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# *Erasmus as Hero, or Heretic? Spanish Humanism and the Valladolid Assembly of 1527\**

by LU ANN HOMZA

IN THE SUMMER OF 1527, the Spanish Inquisition summoned some thirty-three of Iberia's most prominent theologians to the Castilian city of Valladolid in order to judge a variety of suspicious passages culled from Erasmus's works. The theologians met, argued, and disbanded without ever reaching a decision on the orthodoxy of the excerpts or even debating the whole inventory under review, for when plague struck the area in early August, Inquisitor General Alonso Manrique sent them home and never reconvened them. The place of the Valladolid assembly in the scholarly record is nearly minimal, for if a few academics have detailed Erasmus's response to it, no one has sufficiently explored its implications for Spanish history.<sup>1</sup> The reason for such neglect lies not only in the conference's failure to pronounce, but in the modern argument that diagrams it in terms of Erasmus's impact on sixteenth-century Spanish culture.

In his 1937 *Érasme et l'Espagne*, Marcel Bataillon proposed that erasmian ideas entered Castile with the return of the imperial court in 1522, then filtered into the University of Alcalá, and finally reached the masses in printed form by 1526, whereupon they fulfilled a reli-

\*Earlier versions of this material were presented at the Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference in 1990, the Central Renaissance Conference in 1991, and the Mid-Atlantic Renaissance and Reformation Seminar in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 1993. I would like to thank the College of William and Mary for financial support in the form of a 1993 Summer Research Grant; and Charles Nauert, Thomas Mayer, Jerry Bentley, and MARRS's participants for their criticism and encouragement.

<sup>1</sup> On Erasmus's reaction to the conference, see Rummel, 1989, vol. 2, and Avilés Fernández, 1980.

gious revolution that endemic reformers had initiated.<sup>2</sup> Yet Erasmus's notions of and approach to Christianity were not uncontested in Spain, and Bataillon went on to depict early modern Spaniards according to a central dialectic of advancement and reaction, in which he identified Erasmus's supporters as progressives, and labeled them as humanists.<sup>3</sup> In the process he suggested that the Valladolid assembly amounted to a struggle between forward and regressive factions, in which the delegates conformed to typologies as they fought over two versions of Christianity.<sup>4</sup> Bataillon's portrait of the conference was so coherent that subsequent historians have added little to it,

<sup>2</sup> "C'est pendant ces années 1522 à 1525 que commencent à se rallier autour du nom d'Érasme toutes les forces locales de renouvellement intellectuel et religieux: c'est alors que naît l'érasmisme espagnol." Bataillon, 1991, 1:167. On the trajectory of Erasmus's impact, *idem*, 1:172; for the eventual breadth of his audience, 1:301. Bataillon was not the first to propose a positive connection between Erasmus and Spain; consult Bonilla y San Martín, 1907, who framed the relationship in less expansive terms.

<sup>3</sup> Bataillon described Erasmus's Christian humanism as akin to any other "mouvement intellectuel libérateur," noted that Erasmus's effect on Spain was "édifiante," and found that erasmianism in general "a été à la fois illumination et progrès des lumières"; *ibid.*, 1:80, 176, 848. He framed the relationship between Spanish supporters and detractors with military metaphors, from stipulating the xenophobic tendencies of "les défenseurs des croyances héréditaires contre l'invasion érasmiennne," to finding that the *Enchiridion* provoked "une sorte de guerre spirituelle qui oppose la majorité des moines à toute une élite érasmisante suivie par le public des demi-lettrés." *Ibid.*, 1:241-42. Ultimately he paralleled Spain's sixteenth-century conflict over Erasmus with her twentieth-century civil war, 1:848-49. In a 1976 article in *Historia* 16, he repeated the dichotomy between "el humanismo español y sus adversarios tradicionalistas," and noted that the former was "inspirado en Erasmo de Rotterdam," 3:34.

<sup>4</sup> "D'une manière générale, les théologiens porteront le jugement qu'on peut attendre d'eux. Dominicains et Franciscains forment un bloc antiérasmien, assez homogène, duquel se sépare hardiment Fray Gil, le prédicateur de la cour. Parmi les théologiens qui professent dans les Universités, le group des *Complutenses* tranche par ses sympathies érasmiennes." *Ibid.*, 1:264-65. For his stipulation that two versions of Christianity were at issue in the meetings, see 1:282. Though he admitted that the "two camps" (1:295) contained persons of good faith who might have come to a moderate solution (1:283), his argument gave greater weight to an utter divergence between pro- and anti-erasmians.

even though the surviving evidence belies his own exposition of it.<sup>5</sup> For the Inquisition not only charged the theologians at Valladolid to divulge their views orally but in written form as well, and most of them recorded their perspectives on the subjects they were scrutinizing.<sup>6</sup> Their decisions are still extant and have never been investigated thoroughly: they not only prompt an initial reevaluation of Spanish erasmianism, but also a rethinking of one of the standard definitions of the Spanish Renaissance.<sup>7</sup>

Within the field of early modern Spanish studies, academics commonly posit Erasmus's greatest impact in terms of religion, and few scholars would hesitate to characterize him as a humanist where Christian sources were concerned.<sup>8</sup> His *Novum Instrumentum*, *Annotations* on the same, and editions of Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom and others evinced philological concerns and historicist approaches to scriptural and patristic texts.<sup>9</sup> His critical interest in

<sup>5</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, had intended to publish his transcriptions of the Valladolid testimony in 1937, but after reading Bataillon's account decided his French peer already had treated the conference sufficiently; see n. 6 below. Rummel, 1989, and Avilés Fernández, 1980 and 1986, follow Bataillon's perspective, though the latter also recognized ambiguities in the conference testimony and attempted to break down the results according to larger political loyalties.

