vocabulaire. Le p. divin est présenté dans l'A.T. comme dans le N.T., par une quantité de mots et d'expressions qui tous suggèrent une face importante de l'action salvatrice du Dieu qui pardonne. En hébreu, les verbes principaux pour signifier pardonner sont : *sālah* « pardonner, absoudre » ; *nāsā* « lever », « enlever » ; *kippēr* (pi'el) « couvrir », « oublier », comme une chose qu'on ne veut plus voir.

¹² GILLIERON Bernard, *Dictionnaire Biblique*, Poliez-le-Grand, Editions du Moulin, 1998.

Théologie

B. Pardon de Dieu. La source de tout p. est en Dieu qui et en droit de considérer le péché de ses créatures comme une offense contre sa puissance, sa justice et son amour.¹³

Forgiveness in the Bible is unequivocal, it is the complete remission of all sins. This makes it all the more serious if it occurs. Forgiveness is also dealt with as a concept between man and man but in the case of David as king, it is always only a matter between him and God and is indeed of great significance.

The episode that can be perceived as David's first sin and the start of his descent as well as the start of the end of his reign is his adultery with Uriah's wife Bath-sheba (2 Samuel 11). The episode is well-known, yet some details are paramount and might be overlooked at first. David does not operate alone and always works with his servants and messengers who from a certain perspective contribute to his sin by helping him, even though they simply obey their anointed king as they should.

Later David explicitly says that he wants Uriah to die and orders Joab to have the former killed. Uriah would die, killed by arrows from the enemy, in a way placing Joab and David in a position of non-culpability at least directly. Nevertheless, this would still be considered a great breach of the laws of God as the Lord Himself sees it and would be counted as David's second sin.

Because David committed evil and did not follow the commandment of the Lord, he is punished by Him. One of God's reproaches against David is that he committed his actions *secretly*. Not conferring with Him about the nature of his deeds and obtaining God's support or not would have been crucial to the general idea of *anointment*. How can David be God's anointed if he does not represent Him? God's punishment would be very harsh and would have as a first consequence the death of David's first son with Bath-sheba. Secondly, His punishment would have a later impact on the fall of the house of David with the rise of violence between the members of his own family. In God's words:

¹³ BOGAERT Pierre-Maurice, DELCOR Matthias, JACOB Edmond, LIPINSKI Edouard et al., *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible*, s.l., Brepols, 2002. (Vol. II), pp. 974 – 975.

Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house... (2 Samuel 12: 10)

...I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house... (2 Samuel 12: 11)

God decides to forgive David in part and not to kill him. Death should indeed have been David's punishment both for adultery and for murder as the laws of Leviticus indicate. Instead God decides to kill his first son, only because David confessed his sin. This is the reason given in the Bible, but there might be others which are less clear. Indeed, God never says word for word that the reason his punishment is less severe might have to do with David's status of king. Speculating about this one moves into the realm of suppositions. On the other hand, David's second son with Bath-sheba, Solomon, would be loved by God (2 Samuel 12). This might indicate the complete remission of David's sin, he was forgiven and so his second son is loved by God.

This episode seems to show God as being harsh but fair, in a way he can be detached from the consequences of David's killing of Uriah - save the death of his first son with Bath-sheba as a direct punishment. The king himself brought violence into his house and should bear the weight of his deeds alone and not have God as a safeguard or safekeeper.

The lesson is that even - and more so particularly - anointed kings should follow God's will and commandments, in other words a certain form of morality. If they fail to respect the laws of God, they should be prepared to face the consequences and be judged as any man would be; while still having the possibility to confess and be forgiven. In the end, David's greatest sin as a result of the Uriah episode is that he offended God and gave *great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme*... (2 Samuel 12: 14). God *puts away David's sin* (2 Samuel 12: 13) which means that he forgives him but not that he should not be punished, only that he shall not die.

David's sins also have repercussions in the form of his children's sins. It would start with the rape of Tamar by Amnon which led to Amnon's killing under the order of Absalom. In a more practical manner, the conflicts between David's children could be also related to the fact that David had a progeny issued from a number of wives, which would naturally increase the social, familial and political tensions among siblings. The fact that David was significantly polygamous, as opposed to Abraham for instance, might be criticized as well. Abraham only

had Sara, and his mistress Hagar endorsed by Sara herself, and his relations with both were validated by God. Even in this case, Abraham's situation could be considered as rather delicate. David had a much greater number of wives and concubines which led to a large lineage, seen as beneficial for the propagation of the Israelites, but problematic for the royal succession and legacy.

In a way, it is almost obvious to perceive the roots of David's downfall already in his numerous progeny. His children are a recipe for turmoil as David has created at the heart of his household an inner war of possible heirs to his throne.¹⁴The king has already punished himself through his own actions, which would ultimately lead to a fragmentation of his realm.

After Absalom's treason, David seems to accept the situation he is in after having to flee Jerusalem as a consequence. When Shimei, a man of Saul's house, curses him, he accepts it as God's will for in his words *the Lord hath bidden him* (2 Samuel 16: 11). Furthermore, David still expects God's full forgiveness and to fall back into His grace if he takes full responsibility for his actions and accepts his position:

It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day. (2 Samuel 16: 12)

Joab decides to kill Absalom, even though David had asked him and his companions not to do so. This could be understood as a way for Joab to spite David as he decided to make Amasa captain of the host instead of him.

This is a crucial moment for David and his relationship with God. As Kermode and Alter point out, the whole episode of conflict with Absalom, David's exile and finally Absalom's death show a David who is in a very sensitive state. He has found his humanity and his humility, thus paving the way to reconnect to the Lord. Perhaps his punishment was harsher than he thought it would, as he clearly states he would have died in Absalom's stead (2 Samuel 18: 33). He even cries loudly several times, a more emotional feature of his character that had not appeared before. It accentuates David's repentant state, at least in the face of God, and why he is in a position again to be forgiven by God.

¹⁴ ALTER Robert and KERMODE Frank, *Ibid.*, p. 178.

David is great in the end, not only because he is God's anointed king, but because he remains so human and repents for his sins. He might have a personal relationship with God and be king but it does not keep him from being human too. Like all the Israelites, his people, he should follow God's commandments. The fact that he is anointed does not keep him from sinning, but as he is king and represents God, he should be the first to be repentant, show remorse and seek forgiveness. David's lesson to all believers is that kings are not above judgment. The fact that David is very human - through his modest origins and his behaviour on many occasions - and that he is also flawed like all of humanity, brings him closer to his people and to the reader as well, who will be able to relate to his story.

The fact that David sins is not the most important part of his story from the point of view of the morale, what matters most is that he repents and seeks forgiveness. To sin against God is the gravest offense and the dire consequences for such deeds should be accepted as they are. Yet what also matters in the end is that God forgives and that it is always possible to find repentance when one humbly and honestly seeks it. If David can sin in the gravest of ways, by offending the Lord himself in not following his commandments - his adultery and Uriah's murder -, and is able to find forgiveness and *mercy* from God, then any believer can.

David's third and last sin, which is perhaps not usually as well-known, is his numbering of Israel in the last chapters of the Book of Samuel. Once again, he admits to his sin and is repentant when he faces the Lord:

And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly. (2 Samuel 24: 10)

God offers three possible direct punishments to David, among which he chooses the three days of pestilence. The issue is that the pestilence does not strike only the people of the house of David but 70,000 men on a larger territory. David's sin had a great negative impact which affected many, a consequence with which David has difficulty coming to terms:

And David spake unto the Lord when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let

thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house. (2 Samuel 24: 17)

David cannot control God. If he sins, he has to accept the consequences. What is particularly interesting in this episode is that sometimes it is not David himself who has to suffer the consequences of his actions but rather his people or the people in general. The people are the ones who are punished. After all, David is their guide and is the one who could or should save them. This episode is also particularly difficult to analyse from the point of view of morality, as far as the lesson intended by God as well as the way He works are concerned.

What remains certain is that the people are dear to God but always remain in the backseat of most of David's stories. In a way, God intends to make David responsible and accountable for his actions. He wants to elevate him as a king and make him the intermediary between Him and the people. He wants to make David's role matter and for the monarchy to make sense as a system including God at its top, with the actual king being His representative but also His captain and the representative of the people. If the king sins, it is sometimes the people who suffer, as he does not only represent God but also represents them in front of God. This "double duty" can put an anointed king in very delicate situations.

The people, who are sometimes considered as a passive crowd of witnesses, are still mentioned on several occasions in the Books of Samuel. Their overall presence cannot be defined as an ubiquitous one but is still non-negligible. One could consider that they are mainly there to serve their God and their anointed king, whereas the opposite is actually true and matters as much. The people could be considered an extremely important tool of biblical stories but they also often have their own important active role to play. A king's popularity and the support of his flock is actually his most useful and crucial instrument and the opposite often means his downfall. It is the differentiating point between a successful king and a failing one. A concrete example of this principle is David's rise of popularity opposed to the decline of Saul's in 1 Samuel 18:5-7:

5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

6 And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick.

7 And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

David has the approval of the people even before he becomes king. He behaves wisely and with humility, which is greatly appreciated by all. His might is also one of his greatest qualities, a reminder that a king should also be able to defend his people with strength. He is celebrated by women who chant and dance in his name, praising his military deeds which are presented as superior to Saul's. David's show of might and his higher popularity means of course a complete loss of credibility for Saul. For how can he be God's anointed and be above all while holding God's sword of vengeance to pass judgment on the people if David's sword is mightier than his.

4. Responsibility and ambiguity in David's story

Answering the question if a king - in this case David - could be forgiven involves matters of responsibility as far as morality and ethics are concerned in more recent eras of history. But also complete honesty, as opposed to a certain ambiguity, which would make David more culpable in God's eyes. David's relationship with God and the fact that he can be forgiven by Him mattered the most in a biblical context. After all, and as already suggested, if it is said that God forgave David, then so should everyone else.

Additionally, the involvement of the people in David's actions raises sensible questions, as far as to wonder if the servants and messengers are not also in part responsible of David's sins too. The people were responsible for the support of monarchy as a system and David as king. As mentioned previously, David becomes king with their full support, they accepted his anointment with enthusiasm and do not try to prevent him from sinning or counsel him at all. Therefore in more ways than one they might be complicit in his doings.

Samuel had warned about the sedentary monarchy the people wanted to create (1 Samuel 8: 11- 18). Yet one of the dire effects of this political structure comes when David sends Uriah to the battlefield with a letter to Joab, ordering the latter to remove the protection of the former. Joab then sends a messenger to David to inform him of the Hittite's and of other Israelites' deaths. Thus the people have been made complicit of the king's - of David's - crimes through the social structure of the political system.¹⁵

Among others Joab, David's nephew and captain of his army, is in particular complicit in David's sins, he is notably the one who receives the order from David in a letter to set Uriah "at the forefront of the hottest battle...that he may be smitten and die" (2 Samuel 12: 15).

Ethically speaking, Joab might also be responsible for the deaths of others on the battlefield as he decides to send valiant men - including Uriah - to the assault of city walls even though he knew of the danger of them being killed by bowmen's arrows. This Joab decides solely to assure Uriah's death, he would sacrifice other valiant men (2 Samuel 11: 20 - 21). On the battlefield itself, Joab is first responsible for all those men's deaths, but in the background David has his part to play too, and that part is undoubtedly uglier than Joab's.

David's part of responsibility in his sins is tightly bound to his ambiguous behaviour. Anne Lake Prescott who studied that ambiguity thoroughly, describes his position as follows:

That the greatest - not wisest, but greatest - biblical king had begun life as a shepherd provided a provocative fact, and if it pleased God to make him king, one could perhaps say that God alone can legitimately change dynasties or political systems – or perhaps that we must not scorn shepherds, peasants, or even hungry sheep when they murmur (...).

Nor was David without sin, and some might wonder why this adulterous, if repentant, murderer was so forgivable.¹⁶

David's image at first was an extremely positive one, particularly in contrast to Saul's. His humility and low social status made him even more appealing for the people. Only God could

¹⁵ ALTER Robert and KERMODE Frank, *Ibid.*, p. 178.

¹⁶ PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *The 2011 Josephine Waters Bennett Lecture: From the Sheephook to the Scepter: The Ambiguities of David's Rise to the Throne* in *Renaissance Quarterly* n°65, University of Chicago, 2012, p. 2.

raise them as He did David but at least they should be hopeful that they could be elevated by God at all. Prescott's argument is extremely interesting. It implies that God is also the only one who could change dynasties or political systems. It is a further dissuasion for the people to try to take matters into their own hands, and maybe to judge David themselves too and elect a new king. This is a lesson for the people not to question God's will and authority in making a king and to respect his anointment. But also at the same time, it reminds the people that a king is also human as they are and that he might be a sinner as well, as David was. Yet a sinner should always be repentant and admit his sins and not be too ambiguous in his behaviour but to always take responsibility for his actions.

The inclusion of David's third sin later in the last chapters of Samuel is only one of the more important sections of the end of the Book of Samuel. As pointed out by Alter and Kermode, the last part of the Book of Samuel includes David's psalms (chapters 22 and 23), which particularly show David's ambiguous personality. Conclusively though, his relationship with God is presented as being more benevolent and positive, and lauds God for his mercy (2 Samuel 22: 51).

Yet, some of David's ambiguous behaviour is still salient in the penultimate chapter:

Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things: for this is all my salvation... (2 Samuel 23: 5)

What David says in the psalms does not coincide with the way he represents his relationship with God afterwards in chapter 23.

The songs are in contrast to each other, but also to other elements of the two last traditional tercets. "Warrior" units show David with guards, whereas songs show him alone under YHWH's protection. Units of "punishment/expiation" show him guilty under YHWH's eyes and his wrath, songs show him to be without reproach and acting under an infinitely benevolent divinity.¹⁷

Interestingly, in his psalm of thanksgiving particularly, David does not refer to the fact that he sinned and was weak but only that he *kept the ways of the Lord and has not wickedly departed*

¹⁷ ALTER Robert and KERMODE Frank, *Ibid.*, p. 183.

from his God (2 Samuel 22: 22). This is of course a matter of discussion, the main argument being that in the end David always remained true to the Lord. Yet the ambiguous natures of his statement and of his personality are grounds for doubts on his innocence and purity.

Thus, as the songs are last in the second book of Samuel, they tend to be understood as a conclusive note to the stories of Samuel, Saul and David. They shed a light on the contradictions inherent to the personality of the king and the ambivalence of a monarchy.¹⁸ More so than the very last chapters of Samuel with David's sin in numbering Israel and the three days of pestilence. Those last chapters are also more of a bridge to the First Book of Kings and a preparation to Solomon's reign.

Nevertheless in the songs, the personality traits of David which are most salient are solely those which pertain to his special relationship with YHWH as his anointed. As they are at the end of David's story, it could be considered that these positive features and this excellent relation with God are what he should be mainly remembered by. Perhaps not only as a king but simply as a man anointed by YHWH, in the old Israelite traditions.

Even though God is on certain occasions presented as David's punisher, He is not the only one responsible for the rise of violence in his house, which can logically be seen as a natural consequence of David's violent action against Uriah. God's decision to punish David is not the trigger of the violent events that would take place. He is the one who could have stopped them, in other words He simply decides to let them follow their course. It is all a matter of morality and perspective, God says that He will raise evil against David from his own house, but this is after all David's fault and his fault alone. God only raised evil against the house of David when the latter decided not to follow God's commandments.

As mentioned previously, Joab has no small part to play in this rise of violence either, as he is in a way David's weapon used to kill his opponents and the ones standing against his will. He would later become instrumental in the conflicts in David's house, and be in turn a helper and an opponent of David.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 185.

