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The Intervention of Pierre Cotton (1564–1626) in the Debate about Tyrannicide in France and Juan de Mariana's Books *De Rege et Regis Institutione*

La aportación del jesuita Pierre Cotton (1564–1626)
al debate sobre el tiranicidio en Francia y los libros
De rege et regis institutione de Juan de Mariana

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines some French political pamphlets issued between 1610 and 1611 linked to the regicides of Henry III and Henry IV of France in order to shed light upon the controversies surrounding Juan de Mariana's *De Rege et Regis institutione* and the apology of Pierre Cotton. This important debate also involved other scholars, whose sources have not been considered carefully to date. Our secondary aim is to address anti-Jesuitism and its political and textual dimension in the first decade of the seventeenth century.

KEYWORDS: Juan de Mariana, Pierre Cotton, anti-Jesuitism, regicide.

RESUMEN: Este artículo examina algunos panfletos políticos franceses emitidos entre 1610 y 1611 vinculados a los regicidios de Enrique III y Enrique IV de Francia para ilustrar las controversias en torno a los libros *De Rege et Regis institutione* de Juan de Mariana y la apología de Pierre Cotton. Este debate crucial involucró a otros pensadores y autores, cuyas fuentes no han sido atendidas lo suficiente. Nuestro objetivo secundario es abordar el antijesuitismo y su dimensión política y textual en la primera década del siglo XVII.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Juan de Mariana, Pierre Cotton, antijesuitismo, regicidio

CÓMO CITAR ESTE ARTÍCULO: Francisco Sánchez Torres, «The Intervention of Pierre Cotton (1564–1626) in the Debate about Tyrannicide in France and Juan de Mariana’s Books *De Rege et Regis Institutione*», *Revista de Estudios Latinos* 24 (2024), págs. 179–201.

We aim to conduct a comprehensive examination of the textual culture that prevailed during the initial decade of the seventeenth century. Our primary focus is on the reception of Juan de Mariana’s (1536–1624) seminal work *De Rege et Regis institutione*. We place particular emphasis on the contributions made by Pierre Cotton’s *Lettre déclaratoire* to the ongoing discourse. Cotton’s influential work led to the publication of a multitude of pamphlets written in response, the analysis of which will be presented in the ensuing sections of this paper.

Pierre Cotton (1564–1626) fostered an intimate camaraderie with Henry IV (1589–1610), who succeeded to the throne subsequent to the assassination of his father, Henry III (1574–1589) by Jacques Clément (1567–1589). This period was marked by significant upheaval as the Catholic League surfaced as the principal adversary to the king, advocating for the potential violent dethronement of rulers. Their intentions were made manifest in 1589 with the publication of *De iusta Henrici tertii abdicacione e Francorum regno*, traditionally ascribed to Jean Boucher (1548–1646)¹. This publication, which appeared in the aftermath of the demise of Henry III², sought to rationalize, to a certain degree, the assassination of the king to the entire Catholic populace³. The situation intensified considerably in the ensuing years⁴.

¹ However, recent research posits that the development of the text was not solely the effort of Jean Boucher. Instead, it was a collaborative endeavour involving the entire Catholic League (Zwierlein 2016; Nicholls 2015: 81–101; 2021: 138–144). With respect to the broader context of the Monarchomachs, Chevallier’s account (1983: 254–301) continues to be one of the most authoritative narratives put to paper in recent times.

² The demise of Henry III can be attributed to an enduring conflict between the monarch and the Guise family, a dispute that influenced significantly the actions of the Catholic League (Carroll 2011). Sălăvăstru (2022: 657–660) provides an analysis of Boucher’s text, highlighting its significant contribution to the discourse on tyrannicide within the context of early modern Europe. However, it is unfortunate that this author does not adequately address the importance of Latin textual culture.

³ *Non enim id agimus tantum, ut Henricum abdicemus, quod factum nuper et probatum diuinitus etiam gratulamur, sed omnino ut impios ac tyrannos à nobis excludamus* (Boucher 1589: VI).

⁴ In December 1594, the newly crowned King Henry IV was the target of an unsuccessful assassination attempt. The perpetrator, Jean Châtel (1575–1594), was a student at Clermont College, educated by the Jesuits. Following the attempt, the Crown ordered reprisals, resulting in the execution of one of Châtel’s professors, Jean Guignard (?–1595). The remaining Jesuits were subsequently exiled. Moreover, Boucher penned an apology on behalf of those convicted, under the pseudonym Franciscus de Verone Constantinus. Boucher’s apology was divided into five sections, with titles that openly glorified Jean

The climate in Paris, as well as across Europe, was decidedly hostile towards the Jesuits and their literary works. These were perceived by numerous authorities as propagating seditious ideologies and inciting the crime of lese-majesty. Nevertheless, the controversy had not yet reached its zenith. A significant development was imminent: Jesuit scholar Juan de Mariana published his treatise *De Rege et Regis institutione libri tres* in Spain in 1599. Dedicated to King Phillip III (1578–1621) and bearing the seal of the Spanish Crown, Mariana's work served to intensify the ongoing discourse.

1. JUAN DE MARIANA'S *DE REGE ET REGIS INSTITUTIONE* AND TYRANNICIDE

Juan de Mariana is far from being an obscure humanist among scholars. In fact, he is recognized as a pivotal figure in the evolution of proto-liberalist ideas, especially in the field of economics⁵. Mariana's understanding of the situation in France was shaped by his personal experiences. He spent a portion of his youth in Paris, serving as a professor from 1569 to 1574⁶. Although Mariana's writings do not provide a comprehensive account of his time in France⁷, it is plausible that he was a witness to the disputes and unrest involving the Huguenots during that era⁸. The events that followed, notably the assassination of King Henry III, were likely a significant influence on him.

Upon returning to Spain, Mariana spent the remainder of his life in Toledo and the surrounding regions⁹. He commenced his literary career in this lo-

Châtel, describing him as "just" and "heroic". The final section dealt with the persecution of the Jesuits. Boucher (1595: 207) expressed that there was a "manifest animosity" against the Jesuits, asserting that they were the only order combating heresy and tyranny.

⁵ One of the best examples of recent studies about Juan de Mariana's political thought is the one penned by Harald Braun (2007). Other political studies were published by González de la Calle (1913), Roses (1959), Maravall (1972), and Negro Pavón (1988). Unsurprisingly, tyrannicide turned out to be another of the main topics in research on Mariana's ideas, as is shown by Fernández de Velasco (1919) or more recently Centenera Sánchez-Seco (2009), and Merle (2014). Regarding economics, scholars have centred on his monetary theories, for example Fernández Delgado (2004) and Velarde Fuertes (2009).