<sup>6</sup> The repertory of charges, participants' opinions, and other pertinent documents are located in Legajo #4426, Sección de la Inquisición, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid. The repertory is transcribed in Paz y Melia and Serrano y Sanz, and produced in facsimile in Avilés Fernández, 1980. In 1972 Beltrán de Heredia published the only full transcription of the Valladolid opinions, as well as the first four categories of the offenses, which make up the body of the sixth volume of his *Cartulario de la universidad de Salamanca*. For references to specific opinions, I have employed Beltrán de Heredia's transcriptions because they are more readily available to scholars, although unfortunately they contain multiple errors and must be collated against the originals. I have not cited any material in which they differ from the manuscript sources.

<sup>7</sup> Historians of Renaissance humanism in Spain can be divided into three general groups: the first locates it in the early fifteenth rather than sixteenth century, and believes it culminated in the scholarship of Antonio de Nebrija; the second posits Nebrija as its initiator instead of its climax; the third admits Nebrija's contribution but fixes instead on Spanish erasmianism. See Castillo, 1976 and 1988; López Rueda, Rico, and Coles. Bataillon is the preeminent founder of the erasmian thesis.

<sup>8</sup> The positive connection that Bonilla y San Martín, 1907, and Bataillon originally made between Erasmus and Spanish religiosity is still obvious in the bibliographical overview of the field compiled by Gofi Gaztambide in 1986.

<sup>9</sup> My definition of Renaissance humanism entails a method of reading antique texts as much as a preference for them: see Garin; Burke; and Nauert. On Erasmus in particular, see Rice, 1985 and 1988; Bentley, 1983; as well as n. 10 below. The

sacred writings and awareness that the early Church differed radically from his own also constituted the basis for his most profound spiritual counsel.<sup>10</sup> But his religiosity was "humanist" only to the extent that it involved the philological and historicist treatment of scriptural and patristic sources, and the crucial difficulty in many treatments of Spanish erasmianism is that they frequently sever Erasmus's pastoral reflections from his hermeneutics, and then handle the appearance of one as if it always connoted the presence of the other.<sup>11</sup> In such readings, certain attitudes toward God and the Church become signs of erasmianism, and then ones of Renaissance humanism, while any endorsement or even echo of Erasmus's notions implies the acceptance of all his ideas.<sup>12</sup> Besides the fact that many authors apart from Erasmus employed similar religious emphases, any swift elision between piety and philology conceals cases in which someone openly admired or even appeared to copy Erasmus's spiritual advice, but had no empathy for or comprehension of his endeavors with scripture.<sup>13</sup>

humanists' invocation of antique rhetoric as an art that persuaded men and women to virtue had a special resonance for scriptural texts, since corrupted language could hinder their redemptive function: see Camporeale; Stinger. For reflections on Erasmus's and other humanists' inconsistencies, however, see Grafton, 1991, 23-42.

<sup>10</sup> Payne; Chomarat; Olin; and Bentley, 1983.

<sup>11</sup> For instance, Bataillon depicted erasmian humanism in terms of cognates, namely *human-* or *humane-*ness, and privileged tolerance, spiritual interiority, and evangelism as the decisive aspects of Erasmus's thought; many subsequent scholars have followed his lead, n. 12 below. Nevertheless, he recognized hermeneutical criteria in his characterization of Antonio de Nebrija and his description of the flaws in the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. Bataillon, 1991, 1:26-27, 34, 40-41, 43-44, 174; see also his final comments in 1930, 26. His negative reflections on Erasmus's increasingly scholarly bent occur in his introduction to Dámaso Alonso's edition of the *Enchiridion o manual del caballero christiano*, 1932, 104-05. As the final pages of this article should make clear, Erasmus himself could use medieval tropes and techniques as well as humanist ones to disseminate his religious message.

<sup>12</sup> See Rotsaert and Olin on Ignatius of Loyola; Bilinkoff, 79-81, on Juan de Avila; and García Martínez on Aragon. Abellán, and Asensio and Alcina, 1980, recognize the dangers of cursory readings of Spanish erasmianism, but occasionally indulge in them anyway. Alistair Fox has detected the same problem in modern expositions of Tudor humanism, 18-23, 27-31.

<sup>13</sup> Asensio, 1952, stipulated the risk of acontextualizing Spanish spirituality by assessing it in terms of Erasmus alone. On the tautology that can result when scholars posit Erasmus as the axis of intellectual and religious culture in early modern Spain, Andres Martín, 74.