After Uriah's death, it seems that the king has already lost a part of his humanity - to his royal status.¹⁹ David becomes more and more reserved, partly due to the death of his first child with Bathsheba. David does not see a reason to continue the fast he started during the child's illness when he learns of his death. YHWH did not take pity on him and David is left broken.²⁰

The death of his child does not appear either as a random or innocent event, as is seldom the case in Biblical writings. It is understood as a direct punishment by YHWH of David's wrongful order to cause Uriah's death, and is clearly predicted by Nathan to David in one of his prophecies (12, 1-2). The two events follow each other closely, Uriah's death in chapter 11 and his child's in chapter 12.

In the words of Kermode and Alter, later in Samuel, the following chapters 14 and 15 show us a David "passive and manipulated by his servants and children". In 15, when he is exiled by Absalom, he shows his humanity once again as he is represented crying loudly and in a state of humility. His communication with YHWH is then restored.²¹ It is this figure of David that tradition would keep and remember as a model king, rather than the ambiguities and negative aspects of David's rise. As Prescott argues:

The risk is that one might be proud of such a rise, and while everyone lamented David's adultery, murder, and census-taking, few found him proud.²²

Yet the question of his sins and if he could be forgiven or not remains. Many scholars have tried to answer that question as it would settle an old debate to decide if kings in general could be forgiven or not. As the Bible is rather enigmatic and only gives God's approach to David's actions, those answers usually had to be based mostly on analyses and suppositions.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 179.

²⁰ Idem.

²¹ Idem.

²² PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid., p. 5.

5. An insight of David's representation in the Renaissance

One of the greater researchers on David is the aforementioned Anne Lake Prescott, who worked on the ambiguity of David's rise to the throne and presents her analysis of the matter in her article 'From the Sheephook to to Scepter'. She presents versions of David's story through the eyes of several scholars and personalities mainly of the Renaissance who often compared him to the kings of their own era.

The first of these is Sir John Harington, who gives an answer to the question if David can be forgiven in an epigram to his godmother Elizabeth I:

(...)

Sith we, for ours, no just excuse can bring,
Thou hadst one great excuse, thou wert a King.²³

Prescott herself gives various answers from various sources to explain what was meant in the last line of Harington's epigram; that David could be forgiven or at least that his actions were justifiable because he was a king. This is already a deviation from the Bible as the excuse of being a king to justify sin is never mentioned or used as such in the Book.

Prescott quotes Burton²⁴ on the matter of God's forgiveness, David could be forgiven contrarily to other murderers first because he was repentant. This is a rather evident supposition which generally arises when dealing with the matter of God's forgiveness of David as the first reason why He would forgive the king.

Then there is also the topic of the forgiveness of the people, which matters less than God's forgiveness but the refusal of which could have seriously compromised David's status as king and his reign. The topic is more subtle and requires a study of David's behaviour vis-à-vis Saul. He spares Saul's life when he could rightly have killed him. Here Prescott quotes Bishop John Jewel in his 1571 homilies²⁵, where the message put across is that that nobody could rise against the David because nobody could rise against any monarch. This was assured by David

²³ HARRINGTON Sir John, *The most elegant and witty epigrams...*, 1618. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁴ BURTON Henry, *A plea to an appeale trauersed dialogue wise*, London, 1626. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*

²⁵ JEWEL Bishop John, *The second tome of homilees*, London, 1571. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, pp.-4.

himself; when he decided to spare Saul, he consolidated his royal status. In this case, Prescott perfectly agrees with Alter and Kermode, as well as a majority of biblical scholars as it seems. The controversies arise particularly in relation to this decision of the new anointed heir not to kill the current anointed king.

Prescott argues that the Renaissance spirit in particular launched the new interpretation of David's decision in light of his "conscience"²⁶. In other words, did David decide to spare Saul by respecting God and His laws, which includes clear lines of moral behaviour? Or did he spare him solely as a key point of his strategy to build a new unmovable and untouchable royal status? In any case, the result was the same. As David did not harm Saul, so shall he not be harmed either. Both were or are God's anointed kings after all.

On the other hand, a lesson could be drawn from Francis Quarles' 'Divine Fancies'²⁷ where Prescott analyses Quarles' work to be a more critical approach to political ascension in the Renaissance.

David's life, in other words, is a good lesson for those with political ambition, political slyness, perhaps even with violence on their minds, if not at that moment in England then in the recent past in France – and it does seem poignant in this regard that the coming mess across the Channel was to be called the Fronde, the "sling". Yet such denial once more suggests the unwelcome back-of-the-mind thought that David's rise was planned.

David thus offered, officially, a good model of non-ambition, of passive upward movement, of being taken aloft by God without weapon or device.²⁸

According to Quarles, David's rise was merely an elevation from God alone and not at all a political stratagem. It is a lesson and warning to the peoples and rulers of the Renaissance not to forget that David rose to the throne only through his anointment. They should just know their place and not try to elevate themselves, - whether through conflicts, manipulations or revolts, - as only God can elevate them. Like Prescott says, the need to give that lesson came from the fact that during the Renaissance there were doubts about David's intentions and

²⁶ Idem.

²⁷ QUARLES Francis, *Divine Fancies: Digested into Epigrammes, Meditations and Observations*, London, 1632. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁸ PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 18.

decisions, and the question of the ambiguity of his rise to the throne was undoubtedly on the mind of many.

Prescott quotes John Monlas in his 1677 *Quadrivium Sionis* saying:

“God changing (David’s) Shepherds crooke into a Royall Scepter, gave him victory over a world of enemies “. Not that David – nor even Saul – had “meditated how hee might change his Shepherdes crooke into a regall Scepter”, for all was God’s doing.²⁹

According to Monlas, David remained humble through and through and the changing of his shepherds into a scepter was only God’s decision. In truth, God made David King but David himself built the image of the king. Still, his strategies to do so and obtain the ideal image of a king he had built in his mind are questionable. Prescott includes in her article several works from several authors – from the Renaissance and later – who generally have different opinions but who always seem to take the Word of the Old Testament at point value. Generally those authors simply seem to consider the words as they are in the more literal senses of the editions of the Bibles they have read. Prescott nevertheless points out the *ambiguity* of David’s reign, with which it is difficult not to wholeheartedly agree. This ambiguity made it easier for many to appropriate David’s story for political propaganda by using certain aspects of the story from many different perspectives to serve different opinions and points of view.

It is obvious that David sinned, was punished and later forgiven. The difficulty is to measure the true moral extent of his sins, and perhaps manipulations and stratagems, from a moral point of view particularly in the Renaissance. It is indeed not a small task to bring together the Laws of the Bible and - legal - morals of the times, if and up to the extent they differed. It was even more arduous to apply those principles to the monarchical system and to a king or a queen.

On the other hand Prescott also mentions Virgilio Malvezzi who, while he praises David’s decision not to harm Saul, shows a certain awareness and scepticism concerning the matter of his ambiguous behaviour:

²⁹ MONLAS John, *Quadrivium Sionis or the foure Wayes to Sion*. London, 1677. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Malvezzi adds that what “David doth here out of modesty is often done by others out of subtilty” and then continues to comment on how both kings and malcontents can manipulate public opinion.³⁰

Martin Bucer emphasizes the role of God in the elevation of the people - politically speaking - , a feat that only He can perform:

To Bucer this is good news, and if it is God who lifts the humble we can relish that thought without worrying that the lowly might rise on their own. The stress on God’s choice offers both the pleasant possibility of ascent and the sobering lack of human will in such elevation.³¹

Only God can rise the humble. This is at the same time comforting and discomforting for the people. It means that any one of them could be elevated by God, but it also means that they should not try to elevate themselves. They should still know their place and know that they need a guide in any case, in a way an intermediary with God whom God Himself elevated, chose or anointed. It might also be understood by the people once more as an injunction to respect the king and perhaps to forgive him his sins more easily. Basically, the people should not meddle in the affairs of God and His anointed and simply let the king be judged by God only. Only God can elevate a king and only God can bring a king down.

Finally, Prescott mentions Nicholas Byfield:

David’s rise was “the Lord’s dooing, and it was marvelous, “Byfield says of the Psalmist, just the Davidic words the new queen Elizabeth had applied to herself to signal both humility and divine support.³²

In the end, one of the most important aspects of David’s story through his/its ambiguity and its many messages is that it could be used as propaganda for any king, here of the Renaissance, by using any aspect of David’s story and personality which suited the ideal propaganda best. Here in the case of Elizabeth, having *humility and* -

³⁰ MALVEZZI Virgilio, *Il Davide perseguitato, David persecuted*. Trans. Robert Ashley. London, 1607. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 20.

³¹ BUCER Martin, *The Psalter of David in Englishe*. Trans. George Joye. Antwerp, 1530. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 24.

³² BYFIELD Nicholas, *A Commentary upon the Three First Chapters of The First Epistle general of St. Peter*. London, 1626. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 28.

always - *divine support*. David was indeed a most useful political instrument to justify and forgive a sinful king.

Chapter Two: Tyndale's approach to morality, anointed kings and the role of the people

1. Concepts of sin and forgiveness in the Renaissance

Law in the Renaissance and the concept of crime were still relying much on matters of sin and morality from the Bible, basically God's Law. Francis Quarles, among other authors and poets, in his *Divine Fancies* deals with the subject of sin in several epigrams, among which the following:

Book I: 49. On Finnes.
Sinnes, in respect of Man, all mortall be;
All veniall Iefu, in respect of Thee.³³

This is an enlightening vision of the existing contrasts between the New Testament and Old Testament principles. In the Renaissance, the idea conveyed in the first line of this epigram had the most influence. For man, a sin is always mortal, in the sense that it will irremediably lead him to damnation of the soul. It is also an indication of the general severity of punishments for the act of sinning. The Law of God from the Old Testament in particular was still superior to all else. This epigram includes new ideals of forgiveness from the New Testament with Jesus' merciful attitude. From the point of view of Christ, all sins are venial. His capacity of forgiveness is great and in his mind a soul can always be saved, which did not necessarily coincide with the thoughts of a majority of Renaissance society members. The Old Testament was still very much present in the ideological morality of the times, particularly as far as matters of sins turned to crimes were concerned. The images of David and sometimes Saul were the ones most used in comparative approaches, criticisms or defences of Renaissance kings. Thus the imputed use of the Law of God from the Old Testament and as described in Leviticus and Deuteronomy in those regal situations. Nevertheless, as was the case of David, the sin of an anointed king is far from being considered equally to the one of man. Even though kings are men too, much graver sins would be potentially forgiven and if they show repentance

³³ QUARLES Francis, *Divine Fancies: Digested into Epigrams, Meditations and Observations*, London, John Marriot, 1641, p. 23.

even turn from being mortal to being venial. Repentance was still crucial and should always be key in the path of redemption leading towards God after committing a sin. Being God's anointed or under God's Grace would not in any case absolve one from admission and confession of guilt. Quarles wrote an enlightening epigram comparing Saul and Cain on the matter of repentance:

Book. II: 70. On Kain and David

(...)

Kain was punifht; David was forgiv'n:

Both came to tryall: But good David did

Confesse that Sin, which curfed Kain hid:

Kain bewail'd the punifhment; wherein

His Sin had plung'd him: David wayles his Sin:

If I lament my fins, Thou wilt forbear

To punifh, Lord, or give me ftrength, to beare.³⁴

Cain and David both gravely sinned in front of the Lord, yet they both reacted very differently to their deed. David confessed to Samuel and God, Cain tried to hide his murder unsuccessfully. Cain was afraid of his punishment which was in fact unavoidable. On the other hand, David fully realised that he had offended God and could not avoid his punishment, he would rather accept his sentence and be honest with God. In the end, David would still be punished but to a far lesser degree than what should have been his true sanction – death – and after he had suffered the whole extent of God's punishment, he would then be forgiven. From this extract, the message understood is one of morality directed at monarchs but also at their subjects. Even though anointed monarchs should generally be forgiven by their subjects, they should mainly focus on their redemption and obtaining forgiveness from God.

Sir John Harrington also pondered on the difference perceived between an ordinary man and an anointed king in the face of sin, in an epigram that was already partially introduced and which was of interest for Prescott's research. Here it is in its entirety to have a bigger scope on its meaning and signification as well as the deeper reaches of its morale:

³⁴ Ibid., p. 97.

Book II: 92. To King David

Thou fonne in law to King, and Prince appointed:
Yet, when that King by wrong did feeke thy harme,
Didft helpe him with thy Harpe, and facted charme:
And taught, no not to touch the Lords Annointed.
Thou, that great Prince, with fo rare gifts replenifhed
Could'ft not efchew blind Buzzard Cupids hookes,
Lapt in the bayt of Berfabees fweet looks:
With which one fault, thy faultless life was blemifhed,
Yet hence we learne a document moft ample,
Our flefh then ftrongeft is, when weak'ft our faith.
And that the finne forgiuen, the penance ftayeth,
Of Grace and Iuftice both a fweet example.
Let no man then himfelfe in finne imbolden
By thee, but thy fharpes penance, bitter teares,
May ftrike into our hearts fuch godly feares,
As we may be thereby from finne with-holden.
Sith we, for ours, no iuft excufe can bring,
Thou hadft one great excufe, thou wert a King.³⁵

Harrington first starts with great praise of David, up to calling him a Prince through his marriage to Michal. He also points out David's great behaviour towards Saul and the fact that he *taught* people not to touch God's anointed. This choice of verb is not innocent, it shows that learned men in the Renaissance were already aware of David's ambiguous behaviour. It was David who built the idea of untouchability for God's anointed king. This is particularly important because it is not an explicit order from God to His people but rather an interpretation of God's commandments and choices linked to divine monarchy. Among others, William Tyndale would also interpret God's will through what David said. Nonetheless the question of the true reliability of David as a character in the Book still remains. It was not God who built

³⁵ HARRINGTON Sir John, *The Most Elegant and Witty Epigrams*, London, John Budge, 1625, sig.

G3^r.

this idea of immunity for a king, He says explicitly that death should have been David's punishment for his sins of murder and adultery - as would have been the same for any man in his situation. Yet David still manages to obtain forgiveness through repentance, even in a double case of mortal sin. It is in Harrington's opinion a great example of Grace and Justice after David stayed his penance and was actually forgiven. Yet it should not *embolden* people to be reassured on their wrongdoings and still commit sins while knowing that through penance they will be forgiven. David's penance was harsh, as well as his punishment, his *bitter teares* are proof of this difficult process. In fact it should instil the fear of God into people's hearts and not give them a false sense of reassurance and acceptance on the topic of sin. People can have no excuse for their sins and will have to submit themselves to God's judgment directly or through His anointed. On the other hand, the king's great excuse is that he is king, he cannot be treated like any other Israelite or any other believing man, otherwise his status and position would have had no importance and no meaning. In other words, it was really important for God to make the role of king into a special aspect of his rule and to keep the ruler under his guiding hand, lest he simply be a man with an inflated sense of self. Actually, this would happen to several of the Renaissance kings, leading some to their downfall. Furthermore the king also serves as an example for the people. The argument could even be explored further in the sense that he cannot be punished too harshly, i.e. by death, because something has to be learned from his sins, by him first and then by the people. It is a fundamental trait of punishment, it should not be forgotten that God punishes to educate and to have his people come back to him. The king is a model and an example whose best and positive aspects should be followed. Some issues might arise though, when it becomes acceptable for kings to sin because David sinned as well and was forgiven because he was repentant. Maybe the lesson to be taken from David's case is that anointed monarchs - and common men too - should in any case take heed of his mistakes and simply try not to reiterate them.

2. Tyndale's *Obedience of a Christian Man*: defending the principle of anointed king

A most relevant work of reference for Christianity on the topic of morality and sins in the English Renaissance is *The Obedience of a Christian Man* by William Tyndale. It is in a way the human perspective on God's commandments and the following of God's Law through the proper Christian behaviour dictated by good conscience and morality.