⁶ Mariana's life is surrounded by controversy due to the enigmatic nature of his origins and the legal issues surrounding several of his works. George Cirot (1904; 1905; 1936) was the first to collate and analyse the facts presented by various sources and provide a comprehensive account of Mariana's life and the academic debates surrounding it. An updated biography of the Jesuit was proposed by Olmedo Ramos (2009) and Centenera Sánchez-Seco (2009: 39–158).

⁷ The majority of references are drawn from the books *De Rege et Regis institutione* and the preface to *Scholia in Vetus et Novum Testamentum*. He held the Sorbonne in high regard and described the city as *cui opibus, amplitudine sapientiae studiis nulla in Europa comparatur* (Mariana 1599: 52).

⁸ For a proper exposition of the Huguenot doctrine, the *Vindiciae contra tyrannos* and the right of resistance against tyranny, see Allen (1957: 302–331).

⁹ Mariana's return to Toledo was attributed to his fragile health. However, Cirot (1905: 231–232) posits that the political change within the Society of Jesus may have influenced his return. Prior to this, the or-

cation following a period of service to the Inquisition in a variety of roles as a reviewer. Among his works during this period was a revision of the *Polyglot Bible* of Benito Arias Montano (1527–1598), edited in Antwerp¹⁰. At that time, Mariana was already renowned among the Jesuits as a conceited but productive professor. In 1592, he published his *magnum opus*, the historiographic work *Historiae de Rebus Hispaniae*, although it did not immediately achieve widespread success. He then proceeded to produce a translation of the Latin text into Spanish, which was published in 1601 under the title *Historia general de España*. Nevertheless, Mariana persisted in writing in Latin for the remainder of his oeuvre, meticulously revising his historiographical works throughout his lifetime¹¹.

In 1599, Mariana published the treatise *De Rege et Regis institutione* in Toledo, printed by Pedro Rodríguez, the Royal Printer. The title page prominently displays the seal of the Crown, thereby explicitly indicating that the book has been granted royal privileges. This edition also includes the licence for printing and the *censura*, written by Pedro de Oña. In his capacity as an agent of the royal authority, De Oña deemed Mariana's treatise to be "elegant and serious", thereby authorising its printing and recommending it to those "who held the reins of the state"¹². The licence was signed by Stephanus Hojeda, Visitor of the Society of Jesus in Toledo, in his capacity as the representative of Praepositus Generalis Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615).

The treatise presents an analysis of kingship and the education of princes in three books, following the typical humanistic form of a *miroir de princes*¹³.

ganisation had been under the control of Spanish members, but following the appointment of the Belgian father Everard Mercurian as Superior General, this began to change. Cirot posits that this was a logical strategy on the part of the Society, given that its particularly international character was impeding its introduction in Europe.

¹⁰ About Mariana's report on the *Polyglot Bible* and the reception of his work as well as the process in general, see Dávila (2019).

¹¹ The controversy surrounding Mariana's self-translations arises from the existence of a Spanish translation of his Latin treatise *De monetae mutatione*, which resulted in his temporary imprisonment and trial for an offence against the Crown. The entire process was rife with irregularities, both in form and content. Ultimately, the Jesuit was released. However, the judge appointed for the trial did not issue a verdict. For further information on Mariana's process, please refer to Fernández de la Mora (1993).

¹² *Aequum proinde iudico, ut hoc opus typis mandatum in luce et hominum manibus uersetur, eorum praesertim, qui ad reip. gubernacula sedent* (Mariana 1599: II).

¹³ Mirrors for Princes proposed an educational plan for rulers based on the teachings of the ancients and the Bible. The acquisition of classical languages (Latin, Greek and Hebrew) necessitated the development of rhetorical abilities among the students. Furthermore, the objective was to examine matters of the utmost importance, such as religious thought and politics, in a comprehensive manner. Discourse was perceived to possess a considerable degree of influence. It was therefore crucial that humanists develop ethical and moral guidelines to contain the power of discourse and hence, that the authorities that would use it within the limits of good. Maffeo Vegio (1406/1407–1458) authored *De educatione liberorum clarisque eorum moribus*, while Pope Pius II (1458–1464) published a treatise entitled *De*

In the Iberian Peninsula, mirrors for princes were also prevalent, and Juan de Mariana did not ignore these works; in fact, he used them in crafting his own mirror for princes. Throughout the *De Rege et Regis institutione*, Mariana displays a profound knowledge of his predecessors and contemporaries, such as Jerónimo Osório or Pedro de Ribadeneyra. He incorporates passages from the sources he is examining at the time of writing – although he does not explicitly cite them, with some exceptions such as Philippe de Commines (1447–1511). The initial volume of the work examines the image of the king and provides a comprehensive overview of monarchy. The second book outlines the educational requirements for princes to become effective rulers. Finally, the third book examines the relationship between princes and the institutions of the land, offering Mariana’s opinions on political corruption and societal impacts. Mariana’s innovative approach within the genre of the mirror for princes has been acknowledged by scholars¹⁴. Moreover, while monarchy and governance were common topics among Iberian humanists, Mariana’s treatment of the subject set him apart.¹⁵

The first book of *De Rege et Regis institutione* posits monarchy as the optimal form of government. Mariana employs an Aristotelian framework to contrast every virtuous form of government with its corresponding vitious form. Consequently, a republic is opposed to democracy, aristocracy to oligarchy, and monarchy to tyranny. The book’s chapters contain a comprehensive analysis of the differences between monarchy and tyranny, and also of the consequences of allowing tyranny to prevail. Tyrants are defined as unjust rulers who exploit the people, whether through rightful ascension or usurpation of power, and who flout the rule of law. Mariana vehemently condemns tyrants and underscores their fear and animosity towards the populace they oppress. He presents a series of examples from ancient times, illustrating the absurd

educatione liberorum. Erasmus (1466–1536) also composed a *De pueris instituendis*, while Antonio de Nebrija (1444–1522) wrote his *De liberis educandis libellus*. It is also important to consider translations and editions of the works of the ancients. Erasmus translated Isocrates, Leonardo Bruni (1370–1444) translated *Hiero*, and Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) translated Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*. As a mirror for princes, Giovanni Pontano (1426–1503) wrote a book entitled *De principe*, as did Bartolomeo Platina (1421–1481), and Francesco Patrizi (1529–1597) published nine books entitled collectively *De regno et regis institutione*.