The statements from Valladolid consistently betray such equivocal responses to Erasmus's writings.<sup>14</sup> The delegates' testimony blurs any conclusive division between Erasmus's friends and enemies, for even participants commonly reputed as his disciples often discriminated between his ideas; in fact, most of the theologians distinguished between his pious suggestions and his philological ones. Their opinions restore discernment to the reception of Erasmus's texts, return a portion of his Spanish readers, at least, to the level of active rather than passive intellects, and reveal for Spain what we already know for Italy, namely that *Erasmus ex Erasmo* and *Erasmus ex Erasmi lectore* can be different phenomena.<sup>15</sup> When the delegates welcomed affective spirituality but rejected the role of Greek in New Testament scholarship, their example warns us not to interpret devotion as hermeneutics; when they sanctioned Greek but valued Latin more, or defended Erasmus with dialectical reasoning, they shade our portrait even further. If the opinions from Valladolid amplify our grasp of Spanish responses to Erasmus, they also illustrate the complexity of Spanish intellectual practice, such as the relative balance between authority and philology, hagiography and historicism, and scholastic method and humanist techniques. They enhance our understanding of Spanish intellectual and religious thought in the first half of the sixteenth century.

Our chief account of how and why the Valladolid conference occurred comes from a letter that Erasmus's foremost Spanish correspondent, Juan de Vergara, wrote to him on April 24, 1527.<sup>16</sup> In it, he related that the vernacular translation of the *Enchiridion* had so enraged members of Spain's monastic orders and provoked such public calumny that Inquisitor General Manrique had no alternative but

<sup>14</sup> They also confirm the value of polemical literature for the revelation of intellectual allegiances. See Nauert.

<sup>15</sup> On the importance of viewing cultural transmission as a reciprocal transaction in which the audience consciously shaped the message or text as it received it, see the introduction in Grafton, 1990. For an example of the process in Italy, see Seidel Menchi; for caveats on the construction of univocal relationships between literature and audience, this time in eighteenth-century France, see Chartier.

<sup>16</sup> Vergara exemplifies a connection between Spanish erasmianism and a more rigidly defined, and hence more meaningful, Renaissance humanism. Secretary to the archbishop of Toledo, he translated Aristotle and collaborated on the Complutensian Polyglot Bible; his appreciation for a philological and historicist approach to sacred sources can be gleaned from his inquisition trial. See the excerpts transcribed by Longhurst, 28 (1958): 162-63; 31-32 (1960): 346-48.

to admonish their superiors personally.<sup>17</sup> Manrique reminded the vicars that their religious were prohibited from attacking Erasmus in public. He told them that they had become so maddened that they now trusted no one to be motivated by an eagerness for piety. And he warned them that they must keep quiet, abstain from future invective, and leave the judgment of the matter to others. At the same time, however, he conceded that if their orders found anything wrong in Erasmus's writings they ought to write it down, whence it would be referred to the usual conference of theologians for judgment; he also cautioned them to heed only matters that affected the public good, rather than fixing on specific insults to monasticism.<sup>18</sup> The monks promptly ceased their overt diatribes, immediately set off to find the errors in Erasmus's books and, by Vergara's reckoning, became so involved in their task that they did not even have time to administer the sacrament of penance during Holy Week. By April 5, when they presented their objections to the *Suprema*, delegates from the Dominicans, Franciscans, Benedictines and Trinitarians repeated each others' findings to such an extent that Manrique finally ordered them to compile a single list. As Vergara relayed it, the idea was to send the inventory to certain theologians from the universities of Alcalá and Salamanca, who in turn would convene on the feast of the Ascension and render an opinion on its contents. The theologians would separate the merely slanderous from the ambiguous excerpts, and then forward the latter to Erasmus or the pope or both for clarification.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Vergara wrote that the monks "[c]ontinuo clamare coeperunt pulpita, fora, templa, basilicae (nam nusquam non acclamatores eiusmodi disponebantur), Erasmus hereticum, blasphemum, impium, sacrilegum. Quid multa? Plures subito tibi ex vulgata libri interpretatione, quam ex dentium semente Cadmo, hostes coorti . . . " Allen, vol. 7, letter #1814, lines 123-27.

<sup>18</sup> The Valladolid assembly falls within the routine inquisitorial practice of submitting cases to committees for assessment, though Inquisition officials were not bound by such decisions. As the targets of its prosecutions shifted in the 1520s, from judaizing, which had a standard repertory of incriminating signs, to much more nebulous offenses that involved thought as well as action, the Inquisition called a series of assemblies on illuminists, converts from Islam, and witches in attempts to clarify the semiotics of and policies toward these bodies of potential heretics. Pérez Villanueva, 1:462ss; Monter, 260-63; for the medieval corollary to such deliberative bodies, McGinn.