His work is divided in several sections concerned with the different forms of obedience of man to Christian principles, forming the familial, social, political and spiritual fabric of relationships in a society. An extremely interesting chapter for the study of regal matters is the *Obedience of Subiectes vnto kynges, princes and rulers*, in other words aimed at the people as regal subjects, but also in fact at the monarchs themselves already - even though another section is specifically aimed at them and titled *The dutie of Kynges and of the Judges and officers*. Many tropes and ideas are repeated, which is explained by the fact that those texts were generally read aloud, they are intended as types of sermons.³⁶ Here, Tyndale starts with an important concept, the almightiness of God and the fact that only He has power:

Let every foule fubmyt hymfelfe to the auctoryte of the hier powers. Ther is no power but of god. The powers that be are ordeyned of God. Whofoever therefore refyfteth power refyfteth ordynaunce of God.

They that refyft fhall receaue to themfelfe damnacyon. For rulars are not to be feared for good workes but for euell. Wylte thou be wythoute fear of the power? Do well then and fo shalt thou be prayfed of the fame. For he is the mynyfter of God for thy wealth. But and yff thou do evell than feare for he beareth not a fwerde for naughte for he is he mynyfter of God to take vengeaunce on them that do evell. Wherefore ye muft nedes obey not for feare off vengeaunce but alfo becaufe of confcience. Even for this caufe paye ye tribute. For they are goddes mynyfters feruyng for the fame purpofe.³⁷

³⁶ LATRE Guido, *Seminar on The English Renaissance*, Louvain-la-Neuve, Université catholique de Louvain, 2014.

³⁷ TYNDALE William, *The Obedience of a Christen man, and how Christen rulers ought to govern, wherein also (if thou mark diligently) thou shalt find eyes to perceiue the crafty conuience of all iugglers*, (this ed. Antwerp, Merten de Keyser?), 1528, p. 29.

Tyndale's argument, even though directed at the people, is in fact double-edged. First he establishes the obvious, a reminder that there is nothing or no-one above God. He is all-powerful and should be respected in this sense as well as never challenged. This stance has already been explained but is critical in understanding the position of rulers in the Renaissance. The *powers that be*, an ubiquitous biblical expression which was in fact coined by Tyndale³⁸, represent the anointed monarchs, who have been "ordained" by God. The verb in itself carries strong religious sense. It is particularly this meaning that Tyndale would want to convey before the one vaguer of "general ordering". The anointed monarchs have been consecrated as God's ministers, an expression which had not appeared as such beforehand. They implement religious and political power. They should not be resisted either as they are God's representatives. To resist their power would signify resisting God, which is a grave sin indeed. The opponents to His might and the might of His anointed would receive eternal damnation, no more no less. There is somehow a paradox in this principle as only God is supposed to have power, but His anointed has power as well. This is explained quite simply through the idea that the divine power that anointed monarchs wield is in fact supposed to be God's power used through them. Thus their great responsibility and obligation to proceed cautiously when they actually use that power which cannot be used in opposition to God's will. They should still respect and fear God themselves, and in any case never oppose Him.

The people need to truly understand the position, status and power of an anointed monarch. Tyndale elaborates on the complexity of that principle up to all its ramifications with the objective of endeavouring to simplify it so that it can truly be understood by Christendom. It was certainly an extremely important topic for theologians. After all, monarchy was a system which did not have God's support in the beginning, making the story of its establishment with Saul and David all the more delicate to comprehend and its preservation in the continuation of God's ideal all the more important.

What Tyndale intends to put across in a rather complex phrasing in today's standards is that a good Christian man should never have to fear his ruler. As an anointed monarch is God's minister for the wealth - in other words the wellbeing - of their common flock. In other words, a monarch is supposed to only want good for his people and to always be benevolent with his

³⁸ DANIELL David, *Ibid.*, p. 1.

subjects as long as they behave as good Christian Men, exactly as God Himself does. On the other hand, if subjects do not behave as good Christians, an anointed monarch has his sword of vengeance to use against them. The people should fear the potential strike of a vengeful punishment if they fail to obey God's command but they should also use their conscience. It does not do to only use God as an instrument of exchange, as a potential giver or taker. Francis Quarles had identified this misrepresentation of faith leading to a poor and inadequate relationship with God in his *Divine Fancies*:

Book I: 50. On Man's behaviour to God.
We use our God, as Usurers do their bands;
We often bear him in our hearts, our hands,
His Paths are beaten and his Ways are trod,
So long as hee's a profitable God:
But when the Money's paid, the Profit's taken,
Our Bands are cancel'd, and our God's forsaken.³⁹

God cannot be used as the other party in a calculating relationship. He needs to constantly be a guide and not only an enabler and saviour in difficult times or when there is a need for help or "profit". Quarles in this epigram somehow criticizes the hypocritical aspect of the faith of a certain percentage of Christians. Tyndale also worried about this issue and actually found a solution, people needed to be awakened to their conscience. Conscience as an awareness and understanding of faith and morality is a concept dear to Tyndale and a sign of progress in the Renaissance with for some a strong symbolic of the elevation ideal for the people. They should not only obey God because of their fear of vengeance but because their conscience morally inclined them to behave well, which of course is equivalent to following God's commandments. Holly A. Crocker wrote an article on communal conscience in Tyndale's *Obedience*. Conscience is a concept never defined by Tyndale but a general sense of what it could mean can be extracted. It is in Crocker's words "the accumulative process of shared spiritual feeling." It is the common foundation of morality for men in a reformist congregation.

³⁹ QUARLES Francis, *Ibid.*, p. 24.

The fact that Tyndale did not exactly define it allows every Christian man to build his own morality through this concept of conscience and contribute to the communal idea of morality.⁴⁰

With this principle in mind, the idea of a king's immunity rests once more on a seemingly paradoxical argument, for what are people to do if they behave as proper Christians themselves and on the other hand their anointed ruler does not properly follow God's command and does not entirely want their wellbeing?

The answer to this question is indubitably intricate. The one given by Tyndale is in fact quite extreme. In his opinion, only God can judge and so can anointed monarchs through Him and He through them. As he cannot be judged, it implies that people would always have no other choice than to forgive their anointed rulers. Here John Harrington and Tyndale reach an understanding, even though the king sins, he has a good excuse: he is a king. The people cannot in any case decide to take matters of judgment into their own hands, whatever the crimes of a monarch may be. In the end only God can and only God will judge his anointed monarch for his sins.

Importantly, Tyndale also addresses the issue of the reward for an adequate Christian behaviour:

And whofoeuer kepeth the law whether it be for feare, for vayne glory or for fin though no man rewarde him yet fhall God bleffe him abundantly and fende hym wordly prosperite, as thou readeft Deuteronomion XXVIII. What good bleffinges accompanye the kepinge of the lawe, and as we se the turkes ferre exceade us Chriften men in worldly prosperite for their iuft kepinge of their temporall lawes. Lykewise though no man punishe the breakers of the lawe, yet shall God fende his curfes vpon them tyll they be vterly brought to nought as thou readest moft terribly euen in the faid place.⁴¹

The concept of "good" as an ideal to follow is of course more particular to philosophies of later centuries. In the English Renaissance there needed to be guidelines provided by the Laws of God on how to behave well. The people were completely dependent to those laws and often had no other version of the Law than the one of God given to them by members of the Church.

⁴⁰ CROCKER Holly A., *Communal Conscience in William Tyndale's Obedience of a Christian Man*, in *Exemplaria* vol. 24:1-2, pp. 143-160, Routledge, 2012, p. 143.

⁴¹ TYNDALE William, *Ibid.*, p. 31.

Higher members of society belonging to the nobility, the Church and more and more of the bourgeoisie were of course much more learned and could more easily manipulate those from lower layers of society, namely the common people. The motor of a Christian's behaviour was always based on a dual system of punishment for a sinner against reward for a keeper of the law. The fear of punishment and the enthusiasm for reward were the key workings of the Christian man's behaviour in general, it was a simplified version of morality. Yet Tyndale certainly saw much more in Christian morality than a dichotomy of behaviours. He also tried to awaken Christians to the idea of "conscience" so that they might perhaps obtain their own freewill and decide to be good not because of fear of punishment or rejoicing of a reward but simply because they would truly understand the teachings of God from the Word and thusly naturally become good Christian Men.

It is not up to man to punish or reward but solely to God. Only He will give good blessings of worldly prosperity to the man who keeps the law and on the other hand send His curses upon the one who does not. The options left to man are not numerous in this case, mostly he should simply let go of the ideas of judgment and not enact vengeance himself, an expression on which Tyndale dwells much in his work. There is then the matter of forgiveness, which is an extremely delicate and serious concept in the Bible, as has already been previously established. After all, it means the complete remission of sins, the act to completely forget about them and cast them away. It should mostly be an affair between God and man, to which other men would have absolutely nothing to say. Yet there is also the matter of forgiveness between man and man, the workings of which are identical to those between God and man. Then there is forgiveness of anointed kings, who are more than men and in fact closer to God. Thus the principle of general non-interference of man in divine affairs involving God and his anointed. Even men among men should as much as they can leave judgment solely to God or His anointed, as well as matters of forgiveness. Among themselves men should just try to be as merciful as possible. In this sense, Tyndale advocates to never take revenge on a monarch. Furthermore, the inferior person should not take revenge on the superior. This principle is even furthered in the New Testament, saying that no man shall take the sword against another, an idea to which Tyndale visibly adheres strongly:

Nether maye the inferior perfon avenge himfelfe vpon the fuperior or violently refifte him for what fo ever wronge it be. If he doo he is condened in the dede doinge in as moch as he taketh vpon him that which belongeth to god only which faith vengeance is myne and I will rewarde. Deute. XXXII. And chrite faith Math. XXVI. All they that take the fwerde fhall perifh with the fwerde. Taketh thou a fwerde to avenge thyfelfe? Fo geveft thou not roume vnto god to avenge thee but robbeft him of his moft hie honoure, in that thou wilt not let him be iudge over thee.⁴²

Punishment and forgiveness have to be differentiated. In Tyndale's opinion only God can do both, and only through him the anointed king. Man can only forgive, but should he just do so for every sinner? It is clear from Tyndale's opinion that it is always the case for an anointed king, whatever his crimes may be. Man cannot judge - as is would in fact mean robbing God of this honour - and cannot take vengeance, in other words he cannot punish. Here it is not only the versions of sin, punishment and forgiveness of the Old Testament which are put forward by Tyndale but the ones understood from the whole Bible.

However Tyndale to convey his ideas and principles, like many of his contemporary scholars or higher-ranking members of society, focused consequently on segments from the Old Testament including in particular the Books of Samuel. He significantly utilizes David's story to build his arguments and reinforce the principles he seeks to defend. The verses he uses are the ones in the first Book where Saul persecutes and pursues David in order to kill him and where David on several occasions does spare Saul's life (1 Samuel 24, 26). Tyndale first relates the episode of the cave when Saul famously finds himself in a position of weakness by "covering his feet". Saul was in fact being delivered into the hands of David, but the latter decided not to harm the anointed king, even when his men encouraged him to do so by saying that God had given him permission. Instead he cut off a piece of his garment, a deed that would nevertheless make him feel guilty, "his hert fmote him becaufe he had done fo moch vnto his Lorde". David would then show the piece of garment to Saul as proof that he did not want to kill him even though there were slanderous sayings about his alleged planning to kill the king. The reason David gives is obviously that only God can judge and in the words of Tyndale that only wickedness shall rise from wickedness:

⁴² Idem.

God iudge between thee and me and avenge me of the, but myne hande be not upon thee as, the olde proverb faith (faid David), Out the weked fhall wekedneffe procede, but myne hande be not upon the, meaning that God ever punifheth one weked by another. And agayne (faid David) God be iudged, and iudge between thee and me and behold and plete my caufe, and give me iudgmente or right of thee.⁴³

The second episode of David's sparing of Saul is when he takes his spear from him during the night and David's servant Avishai would have David kill Saul or kill the king himself, yet David is opposed to the deed again:

Kyll him not. For who (faid he) fhall laye hands on the lords anointed and be not gyltye: The lorde liveth or by the lords lyfe (faid he) he dieth not excepte the lorde fmyte him or that his daye be come to dye or elfe goo to batayll and there perifh.⁴⁴

David truly had cause to avenge himself as Saul had wrongfully persecuted him. He had gone against God's commandment and had failed as His anointed, particularly when he killed 85 priests. Yet David could not bring himself to kill Saul. Tyndale's interpretation is that David would be guilty in any case if he slew Saul, for several reasons. David was already anointed by God but he was not yet the anointed *king* (italics mine), there comes the ambiguity of the reason behind David's decision to spare Saul which would lead to much debate on the status of anointed monarch. Then there is the idea that he would have tread on God's work by dispensing justice in his stead. Only God and his anointed can judge Men for their sins:

Why did not David fle Saul, feinge he was fo weked, not in perfecutinge David only, but in difobeynge Gods comaundmentes and in that he had flayne LXXXV of Gods preftes wrongfully: Verely for it was not lawfull. For if he had done it, he muft have finned agenfte god. For God hath made the kinge in every realme iudge over all, and over him is there no iudge. He that iudgeth the king iudgeth God and he that layeth hands on the kinge layeth hande on God, and he that refifteth the kinge refifteth God and damneth Gods lawe and ordinaunce. If the fubiectes finne they muft be brought to the kings iudgemente. If the kinge finne he muft be referred vnto the iudgement, wrath

⁴³ Ibid., p. 31.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

and vengeance of God. And as it is to refifte the kinge, fo is it to refifte his officer which is fet or fent to execute the kings commaundment.⁴⁵

The reason of David's sparing of Saul is unequivocal in Tyndale's opinion, it is solely because he could not bring himself to judge Saul. He was anointed by God but not yet king, he could not judge Saul who was his superior but Saul could judge him. David would not have wanted to suffer God's wrath if he killed His anointed king without His accord. The matter of God's support of David in Saul's killing could in fact also be disputed, and the question remains if David could have killed Saul without having to suffer God's anger. He would have had to suffer the anger of Saul's supporters in any case, it would have been a disastrous decision politically speaking. David's reasons as perceived in most Biblical studies would always remain ambiguous. It was not at all the case in Tyndale's mind.

In his studies of the Bible, he would generally oscillates between the literal approach and historical-grammatical method - which aims to extract the original meaning intended by the authors of the text, a trait typical of the Protestant Reformers. He always tries to remain as true to the text as possible and to interpret only what would obviously be interpreted. Although some might argue that any interpretation will be contaminated, even slightly, by subjectivity. In the case of these extracts, Tyndale does not go much further into the analysis. An enterprise carried on by later scholars like Anne Lake Prescott who would take an approach closer to the critical-historical, which was in effect more critical of David in general while trying to analyse all the facts objectively. The version of David that Tyndale presents is really his positive aspect. He does not directly deal with the issue of David's sins and moreover in this particular situation the ambiguity of David's decision to spare Saul, which can be understood as a political ploy to serve his own interest by building the sacrosanct status of anointed king and the inferred utter immunity.

Later in the Renaissance and after Tyndale's death, a situation similar to David's sparing of Saul would appear with two queens, Elizabeth I and her cousin Mary Queen of Scots, who would find herself in a most difficult position and under the judgment of the former. Elizabeth had wanted to forgive her cousin in the past and still in a way wanted to do so again. In fact through Christian values, it would have been considered as a merciful and respectable gesture.

⁴⁵ Idem.