¹⁴ Other writers such as Coluccio Salutati (1331–1406) and Bartolo de Sassoferrato (1313–1357) had already pursued a humanist approach the topic of tyranny. Mariana’s work also develops that of George Buchanan (1506–1582), Jean Bodin (1530–1596) and Giovanni Botero (1544–1617). Fernando Centenera Sánchez-Seco gives a valuable account of the tyrannicide in the early modern era in Europe (2009: 204–280). Braun’s conclusion to his excellent work on Mariana also considers how he integrated the ancient and medieval thought with a contemporary sensibility (2007: 161–164).

¹⁵ Allen emphasises Mariana’s originality in his departure from Jesuit thought and the inherent secularism of his doctrine (1957: 360–366).

measures that tyrants employed to safeguard their lives. However, the primary focus of the sixth chapter of the book, entitled “Whether Tyrants Can Be Legitimately Killed,” is of greater significance than these episodes. This chapter presents an example of tyranny that resonates with contemporary readers: the assassination of Henry III. Mariana’s analysis of this event demonstrates his profound interest in the subject-matter.¹⁶

Mariana’s perspective is unambiguously conveyed through his exclamations (*insignem animi confidentiam, facinus memorabile*), which indicate his inclination towards glorifying the assassin. The excerpt evokes a dramatic tone from the outset, employing tragic irony. The king is depicted not only as an adversary but also as a victim, and his described reaction serves to enhance the climactic nature of the passage. The subsequent page commences with the following opening sentence: *Sic Clemens periit aeternum Galliae decus, ut plerisque uisum est, uiginti quatuor natus annos, simplici iuuenis ingenio, neque robusto corpore: sed maior uis uires et animum confirmabat* (1599: 69). The initial portion of the sentence would be omitted in future editions, but in 1599, Mariana permitted the publication of his praise, perhaps unaware of the consequences this would have.

Mariana demonstrates his awareness of the controversy surrounding the event, reflecting on the character of the assassinated monarch, and emphasising his descent into tyranny following his assumption of national leadership. The Jesuit acknowledges the polarised opinions surrounding the royal murder and highlights the prudence and intelligence exhibited by supporters and opponents of the act. Nevertheless, there was minimal interest among those opposed to the Jesuits in examining Mariana’s work in depth. Instead, his unambiguous statements were used as a basis for propaganda.

¹⁶ The narration flows smoothly in the hands of such a trained rhetorician, but the characterisation of both the king and his assassin proves that Mariana finds intellectual delight in describing the events surrounding the death of the monarch. He begins by giving the details of Jacques Clément’s life, who is presented as a young Dominican from Serbonnes. After asking his superiors about the possibility of assassinating rulers, he sets out with the aim of taking down Henry III. The French king had retired to Saint-Cloud, where Clément accessed by deceiving the guards. Under the false excuse of communicating with the king, the Dominican could find him unarmed, unguarded, utterly vulnerable. Mariana’s narration becomes precise and sharp as the knife that puts King Henry’s life to an end (Mariana 1599: 68).

2. MARIANA, *ANTIMARIANA*: THE FIRST RECEPTION OF *DE REGE* AND THE BEGINNING OF THE CONFLICT

The publication of *De Rege et Regis institutione* in Toledo in 1599 met with limited success, particularly when compared to the subsequent impact of the work on the discourse surrounding the Society of Jesus in the following decades. It seems probable that the Mainz edition of *De Rege* in 1605 was the version that achieved the widest readership and distribution throughout Europe. The debate surrounding Mariana's words and ideas can be traced back as early as 1609. In order to enhance clarity and organisation, the review of works that engaged with *De Rege* will be presented under distinct headings.

2.1. Sebastian Heiss: *Ad Aphorismos Iesuitarum* (1609)

In his book *Ad Aphorismos Iesuitarum aliorumque Pontificum ex dictis, scriptis, actisque publicis collectos declaratio apologetica* (Ingolstadt, 1609), Sebastian Heiss (1571–1614) addresses the controversy in the third chapter of the first book. He presents his viewpoint in opposition to the erroneous assumption that Jesuits advocated regicide. Heiss cites Mariana's treatise, stating that *stultitiam longe superat nequitia* (1609: 161), indicating his belief that the misinterpretation of the arguments was the result of malicious intent.

Heiss's defence of Mariana is based on two key arguments: firstly, the complexity of thought evident in the text, and secondly, the fact that the book was published. The German writer examines Mariana's arguments in depth and reaches the conclusion that the portrayal of tyrants in *De Rege* must be understood in the context of public discourse. This perspective is not in conflict with the tenets of Jesuit and Catholic doctrine¹⁷. His second argument, though straightforward, is undeniably logical. Stephanus Hojeda, who signed the censura of the book, emphasises that the text was subjected to a rigorous examination by experts. Heiss hypothesises that *De Rege* would not have been published if Mariana's words and ideas had been as superficial and dangerous as his detractors claimed¹⁸.

¹⁷ As Chevallier states, the assassination of a tyrant is "légitime selon certaines distinctions" (1983: 262). Furthermore, Allen presents an excellent analysis of the divergence between Mariana and Bellarmine, along with other figures, on the subject of tyrannicide (1957: 363–364).

¹⁸ The arguments of this book were reused by Pierre Cotton in his *Lettre déclaratoire*, one of the seminal works that are to be discussed.

2.2. Michel Roussel's *Antimariana* (1610) and its translations

The year following Heiss' publication, an event occurred that made a profound impact on France and Europe, setting the stage for the debate on the relationship between the Jesuits and royal power: the assassination of Henri IV. The king had previously been the victim of several assassination attempts¹⁹, but it was in May 1610 that he succumbed to a successful attack by François Ravaillac (1578–1610).

The assassination of Henri IV by Ravaillac, a Catholic, inevitably intensified religious controversy. Jean Châtel, who had attempted to assassinate the king, had been educated at the Jesuit College of Clermont, while Ravaillac, who ultimately succeeded in killing the monarch, had unsuccessfully sought to join the Society of Jesus. The logical conclusion that could be drawn from these facts was quickly apparent to Europe's intellectuals. Mariana's book played a pivotal role in the persecution of the Jesuits, as *De Rege* was condemned and publicly burned by the Parliament of France. Subsequently, Michel Roussel published the treatise *Antimariana ou refutation des propositions de Mariana*, which included the trial of the book (Roussel 1610: 173–180)²⁰. The trial served as a prime example of the cultural and religious warfare waged against the Jesuits in Europe. Translations of the proceedings appeared in England and German-speaking countries in that same year.