<sup>19</sup> Vergara's account supported Bataillon's belief that the religious orders formed the core of Spanish anti-erasmianism, and other evidence ratifies monastic enmity as well: Allen, vol. 6, app. 18, #3, lines 19-35; vol. 7, #1902; 1903, line 15; 1909, lines 35-37. Yet extant testimony from self-conceived erasmians such as Vergara, Alfonso de

The conference actually began on 27 June 1527, or a few weeks later than originally stipulated, because of the Sack of Rome: on that afternoon, approximately thirty-three individuals swore themselves to secrecy in front of the *Suprema* and two prosecutors for the Inquisitions of Castile and Aragon, and immediately afterwards started to deliberate. The format and frequency of the sessions remained constant throughout the six and a half weeks of the conference. The participants convened on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays; with each new category of accusations, one of them would expound the charges under consideration, which included rendering his own opinion on them. His verdict in turn would be followed by those of other attendees. Thus on the first day of the meetings, the abbot and rector of the University of Alcalá, Pedro de Lerma, commented on the first set of passages, which pertained to the Trinity, and six of his peers succeeded him. In subsequent sessions the rest of the theologians would speak until everyone had expressed their feelings on the issue at hand, and then they would take up the next category, whereupon they would start the process all over again. When Inquisitor General Manrique dismissed them on August 13, they had worked through four parts of a twenty-part repertory.<sup>20</sup>

Obviously the participants' opinions are unintelligible without an account of what they were responding to, but the history of the inventory is murky, especially since it is impossible to stipulate exactly who directed or performed its compilation. Erasmus's most prominent Spanish adversaries, Diego López de Zúñiga (or Stunica) and Sancho Carranza de Miranda were either in Rome or a delegate to the conference itself.<sup>21</sup> Edward Lee, who published his criticisms

Valdés, and Gil López de Bejar also suggests a wider sphere of suspicion where Erasmus's ideas were concerned: idem, vol. 7, #1814, lines 23-24; Caballero, 335; Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 82. Distrust apparently arose out of an identification between Erasmus and Luther: Bentley, 1983, 210-11; Bataillon, 1991, 1:150; Bonilla y San Martín, 1903, appendix 1, 693-98; Allen, vol. 7, #1814, lines 155-58. For Lutheranism's initial presence in Spain, see Redondo.

<sup>20</sup> Sección de la Inquisición, Legajo #4426, 3-8; Francisco de Vitoria expounded the second category of charges on July 9, followed by Francisco de Castillo on the third and fourth sections on July 27.

<sup>21</sup> Stunica wrote his first polemic against Erasmus in 1520; it remains unedited, though Erasmus's counterattack has been edited; de Jonge, ed., 1983, 3-49, remains the best overview of this complicated interchange. With his *Opusculum in quasdam Erasmi Roterodami annotationes* (Rome, 1522), Carranza inserted himself into the quarrel between Erasmus and Stunica, and repeated three of his compatriot's complaints from 1520. For Erasmus's response, see LeClerc, ed., vol. 9, columns 401-28.



of Erasmus's New Testament in 1520, and resided in Spain from 1525-29 while conducting diplomatic missions, could have contributed to the accusations: certainly the Spaniards' persistent charge of Arianism conjured up his earlier complaints.<sup>22</sup> Still, though many of the components from 1527 had precedents in earlier controversies, such as the problem of 1 John 5:7, or the substitution of *sermo* for *verbum* in John 1:1, the Spanish architects did not copy their grievances directly from other invectives. The evidence suggests they were much cleverer than that.

Whoever assembled the Valladolid propositions tried to deflect potential objections from the start, for they turned to Erasmus's apologies against Lee and Stunica, and indicted his explanations of his alleged errors instead of the original accusations against him. Citing Erasmus's responses to his critics prevented anyone from protesting that he already had responded to the offenses in question. Excerpting passages from his polemic with Stunica may have intensified the weight of the indictment as well, since that individual was a respected figure in Spanish academic circles.<sup>23</sup> But if the Spanish repertory was innovative in some respects, it also reflected a meaningful shift within erasmian controversies as a whole. The earliest polemicists had aimed their criticisms at Erasmus's 1519 revision of the Latin New Testament, as well as his *Annotations* on it; they had organized their censures according to the structures of those works, and as a result grouped their remarks according to the books of the Bible. Under the heading of "Matthew," for instance, they would file, verse by verse, everything wrong with Erasmus's comments, so that within the larger category they might reproach the damage his editorial decisions could wreak on the doctrine of the Trinity, as well as his specific rendition of Greek into Latin.

In contrast, the Spanish propositions resembled Stunica's second attack from 1522, in that they were arranged by theoretical topic instead of scriptural division, with anywhere from one to twenty objectionable passages or charges drawn from any number of works listed below the major theme.<sup>24</sup> For example, the heading "Against the Eu-

<sup>22</sup> Asso, 57-58. As is the case for other antagonists, Lee's attacks have never been critically edited, though the first of Erasmus's responses has been; Ferguson, 225-303.

<sup>23</sup> Stunica had studied under Ayres Barbosa, labored on the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, and published his first assault on Erasmus at Alcalá. For the most reliable summary of his career, see de Jonge, ed., 1983, 13-34.