Even though she was her equal at the time, which was not the case for David vis-à-vis Saul, she still decided to carry out the imputed sentence for treason against the queen, which was execution. Elizabeth had decided to bypass God's Law and use Civil Law instead. Thus what would have appeared as non-mercifulness in the eyes of the Christian community and of God had been made acceptable by the new Law of Man through government. Furthermore Elizabeth's strong position and the fact that she was in the eyes of many Englishmen God's true anointed ruling by divine right would in fact perfectly justify the execution of Mary. The power of God's judgment and his avenging sword belonged to her. The fact that she was Mary's equal in status and was thusly not judging her superior made it difficult to oppose her decision - save from the Catholics of course - and the people's consideration of Mary as anointed queen had also certainly degraded remarkably whereas Elizabeth's had only grown.

Tyndale through his arguments appears to be a strong advocate of divine monarchy as a system and of God's anointed king as divine ruler. He does not mention God's initial disappointment of the Israelites' will to have a king, which is voiced particularly through Samuel's displeasure with the idea. At first, the idea of a monarchy is not something positive in the Old Testament:

But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.

And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. (1 Samuel 8: 6-7)

Initially God does not like the idea of the people forsaking Him and that He could be replaced by a king, who would now reign over the Israelites and be the one to judge them. Yet God is most of all benevolent and does listen to the will of His people. He would still grant their wish, showing that they very much had a voice. However the status of anointed king would need to be firmly established and controlled. The king should still be before everything else a servant of God and His commandments. In this sense, Saul in his failure as anointed king is made an example. It was David who would prove to be the accomplishment of the idea of the exemplary anointed king. He properly built the identity and status of king with God's guidance and by trying his best generally speaking to follow His Word. His exemplary model would be followed by his successors and inspiring for many, a figure to be used as propaganda for the kings to

come. It is this model, not the perfect model of a king but the perfect model of a man of God who happens to be His anointed king, which Tyndale would have in mind when he wrote the chapters on anointed rulers and their subjects in his *Obedience*. Even though Tyndale is quite extreme in his defence of an anointed king's position and his complete immunity, it is crucial to note that he still gives a voice to the people and also wants to elevate them in their Christian knowledge and spirituality.

After all, Tyndale famously said to a learned man: "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost."⁴⁶ These ideals certainly came from Tyndale's first experience of the divinity studies at Oxford. Here he would criticize the approach to theology which only started in the course of the MA whereas the BA focused on other "heathen" works. Tyndale heavily criticized this system where the heart of the Christian faith has been removed by the Church. The immersion in scholasticism before the actual theological approach and introduction to the biblical text was part of the institutionalization of the Christian faith which had completely denatured its true sense and meaning according to Tyndale.⁴⁷ From there, he adopted a certain approach of Christian faith, which would distinguish him from his peers. As a matter of fact, Tyndale would have had a much smaller distance between man and the Word of God. The Church as an institution and its prelates was in the way. His praise of the vernacular as the vector of transmission of the Word - and his no less than incredible work of translation in said vernacular - is also another statement of a will, sometimes not obviously stated and which might even appear as hidden - to make the Bible accessible to all, from ploughman to king. Tyndale's first argument was in fact that "the vernacular was the best rhetorical vehicle for the very best 'poesy'(...), the word of God."⁴⁸

All in all, Tyndale was a strong defender of anointed monarchs, even as tyrants. But his actions and ideals would greatly help to elevate the people as well even though it was not necessarily his primary objective, which simply was to make the Word of God available to all, a principle that the Catholic priests did not seem to really follow. This gave Tyndale cause to argue against

⁴⁶ DANIELL David, *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

their doctrines and their scholastic ways which according to him were not the true way to Scripture and its subsequent enlightenment through faith.

As a matter of fact, Tyndale's fiercest anti-clerical ideas can be dated to the denunciation and burning of his New Testament printed versions in England by Cuthbert Tunstall. Tyndale's translations took elements from Protestant versions by Luther and Zwingli.⁴⁹ England was still Catholic at the time and thusly Protestant versions of the Word would be seen as nothing less than a form of heresy. The fact that a Scholastic like Tunstall could oppose Tyndale's versions which tried to render the Word as truthfully as possible would be proof in his opinion that the position of clerics was nothing more than a barrier to the true understanding of the Word. It would reinforce the ideas that had come to him during his Oxford years and his rejection of Scholasticism. If all types of clerics and prelates did not have any form of divine authority, logically this would their highest-ranking member: the Pope:

There is no powere but of God (by power vnderstonde the auctorite of kings and princes). The powers that be, are ordened of God. Whofoever therfore refifteth power refifteth God: Yee though he be Pope, Biffhope, monke or frere. They that refifte fhall receave vnto themfelves damnacion.⁵⁰

In Tyndale's opinion, there can be no power on Earth but the one that comes from God. The authority of kings and princes is justified through God. The "powers that be" is an expression that always implies the supporting presence of God behind such authorities. On the other hand, clerics and prelates - namely friars, monks, bishops and popes - do not really have this divine authority as they have never been ordained by God. It would contrastively leave him the one obvious remaining option in the matter of trusted divine authority referred in the Bible: the anointed monarch. Tyndale does not believe in the Pope, he only believes in God and Scripture. Obviously, these ideas would bring discontent and wrath from the Catholics, who still had much to say in England. This did not matter to Tyndale, the only thing that mattered was the Word of God:

Tyndale does not find a pope in the Bible. He does not find everything that stems from the Pope in the Bible. The Bible has to come first. The Pope is a mistake. That is why

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 189.

⁵⁰ TYNDALE William, Ibid., p. 33.

his analysis of obedience in many places in life is prefaced by the long address to the reader not only defending Scripture in English, but pleading passionately, as with a kind of divine and outraged disbelief, against those from the Pope down who cannot see that Scripture is the very fountainhead of Christianity, and that fountainhead of Christianity must be available, entire, to everyone, or else Christ died in vain.⁵¹

The authority of the Pope and the other members of the Catholic hierarchy is never justified anywhere in the Bible. The most important is the Word above all else and its transmission to the people. This should not be mistaken for a particular will from Tyndale to elevate the people, their elevation would only be a consequence of the propagation of the Word, which is Tyndale's main objective. Yet in his section on 'The Duty of Kings and of Judges and Officers' in the *Obedience*, Tyndale also clearly states that "the people are God's and not theirs." It is again a way of saying that anointed monarchs should still follow God's commandments and that they should still work for their people too. Furthermore there is also Tyndale's famous 'ploughman' quote, as the embodiment of the common people, of God's flock. A ploughman whom was also praised for his simplicity by Quarles:

Book I: 76. On the Ploughman.
(...)
The one, in Paines, and want, poffeffes all;
T'other, in Plenty, finds no peace at all;
'Tis ftrange! And yet the caufe is eafly known;
T'one's at Gods finding; t'other at his owne.⁵²

The ploughman is the symbol of simplicity in the best of ways. Contrarily to a lord, who has much responsibility to bear and is never at peace, the ploughman is in pain but is much richer in the simple things which are in fact the most important: peace and faith. A lord will always seek to make himself richer and focus on his own self, a ploughman is dedicated to God, and God to him. As a matter of fact, God's people truly are what matters most to Him, in this sense it should also be what matters to His anointed:

⁵¹ DANIELL David, *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁵² QUARLES Francis, *Ibid.*, p. 35.

For he is the minifter of God for thy wealth: to defende thee from a thoufande inconvenientes, from theves, murderers and them that wolde defile thy wife, thy doughter and take from thee all that thou haft: yee life and all, yf thou did refitte. Forthermoare though he be the greatift tyrant in the worlde, yet is he vnto thee a greate benefit of God and a thing wherefore thou oughteth to thanke God hyly. For it is better to have fomwhat than to be cleane ftripte out of all togeder: it is better to paye the tenthe than to loofe all: it is better to fuffer one tyraunte then mani and to fofre wronge of one then of every man.⁵³

The anointed king will always defend the law and his people against criminals and sinners. His role is to be God's sword of vengeance. Thus it is not to be considered as something ultimately negative if the king is severe, even up to being a true tyrant. Tyndale considers that a tyrant who sometimes makes his people suffer through his harsh judgment is better than not having a ruler at all. It is better to suffer one tenth from a tyrant than to suffer wrongs from every man, it is better to pay one tenth than to risk losing all. A consequence of this principle is of course the unavoidable forgiveness of kings by their subjects if the term could even be used with God's anointed, which it should not according to Tyndale: "Hereby seest thou that the kinge is in this worlde without law and maye at his luft doo right or wronge and fhall geue acomptes, but to God only."⁵⁴ The king is beyond reproach and only the Law of God applies to him.

David Daniell gives another strong argument for Tyndale's reason to defend anointed monarchs so vehemently in the *Obedience*, which is in fact a response to Thomas More's accusations against reformers. He accused them of being responsible of the rise of violence in Europe. In fact, More blamed Luther personally for the Peasants' Wars in Germany and for atrocities at the Sack of Rome. More also wrote that Tyndale had written against obedience to authority, which was the opposite of the truth. The reformers said that kings and governors had to be obeyed because God had decided to rule the world through them, quite logically to resist them would mean to resist God. This political theory did in fact come from Luther. Tyndale added to it new concepts of hierarchy inserted in the other sections of the *Obedience* and a context of human relationships, as well as the wrongfulness of rebellion in reaction to the

⁵³ TYNDALE William, *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

aftermath of civil war in England.⁵⁵ To expand further, here is what Tyndale said in the *Obedience* concerning the damnation of those who resisted God, including the entire hierarchy of Catholic priests (continued from previous extract):

Why? For Gods worde is agaynft them which have all men vnder the power of the temporall fwerde. For rulers are not to be feared for good works but for evyll. Hereby feift thou that they that refifte the powers or feke to be exempte from their auctorite have evyll consciences and feke libertie to finne vnpuneffhed and to be fre from bearing payne with ther bretherne. Wilt thou be without feare of the power: go doo well and thou shalt have laude of the fame (that is to faye of the ruler) With good livynge ought the fpiritualte to ridde themfelfes from feare of the temporall fwerde, and not with craft and with blinding the kynges and bringing the vengeaunce of God apou them and in purchafinge licence to finne vnpuniffhed.⁵⁶

Those who seek to resist any kind of power are in fact certainly culpable of sin. If they did not fear authority at all, they would simply accept it as well as those who hold it: the powers that be. It is because they do evil that they fear the judgment of God and the temporal sword, otherwise if they did good they would have no reason to. This is a warning to the people but also one in disguise to the clerics and the prelates. From Tyndale's previous arguments and his will to consider the members of the Catholic Church as any other men, this can also be understood as accusations against them. If they do not support anointed kings and resist them, it means that they oppose them. If they show any kind of opposition to their anointed, it means that they fear them. If they fear them, it means that they have something to hide, most likely a sin. If they had nothing to hide and nothing to reproach themselves as they would always have acted for good, they would simply accept an anointed and his authority as it would be equivalent to respecting God's authority. Tyndale turns the arguments of the Catholic prelates against them. If they oppose and resist an anointed, it is perhaps because they have "evil consciences and try to sin unpunished". They should not pretend to the judgment of God's anointed and in fact should know better. The situation is in fact reversed, it is God's anointed monarch who has divine right to judge them as he was ordained by God, whereas they were not. The topic of forgiveness should not even be alluded to. The suggestion of forgiveness of

⁵⁵ DANIELL David, *Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁵⁶ TYNDALE William, *Ibid.*, pp. 33 – 34.

an anointed king implies matters of sin - which can be from a certain point of view acknowledged - and also judgment, which is not acceptable. Thus forgiveness after judgment can only be left to God and his anointed, and certainly not to priests from any position on the hierarchical ladder who completely lack divine authority. Talking about forgiving an anointed king when God is not the actor would already signify treading two steps too far, in other words venturing beyond considerations of sin and judgment.

Chapter Three: The cases of Mary Queen of Scots and Elizabeth I

1. John Leslie's defence of Mary Queen of Scots

Forgiveness of a sinful king or queen is indubitably a complex affair. It depends on many factors, the first one being the nature of the sins. Then there is the matter of the forgiving entity, be it God or the people. Of course, having the support of both God and/or the people would be a great asset for a sinful king or a queen seeking forgiveness. If a monarch is well with God and the people and has always done naught but good in the world, why burden him or her with the weighting guilt of sin and a harsh punishment? Thus some higher-ranking members of society were eager to defend the monarchs whom they felt were the rightful heirs to the throne against the many accusations of their political and religious adversaries.

One such man was John Leslie, who is known for his defence of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots in his *Defence of the Honovr of the Right High, Mightie and Noble Princeffe, Marie Queene of Scotland, and Douager of France (...)*. Among the events that had besmirched Mary's royal status, the death of her husband Lord Darnley in which she is said to be involved, would be the hardest blow against her crown. It marred her honour greatly as it led many to believe she was no less than a murderess:

Of such vnbrideled talke no man or woman in our daies hath (as I fuppofe) more iufte caufe to complaine, then the right Excellent Princeffe Ladie Marie Queene of Scotland: whofe honovr many haue gone to blotte and deface, in charging her most falfly and vniuftly with the death of her late hufbande the Lorde Darley.⁵⁷

Furthermore, she was presumably an adulteress, having allegedly entertained extramarital relationships with her secretary David Rizzio as well as James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. Those sins, which are coincidentally the same as King David - a parallel that Leslie would use to the advantage of his argument too - are part of the famous or rather infamous Casket Letters case. The letters were allegedly sent by Mary to the Earl of Bothwell and would prove her

⁵⁷ LESLIE John, *Concerning the Defence of the Honovr of the Right High, Mightie and Noble Princeffe, Marie Queene of Scotland, and Douager of France, with a Declaration, as wel of her Right, Title and Intereft to the fucceßion of the Crowne of England: as that the Regiment of woman is conformable to the Lawe of God and Nature*, (Liège?), Apud Gualterum Morberium, 1571, p. 2.

close relationship with Bothwell as well as her involvement in Darnley's death. Yet it is rather crucial to note that they have never been certified as authentic.

As a matter of fact, many Catholics and supporters of Mary have denounced them as being fake and part of a plot to overthrow her. Leslie also, as a Scottish Roman Catholic bishop in a Scotland becoming more and more protestant⁵⁸, was a fervent supporter of Mary against those *false* accusations (italics mine):

And yet though they haue done their worfte, though they haue caft out all their fpite and malice againft her: they neuer haue bene able by any direct and lawful meanes to proouue any thing at al, wherby they may ftaine her Graces honour in any of the forefaid points.⁵⁹

Leslie says in his *Defence* that he would have been open to accept tangible proof of Mary's faults, in other words: *a geuen trewth*. Yet no lawful means were used to prove her alleged crimes. In fact, there seems to be no proof whatsoever of the Queen's involvement in Darnley's death, including testimonies or even physical proof. Leslie considers the letters to be falsified and written by the Queen's adversaries as they do not have superscriptions, seals, signatures or dates.⁶⁰ One could also add that presumptions are not evidence and slander against another man could be considered a serious offense, particularly in the New Testament, but also in the Book of Samuel through a concrete moral lesson taken from one of David's experiences with Saul: "And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?" (1 Samuel 24:9). David questions Saul on his decision to listen to slanderous accusations from men accusing the former of wanting to hurt the latter.

There is in the case of Mary a most important factor which makes it differ greatly from King David's case. In the Old Testament, there is no distinction between the law of society and the Law of God, they are one and the same. The only law that truly matters is the one of God, man does not follow the law of man but the law of God. In this sense, a sin and a crime were also one and the same. In the Renaissance though, there is also the Civil Law, which is mentioned by Leslie in his *Defence*:

⁵⁸ LATRE Guido, Ibid.

⁵⁹ LESLIE John, Ibid., p. 3.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 12.