The translations included paratexts in which the anonymous authorship of the edition contextualised the text and its potentially dangerous content. To illustrate, the *English copie of a late decree of the Sorbonne at Paris* (signed by an obscure J. B.) dedicated ten pages to elucidating the perceived neglect of England by the Catholic Church and the perceived role of the Jesuits as an armed section of the Church, aimed at eliminating secular authorities. Prior to Mariana, Henry Garnet (1555–1606) is referenced by the author as a means of contextualising the connections between the Spanish Jesuit and his English counterpart. However, this English author appears to have not read nor seen the book, as evidenced by the erroneous information provided. In relation to Mariana's book, he states: "by another [book] not long since, Viz. *Decemb. 13. An. 1598.* allowed to be Printed *In Coenobio Madriti*, at *Madrill* in Spaine, by

¹⁹ Pierre Chevallier (1989) gives a full account of the assassination attempts on Henry IV, but also of the debate about tyrannicide throughout this entire period.

²⁰ We will focus on the texts that copied and echoed the trial against Mariana's book. However, there were other responses, such as Antoine Leclerc's *La deffense des puissances de la terre contre Jean Mariana* or Thomas Pelletier's *De l'inviolable et sacrée personne des Rois. Contre tous Assassins et Parricides qui ozent attenter sur leurs Maiestez*. For an interesting summary and catalogue of the answers to Mariana's text, see Centenera Sánchez-Seco (2007: 444–464) and Gabriel (2019).

Friar *Peter de Onna* the Principall of that Order, and compiled by *John Mariana*, a Spanish Iesuite, at that time Scholemaster to the now King” (1610: 8). This erroneous interpretation is likely to have originated from a misreading of the French arrest, as the author confuses the authorship and attributes to Mariana the role of educator of the King, which was actually carried out by García de Loaysa y Girón (1534–1599). The anonymous author, J. B., concludes the preamble by recommending the reading of the pamphlet to recusants with the intention of dissuading them from their religious and political stance.

A German *Arrest oder Endturtheil dess königlichem Parlaments zu Pariss* was also edited in Strasbourg by Anthonius Bertram²¹. Following the arrest and sentencing to death of Ravailac, a ten-page pamphlet is included in the translation from French, in which the author delves into Mariana’s book. The author examines several chapters of the first book and appears to be familiar with its content. Indeed, the analysis of Mariana’s text provides the author of the pamphlet with further arguments, particularly when he discovers Chapter Seven, in which Mariana discusses the killing of monarchs with poison. The anonymous author appears to be taken aback, stating: “Und im 7. Capitel lehret er Mariana ferner: Das auch durch gifft solche Könige und Fürsten von ihren Underthanen, Dienern und andern hingerichtet werden mögen” (1610: 24). The examination of the text continues with a commentary on its republication in Mainz. The author links the publication of the book with the Jesuits in Mainz and their students, explicitly stating the potential dangers. Consequently, the anonymous author provides a comprehensive list of all the works he is aware of in which Jesuits mention tyrannicide. He then proceeds to review the Jesuits from German countries, including remarks such as “*Cauete Vobis Principes!*” which serve to illustrate the pamphlet’s quality as provocative propaganda (Bertram 1610: 31).

2.3. *Pierre Cotton: Lettre Déclaratoire (1610)*

From 1610 onwards, there appeared a steady stream of books on the matter. In 1610, Pierre Cotton produced his *Lettre déclaratoire de la doctrine des Peres Jesuites conforme aux decrets du Concile de Constance*, which was addressed to the Queen Mother and Regent of France. In his letter, Cotton cited Mariana’s treatise as the cause for the persecution of the Jesuits in France, characterising it as an “evil book, whose doctrine was rightfully condemned by the

²¹ This book includes a six-line epigram against Mariana and the Jesuits in general: *Galli si sapitis, quid librum traditis igni? / Authores vestris pellite limitibus. / In cineres abiit liber unus, mille relictis, / Horum turba loquax, mutus at ille fuit. / Hortos qui cupiunt penitus purgare veneno: / Radices properant vellere, non folia* (Bertram 1610: 2). The poem is translated into German couplets.

Court of Parliament” (1610a: 5). Cotton then proceeds to list and examine the works by Jesuits that were contrary to tyrannicide, citing Sebastian Heiss’s treatise among others. However, Cotton’s letter provides valuable insights into how Mariana’s book was perceived within the Society of Jesus. He cites the *Vespertilio Haereticopoliticus* of Jacob Gretser (1562–1625), a treatise by which author engages in dialogue about Mariana with Heiss, a fellow Jesuit of Ingolstadt, about Mariana. Cotton ultimately concludes that “il se faut tenir à la commune, laisser la particulière de Mariana”.

It is evident that the opinions within the Society were largely divided into two distinct camps: those who sought to defend Mariana’s reputation and those who opted to distance the Society from his opinions. Cotton can be included among the latter: “Tel doncques estant le sens & telles les sentences de ces Docteurs, graves & signalez de nostre Compagnie, quel prejudice peut apporter l’opinion particulière de Mariana à la reputation de tout un Ordre” (1610a: 14). There is a lack of information regarding Pierre Cotton’s opinion of Mariana, which makes it challenging to ascertain whether his stance was conveyed accurately in the treatise or if he was merely complying with Claudio Acquaviva’s directives, which aimed to prevent the dissemination of Mariana’s work throughout Europe, as Cotton recommends²².

Additionally, there is a significant piece of information regarding the history of Mariana’s text that is worthy of note. Cotton suggests that *De Rege* may have been subject to manipulation by the editors²³. Roussel’s *Antimariana*, which contains the documents of the trial of Mariana’s book, indicates that the general public only read the version published in Mainz, which had been modified through the addition of a new chapter and some changes of nuance (which affected the characterisation of Jacques Clément as “*aeternum Galliae decus*”). Cotton reveals another detail: although it is known that the printing costs were borne by the editors, as indicated on the cover of the edition, there was a debate about the content of the book and its authorship. Cotton provides an account of the terms of this discussion. It is worthwhile to consider the

²² General Claudio Acquaviva was known for his efforts to enforce obedience among the members of the Society. Mariana’s case, in fact, represented a great obstacle for Acquaviva, who had not only to face the consequences of *De Rege*, but also of the publication of his treatise *Discurso de las enfermedades de la Compañía*, which exposed sensitive information about the Society of Jesus. Mariana’s authorship of the latter is, nevertheless, still disputed. For an account of Acquaviva’s Generalate, see Mostaccio (2014).