<sup>24</sup> Idem, 23-24. For the reproduction of the Valladolid repertory in either facsimile or transcription, see Avilés Fernández, 1980, or Paz y Melia.

charist" contained five charges drawn from, among other works, the prologue to the *Paraphrase* on Corinthians and the *Annotations* on Mark. In addition, the Spanish architects followed a European-wide pattern of moving from the exclusive indictment of Erasmus's biblical scholarship to broader accusations against his religious writings. Like their Parisian counterparts, who were acting simultaneously, the Spaniards too cited the colloquy *Inquisitio de fide*, the edition of St. Hilary of Poitiers (1523), and the *Paraphrases on Matthew* (1522) as containing suspicious sentiments: in the first two instances, they isolated different passages from their French peers, while in the last they adduced the same excerpts but worded them differently.<sup>25</sup> They also inculcated the *Modus orandi Deum*, which only had appeared in 1524, with a second edition in 1525. Their attention to Erasmus's later works, like their citations of his *apologiae*, diminished the possibility that he already had exonerated himself in print. But if the Valladolid inventory consigned relatively more space to doctrinal and devotional issues and absolutely none to specific problems of Greek to Latin translation, it also included enough criticisms of Erasmus's textual emendations to make the relationship between philology and theory quite clear. It thus would be misleading to characterize the Spanish repertory as "theological" vis-à-vis its more "grammatical" predecessors, as if its protests had nothing to do with Erasmus's observations on and modifications of the New Testament itself.

What the builders of the Spanish codex chose to copy into it was hardly straightforward, and it could be a challenge to reconstruct both the location and the circumstances of the excerpts. Though they occasionally transcribed Erasmus's remarks exactly as they occurred, they just as frequently sequestered quotations, rent prose, and wielded paraphrases in an effort to make him look as wicked as possible. They could cite a passage as originating in the *Annotations* when it really came from the 1521 apology against Stunica. Sometimes they refused to specify exactly what Erasmus had written, as when

<sup>25</sup> For the Parisian indictments, Du Plessis d'Argentré, 2, part 1:53-77. Olin specified the Parisian censures of the preface to Hilary in his translation of its prologue, 93-121. Classification of the same suspicious passages occurs between the fourth category of the Valladolid repertory, "Against the holy inquisition of heretics," charges 1 and 2, and Du Plessis d'Argentré, 2, part 1:54, 69. On the general history of the conflicts between the Parisian Faculty of Theology and Erasmus, Farge, 186-97. The coincidence of the French and Spanish deliberations is provocative, but I have not found any evidence that the latter attempted to copy its Parisian analogue.

they noted that he "said many things in the *Colloquies*" against the veneration of saints, relics, and pilgrimages.<sup>26</sup> And they could slice a cohesive paragraph into three different accusations, which they then placed under three different topical categories; in the process they literally inverted the order in which the points originally appeared.<sup>27</sup> In keeping with such acontextualism, they very often erased the surrounding material from a quotation and thereby obscured its meaning: one example is Erasmus's statement that "I do not see that what the Arians deny is able to be taught except by a ratiocination." That remark came from his exposition of 1 John 5:7 in his first response to Stunica, in which he intended "what" to refer to the Arians' denial of the Trinity's unity of essence; by the time the sentence appeared in the propositions, however, it had lost its specific environment, and "what" implied that *everything* the Arians denied was undemonstrable by a direct proof.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, the manufacturers of the repertory could list propositions as if they formed part of a coherent discourse in Erasmus's writings, when they had nothing to do with each other. Such a composition occurred, for instance, in the first section of the inventory, which concerned offenses against the Trinity. The first two passages came from the 1521 apology against Stunica, and supposedly revealed Erasmus's fondness for Arians through his doubts over the canonicity of 1 John 5:7 and its effectiveness against heretics. The third excerpt went on to quote his statement that "This is the moral foundation of the Christian religion, to revere everything among divine matters, but to sanction nothing except that which is expressed in sacred letters," and proceeded to connect it to the two other statements, thus concluding that Erasmus uttered it in order to substantiate "the long-lasting and irrefragable heresy of the Arians."<sup>29</sup> Aside from the fact that the Spaniards left out several words that modified the sentence — including such words as "perhaps" at the very start, and "clearly" be-

<sup>26</sup> "Multa dicit in colloquiis quae propter prolixitatem eorum praetermittimus." Avilés Fernández, 1980, 49.

<sup>27</sup> The example comes from *Modus orandi Deum*: the monks extracted three statements from a single section and put them under categories on the Trinity, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Compare Bakhuizen van den Brink, ed., 144-146, with accusation 3 under "Against the sacrosanct Trinity;" accusation 1 beneath "Against the divinity of Christ;" and accusation 2 of "Against the divinity of the Holy Spirit," in Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 18, 21.

<sup>28</sup> For the statement and its context, see de Jonge, ed., 1983, 258.