Surely the Ciuil Law willeth, that in criminal matters (for fuch are thefe) the accufers alleage and bring foorth nothing, but that they may be able to approue and iuftifie by the tefimonie of good and lawefull witneffes, or by fome other moft manifelt, cleare and euident proufe or prefumptions.⁶¹

The distinction between the Civil Law and the Law of God in the Bible is the importance of tangible evidence - like authentic physical proof - and lawful testimony. Those are all part of a more modern conception of the law, which was already growing in Renaissance societies. This new idea of the law is important as it means a progression of the role of the people in general and perhaps a dent in the complete immunity of rulers. Unlike the events of Saul and David's story in the Book of Samuel, people could now be aware of the sins and crimes of their rulers if there was strong evidence or even strong allegations. People would have a consequent part to play in this situation. Even if the evidence against a monarch was a little bit faulty. If there were too many doubts on the innocence of said rulers and that their popularity was declining, they could still find themselves at the mercy of their own subjects, whose power was in fact always growing. If they were unhappy, people could revolt and overthrow a monarch, as would actually happen with Mary. In the end, it is not God who would have the last word on the precipitation of Mary towards her downfall but the people.

David obtained God's forgiveness in the Bible, which is the only one that mattered. There is no mention of the people being aware of David's sins or of their forgiveness because it did not have much importance as long as he was well with God. Yet there is already in the Book of Samuel a certain awareness of the potential power of the people, particularly from David. His decision to spare Saul because he was God's anointed would help him build the status of anointed king who cannot be judged or touched by others. These "others" being higher member of the Israelite society but also of course the people. God was the only judge, and the king was judge under him. The people could not decide to judge or to punish the king as it would signify opposing God. Their only remaining option was to forgive the king under God's Law.

In the Renaissance the matter of the law is more subtle and so was Mary's case. Leslie had to take into account the two different kinds of law in his *Defence*. First the Law of God, followed by every Christian, being Catholic or Protestant; then the civil law, established by society.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 11.

Obtaining God's forgiveness could of course not be proven directly as was written in the Bible word for word in David's case. Instead various facts, events related to and aspects of a personality were inspected in order to surmise the actual forgiveness given by God to man. This is exactly the way Leslie proceeds to defend Mary, by examining her past, her personality and behaviour, the events in her life, her devoutness... As well as a comparison of her case with the cases of various characters from the Bible, David being crucial in that sense.

The second part of the defence argument is the more practical aspect of Mary's case in relation to civil law. Here Leslie uses general legal arguments which have less to do with Mary herself but more with dismantling the arguments of her adversaries. Thus Leslie tries to discredit the attempts to convict Mary with certainly the objective of overthrowing her and ending her reign. As was already mentioned, this is already a part of a legal process of defence including the refutation of certain alleged proofs of Mary's implication in Darnley's death, mainly the Casket Letters. Leslie denounces the non-tangibility of these physical proofs as well as the absence of lawful witnesses. This aspect of Mary's defence is not divine anymore but entirely legal and physical. The fact that Mary had allegedly sinned was not enough to simply endeavour to judge her and convict her. Most authorities would have found a hurdle at some point in the process of accusing an individual of such high status. Particularly because she was a queen, the matter was all the more serious. The principle of God's authority and consideration was still a most important factor but there were others to take into account: the more practical aspects of civil law. The concept of sin was giving place to the concept of crime.

Conclusively, if one makes accusations of crimes as serious as murder and adultery against a queen, he or she better have strong evidence of their sayings. Furthermore, the matter of forgiveness which belonged primarily to God in the Old Testament and was linked to the concept of sin as such could now be applied to a general concept of crime. This has indubitably a lot of sense in the historical and political context of the Renaissance with the progression of many ideas and of society as a whole. The idea of forgiveness was passing to the more physical entities of the world: man and the people.

Structurally speaking, Leslie's *Defence* is in fact divided in three Books, the first one being the actual defence of Mary's honour against the aforementioned accusations. The second, the *Declaration, as wel of her Right, Title and Intereft to the succeßion of the Croune of England,*

is concerned with Mary's rightful claim to the throne of England. The third, *the Regiment of woman is conformable to the Lawe of God and Nature*, is a defence of the idea that a woman could be a monarch under God, an idea Tyndale did not agree with at all. Of course, as far as the matters of sin, punishment and forgiveness are concerned, the First Book is the most relevant chapter of Leslie's treaty. He first proceeds to present the slanderous accusations against Mary:

The effect and drifte of the whole tendeth to this, that firft they would we fhould beleuee, that after her mariage her minde was as it were alienated from her hufband.

Secondly they pretende certaine letters that they furnife and would haue, to haue bene written by her Grace wherby the feeke to inferre againft her many a prefumption, as their wily braines imagine. But the moſte weighty of them feemeth to them to be her pretended Mariage, whereof we will laftly entreate.⁶²

These are the basis of the accusations against Mary: the fact that she was alienated from her husband, in other words that she was interested by another man (Bothwell) and that her marriage to Darnley was not sincere. Of course this implies adultery. Interestingly Leslie's argument for the defence of Mary is divided in two. The first part consists in denying her implication in Darnley's death and her crimes in general entirely. The second part is more subtle and has to do with her royal status. Leslie profoundly explores the matter of a king or a queen's sins and if he or she could be forgiven.

(...) feeling alfo that we ought alwaies in criminal caufes, chiefly when a Prince is touched, who is Gods anointed, to be more procliue and prone to fauour, then to hatred, to be readier to abfolue and releafe, then to deteine and condemne, and that is farre better, and a more fure and more indifferent and vpright way, to faue the guiltless life than to condene and caft away the innocent:(...)⁶³

Leslie mentions the Christian ideal of forgiveness and clemency as it should be applied to any fellow Christian man or woman who would be in a situation of sin. When unsure, it is better to refrain from pronouncing a sentence rather than taking the risk of condemning an innocent, which would also be greatly frowned upon by Christendom.

⁶² Ibid., p. 3.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 4.

This segment is also in a way a form of potential acceptance of Mary's wrongdoings and a consideration of what would happen if all of her crimes were true. This is a most habile way for Leslie to further the Queen's defence while protecting himself at the same time. Indeed, he makes a clever approach to the matter of the Queen's responsibility and culpability in the sins she accused of by studying her case as a royal matter and by presenting himself as ready to accept her responsibility if it were the case. Thus he is also able to partly protect himself and tentatively remove himself from any implication in her deeds if she were actually at some point considered guilty.

Some of the other arguments produced in the *Defence* deal with the general presumption of innocence for women in general. Indeed as he himself establishes, it *is rare to hear of such foul practices in women*. Particularly a noble and honourable lady like Mary, a devout Catholic who had the support of many in her Church. There is also the matter of the degree of sin which, according to Leslie, is a progression in life and does not suddenly arise on its own. Yet there were never any indications of Mary sinning beforehand in her past, which plays greatly in her favour.⁶⁴

Leslie later advances another important argument, which is also in a way a parallel to David's story. He mentions Mary's own clemency and forgiveness of Darnley after he murdered Mary's Secretary David Rizzio in cold blood in front of several witnesses, including the Queen herself, when he should have lawfully been condemned, convicted and executed:

Or that will not find it farre vnlike, that this noble Queene, who hath fo grafiouſly pardoned them duple and treble treafons, would euer finde in her harte fo to vfe her own dear hufbande.

(...)

By the due and ordinary proceffe and courſe whereof he might iuſtly haue bene conuicted, condemned and executed, afwel for the murther committed upon Dauid her Secretarie, in whofe body his dagger was found ftabbed: as for the imprifoning of the

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 4 – 5.

Queene, and for the attempting to remoue her from Ciuil gouernment, to intrude himfelfe hereto, and for diuers other the like pageants by him plaid.⁶⁵

Mary did not stoop so low as to condemn her own subjects and to retaliate against them when they committed treason. She remained gracious and kept her dignified elevated status, which is proper to an anointed queen. She even forgave her husband Lord Darnley for his murder of Rizzio and for all his plotting against her. In Leslie's opinion, this worked greatly in the Queen's favour.

Of course this is a matter of discussion as Mary might as well have already planned to remove Darnley by having him killed - but in a more indirect manner so that she would have remained above any suspicion. Had she decided officially and lawfully to have her own husband sentenced to death it would certainly not have played well with her subject or the Church. Incidentally, Darnley would nevertheless still meet his end no less than a year after Rizzio's own and Mary would still be suspected of his assassination. There is no doubt that her popularity, lack of diplomacy and ability to *shroud herself in mystery*⁶⁶ also played against the Queen of Scots. Her political schemes and ploys - if they were confirmed to be true - did not really succeed because she did not connect with the people as much as she should and/or she did not build this strong royal identity with a touch of mystery helping to consolidate her status of anointed monarch.

The comparison with Elizabeth I is the most obvious. Additionally the relationship between the two queens is suggestive of the one between Saul and David. They have both been compared by their supporters to the latter. However, one might argue that history remembered Mary somehow as the Saul of the story – at least certain aspects of him.

Nevertheless, in this case Leslie presents Mary as a complete David and Darnley as her Saul. It is difficult and in fact almost impossible not to see the episode of David's sparing of Saul's life (1 Samuel: 24) when Leslie describes how gracious Mary was as she decided not to have Darnley killed when she lawfully and rightfully could have. David acted exactly the same way when he decided to spare Saul, whom he could rightfully have killed.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁶⁶ LATRE Guido, Ibid.

These decisions served both Mary and David politically at the time, even though they are presented as gracious decisions by anointed kings simply following the Word of the Lord. However the rest of the story would not be as positive for Mary as it was for David. The latter would never be considered a murderer by his subjects and his decision to spare Saul would remain intact as he died at the hands of the enemy without any implication of David whatsoever. On the other hand, because of Darnley's suspicious death, Mary would be charged with his assassination and be considered as a murderer by some of her subjects. Of course, there also remained suspicions on why Mary had spared Darnley at that moment, presuming that she had had ulterior motives to do so.

Mary's other serious alleged sin aside from murder is adultery. Even if, like David, both are never really far from each other. On this topic, Leslie continues his strategy of presumption of innocence for Mary, she simply was a victim who had to witness many members of her close circle commit sins and crimes against others and even against her. In Leslie's mind, the involvement of such an exemplary and innocent Catholic queen like Mary with the sordid subject of adultery has to be utterly inconceivable.

Mary's first possible lover and secretary David Rizzio, who was allegedly murdered by Darnley or under Darnley's orders, is not at all considered to have been in an amorous relationship with the queen and is not even mentioned in this capacity in Leslies' *Defence*. Other scholars seem to partly agree with this opinion. Jenny Wormald in her historical essay aptly named *Mary Queen of Scots: a study in failure* does not dismiss for instance the possibility of an affair but rather shows more caution. Rizzio seemed to have found his place in Mary's court at first and even seemed to like Darnley. He also became closer to the queen and was the *one with whom she sat up late at night*. He was also supposed to have fathered the child she was carrying in 1565-6, the future James I and VI, even though it could also have been her current husband Darnley. In any case, Mary had *created the opportunity for scandal* by showing such closeness to her secretary. Rizzio was also becoming quite unpopular, which did not help Mary's popularity either.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ WORMALD Jenny, *Ibid.*, p. 157.

Rizzio would become part of a political plot by an array of the queen's adversaries including the Earl of Moray as well as Darnley himself. His murder would be a flagrant sign of the great political divide in Scotland. If council members of the queen who also happen to be her adversaries can freely enter her private apartments from the council chambers, her grip on her kingdom had once more diminished:

The Rizzio murder was not just the immediate comment on a queen's folly in putting too much trust in one foreign servant. It was a general comment on a refusal to consult and communicate with the political nation which had gone beyond the point of toleration. It was also the effective end of any semblance of policy or government by the queen.⁶⁸

Mary had been presented as being a victim and as being particularly innocent in Rizzio's murder by Leslie in his *Defence*. The weight of the killing is borne solely by Mary's adversaries. Yet as Wormald indicates Mary has a certain part of the responsibility to share, not necessarily for Rizzio's murder, but for her failure as a queen through her lack of communication and her inappropriate political behaviour. Rizzio's death was a complete invasion of her privacy and an incursion into her own personal royal status and power and there were no real repercussions on the perpetrators. It was the first attack by her adversaries to touch Mary personally and deeply. If a queen can be touched so directly, her status and power are once more seriously questioned and she loses even more support from the people.

After Rizzio's death and the subsequent events, Darnley himself was starting to become a thorn in Mary's side. Among his faults, his writing of a letter to the pope accusing Mary of failing Catholicism in Scotland as well as his refusal to attend James' baptism ceremony.⁶⁹ This could also be a sign that the child was in fact Mary's illegitimate son begotten out of wedlock and that the father was Rizzio and not Darnley. Yet Mary's public proclaiming of James as her legitimate son would help history remember him as her true heir.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 159.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 160 – 161.

What Leslie also reproaches to Mary's adversaries is the fact that they do not only attack their queen with slander and false accusations - for which they have produced no veritable proof. They also committed a much graver sin, which is to raise arms against an anointed monarch:

We affirme then firft, that as they haue produced nothing in the worlde, touching the principal points: as of the Lorde Darleyes death, the acquital of the Earle Bothwel, and the Queenes mariage with him, iuftly to charge her withal: fo are they them felves, afwel for the faid acquital and mariage, as for their damnable and rebellious attempts againft their Souereigne, and for many other enormous crimes, fo farre and fo deeply charged, fo foule ftained, and fo fhamefully marked and noted: that neuer fhall they with al their hypocritical fine fetches be able, to rubbe out the dirty blottes thereof from their fkirts.⁷⁰

In the Book of Samuel, the matter of the immunity of God's anointed monarch was very serious. David managed to consolidate the concept, which would generally be respected by all. If one were to attack an anointed king or queen, it would be considered as the equivalent of attacking God. As a Catholic queen, Mary indubitably had to be considered as anointed by God. Sadly for her, society in the Renaissance was extremely different from David's in old biblical times, where the followers of YHWH were not yet divided among themselves doctrinally. There was now the matter of the internal divide of Christendom. A monarch who could be considered as anointed by God by the Catholics would sometimes not be considered as such by the Protestants. Having to rule over a divided flock was certainly no easy task for Mary and would in fact be difficult for any God-anointed ruler. The fact that Mary could be attacked was already a sign that she would certainly not find much in the matter of forgiveness from her subjects. Elizabeth's task was perhaps easier in this sense, as a majority of her subjects were Protestant or rather Anglicans-to-be.

One of Leslie's strongest arguments in Mary's *Defence* against the accusations of her adversaries has to be mentioned. It is concerned with the second focal point of Leslie's argument which consists in the acceptance of the possibility of Mary as a sinner as previously mentioned. Here David provides an ideal figure of comparison. The king of old was a sinner himself but was nonetheless never overthrown by his own subjects, or even worse by traitorous

⁷⁰ LESLIE John, *Ibid.*, pp. 20 – 21.

murderers. The extract detailing Leslie's argument is quite extensive but makes up for a key argument in his case and thusly has to be analysed in detail:

I would then farther demaund of them, what authoritie they had, to somon and affemble a Parliament? And whether this fact of hers, fhuppofing fhe were therein guilty, deferueth in her, being a Prince, and confidering how heinoufly Lord Darley had offended her and the Croune of Scotland, fuch extreme punifhment to be leuied vpon her for one simple murther: efpecially by them, that committed that flameful murther vpon her secretarie, that haue committed fo many treafons, and daily do committee fo many fo many horrible murthers vpo the Quenes louing fubiectes. How any and how cruel and terrible deathes do fuch Traitours deferue?