²³ “De fait à grand peine trouveroit on maintenant un seul exemplaire de Mariana, n’eust esté la pernicieuse liberalité des heritiers de Wechel, que l’on sçait estre de la Religion pretendüe reformee, qui l’ont fait imprimer à leurs propres cousts, non tant poussez, comme il est aisé a presumer, du desir de server le public, que de nuyre au particulier de nostre Compagnie. Aucuns ont estimé qu’ils y avoient adjousté du leur, autres, que ceux de la premiere impression estoient encore pires” (Cotton 1610a: 15–16).

reasons that might have led part of the public to believe that the editors had added contents of their own to the book. In addition to the overtly religious controversy, the text itself may have invited readers to question Mariana's full authorship. A search of the extensive history of scholarly research on Mariana and his works has not yet revealed any references to this debate.

The opposing viewpoint helps to define the potential methodological issues that may arise from our interpretation of Cotton's text. The French Jesuit indicates that others considered the details of the first edition to be of a significantly more controversial quality. A comparison of the editions reveals that the majority of the changes to the text are corrections and other stylistic choices. However, the modification to the aforementioned characterisation of Clément appears to be rather unique in the text. It is possible that this discrepancy was the catalyst for the controversy that ensued in the public domain. The question whether it was Mariana or the editors who proposed this modification remains open to debate. The history of the editions of *De Rege* has recently been discussed (Sánchez Torres 2020), particularly in relation to the so-called *editio secunda*, published in Frankfurt in 1611. It was determined that this edition was a second edition published by the editors (from the Wechel family), whereas the true second edition by the author must have been the one edited in Mainz. It seems plausible to suggest that Mariana was the full author of the second edition, as evidenced by the chapter on coinage and the minor corrections. Nevertheless, in light of the fact that the Wechel family continued to publish the author's work, it is prudent not to rule out the possibility that the editors may have made modifications to the text without the author's consent. Mariana's relationship with his own works proved to be challenging due to the trial for his *Tractatus septem*, in which *De Rege* was also involved. In this way, Cotton has identified a significant challenge for contemporary research.

2.3.1. *Translations of Pierre Cotton's Lettre Déclaratoire (1610)*

The Lettre was disseminated widely throughout Europe, as is evidenced by its numerous translations. The Italian translation was published in Lyon the same year as the French version (Cotton 1610b) by an anonymous editor writing under the name of Jean Petit, a figure of note in the context of the issue of tyrannicide. This version also includes the translation of a work to be discussed, the *Anticoton*, and the response to the *Anticoton*. The letter was also published in German as *Erklärung Schreiben P. Cottonis dess Jesuiten zu Paris* (Cotton 1610c) by Anton Bertram, the same editor of the *Arrest oder Endturtheil* of Mariana's book. A Dutch edition was subsequently published,

including the *Anticoton* (Cotton 1610d). This edition, like the German version, does not include any additional texts beyond the translations.

The most original translation and edition is undoubtedly the one produced in England. The pamphlet published under the name *The Hellish and horrible Councell, practised and used by the Iesuites, (in their private Consultations) when they would have a man to murder a King* in 1610 provides the contemporary reading public with an illustrative example of the situation of the Society of Jesus and their opponents (1610: 5–8). This pamphlet, also addressed to Marie de' Medici, Queen Regent of France (1610–1614), was published and sold in London, including Cotton's *Lettre déclaratoire* in an English translation. However, it was preceded by a letter written by the anonymous author (T. B.) to the queen, expressing indignation towards the Jesuit and his letter. Furthermore, a text with peculiar content is added, bearing the name "The Secret and hidden Myserie, which the Iesuites doe use, when they resolve to have a King murdered". It describes a cult-like ceremony in which the Jesuits anoint a man and give him a knife to kill a king. The peculiar nature of the text suggests a scene that is so implausible that a contemporary reader might assume it is satire. However, the words are carefully chosen to convey an earnest intent towards smearing the reputation of the Jesuits. The text by Cotton is attached to this text, and it does not manifest any substantial change in contrast to the French version.

Cotton's *Lettre déclaratoire* did not lack detractors, and the year 1610 saw the emergence of a spirited literary exchange with the publication of the *Anticoton*. The Jesuits' denunciation of Mariana's book was intended to protect the reputation of the Society, but the response was deemed inadequate by their opponents. The subsequent debate centred on *De Rege et Regis institutione*, with broader underlying conflicts becoming evident.

3. COTTON, THE *ANTICOTON* AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEBATE

The *Anticoton* emerged anonymously in 1610, in a manner similar to the *Antimariana*, as a refutation of Cotton's *Lettre déclaratoire*. As with the *Antimariana*, that was signed by one M. Roussell, who was evidently associated with anti-Jesuit circles, César de Plaix, the possible author of the *Anticoton* (Lindsay and Neu 1969: 174), signed the prefatory letter to the Queen Regent with the initials P. D. C., also aligning with anti-Jesuit sentiments. Pierre Cotton had gained little support for himself or his cause, making it possible

that any of his numerous opponents could have written this brief treatise. It is also possible that the author of the *Anticoton* was acquainted with the *Antimariana*, given the striking similarity in titles and the almost simultaneous emergence of both works. However, the content of the two works differs significantly. While the *Antimariana* is a relatively extensive treatise that addresses every question posed in Mariana's first book of *De Rege et Regis institutone*, the *Anticoton* comprises just ninety pages divided into five chapters, focusing on topics that had already become clichéd in discussions about the Jesuits.

The initial chapter of the book is dedicated to demonstrating historical instances where the Jesuits advocated for the assassination of monarchs. The initial example cited is that of Pedro de Ribadeneyra (1526–1611), one of the earliest members of the Society of Jesus and a close associate of Mariana. The anonymous author cites from Ribadeneyra's *Tratado de la Religión y las Virtudes que deve tener el Principe Christiano*, published in 1595, shortly before Mariana's book. In a separate study (Sánchez Torres 2023), it has been demonstrated that Ribadeneyra and Mariana shared common references and sources, with the probable consequence that they engaged in discussions on these topics together. The chronological order of their writings is of no consequence, as Mariana's more detailed account of the killing of Henry III suggests a deeper familiarity with the events in France. Nevertheless, Ribadeneyra's quotations provide evidence that this Jesuit was theoretically in favour of regicide²⁴.