<sup>29</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 17-18.

fore “expressed” — the other difficulty is that the quotation in question came from the *Modus orandi Deum* rather than the reply to Stunica, and in its first milieu formed part of a reflection on the differences between antique and contemporary prayers.<sup>30</sup> It had nothing to do with the Godhead, or Arians, or problems of speculative theology such as the Trinity’s unity of essence. By employing such techniques, of course, the draftsmen were challenging the theologians to put the excerpts back into context. But their use of the mosaic method exposes something more than just antipathy in action; it also illustrates the worst features of scholastic exegesis, in which an author’s intention and a work’s coherence became irrelevant in the face of interpretative exigencies.<sup>31</sup>

If problems of philology and historicism were implied by the inventory’s very structure, they reverberated in the passages under review, which repeatedly raised issues of language and chronological distance. The passages treated Erasmus’s critical perspective on the New Testament, such as the attribution of Hebrews to Paul. They sparked consideration of sanctity and scholasticism, through his purported slurs on the apostles’ Greek and contemporary theological method. And everywhere they reflected his perception of the difference between the beliefs and mores of the early church and the contemporary one, whether in matters of confession, the papacy, or manuscript transmission. Entangled in the Valladolid propositions, then, were matters central to the presence and practice of Renaissance humanism; and when the theologians responded to the first four categories of charges, which comprised offenses against the Trinity and the Inquisition itself, they considered subjects that were at the vanguard of early modern intellectual life.

The Inquisition file that survives from Valladolid contains the manuscript reflections of twenty-eight delegates, but we know that approximately five more attended who did not leave any record, and that two others, Alonso Ruíz de Virués and Pedro de Vitoria, wrote

<sup>30</sup> Bakhuizen van den Brink, ed., 146.

<sup>31</sup> Carruthers offers a positive evaluation of glosses, commentaries, and the mosaic method in which the “textualism” of such measures contrasts with a “fundamentalism” that privileged the source over any explication of it. Nevertheless, she admits that extreme textualism could bury the source altogether, which is certainly the case with the Valladolid repertory. In fact, I would suggest that her dichotomy is inappropriate for the sixteenth century, since by that time textualism itself had hardened into a set of conventional hermeneutical approaches and results: the architects of the 1527 indictments were as “fundamentalist” as Erasmus, but in different directions.

down replies that are either missing entirely or only partially extant, the documents in question having disappeared sometime after 1937.<sup>32</sup> The greatest expanse of my sample, therefore, amounts to twenty-nine sets of responses, nearly all of which are in autograph. As to the authors of these documents, they were professors of theology, bishops, imperial preachers and confessors, members of monastic orders, and rectors of universities. Out of a total of eight regular clerics, three were Dominican, three Franciscan, one a Benedictine and the other an Augustinian; three more participants were Portuguese, while another had resided for at least five years in Bologna, and one more held a see in Albania.<sup>33</sup> Several were inquisitors, and at least ten had studied at Paris. They were a divergent group, and they wrote in disparate ways, for not only the length but the complexity of their responses varied wildly. The Portuguese Pedro Margallo, professor of moral philosophy at the College of St. Bartholomew in Salamanca, composed six and a half folios; Diego de Astudillo, a member of the Dominican college of San Gregorio in Valladolid, wrote two. Alonso de Córdoba, professor of nominalist theology at Salamanca, bolstered his reactions with references from Augustine, as befitted a member of that religious order, while Fernando Matatigui, professor of Scotist theology at Alcalá, framed his impressions in single-sentence paragraphs. Some participants responded to everything, others seem to have replied to only part of the accusations, while still others left no answers at all; as the conference progressed, the number of responses lessened in general, but I do not know whether that reflects a refusal to write on the later charges or simply a diminution in what has survived. Silence does appear significant when it occurs in the midst of an exposition, but how to interpret it is another matter, since participants could have refrained from replying for very different reasons.<sup>34</sup> More importantly, the lacunae mean that methodologically the expanse of the evidence constantly shifts, and yet at no time do we possess single or only several responses to the indictments under review. As a result, we can draw conclusions from the replies.

<sup>32</sup> All of the originals from Virués, and half of those for Vitoria, are now missing from the Inquisition file in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, though Beltrán de Heredia was able to transcribe them.

<sup>33</sup> On the Portuguese attendees, see Bataillon, 1930.

<sup>34</sup> For instance, a delegate might have passed over a charge because he found it unimportant, although the participants frequently wrote as much; or because he hesitated to reply to something he did not understand, or because his opinion would have been negative.

The first accusation the theologians began to debate on June 27 was a familiar one: that Erasmus had mishandled 1 John 5:7, or the *comma Johanneum*, which was the major proof-text against Arianism because it could support the Trinity's unity of essence. Erasmus had omitted it from both the Greek and Latin texts of the first two editions of his New Testament in 1516 and 1519 because he did not find it in any of the Greek manuscripts he consulted; the verse occurs in almost all the Vulgate manuscripts of the period, but in only four Greek ones.<sup>35</sup> Lee and Stunica had rebuked him for the expurgation because of Lorenzo Valla's inclusion of it, and his own presumably corrupt manuscripts.<sup>36</sup> In his third *apologia* against Lee, Erasmus had justified his omission on the basis of the Greek and noted that if he had found the verse, he would have included it; an Irish text quickly appeared with the *comma* added in the margin by a contemporary hand.<sup>37</sup> Though it was replaced in subsequent editions of the New Testament, beginning in 1522, the Valladolid censors castigated Erasmus anyway, writing that he attacked the verse relentlessly, defended corrupt manuscripts, and thereby protected and even pleaded the Arian cause.<sup>38</sup>

All twenty-nine theologians responded to this imputation and twenty-three explicitly professed a belief in the *comma's*

<sup>35</sup> Bentley, 1983, 44-45, 152-53; Rummel, 1986, 132-33.