We haue moreouer to demaund of them whereas they pretende a merueilous and a finguler zeale to religi6, and holy Scripture, and to meafure al their doings precifely by Scripture and order thereof, what fufficient warrant they haue therein, by their priuate authorities to fe violent hands vpon their annointed Prince? I find ther that King Dauid was an adulterer, and alfo a murtherer? I finde, that God was highly difpleafed with him therefore. Yet find I not that he was therefore by his fubiectes depofed.⁷¹

The irony of Mary's case is pointed out by Leslie in the first paragraph, as well as her particular status of monarch. How can people below her status attack her and offend her when they are villains themselves. They think to act as her betters whereas in fact are very much lesser persons. Leslie's expression *a simple murder* indicates a strong opinion about the immunity of monarchs, coming from biblical times and even up to the Renaissance. Even if Mary committed a murder or was involved in a murder, there is no reason to punish her so harshly as to even take her kingdom away from her. Nonetheless it seems that from a certain point of view, a sinful king would have received either more leniency in the Renaissance than in Biblical times or on the contrary an even harsher punishment. A certainty is that the subject was much more subtle and had more factors involved. Leslie balanced more on the side of leniency.

Rightly so, the subtlety of Leslie's argument is that it is double. First coming from the fact that Mary's accusers and adversaries are extremely versed in sins themselves including serious

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 33 – 34.

ones such as murder and treason. They need to be judged themselves first. The people in general would have no right to judge a king, but these persons would have even less right to do so. An argument previously mentioned by Leslie is that every man or woman has sinned in some way and should focus on his or her own redemption and not judge others by their own *private authority*, particularly a king or queen as it would be the equivalent of trying to judge God and only He can judge man.

Second, there is the *simple murder* behind which Mary allegedly was. An element of analysis that matters greatly is also that Mary is not sole responsible here. She was not in any case the one who directly killed Darnley herself but most probably was involved indirectly via an intermediary who was certainly Bothwell. She would already have to share responsibility. This is obviously a strong reminder of David's plot to kill Uriah where his intermediary was Joab who also did not commit the deed himself. Political stratagems to preserve a king's own reputation were started then and had continued until the 16th century with the still-overarching role played by the Bible throughout Christendom.

Even though Mary and David in their own rights did not actually perform the act of killing themselves, they might have to take responsibility for another part of the sin: the involvement of third parties. In other words they implicated those parties in their own sins, which could perhaps be considered to be a sin on its own. In the Old Testament, there is no particular mention of God's punishment for Joab as God certainly considered David sole responsible of Uriah's killing. Furthermore only God and to a certain extent Nathan knew about David's sin in the sense that they were the one who would have to deal with this difficult situation and God to find David's apt punishment.

Mary and Bothwell's situation was more complex and would lead some to believe that Bothwell was sole culpable of Darnley's killing. Those were the same people who also believed that Mary had not fled with the former but rather had been kidnapped against her will. A group of persons tried to deliver the Queen from Lochleven, where she had been taken by or where she simply went with Bothwell, and presented themselves in arms after the Parliament's decision to sit James on the throne with the Earl of Moray as regent, but they failed. This was because they acted unlawfully and were the adversaries of the king according to Leslie. God was still on Mary's side:

But as their attépt (fay they) was vnlawful, fo the victory fel aginft them on our the righteous fide. Whereby God him felf femeth to haue geué fentéce for the equity of our whole caufe againft our Adversaries.⁷²

There are said to be three reasons for these actions. The first one being to deliver the queen from Bothwell who was said to have captured her against her will. Secondly to punish Bothwell for Darnley's murder and finally to *preserve* the queen's young son James. This is just an example of how those cases always remain subjects of perspective. The other one being that Mary could actually be responsible of Darnley's murder.

An idea certainly strongly present during the Renaissance was that if a monarch was anointed by God - like David - or at least thought himself or herself as such, it was definitely possible for him to get away with sin, up to the likes of adultery and murder. The vector to sin without having to face consequences too severe was a strong sense of cautious scheming and manipulation. This is proof once more that political stratagems and manipulations were not an offspring of the Antiquity, the Middle-Ages or the Renaissance but were present in the Book from the very start. They are very much a product of the human mind, which would be carried out throughout the entire course of history.

In fact, murder for an anointed regent was perhaps met in some cases with much more leniency in the Renaissance than in Biblical times. Particularly if it was only the subject of presumption without tangible proof accepted by a majority and if a monarch was involved more indirectly. Interestingly, complete forgiveness is what Leslie advocates for Mary. After all in Leslie's words, David himself was an adulterer and a murderer, yet he was never deposed by his subjects. This reinforces the principle of God being the only one to have the power to judge, particularly an anointed king. If the people themselves could decide in his stead, which place would an anointed king have in a Christian kingdom?

Nevertheless murder and adultery were still grave offenses in the Book of Samuel. They are sins punishable by death in accordance with the Law of God. David himself should have been killed, yet God decides to put away his sin but not to save the king entirely from punishment. In David's situation, God showed great clemency and capacity to forgive. It remains difficult

⁷² Ibid., p. 19.

to say if it was purely because David was His anointed or also to support the idea that God could also show mercifulness to those who are sincerely penitent. It was certainly a bit of both.

On the other hand Mary herself would not be directly punished, by God or by the people, her culpability and involvement could not be directly proven. The only fact people were certain about was that Bothwell was the main conspirator. Mary's involvement was only assumed. According to Jenny Wormald, Mary could apparently have continued to reign perfectly normally after Darnley's death if she had made amends and acted innocently and regally enough. The people would have supported the idea of their queen's innocence for the sake of political stability. However Mary acted in a way that would bring upon her more discontent and disapproval from her subjects. When she should have been in mourning, she attended a wedding the day after the murder. She allowed a farce-trial of Bothwell and issued grants to him and to other of the murder conspirators, which suspiciously looked like payments for the assassination. This she did instead of properly judging, convicting and punishing them. She also held a parliamentary session with many controversial measures and decisions concerning religion and the repression of anti-Marian placards and bills, which would once more mar her popularity.⁷³ Wormald also points out that Mary managed to escape for two weeks and rally troops at the beginning of her imprisonment only because of "Scottish attitudes to the authority of the crown", which should not lead to the assumption that "they regarded her as a successful ruler."⁷⁴

The confederate Lords, among which were several conspirators, later put into place an efficient political lie when they decided quite ironically to punish Darnley's murderers after they had deposed the queen. It was a most habile political stratagem as their objective was of course solely to garner positive support from the people and not really their will to actually execute true justice. Thus they showed to the public their ability to act and to rule with decency and skill, even if it meant using cunning political lies, which Mary always failed to do.⁷⁵

The importance of political stability seems evidently not to have been one of Mary's chief concerns. She was certainly not armed, educated or versed enough in these matters. She made

⁷³ WORMALD Jenny, *Ibid.*, pp. 162 – 163.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 170 – 171.

decisions based mostly on her own personal feelings, which could have dire consequences. Her growing closeness to Bothwell would also be one more step towards the queen's downfall. After several bishops, lords and earls signed a bond to accept Bothwell's innocence. He would later seize her and take her to Dunbar where he apparently raped her. Still, Mary would marry him after a few weeks. The main issue with this union was the difference in religious faiths and was concerned with Mary's previous stance on her Catholicism, which she kept against all odds in the Scottish Protestant climate and which brought a lot of trouble to Scotland through the religious divide of the population in two different Christian faiths. Now, Mary was marrying a Protestant, and by Protestant rites. This would figuratively be one more nail in the political and religious coffin of Mary's reign. It would lead to Mary's taking from Dunbar and her imprisonment at Lochleven. She then abdicated in favour of her son James and Moray as regent. Her life from the summer of 1567 to her death in 1587 was spent as a prisoner, a queen with nothing but a title.⁷⁶

Thus Mary's sins as such were not the cause of her failure but rather her way to cope with them. She had been politically inept throughout most of her reign and did not respond well to situations of crisis. She also failed to place her kingdom and her people's needs before her own. However her first true mistake was to not have entertained better relations with her subjects from the start. David had benefitted greatly from such a support, which would help him even beyond his reign in the matters of his legacy and his remembrance by history. The ambiguities of his reign and his ascension as well as his sins would be but notes of his story and his image would remain as a positive and shining example of an exemplary king. The support of the people is one of the main reasons why he was forgiven by God, the people and history. The matter of Mary's forgiveness by God if some of her sins were confirmed to be true will always remain a mystery and never find a straight answer like David had. On the other hand, it seems evident that she did not obtain forgiveness from her people. Not necessarily for her sins but for her failure to be an exemplary ruler.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 165 – 167.

2. Mary and Elizabeth I: failure against success

To understand how Mary failed as a queen and how others might have succeeded, a look back into her early life is eye-opening. Jenny Wormald surmises Mary to be a product of a misdirection of the education of a future monarch.⁷⁷ Indeed, many monarchs of the sixteenth century seemed to have forgotten an extremely important principle of a monarchy under divine right as described in the Book of Samuel for Saul and David. If they are to be God's representatives on Earth, they should not forget that they are not divine themselves and that they should still serve God and God only, as well as guide the people and not use their status as an instrument of power. Only God truly has power and only God can judge. This is a double-edged argument like previously mentioned. It could be used at the advantage of a monarch when the people are the target of this so cautionary saying as well as a disadvantage when the monarchs themselves are the target of that same saying.

Mary was educated in France by Catherine de Medici and the Guises. This kind of upbringing would not particularly play in her favour according to Wormald.⁷⁸ The French royal upbringing was focused on the education of future kings and queens, and Mary was educated as such. The issue with this kind of education is in a way that it certainly lured the royal children into a sense of comfort and confidence of their royal status. They were already groomed to be rulers under divine authority, their place was already established and God was with them.

This feeling of divine grandeur grew from the seeds of the French fertile royal ground. It would emerge later as a need for adulation, which was in fact present in most Renaissance rulers:

The monstrous arrogance of a Henry VIII, the pathological need for flattery of an Elizabeth, may suggest that this was a side of kingship which was in danger of taking monarchs out of touch with reality, as they wound themselves into a cocoon of adulation.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 79.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 78.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 79.

This behaviour was still nonetheless extremely dangerous and was handled better by some than others. One of the better examples being of course Elizabeth I and oppositely one of the lesser ones Mary Queen of Scots.

The place of education is crucial to the topic of kingship, particularly in the Renaissance and particularly in relation to the critical reception of a monarch's deeds and behaviour. It seems that an upbringing with more emphasis on humility was greatly beneficial to a future ruler. So was the case of David being a simple shepherd and so was also the case of Elizabeth I. The great difference in behaviour between of the two queens is highlighted by Wormald in the perspective of their education. It was this particular ability to remain in touch with reality coming chiefly from their different upbringings that would be one of the main factors of Elizabeth's rise in contrast to Mary's fall:

Thus such monarchs were in fact profoundly in touch with reality. But it took a hard head to be so. Arguably the necessary detachment was more likely to be found in people who had not had the kind of upbringing so thoroughly enjoyed by Mary Queen of Scots. The extreme contrast is with her cousin Elizabeth, declared bastard before she was three, enduring four stepmothers thereafter, and brought up mainly away from court circles. Their different reactions to political pressures when both were aged fifteen are therefore instructive. Mary was signing away her kingdom, at the behest of Henri II. Elizabeth was preserving her reputation, and the possibility of one day ruling her country in the face of irresponsible sexual scandal about her created by one step-uncle, Thomas Seymour, her supposed lover, and of implacable hostility from the other, Edward duke of Somerset and protector of England.⁸⁰

This definitely proves the importance of education and reputation leading to a greater capacity of political play in the Renaissance society, also linked to the relationship of a monarch with the people. A monarch who remained in touch with reality and did not become too infatuated with a sense of divinity above all else would have maintained a positive connection with his or her subjects as well as kept a capacity to circumnavigate complex political matters without losing his or her head – sometimes literally. In other words, such a monarch would also have been much more likely to be forgiven his or her sins or crimes in comparison with another who

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 79 – 80.

was not able to rule as a proper king - in other words to act cleverly in politics - and to maintain good relations with the people.

Elizabeth was indeed much more capable in this sense than Mary, she was adulated to really high levels and also craved a need for attention and grandeur but managed to walk that dangerous line with much political wit and caution. On the other hand Mary even appeared to be indifferent to her kingdom.⁸¹ Aside from her own personal sins, Mary apparently faulted against her people and her absence of responsibility and duty as a queen was most striking during certain periods of her life and regency. An example would be what Jenny Wormald calls the *vacuum at the beginning of Mary's reign*. Mary left her kingdom without any legally constituted government during fourteen months. She also let Protestant rebels set themselves as 'the Great Council of the Realm' and control the affairs of the country. This would lead to a weakening of the position of the Catholics in Scotland and the departure of the French. The position of the Protestants and the English in Scotland was consolidated and Mary's was already slightly crumbling.⁸²

In a way, by her non-responsiveness, Mary had already shown signs of not guiding her flock and not being a dutiful or strong ruler. She did not fulfil her role of shepherd properly. The absence of a monarch is generally not a good omen for the consideration of his or her position and the stability and strength of a rule. This only happened to David at the very end of his reign after he had to flee Jerusalem as a consequence of Absalom's treason. This was truly the darkest and most unstable moment of his reign, only then were there signs of general unrest and opposition to David even among the people, particularly the people of the house of Saul:

And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came a man out of the family of the house of Saul, whose name *was* Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came.

And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand and on his left.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 79.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 102 – 103.

And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial:

The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief, because thou *art* a bloody man. (2 Samuel 16: 5 – 8)

These extracts from the Book of Samuel can easily be read in the light of Mary's story. The rebellion of Absalom occurred at the end of David's reign, and would all be settled after Absalom's death at the hands of Joab against David's wishes after David decided to take action against his rebellious son. On the other hand, Mary did not take action. Even more worrying, the fact that her Protestant adversaries could rule in her stead and in her absence could be a sign that perhaps God Himself let them do so. Perhaps He was with them and not with Mary anymore, perhaps he had forsaken her. The occurrence of such crippling events at the beginning of a reign is definitely not announcing the positivity of things to come. The relationship of Mary with her people would start with a certain feeling of distance and a dent to her image and reputation.

In the end, Mary's judgment would be left to someone of equal status, her cousin Elizabeth I, who was also an anointed ruler. Even though the true reasons for deposing Mary were actually more linked to her incapacity to be a proper monarch and ruler, the reasons for her imprisonment and her removal from the throne had to come from more serious crimes. Darnley's murder provided enough evidence of those actions and would be instrumental in Elizabeth's plan to keep Mary locked away without having dire consequences to face afterwards and still keep her image of just and exemplary monarch. The Casket letters were used by Moray in the case of Mary's judgment, defended among others by John Leslie. It was a strong piece of evidence which Elizabeth could not ignore and she made the most sensible decision with all the political and religious elements she had to take into account. This political aptitude was indubitably one of Elizabeth's greatest skills and certainly one of Mary's weakest. There is not much chance that she would have made a decision as well-thought had she been

in the same situation. In order not to offend either the Catholics or the Scots by either executing Mary or by restoring her, Elizabeth simply maintained the status quo.⁸³

Thus she would also have proven that she was still a clement ruler. She would respect the principle set in the Book of Samuel that only God could judge and that even an anointed monarch (David or Elizabeth) could not just kill another anointed monarch (Saul or Mary) when he was at his mercy. Even if it must have been acknowledged by many at that point that Mary's status of anointed was slightly fading away. Elizabeth appeared at first to be partly forgiving Mary, but there was – as there always is – a political strategy behind her actions. Elizabeth still wanted to be rid of Mary somehow.