The argumentation provides a further significant detail regarding the history of the book²⁵. It leads to the conclusion that the French Crown was likely aware of Mariana's work as early as 1602, three years prior to the Mainz edition. However, no author appears to have taken note of Mariana's statement glorifying the assassin of Henry III. This apparent oversight may be attributed to the limited circulation of the Toledo edition, contrary to what the sources may indicate. Alternatively, the passage itself may have been inaccurate, as will be discussed later. At the time, Cotton was approached with a request to draft a letter to the Society of Jesus. Nevertheless, he declined, citing concerns about potential opposition to the General and the principles of the Society

²⁴ After Ribadeneyra, the Jesuits Carolus Scribanus and Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) are referenced as proponents of the cause. Mariana becomes the protagonist of the passages that follow the two previously mentioned authors. His treatise on monarchy is referenced and extensively quoted, while the subsequent paragraphs are devoted to a list of other Jesuit authors who had elaborated on Mariana's work and who, according to the anonymous author, had praised the work of the Spanish Jesuit.

²⁵ "Ce livre de Mariana ayant esté premierement imprimé à Toledede fut apporté en France il y a huit ans et présenté au Roy, et les clauses seditieuses de ce liure representees à sa Majesté, laquelle ayant appelé le Pere Cotton lui demanda s'il approuuoit ceste doctrine" (Plaix 1610a: 15).

(1610a: 15)²⁶. The extant documents from Mariana do not provide clarity on whether he was aware of the situation in France. One might therefore ask whether in fact he was not aware of it. One might initially speculate that he was not, given that he published a second edition in Mainz only three years later. However, the revisions he made to the text, particularly concerning the passage involving Jacques Clément, may suggest otherwise. They may indicate that he had indeed become aware of the situation and attempted to make significant alterations that would go unnoticed. Nevertheless, this remains a question open to speculation.

The first chapter revisits the episodes involving Jacques Clement, Jean Chastel, and Henry Garnet, exploring their connections to the Jesuits and the reactions of both Jesuits and Catholics to their assassination attempts. The second chapter briefly elaborates on the practicality of Jesuit theories regarding regicide, serving as a continuation of the preceding chapter. The third chapter examines the Jesuits' purported involvement in the events leading to the death of King Henri IV. This is preceded by an analysis of previous assassination attempts on the monarch, including Pierre Cotton's purported involvement, as claimed by the anonymous author. This section incorporates excerpts from Ravailac's confession and unsubstantiated accusations regarding the Jesuits' foreknowledge of the assassination. The pamphlet author posits that Jesuits from outside Paris were aware of the monarch's death before official notification (1610a: 54–55). Furthermore, the author makes the assertion that Jesuits were absent from the funeral of the king (1610a: 55). Despite their apparent lack of foundation, these arguments proved to be remarkably effective, underscoring the pamphlet's persuasive impact despite its apparent lack of meticulous craftsmanship. The arguments put forth by P. D. C. in this regard are consistent with broader anti-Jesuit sentiments that have been previously explored in this discourse.

The chapter before last openly critiques Cotton's *Lettre déclaratoire* and offers a detailed analysis of the arguments presented by the anonymous author against the Jesuit priest. The legitimacy of the letter is initially questioned due to its belated publication, with the suggestion that it should have been disseminated earlier in order to discredit Mariana's work among the Jesuits in France (Plaix 1610a: 56–57). Mariana plays a pivotal role in the arguments presented in this treatise. The Jesuit from Talavera and his works are once again invoked against Cotton, with the latter's seemingly indifferent assessment of Mariana's ideas being interpreted as tacit approval. Furthermore, the chapter

²⁶ Centenera Sánchez-Seco also includes a reference to this event (2009: 118).

includes twelve statements that seek to challenge the Jesuits, examining their loyalties to the royal family, the Pope, and their superiors (1610a: 59–60)²⁷.

The concluding chapter of the treatise presents the author's concerns about both Cotton and the Catholic League. These paragraphs must be viewed as a series of rhetorical passages, akin to the concluding paragraphs of Cotton's *Lettre déclaratoire* which appealed for mercy to the Queen. However, it is noteworthy that the author associates the Jesuits with a foreign menace, with the intention of heightening antagonistic sentiments: "Car ie trouve que ce Polonois auoit raison, qui disoit que la societé des Iesuites est une espee à qui la France sert de Fourreau, mais la poignée est en Espagne ou à Rome, où est le General des Iesuites" (Plaix 1610a: 72). The Jesuits were perceived as a threat to France originating from abroad, which made it easier to justify their removal from positions of authority.

3.1. *Translations of the Anticoton*

A German version of the *Anticoton* was published in the same year (Plaix 1610b). The edition is devoid of any information regarding the place of publication or the editors, with the exception of the printer's mark, which features a humanoid face of a beast within a frame with vegetation motifs. This specific printer's mark is not present in other editions from the same year or in editions that are chronologically close to it. This translated edition is identical in content to the French original.

Another response to the *Lettre déclaratoire* was published in German, distinct from the *Anticoton*, and also anonymous. This brief rejoinder includes a discussion of the context of Cotton's controversy. Once again, the source of the book and the editor responsible for its production and dissemination remain unknown to the reader. The author of this response to Cotton reiterates, as others have done, the Jesuit doctrine on tyrannicide and provides examples. Mariana naturally becomes a central topic for the pamphlet, and the author presents new information about *De Rege et Regis institutione*²⁸,

²⁷ The final statement ("xii. Si Garnet et Oldecorne sont Martyrs: et si Guignard a esté iustement condamné à mort") is of paramount importance in order to comprehend the nature of the debate against the Jesuits (Plaix 1610a: 60). At that time, no Jesuit would have been so disrespectful as to denigrate the Society or any of their colleagues. Despite the fact that Mariana's book was a source of significant discomfort for the Society, Pierre Cotton refrained from publicly discrediting the author. P. D. C. thus proposes an unfavourable agreement for the Jesuits. This cunning movement reveals the intentions of books like this one or the *Antimariana*. Their stances were so uncompromising that there was little incentive to pursue a consensus.

²⁸ "Dabey ferner auch in acht zunemen / das der Toledisch truck in dem 6. c. lib. i. durch dem Mentzischem geendert seyn sol / Erstlich / in dem die wort von das lob / so dem Königs-mörder Clementi in dem Toledischen truck beygesetzt / Nemblich (aeternum Galliae decus) in dem Mentzischen ausssgelassen

including references to Henry IV that were omitted in the editions published after Toledo. This excerpt serves to corroborate our suspicions regarding the editions handled by those opposed to the Jesuits. The controversial modifications made by Mariana in the Mainz edition were not overlooked and were, in fact, used against the Jesuits.