<sup>36</sup> Lee probably used Valla's example to highlight what he construed as Erasmus's inconsistency, since the latter had published Valla's annotations to the New Testament in Paris in 1505. See Bentley, 1983, 95. As for the potential corruption of Erasmus's Greek manuscripts, Stunica simply invoked a medieval commonplace, though from a modern standpoint he was correct: Erasmus used Greek manuscripts from the Byzantine Church, which embodied not only a separate but a late and inferior state of transmission. As a result, the Latin version that Stunica championed was more reliable than the Greek Erasmus employed as a model and translated in 1519, but since he did not know that, he deserves no credit for it. See de Jonge, ed., 1983, 19-20.

<sup>37</sup> De Jonge, 1980.

<sup>38</sup> "Erasmus in annotationibus primae Joannis 5 corruptos codices defensat, in beatum Hieronymum debacchatur, arrianorum causam agit atque tutatur. Nam et locum illum, *Tres sunt qui testimonium dant in caelo, Pater, Verbum et Spiritus Sanctus et hi tres unum sunt*, bello inexorabili impugnat, suffragia omnia respuit, rationes etiam frivolas undique in contrarium coacervat . . ." Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 17-18. On Erasmus's views on heterodoxy in general and Arianism in particular, see Tracy, 1-10.

canonicity.”<sup>39</sup> Still, a few questioned exactly how genuine the verse was. Jacobo Cabrero, the Albanian bishop, and Alonso Ruíz de Virués, the Benedictine preacher, disagreed with Córdoba, the Augustinian, and Diogo de Gouvea, head of the Portuguese college at the University of Paris, as to whether papal and conciliar references to the *comma* determined its authenticity. The former noted a lack of formal definition as to what, exactly, the biblical text comprised, and argued that their conference ought not pronounce in instances where the Church herself had not. The latter explicitly adduced customary invocation as enough to secure the verse’s legitimacy.<sup>40</sup> Their conflict illustrates that at least some of the participants understood the difficulties involved in having no conclusive version of the Latin biblical text, as well as the relative ambiguity of religious authority, since no one could tell anyone else that his arguments were absolutely wrong. Nevertheless, the majority of the delegates did not confront such theoretical issues in their written responses, but concentrated instead on the more formal aspects of Erasmus’s purported crime.

The primary strategy for defending Erasmus’s treatment of the *comma* was to read the charge literally and refuse to address its insinuation that the Latin Bible was amendable in light of the Greek. Eight delegates, including Lerma, Cabrero, Carranza and Luís Coronel, bluntly affirmed that Erasmus really could not find the verse in the Greek manuscripts he consulted, restored it when he did, and therefore resolved the problem.<sup>41</sup> The opposite tactic was to go outside the charge in search of exculpatory material. Accordingly, royal preacher Gíl López de Bejar, philosophy professor Antonio de Alcaráz, and rector of the Spanish college at Bologna, Miguel Gómez, maintained that Erasmus expounded 1 John 5:7 brilliantly in his *Paraphrase*, which proved that he tacitly accepted the *comma* as part of the canon. They also insisted that he expressed nothing but sound sentiments about the Trinity throughout his writings. Cabrero and

<sup>39</sup> Castillo, the Salamanca Franciscan, declared “Primo, illud testimonium beati Joannis, ‘Tres sunt qui testimonium dant in caelo, Pater, Verbum et Spiritus Sanctus, et hi tres unum sunt,’ credo esse de canone sacrae scripturae.” Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 46.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 36 and 114, 53 and 71, respectively.

<sup>41</sup> Lerma’s statement was typical: “That he says that that triplicity of heavenly testimony was not found by him in a Greek manuscript, he amply demonstrates; and seeing that he does not omit that verse in his translation, it may be passed over.” [“Quod dicit se in codice graeco non invenisse illam triplicitatem de testimonio caelesti, abunde probat; et quoniam in sua translatione illud non praetermittit, transeat.”] Ibid., 76.

Gómez even defended the omission with one of Erasmus's own criteria for textual emendation, that the *comma* was missing from the writings of Church fathers, who surely would have used it if it had been available.<sup>42</sup> But literalism, extra evidence, and the absence of patristic testimony could not sway others who argued on the simple basis of Latin superiority, and implied that Erasmus had no business preferring Greek in the first place. Like Lee and Stunica before him, Juan de Quintana, who moved in imperial circles, stated that Erasmus's Greek manuscripts were fallacious. Gouvea insisted that the *comma* had to be canonical because the entire epistle of John was, that Erasmus should have remained silent until the right manuscript came along, and that anyone who ventured to doubt the verse's authenticity was comparable to "a burned-up heretic."<sup>43</sup> Fifteen theologians in all refused to allow any mitigating circumstances to lessen the temerity of Erasmus's expurgation.