In 1572, *A Treatise of Treasons against Q. Elizabeth* was published by Leslie, a year after the publication of his *Defence*. The text is divided into two parts, the first one being once more a defence of Mary this time against the false accusations of treason against the Crown of England:

But of any attempt made by the Q. of Scotland, litle or much towards the euiction of that Croune out of your Q. poffeffion, by ftile, by title, by force, or by any other waie (by which fuch enterprifes haue bene wonte to be allaied) the whole world beareth witneffe with her, that no leaft figne nor token hath fhe geuen of any fuch intencion (...)⁸⁴

Of course, those accusations would in fact eventually be well-founded but for the time being they were not as numerous and obvious as to build a case against Mary. The second part of Leslie's text was concerned with the detection and unveiling of other treasons, of which Elizabeth was perhaps unaware. This was undoubtedly a strategically clever argument from Leslie and a way to endeavour to lure Elizabeth away from suspecting Mary and thus defending the Queen of Scots. With the simultaneous accusation of other conspirators, Leslie would also show his willingness to defend and honour Elizabeth. From his works Leslie appears to often be playing between the two powers and the two queens, while defending one he would always try not to offend the other and thusly remain in the good graces of both. Here and very much

⁸³ Ibid., p. 176.

⁸⁴ LESLIE John, *A Treatise of Treasons against Q. Elizabeth*, this ed. London, Scolar Press, 1975 (first published 1572), p. 15.

like in his *Defence*, Leslie makes great use of elements of Civil Law, such as tangible proof and witnesses, to make his case.

Surely, in the end it is not an effect of the Law of God which would signal Mary's demise but of Civil Law. Elizabeth had to find a way to remove Mary in the most lawful manner in order not to see parties raise against her and to preserve the royal identity she had so carefully built. As Jenny Wormald explains:

In 1584 in England, there was another 'Association': the Bond of Association, proposed by the council and enthusiastically accepted by parliament. This was sent throughout the country for signatures. It allowed the killing of any person of any person on whose behalf a plot was made with the intention of putting him – her – on the English throne. It was lynch law. But only Elizabeth's direct intervention persuaded parliament to introduce into the act, which would give the bond legal force, a clause providing for a tribunal to try the person in question.⁸⁵

As Mary was continuously plotting behind Elizabeth's back, which the English queen must have suspected, she would certainly be able to lawfully execute her cousin with this new bond. It was also strangely reminiscing of the biblical idea from Samuel that one should not move against a king/a queen or attempt to judge him/her. So, it was the Babington Plot, the objective of which was to assassinate Elizabeth, which would be Mary's final undoing. Mary should have known that treason - particularly against Elizabeth - was a very dangerous idea. Sir John Harrington considered the matter in his Epigrams:

Book III: 5. Of Treafon.

Treafon doth neuer profper, what's the reafon?

For it profper, none dare call it Treafon.⁸⁶

It was either poor judgment from Mary or a desperate measure, it would not come to completion though, as Elizabeth was far more cautious and a far better political strategist than her cousin. Elizabeth however did not find much joy or solace in Mary's planned execution after the unveiling of her plot and her sentencing. The weight of such a *monstrous act* was

⁸⁵ WORMALD Jenny, *Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁸⁶ HARRINGTON Sir John, *Ibid.*

much to bear for Elizabeth but she would still have to carry that weight as only she could have the last word on such a serious judgement, indeed: “For the first time, a divinely ordained monarch was condemning and putting to death another equally divinely ordained monarch.”⁸⁷ This matter is discussed extensively in the previous chapter.

It was not Mary’s sins in breach of the Law of God – adultery and murder – which would have her face her final and most severe punishment. It was her crime in breach of Civil Law: treason. Mary’s failure was due to several elements, which did in fact have sequential repercussions on each other all along her life. First there was her inadequate royal education at the French court, then her lack of attention to her subjects, which was certainly one of the most important factors of her failure. During her reign in Scotland, her great faults were her involvement in murder plots and her controversial marriages and relationships. Finally, there was in general her inability to handle political and religious matters or to act properly as a queen.

It cannot be contested that Mary did indeed fail as a queen, due to all of these factors. She was one of those monarchs which would never really be seen as being forgiven. Yet interestingly enough, she is not particularly remembered for her alleged sins or crimes but rather for her ineptitude as an anointed queen. More than her said involvement in murder plots or the fact that she was an adulteress, it was her absence of connection with her people and her failure to be a proper ruler which would not be forgiven. In the end her story - even though it has been compared with David’s - is also very similar to Saul’s and their legacies and fates not so distant. What triggered Saul’s downfall was the fact that he had not followed God’s commandment and thus he had failed to rule properly as anointed monarch. He also seriously lacked the support of the people compared to David for instance. Both those traits - failure as an anointed ruler and poor relationships with the people - , more than their other faults, were the key of the undoing of the Biblical king and the Scottish queen. This idea of an inadequate monarch being too passive and too weak to fulfil his role of proper anointed ruler had in fact also been established before Mary’s time by Tyndale:

Yea and it is better to have a tyraunte unto thy kinge then a shadow, a paffive kinge that doth nought himfelfe, but fofre other to doo with him what they will, and to leade him whither they lyft. For a tyraunte though he do wronge vnto the good, yet he

⁸⁷ WORMALD Jenny, *Ibid.*, p. 186.

punefheth the evyll and maketh all men obeye nether fofereth any man to polle but himfelfe only.

A kinge that is as foft as fylke and effeminate, that is to faye turned vnto the nature of a woman, what with his awne luftes, which are as the longing of a woman with childe, so that he can not refifte them, and what with the wyly tyranye of them that ever rule him, fhall be much moare grievous vnto the realme then a right tyraunte. Reade the chronicle and thou fhalt finde it ever fo.⁸⁸

As previously mentioned, Tyndale is unwavering up to an almost extreme point on his opinion of the position of anointed monarch. It goes as far as to completely accept tyrants without any kind of misgivings. A tyrant is extreme but at least will endeavour to keep evil from his kingdom. He also makes people obey and does not allow elections for any kind, which would bring other choices of ruler than himself. He is God's anointed and should be accepted by all as such, no other could have a claim as strong as he over the rule of a Christian kingdom. The severity and harshness of a tyrant's rule would also have the non-negligible advantage of providing a greater sense of order, security and stability to a kingdom.

These arguments shine a new light on Queen Mary's case. First there is the matter of her gender; being a woman was certainly not acceptable for an anointed ruler in Tyndale's mind. He heavily criticizes the nature of women in the sense that they have their own lusts. In other words Tyndale criticizes women for being dictated by their own desires and not at all be able to resist them. They will in fact put their own persons and said desires first before their kingdom and subjects, and thusly before God's will. It is of course a sign of Tyndale's closed-mindedness from the point of view of gender but which can certainly mainly be imputed to the spirit of the times. Many kings, like Henry VIII to name just one - who incidentally also happened to be Tyndale's contemporary - would at some point follow their own personal desires in spite of the ill it could bring to their realms. Yet Mary fits the derogatory characterization nevertheless. She did tend to put her needs and her own person before the affairs of the state. Then there is her personality and character, which have to be dealt with more subtly. Tyndale criticizes a monarch who would be passive and a "shadow". Nonetheless Mary's essence of queenship could not be characterized as a whole as passive or shade-like.

⁸⁸ TYNDALE William, *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Certain parts of her reign would undoubtedly fit that description, such as her somehow faulty start and her absence from Scottish affairs up to a point. During that times, a confederation of rebels were leading the country. This is another unacceptable idea for Tyndale. In other words, she actually suffered others - even worse, her adversaries - to rule in her stead. Lastly she was surrounded by men who would in turn support her and oppose her. She would sometimes manipulate them but more often they would manipulate her. Mary's relationship with the men from her entourage would be a strain to her rule. They would never really be able to take power from her while she was on the throne but they would always endeavour to. The only difference with Tyndale's previsions is that in the case of Mary, when her adversaries finally managed to obtain her throne after she was imprisoned, their rule was certainly not worse than hers. They were in fact mostly welcomed by the people. The legitimacy of their act was also reinforced by the fact that they had put Mary's lawful heir on the throne with one of the conspirators, the Earl of Moray, acting as regent. Nonetheless, it does reinforce Tyndale's argument and bring proof that Mary's kingdom would fare better once she was gone and it was rid of the ineptitude reproached to her.

Still, Mary had several mitigating circumstances which had to do with her education, the issue of religious divide linked to internal political problems, as well as external ones with England and the English throne. Her failure as a queen should not be considered in any case her own responsibility entirely. In retrospect, the fact that she was not so much forgiven in her time and that people in general, as well as history, benefited more of her in death than in life should not lead to her "damning".⁸⁹The role of monarch, like Saul in a certain way, was perhaps just not made for Mary.

Whereas Mary was a failing queen and a regent who cannot be considered to have been forgiven by her people or her contemporaries in the time of her rule, her cousin Elizabeth was an extremely successful monarch. To understand why one queen did so well and the other so poorly, a comparative study of their respective lives is the ideal research pattern to carry out.

Mary's life was one of opulence and complete dedication to the principle that her divine right to be queen had been acquired from birth whereas Elizabeth's was more laden with hiccups

⁸⁹ WORMALD Jenny, *Ibid.*, p. 188.

and difficulties. She was considered a bastard early on because her father Henry VIII had divorced (and executed) her mother Anne Boleyn. Later, with political alliances in the making, Elizabeth was again set in the line of succession to the crown of England in third place behind Edward as heir apparent, followed by her half-sister Mary in second position. The fact that Elizabeth would one day sit on the throne was still unlikely.⁹⁰ This must have already created in Elizabeth's mind a sense of uncertainty and of humility. She should just accept her position for the time being. In this sense, she could not have pictured herself as queen as much as Mary Stuart did. Whereas Mary was the direct heir to the throne of Scotland through cognatic primogeniture and groomed to be queen through all aspects of her education, Elizabeth was only third in line of succession of the throne. Yet she would find herself in conditions much closer and similar to King David's in her youth and upbringing than Mary. David did not picture himself as reigning monarch. Even when he became God's anointed, he remained humble and went back to tend to his sheep while remaining patient.⁹¹ Patience is also a crucial trait of both David's and Elizabeth's, which would greatly help them to fortify their royal statuses. Humility is maybe a matter of discussion, but at least both David and Elizabeth at least generally acted the part. Whether it was part of a political strategy or not could be discussed. Elizabeth was often represented as being particularly humble, and compared to David in that manner, exactly as Nicholas Byfield had described him:

David's rise was "the Lord's dooing, and it was marvellous," Byfield says of the Psalmist, just the Davidic words the new queen Elizabeth had applied to herself to signal both humility and divine support.⁹²

She came from humility before reaching great heights, this certainly helped her popularity greatly. Particularly as her rise to power was truly said to have come from God and was compared to that of David. Like him, she was not the first in line as David was not the first anointed. Because she rose so such great heights from what sometimes such a low position, she could establish her humility as well as prove her divine support through the same argument, she truly was God's anointed. On the other hand, this was not so much the case for Mary for instance. The role of the people in Elizabeth's judgment and the perception of her image

⁹⁰ MacCAFFREY Wallace, *Elizabeth I*, London, Edward Arnold, 1993, p. 5.

⁹¹ PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁹² BYFIELD Nicholas, *Ibid.*.

mattered much. A humble queen who seemed to have come from a difficult position of apparent inferiority would without any doubt garner much sympathy and appraisal from her subjects, who would see her as being much closer to them through several common characteristics. Elizabeth and David's popularity was also one of their greatest assets. This was not Mary's case, who seemed more distant and passive. Elizabeth did not find herself in situations as delicate as Mary, but it can be surmised that if it had been the case - even more so in the late times of her reign - she would have fared much better. It is far more likely that her people would have forgiven her misconducts and other "alleged" sins.

Elizabeth also had more luck in her education than Mary. Henry's sixth and last wife Katherine Parr would create a veritable family setting for her stepchildren. Elizabeth had through her mother figure who would also put much emphasis on education, with the idea that high-born women should share the same humanistic learning as their brothers. In this, Elizabeth was extremely fortunate. As Wormald also pointed out, this type of purely academic education not solely centred on regal grooming would greatly differentiate Elizabeth from Mary. Wallace MacCaffrey points out the importance of Elizabeth's education and the ramifications of her learnings as consequences affecting her rule as queen:

The practical advantages of this education are obvious; her command of the principal European tongues was invaluable to her in dealing with the ambassadors of foreign princes. These skills enabled her to play a direct and commanding role in the exchanges of diplomatic intercourse.

(...)

However the question remains how far her immersion in the classical authors affected her conduct as a ruler. It might well be argued that Elizabeth's coldly calculating view of politics and her secular view of the function of religion in society owed something to her reading of the classical moralists. There is little evidence that the substance of their argument affected her practice of politics. She was familiar with at least one work of Erasmus, but there is little evidence that his humanist moralism touched her feelings. Machiavelli – had she read him – would have been more congenial to her way of

proceeding. Her cool pragmatism owed more to her own harsh experience than to any bookish instruction.⁹³

Elizabeth was not groomed to be queen, she was educated to be a learned monarch. Like David in a way, whose position of shepherd was already a sign of his potential greatness as a ruler. There does not seem to be a calling in life closer to the position of ruler than the position of shepherd. He is the bridge between the political and the religious through his role of guide. David was in fact prepared to be king and to properly act as monarch before he was even anointed through the learnings his pre-royal position offered. It was the same for Elizabeth, who also knew much about ruling principles before actually ascending to the throne. She would already in the course of her education acquire many skills - linguistic and diplomatic ones - which would help her to always be advantaged politically and to be a skilled ruler, not only a queen whose position is given but a guide for the people whose position was earned. Among the other learnings from her scholarly education, there was also the influence of classical authors on a view of politics filled with ideas of stratagems. Then the idea of secularisation of religion in a society, this Mary was not able to accomplish either, being far too involved in her own Catholic belief against all odds, costing her much more than it should have. However in the end it was truly Elizabeth's experience and her hardships - even more than her education - which would help her become a skilled anointed monarch. All the skills she had learned from the obstacles and the predicaments of her life, coupled to her high level of education in a large scope of various fields would serve her extremely well as a queen navigating complex political waters populated by issues of power and religion.

When Elizabeth became queen, she made several changes to the constitution of her government. Contrary to Mary who reigned her whole life in a government including many of her adversaries, Elizabeth decided to surround herself only with trusted servants and to fill strategic positions with key members from various layers of society, including a gesture of loyalty and respect to the traditional noble elite some of which were included in her Council. On the other hand she excluded the clerics, which makes sense from the point of view of the recent change to the English society setting the head of state as the head of Christendom. This

⁹³ MacCAFFREY Wallace, *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

also evidently tallies with Tyndale's opinion on divine rule. The anointed monarch should not have to explain himself to friars, monks, bishops or even the pope:

Another concludion is this, that no perfon nether anye degree maye be exempte from this ordinaunce of God. Nether can the profeffion of monkes and freres or anye thing that the Pope or Biffhoppes can laie for themfelves, except them from the fwerde of the Emperoure or kings, yf they breake the lawes. For it is written, let every foule fubmit himfelfe vnto the auctorite of the hier powers. Here is no man excepte, but all foules muft obeye. The hier powers are the temporall kings and princes vnto whom God hath geven the fwerde to punefhe who fo ever finneth.⁹⁴

As a matter of fact, an anointed king is said to be directly chosen by God, in Tyndale's opinion, it is not the case of monks, friars, and bishops, who are all servants of God having chosen to dedicate their lives to Him, but it cannot be proven that he chose them. The Pope cannot go against God's anointed as even for him it would be the equivalent of opposing God Himself. Every soul needs to submit to the higher powers, by which is meant the powers that be or in other words God's anointed monarchs. They are the temporal princes through whom God wields his sword to punish sin. In Tyndale's opinion, all clerics and even prelates including the pope would need to give accounts to God's anointed and not the other way around. From this point of view, every man should follow the rule of God's anointed and not endeavour to judge him. In Tyndale's opinion this would irremediably lead to forgiveness - or at least a form of it - of anointed monarchs, whatever their sins - or crimes - may be. The idea is in fact even more extreme, as the question of having to forgive an anointed king should not even arise. An anointed cannot be judged, thus it implies that he cannot be forgiven as there is nothing to forgive. He is not to be held responsible, as one cannot in any case hold God responsible or endeavour to judge Him. Beyond the nonsensical idea it would be understood as for Christians, it would also mean blasphemy or heresy. God's anointed needs to be considered the same as Him. Hence an interesting conclusion related to the text itself; the lexical field of "forgiveness" including all the subjacent lexicon derived from the root of the word do not appear as such in Leslie's and particularly in Tyndale's texts. This is symptomatic of a will to consider an anointed monarch as untouchable. It was certainly present at a greater level in Tyndale's mind

⁹⁴ TYNDALE William, *Ibid.*, p. 33.

than Leslie's as the former was closer to Protestant ideals through his stance of reformer and the latter a Catholic who would have to follow the Pope's sovereignty. Yet as far as both theologians are concerned, the mere idea of suggesting that a monarch would have to be forgiven for a sin considered as a crime is difficult to accept for Leslie and utterly unacceptable for Tyndale.

