

November 2014

# La Biblia, que es, Los Sacros Libros del Viejo y Nuevo Testamento (Spanish Bible)

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## Recommended Citation

"La Biblia, que es, Los Sacros Libros del Viejo y Nuevo Testamento (Spanish Bible)" (2014). *Commentaries on the Exhibit's Works*. 47.  
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Reflections on the various works in the exhibit

## Imprints and Impressions: Milestones in Human Progress

Highlights from the Rose Rare Book Collection, Sept. 29-Nov. 9, 2014

Roesch Library, University of Dayton

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La Biblia, que es, Los Sacros Libros del Viejo y Nuevo Testamento  
(Spanish Bible)

- Basel, 1569
- First complete Spanish-language translation of the Bible

**T**his text presents an original first complete printed Spanish Bible. Casiodoro de Reina, an ex-monk of the monastery of St. Isidore of Seville (yes, Isidore was an actual person, not just the online system we use for courses at the University of Dayton), following the teachings of Martin Luther, pledged to translate the full text of the Bible into Castilian Spanish. This Bible was published in 1569 in Basel, Switzerland, after de Reina fled there to escape religious persecution. It bears the nickname *La Biblia del Oso* (Bible of the Bear) because its frontispiece depicts a bear sucking honey from a bees' comb hanging from a tree.

This translation of the Bible includes all of the books of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures recognized as part of the Catholic Canon. Some claim this Spanish translation to be the most used biblical source by Spanish-speaking Protestant churches.

The front matter of this Bible includes a citation from the Council of Trent's "Rules

Concerning Prohibited Books IV," which asserts:

As has been manifested through experience that the sacred books be allowed to all in the vernacular, more harm rather than good is born due to human recklessness. For this reason, these translations have been entrusted to the wisdom of the bishops or inquisitors so that with the guidance of a priest or confessor others may learn the lessons of the Bible in the vernacular, translated by Catholic authors, but only to those who will gain from this understanding more good than harm. These individuals must have this permission in writing. Those who presume to read or possess it without such permission will not be absolved from their sins until they deliver the book to the ordinary (local bishop). (My translation)

The introduction to this Bible declares as the reason for this translation to exist:

Intolerable thing is Satan, father of lies and author of darkness so that the truth of God and God's light may be manifest in the world; because only through this road is Satan's deception undone; his darkness stopped; the worthless foundation of his reign discovered; and from where his ruin is certain; and so that the misery of humans, who are tied to death by prisons of ignorance, may be taught through divine light and leave their prisons for eternal life and liberty as children of God. (My translation).

As an example of how this text may be used in contemporary research, I turn to my

own research. I am currently using the passage of Mark 8:27-30 where Jesus asks the disciples who the people say he is and who disciples themselves say he is. Using this biblical translation for this excerpt presents a way of looking at these questions between Jesus and the followers of Jesus as understood in sixteenth-century Spain and at least one way this text was brought to what we know today as the Americas. This passage poses significance in a Christology book I am scripting from a Latina perspective tracing historical traditions through Catholic histories of the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries of the Americas and Spain.

—*Neomi DeAnda, PhD, Assistant Professor,  
Religious Studies*