However, a more intriguing aspect emerges with the mention of Andreas Schott (1552–1629), who had remained unmentioned till then in the course of the dispute. The hypothesis that these alterations in the editions were prompted by external advice given to Mariana has been explored. It is noteworthy that this hypothesis had already been proposed at the time, as documented by the anonymous author. Nevertheless, the reference to Andreas Schottus is somewhat vague and unsupported, with the exception of a single sentence that Schott wrote to Mariana. In the 1608 edition of Schott's *Hispaniae Bibliotheca*, a letter addressed to Mariana is included, in which Schott writes: “*Narro tibi, mi Pater, Annales Hispaniae tuos cupide legi, eo cupidius, quo minore forma trans Pyrenaeos nuper exierunt, etsi libellus unus Gallos διηγῆσεος ἔνεκα ὑπερ κλήμεντος turbarit nonnihl, sed ut sit, eo magis expetetur, nam Nitimur in vetitum semper cupimusque negata*” (1608: 445). The *libellus unus* that Schott mentions appears to be Mariana's *De Rege et Regis institutione*. It can be reasonably assumed that the letter was sent before 1608, the date of publication of Schott's book. This would appear to confirm the tumultuous reception of Mariana's work, as both Cotton and his detractors had indicated²⁹.

The pamphlet alerts the reader to the potential threat posed by the Society to the authority of noble rulers and their lands. Furthermore, the text includes a reference to the censorship imposed by the Faculty of Theology in Paris on the Jesuits and their doctrine, as well as the condemnation of Mariana's book issued by the Parliament of France. The pamphlet concludes by enumerating Jesuit authors and quoting from them in order to demonstrate how these authors supported the doctrine of tyrannicide.

3.2. Responses to the Anticoton

Similarly to the *Anticoton*, which was a response to Pierre Cotton's *Lettre déclaratoire*, the Jesuits produced texts with the intention of refuting it.

/ die ursach solcher enderung ist bey dem Jesuiten A. Schotto (der auch Marianae Buch lobet) in seiner Bibliothecâ Hispanicâ pag. 445. in Epistolâ ad ipsum Marianam wol zuverstehen / davon auch ferner hernacher” (Anonymous 1610, 13).

²⁹ However, we consider this to be a relatively inconsequential clue in the search for a testimony that is sufficiently robust to identify the person who assisted Mariana in the process of modifying the text of *De Rege et Regis institutione*.

Consequently, we are aware of three texts that respond to the *Anticoton*: a *Response apologétique*, a *Véritable réponse à l'Anticoton*, and a *Confutatio Anticotoni* penned by Andreas Eudaemon-Joannes (1566–1625). The first text, the *Response apologétique*, was published anonymously in 1610. However, the author identified as one of the Jesuit priests in France. The text is addressed to the Queen and constitutes one of the most lengthy treatises on the subject, comprising over three hundred pages. The Jesuit author expresses indignation towards the book in question and commences by addressing the anonymous author of the *Anticoton* (under the name of P. D. C.) with various epithets, such as *Père de calomnie*, *Partisan de Calvin*, *Pasteur de Charanton* or *Pierre de Cuignières* (1611: 10). Ultimately, the author consistently refers to him as *Calomniateur* throughout the entire treatise.

As the work progresses, the author meticulously examines the arguments presented in the pamphlet and provides a detailed refutation of each aspect of its argumentation. The author employs paratextual markers such as “calomnie”, “mensonge”, “impertinence” or “ignorance”, to demonstrate how each argument presented by the *Anticoton* is founded upon a combination of half-truths and falsehoods. With regard to Mariana, the anonymous author swiftly downplays his influence on the matter, suggesting that without the propaganda against the Spanish Jesuit the book would have remained unknown (1611: 37–38). Furthermore, the interpretations of others derived from Mariana’s passages are similarly dismissed, with the author providing exegetical passages to refute the assertions made in the *Anticoton* and demonstrating familiarity with the works referenced by the latter. The stance on Mariana’s controversy is similar to that of Cotton, as the Spanish Jesuit was regarded as inconsequential within the doctrine of the Society of Jesus. The author posits that Claudius Acquaviva, the General of the Order, even repudiated Mariana’s work, suggesting that the Jesuit was, to some extent, abandoned by his own peers.

In addition to these arguments, the author also contested the assertion that Pierre Cotton had been tasked with defending the Jesuit doctrine on tyrannicide at the beginning of the century. The anonymous author states that Cotton had never been tasked with drafting a letter to Spain in order to chastise Mariana, casting doubt on the previously assumed reception of *De Rege et Regis institutione*³⁰. Indeed, if we consider that Cotton had not

³⁰ “En ce peu de lignes il y a quasi autant de mensonges que de mots: La première est, que le Père Cotton n'estoit point encores près du Roy il y a huic tans, ains estoit ou à Aix en Provence, ou en Avignon: La seconde, que le Père Cotton n'a aucune memoire que iamais le Roy luy ait fait une telle demande: La troisieme, que beaucoup moins luy commanda-il d'escrire à l'encontre: La quatrieme, qu'il n'ait ozé escrire à l'encontre, puis que trois autres l'avoient fait, Gretserus, Heissius et Beccanus:

been associated with the French court until two years prior to the death of King Henry IV, the author of this treatise appears to be correct. However, the author of the *Anticoton* does not necessarily imply that Cotton was already a member of the court; rather, he was summoned to the presence of the king and questioned on the matter. These conflicting pieces of information nevertheless indicate that Cotton may not have been tasked with writing to Spain, but perhaps he was indeed summoned to an audience with the king to justify the Society, much like he did in his *Lettre déclaratoire* addressed to the Queen.

Notwithstanding this matter, it becomes evident upon reading the text that Mariana and his book had become a source of embarrassment for the Society. The author of this treatise presents a critical analysis of Mariana and portrays him as an exception within the ranks of the Society of Jesus. In this analysis, the author cites Claudius Acquaviva's decree banning any apologies of tyrannicide, issued after the content of Mariana's book was known (1611: 100–101). There was a general consensus among scholars of Mariana that he had felt abandoned by the Society, particularly when he was imprisoned and tried in Spain on charges of lese-majesty. These treatises leave no doubt, as the anonymous author asserts, that “on a monstre peremptoirement que les Pères de nostre Compagnie, reprobent et detestent la doctrine de Mariana” (1611: 173). The author of this *Response apologétique* asserts that Mariana's ideas are irrelevant and disagreeable to the Society, while also presenting a series of arguments and references to support Pierre Cotton. In his defence, the author includes four letters from various religious authorities to refute accusations against Cotton. Additionally, he presents a final statement directed to the Queen, which emphasises the falsehoods of the *Anticoton*. The book concludes with a collection of documents (letters, declarations, and other official statements) in which various religious and non-religious authorities, as well as the General of the Society, denounce the pamphlet against Cotton. A Latin translation of this *Response apologétique* was published in Lyon in 1611, by a Ioannes Perpezatius (1611).