Elizabeth herself was in the middle of an opposition between Catholics and Protestants, brewing into a potential uprising which she tried to quell by being fair with the former. Obviously she still kept a touch of her typical indomitability though. She wanted to convey the idea that she did not seek to inquire into men's own choice of religion. Her government needed to have the appearance of an acceptant one as far as religion - in fact her Catholic subjects - was concerned. Apparently in reality it was not exactly a society of Catholic stigmatisation through repression but it was not either a haven of ecumenism. Yet, matters would drastically degrade in 1569 with the Northern Rebellion of the Catholic supporters of Mary Queen of Scots who wanted to place her on the English throne instead of Elizabeth. The English queen had no choice but to respond harshly to the uprising. In concordance with the rebellion and with the idea of bringing Catholicism back to England through Mary, the Pope had a strong response to Elizabeth's firm reaction: her excommunication, which was officialised by a papal bull in 1570.⁹⁵

Tyndale had already questioned the authority of the Pope in his *Obedience* as well as his claim of divine rule. Now the Holy Father's excommunication of the queen would only bring him more opponents and more to also call into question his claim of divine rule above all else. Surely he could not be above God's anointed. All in all, the Pope's decision of excommunication would be highly controversial and criticized by many, including Francis Quarles. On this matter, he followed in the footsteps of Tyndale himself and what he certainly would have thought, were he still living:

Book I: 90. On the depofing of Princes.

I know not by what virtue Rome depofes

A Chriftian Prince: Did Aaron command Mofes?

⁹⁵ MacCAFFREY Wallace, *Ibid.*, pp. 327-328.

If sacred Scriptures mention such a thing,
Sure Rome has colour to depose a King.⁹⁶

Quarles points out the nonsensical aspect of the situation. Rome wanting to depose an anointed king would be the same as Aaron deposing Moses, which would indeed make no sense at all in the mind of any Christian.

Elizabeth's reaction would be at first a harsh repression of Catholics in England. Nonetheless she kept a sense of leniency as she separated the flock of believers from the priests themselves, considered to be the head of the insurrection. They became the target of repression and executions, whereas the Catholic congregation of people was mostly left alone as long as they respected the law. Verily, Elizabeth and her government considered that to kill the snake, they just needed to cut its head. She blamed the priests, but mostly their superiors of plotting against her. Unfortunately for the English queen, the problem would not fade away with time as the Catholic community was particularly defiant and resilient. Eventually Elizabeth had to compromise and keep a certain form of leniency with her Catholic subjects even in the course of and after the repressions.⁹⁷ This was an extremely difficult matter. Nevertheless where Mary had failed to rule over subjects of different Christian faiths, Elizabeth was certainly more successful. In the end she had managed to keep order in the English state and to thwart what would have become a state-wide uprising and revolution. Through her sometimes harsh but generally fair decisions, her political skills and her attention to her people and their states of mind, she had managed to remain on the throne to prove once more to her loyal subjects that she truly was God's anointed.

Conclusively, what matters in the end is not that Mary sinned or committed crimes but how she handled the situation in the aftermath of the accusations against her and how she handled herself as queen and in relation to her subjects. Those factors would be the key to the road of forgiveness. In the end, God's judgment and mercifulness would be seen more and more as an aspect of a personal relationship between man and God Himself. It is indeed particularly difficult to prove His forgiveness, only in the word of the Bible was it possible. The Renaissance rulers would have to rely on scholars versed in the Word of the Lord who had

⁹⁶ QUARLES Francis, *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁹⁷ MacCAFFREY Wallace, *Ibid.*, p. 335-336.

analysed their situation, their personalities and the events in their lives to interpret certain signs as evidence of God's forgiveness or abandonment. However it did not keep the people from having their own opinions and their influence on the salvation or damnation of their monarchs. After all, God Himself listens to their pleas and their ideas. He has their wellbeing placed high among His matters of concern, and so should His anointed.

The crucial role of the common folk has been established from a divine point of view. Nonetheless it was also the case in the World from a human perspective. The Law of God still had a crucial role to play in judgments of the Renaissance societies, but was now also used in conjunction with the Civil Law as Leslie mentions it. Even though parliaments were not as they are today and the anointed monarch still held most of the power in ruling a country, the lords and noblemen constituting councils and parliaments would have a certain influence and would have their say in most decisions. What is certain is that the people influenced both, directly or indirectly. If their opinions and reactions were not taken into account, rulers could pay these types of mistake dearly. Even though anointed kings were under the impression that their power was still divine and unchallengeable, the people were quietly but surely rising. The monarchs who were aware of the weight of the people were the ones who could be the better rulers and sit the longest on their thrones. Indeed, the time would soon come when the people would be the ones holding the majority of the power, even above God.

Conclusion

Forgiveness in a Biblical context is certainly one of the more subtle concepts to analyse. It depends on many factors; the identity of actor and beneficiary, the nature of the sin or crime at its origin, the different perspectives, its inclusion into larger moral and historical contexts... The case of kings, in particular ones anointed by God is certainly different from common men. During the English Renaissance, forgiveness was always seen through a Christian perspective, which could also differ in accordance with the particular branch of Christianity concerned: Catholic or Protestant.

Tyndale in his *Obedience* and on the other hand Leslie in his *Defence* give contrasted perspectives on the principle of anointed kings; the former being a reformer close to Protestant ideals, the latter being a Catholic. Nonetheless they still agree on several points; the first evident one being that they recognize the relevance, existence and authority of an anointed monarch. Then they both also agree on the fact that an anointed king is untouchable and possesses immunity. Finally they consider that God cannot be judged and that He should be the only one able to judge all.

The points on which their opinions differ do in fact derive from these common points of agreement. Leslie favours absolution instead of condemnation particularly in the case of an anointed monarch. However his argument is still very general and remains understood more as a plea of mercifulness as a Christian ideal and not necessarily a plea in the defence of an anointed king in particular. It is just a principle applied to the case of a king and not a principle made for one such case. Leslie certainly shows more distance with the principle of anointed monarch even though he does support it. Additionally it was certainly easier for Leslie to accept the fact that an anointed king could be a sinner. In his Catholic opinion, the Pope's divine authority mattered more than a king's. In a way, the Pope would be the only one with the authority to judge a king. In a Catholic's mind, a pope's divine authority would always supersede that of an anointed king.

Tyndale's reformer perspective is the complete opposite. The clerics and the prelates - among which the pope in particular - have no divine authority, they were never ordained by God. The only type of divine ruler ever ordained by God is his own anointed king. Tyndale would even

have very easily accepted a tyrant as anointed king even though he does not have the best of relationships with the people. Still the people would have had to forgive him in any case no matter how grievous his sins. Furthermore the people should accept a king who is a tyrant because the decision to have one originated from them in the Bible. Tyndale's arguments sometimes appear to be rather paradoxical. His work of translation would help the emancipation of the people considerably, yet at the same time he would support a tyranny in which the same people are oppressed. This is not a sign of lunacy but rather a reflection of Tyndale's complete and unflinching devotion to Scripture and his faithfulness to the Word. Tyndale and Leslie's differing stances are even clearer through a textual detail: the use of the concept of *forgiveness* of a king, even as a lexical field. It does tend to be more salient in Leslie's. A king could need to be forgiven as he could be considered a sinner. On the other hand, the concept is almost completely absent in Tyndale's. To consider that a king would need forgiveness is unacceptable as it would be a consequence of judging him as a sinner, which cannot be done save by God.

This was the scholars' opinions on the moral course which should ideally be followed by all Christians. In reality though, a king's forgiveness would not rely as much on Biblical principles defended by divinity scholars - at least not directly. It is difficult to assess the overall influence that writings by Tyndale or Leslie might have had on the matter. However, two concrete factors can be identified as the main elements of impact on the potential forgiveness of kings by their societies: their popularity and their political skills. This can be observed in the cases of Mary Queen of Scots and Elizabeth I, where the former failed as anointed monarch and the other succeeded. In the end, Elizabeth much more than Mary was able to approximate King David's qualities - such as his ruling skills, his humility and his popularity. This was the key to her success. In the end it is not so much the types of sin that influence the potential forgiveness of a king. It is those other factors which mostly rest in the hands of the people, whose power should never be underestimated. In the Renaissance, an anointed monarch could obtain forgiveness for any kind of sin - as serious as it might be - as long as he had strong political skills and most of all the support of his subjects. Those who failed in one or both of these characteristics would certainly be doomed by some of their contemporaries, and even perhaps by history.

Bibliography

- ALTER Robert and KERMODE Frank, *Encyclopédie littéraire de la Bible*, Paris, Bayard (trad. DAUZAT Pierre-Emmanuel), 2003.
- BOGAERT Pierre-Maurice, DELCOR Matthias, JACOB Edmond, LIPINSKI Edouard et al., *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible*, s.l., Brepols, 1987. (Vol. I)
- BOGAERT Pierre-Maurice, DELCOR Matthias, JACOB Edmond, LIPINSKI Edouard et al., *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible*, s.l., Brepols, 2002. (Vol. II)
- BUCER Martin, *The Psalter of David in Englishe*. Trans. George Joye. Antwerp, 1530. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.
- BURTON Henry, *A plea to an appeale trauersed dialogue wise*, London, 1626. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.
- BYFIELD Nicholas, *A Commentary upon the Three First Chapters of The First Epistle general of St. Peter*. London, 1626. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.
- BYFIELD Nicholas, *A Commentary upon the Three First Chapters of the First Epistle general of St. Peter*, London, 1636.
- CROCKER Holly A., *Communal Conscience in William Tyndale's Obedience of a Christian Man*, in *Exemplaria* vol. 24:1-2, pp. 143-160, Routledge, 2012.
From <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1179/1041257311Z.0000000010>,
accessed via KU Leuven Libraries, 24/07/2017.
- DANIELL David, *William Tyndale: a biography*, (printed in the U.S.A.), Yale Nota Bene, 2001 (first printed Yale University, 1994).
- GILLIERON Bernard, *Dictionnaire Biblique*, Poliez-le-Grand, Editions du Moulin, 1998.
- HARRINGTON Sir John, *The most elegant and witty epigrams...*, 1618. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.

- HARRINGTON Sir John, *The Most Elegant and Witty Epigrams*, London, John Budge, 1625.
- JEWEL Bishop John, *The second tome of homilees*, London, 1571. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.
- LAMPE G.W.H. (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1968 (first printed 1961).
- LATRE Guido, *Seminar on The English Renaissance*, Louvain-la-Neuve, Université catholique de Louvain, 2014.
- LESLIE John, *Concerning the Defence of the Honovr of the Right High, Mightie and Noble Princeffe, Marie Queene of Scotland, and Douager of France, with a Declaration, as wel of her Right, Title and Intereft to the succeßion of the Croune of England: as that the Regiment of woman is conformable to the Lawe of God and Nature*, (Liège?), Apud Gualterum Morberium, 1571.
- LESLIE John, *A Treatise of Treasons against Q. Elizabeth*, this ed. London, Sclar Press, 1975 (first published 1572).
- MacCAFFREY Wallace, *Elizabeth I*, London, Edward Arnold, 1993.
- MALVEZZI Virgilio, *Il Davide perseguitato, David persecuted*. Trans. Robert Ashley. London, 1607. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.
- MONLAS John, *Quadrivium Sionis or the foure Wayes to Sion*. London, 1677. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.
- PRESCOTT Anne Lake, *The 2011 Josephine Waters Bennett Lecture: From the Sheephook to the Scepter: The Ambiguities of David's Rise to the Throne* in *Renaissance Quarterly* n°65, University of Chicago, 2012. From <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/665834>
- QUARLES Francis, *Divine Fancies: Digested into Epigrammes, Meditations and Observations*, London, 1632. In PRESCOTT Anne Lake, Ibid.
- QUARLES Francis, *Divine Fancies: Digested into Epigrams, Meditations and Observations*, London, John Marriot, 1641.

- TYNDALE William, *The Obedience of a Christen man, and how Christen rulers ought to govern, wherein also (if thou mark diligently) thou shalt find eyes to perceive the crafty convience of all iugglers*, (this ed. Antwerp, Merten de Keyser?), 1528.
- TYNDALE William, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, edited with an introduction and notes by David Daniell, London, Penguin Books, 2000 (first published in Antwerp, Merten de Keyser, 1528).
- WORMALD Jenny, *Mary Queen of Scots: a study in failure*, London, George Philip, 1988.
- The Oxford Bible: *Authorized King James version, with Apocrypha.*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008.

Online resources

- <http://www.biblestudytools.com/> (consulted between 03/08 and 15/08/2017)
- <https://www.academic-bible.com/en/online-bibles/septuagint-lxx/read-the-bible-text/bibel/text/lesen/stelle/9/90001/99999/ch/35c4b35085512339a5ea1d5985c6e802/> (consulted 10/08/2017)
- <http://www.kingjamesbibledictionary.com/Dictionary/elder> (consulted 10/08/2017)

Summaries

English – This dissertation has the objective of trying to answer the question if a king could be forgiven, in particular a Christian anointed monarch. The perspective of God is dealt with in the analysis but in the Renaissance the focus is mainly on the people. The contexts for this study are the Bible through the representation and life of King David and his perception in the Renaissance through authors, scholars and theologians with the main ones being William Tyndale and John Leslie. The point is to compare the story of David to the one of the Renaissance kings - here the cases of Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots - to extract the similarities and differences between the Biblical king and the Renaissance queens. Thus the emergence of patterns leading to the concept of forgiveness. The results are rather contrasted, the question can be answered unequivocally by Tyndale as ‘yes’. Leslie’s answer is more nuanced, depending more on the variability of certain factors. More concretely speaking and from the people’s perspective, it appears that forgiveness of a king depends mainly on two factors: his popularity and his political skills.

French – Ce mémoire entreprend la tentative de répondre à la question du pardon d’un roi, en particulier un roi oint chrétien. La perspective de Dieu est étudiée mais pour les parties d’analyse sur la Renaissance, le point d’intérêt devient plutôt le peuple. Les contextes d’étude sont la Bible à travers la représentation et la vie du Roi David, ainsi que la manière dont il est perçu pendant la Renaissance par les auteurs, érudits et théologiens, les principaux étant William Tyndale et John Leslie. L’objectif est de comparer l’histoire de David à celles des rois de la Renaissance, ici donc les cas d’Elizabeth I et de Marie Reine d’Ecosse, afin d’extraire les similarités et les différences entre le roi biblique et les reines renaissantes. Ainsi est obtenu un schéma menant au concept de pardon. Les résultats sont assez contrastés, Tyndale répond à la question d’un « oui » sans équivoque. D’autre part, Leslie répond de façon plus nuancée selon la variation de divers facteurs. Plus concrètement et selon la perspective du peuple, il semble que le pardon d’un roi dépende principalement de deux facteurs : sa popularité et ses compétences politiques.