An original response to the *Anticoton* was the *Véritable réponse à l'Anticoton*, which was printed in Nantes in 1611. The anonymous author, referred to as “Sieur de L. N.,” presents the work in the form of a dialogue, in which three characters engage in a discussion about the publication of the *Anticoton*, highlighting problematic or false passages. These arguments largely echo those

La ciquiesme, qu'il ne fust opposé en ce faisant au Reverend Père General, puis que luymesme a respond que le livre de Mariana luy a grandement despleu: La sixiesme, qu'il ne scauroit monstrier qu'aucun, tenant rang de Provincial en Espagne, l'ait approuvé: et quand ainsi seroit, quell commerce à le Père Coton avec le Provincial de Tolède, qu'il ne cognoit, ny de nom, ny de face?” (1611: 43–44).

presented in the *Response apologétique*. However, several passages provide a paradigmatic exposition of how Mariana and his book were received by the French Jesuits and the Society of Jesus in general (1611: 25–33). The author posits that Mariana erred and that his opinions should not be considered representative of the Society. The numerous authors who refuted Mariana are also highlighted, and the book includes a mention of Mariana's treatise *De monetae mutatione*, which was the subject of a highly irregular trial in Spain³¹.

One of the most comprehensive responses to the *Anticoton* was authored by Andreas Eudaemon-Joannis Cydonius, who at the time had considerable expertise on the matter, having previously written a book in defence of the Jesuit Henry Garnet. Written in Latin, Cydonius' *Confutatio Anticotoni* encapsulates the majority of arguments presented in the French treatises and elaborates on them in a systematic manner. Cydonius offers few new insights into Cotton and Mariana, apart from noting that Mariana's book *De monetae mutatione* was temporarily banned by religious authorities³². However, Cydonius does not present an alternative vision of Mariana; instead, he focuses on the claims of the *Anticoton* regarding how the Jesuits received and interpreted Mariana's words.

One of the most notable proponents of the defence of Cotton and the extension of support to Mariana was Jacob Keller (1568–1631), a German Jesuit. In 1611, he authored a treatise in both German and Latin, which delved into the subject of tyrannicide and its links to the Society of Jesus. This work comprises nine *quaestiones*, with particular attention paid to *quaestiones* three to five, where Keller elucidates the controversy surrounding Mariana (1611, 36–56). Furthermore, Keller analyses Mariana's passages, offering interpretations in conjunction with quotations from *De Rege et Regis institutione*. Notably, the German Jesuit emphasises Mariana's avoidance of subtleties and his portrayal of the tyrant as an enemy to the republic, thereby equating both usurpers and legitimately appointed tyrants. Keller argues that Mariana's discourse primarily targets unjust, corrupted, and illegitimate rulers, thus diverging from a focus on lawful monarchs. Although Keller's advocacy for Mariana differs from that of the French Jesuits, it does not explicitly contravene the stance

³¹ "Il veut dire, que Mariana devoit estre censuré à Rome, aussi bien que son livre des monnoyes contre le Roy d'Espagne, et que l'histoire de Monsieur le Président du Tou" (1611: 30).

³² Fernández de la Mora (1993: 90–91) provides an account of the consultation of Francisco Peña, auditor of the Roman Rota, regarding the possibility of the Pope condemning Mariana's book. Peña responded that the entire process was highly irregular, given that a civil judge was appointed to preside over the trial of a member of the clergy, and that Mariana was incarcerated prior to the testimony of the witnesses. He thus disregarded the consultation and declared that there was no censorship of the book that would have enabled the Pope to condemn it.

of the Society. He provides a robust defence of the legitimacy of Mariana's treatise, citing the endorsement of the General Visitor and the royal privilege under which the book had been published. Keller ultimately asserts that Mariana's work was subject to convenient misinterpretation, and that the notion that the Spanish Jesuit endorsed regicide is a distortion of the facts (1611: 41–43). In the context of the preceding year, during which the French Jesuits sought to discredit Mariana, Keller's approach to the issue emerges as original, redirecting attention from the accused to the accusers.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The assassination of King Henry IV of France in May 1610 did not immediately ignite the long-standing animosity towards the Jesuits, which had been festering for decades. However, it certainly exacerbated tensions that engulfed France and parts of Europe in a vehement intellectual conflict, with Pierre Cotton emerging as a primary target. Given his proximity to the king, Cotton's association was perceived as a threat to dissenting religious factions. Concurrently, another contentious issue gripped the region as Mariana's treatise *De Rege et Regis institutione* became a focal point for those seeking to assign blame for the king's sudden demise. These two controversies coalesced, evolving from mere debate into a full-fledged intellectual battle. Mariana and Cotton found themselves at the centre of this storm, with the publication of the *Antimariana* and the *Anticoton* serving as the rallying points for a barrage of pamphlets and treatises, many of which were translated into multiple languages and levelled serious accusations not only against the Jesuit priests, but also against the Society of Jesus as a whole.

In response to being accused of involvement in the king's assassination, Cotton published his *Lettre déclaratoire*, which prompted the *Anticoton* to issue a rebuttal. In his letter, Cotton unequivocally disassociated Mariana from the Society of Jesus and sought to demonstrate that the majority of the Society was disinclined to defend Mariana, preferring instead to refrain from engaging with the arguments put forth in his treatise. Cotton's stance on Mariana set the tone for the discourse among other French Jesuits.

The parallel experiences of Mariana and Cotton, each with their own distinct resolutions, serve to illustrate the precarious position in which the Society of Jesus found itself at the turn of the seventeenth century. A survey of the pamphlets reveals that Mariana was not merely the object of scapegoating, but rather that his treatise was repeatedly and deliberately misinterpreted.

Cotton's contribution to the debate did not address the misinterpretation of Mariana's words but instead focused on establishing a clear distinction between Mariana and the Society of Jesus. Ultimately, the absence of a concerted institutional response can be viewed as a vulnerability exploited by opponents of both the League and the Jesuits.

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