Erasmus's reason for putting the *comma* back in did not make the delegates any happier. While numerous participants felt that Erasmus should be exonerated because he restored the verse, for others the reinstatement just threw his orthodoxy into further flux, for he had written in the 1522 version of the *Annotations* that he had included 1 John 5:7 in the third edition of the New Testament to avoid slander. Ten theologians thus decided that his original excision of the passage signified more than a philological decision. Córdoba noted that he "openly implies that he added that testimony, not because he thus believed it or felt it must be believed, but because he finds it written."<sup>44</sup> Francisco de Vitoria, the famous commentator on Aquinas and controversialist on native Americans, claimed that Erasmus's rationale left the reader doubtful, and therefore must be removed or revised. And even López de Bejar, who seemed to understand Erasmus's interest in Greek, wished he had not adduced that particular motive for replacing the *comma*: "He should be warned and begged

<sup>42</sup> Cabrero reiterated Erasmus's statement against Stunica, namely that neither Cyril nor Bede nor Augustine cited the verse, while Gómez phrased the same idea more theoretically, namely that "[Erasmus] had seen that some authors of the greatest reputation did not employ that verse against heretics" ["... vidisset nonnullos maximi nominis auctores eo testimonio non fuisse usos adversus haereticos."] Ibid., 37, 67.

<sup>43</sup> "... est ut hereticus comburendus." Ibid., 72.

<sup>44</sup> "... aperte insinuat quod illud apposuerit, non quia sic credidit aut credendum sentiat, sed quia scriptum reperit ..." Ibid., 54.



that he may affirm that passage to be from the text, acquiescing to the opinion of the majority."<sup>45</sup>

As for his other editorial decisions, the composers of the Valladolid propositions also charged him with having doubted the canonicity of the predicate of Romans 9:5 in the *Annotations*. His complete exposition follows; the dates in brackets signify the editions in which the statements appeared.

Romans 9:5. "Who is God over all things." [1516-22: Unless this bit is added on, as we do come upon certain added-on bits]. [1516-27: Certainly in this passage Paul openly pronounced Christ as God. And in fact the Greek manuscripts which I have seen agree].<sup>46</sup>

By the time the annotation appeared in the inventory, it had been transmitted in the ensuing fashion:

On Romans 9, although the plainest source is of Christ's apostle speaking, "Who is God blessed forever," and this is the clear, frank, and obvious meaning, and in regards to it, as the same Erasmus shows, all the manuscripts agree, he resorts to the most impudent evasion as he says, "unless this bit is added on, as we do come upon certain added-on bits, etc."<sup>47</sup>

The rendition was hardly accidental. By excluding from the passage the affirmation that the apostle witnessed Christ as God, the accusation was constructed to illustrate Erasmus's disparagement of the divine inspiration presumably at work in Paul, while the paraphrase that all the manuscripts included the verse was an attempt to strike back at him with his own methods. But whereas this indictment was formally adduced to cast doubt on his belief in Jesus and to substantiate his affection for Arians, the theologians instead responded to its implications for textual criticism.

<sup>45</sup> "Monendus atque rogandus est ut, majorum sententiae acquiescens, locum illum affirmet esse de textu . . ." Ibid., 79.

<sup>46</sup> "Romans 9:5. *Qui est super omnia Deus*. [1516-1522: Nisi haec particula adjecta est, sicuti quasdam adjectas offendimus.] [1516-1527: hoc certe loco Paulus palam Christum pronuntiavit deum. Et consentiunt, quae quidem viderim graecorum exemplaria.]" Reeve, ed.

<sup>47</sup> "Ad Rom. 9, cum sit patentissima auctoritas Apostoli de Christo dicentis, *Qui est Deus benedictus in saecula*, et hic sit planus, simplex, manifestusque sensus, in quo etiam, ut idem Erasmus testatur, omnes codices consentiunt, ad impudentissimam tergiversationem confugit ut dicat: 'nisi haec particular adjecta est, sicuti quasdam adjectas offendimus,' etc." Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 20.

Only one of the sixteen figures who replied — Gómez — was entirely comfortable with the notion that scriptural passages might be appended. Conversely, Vitoria believed the annotation weakened the authority of sacred scripture and scandalized the faith; Lerma found Erasmus's rhetoric offensive, and wished the remark torn from his books, and the inquisitor and bishop Antonio de Guevara termed the comment completely heretical and scandalous. Others pondered Erasmus's language and wondered whether he really claimed the verse was annexed. If Coronel spoke publicly what he wrote privately, he may have prompted uncertainty about Erasmus's aim, for he proposed that if the annotation were examined with scholastic techniques, it would prove Erasmus's innocence. But even if he doubted that Erasmus meant what he said, like almost everyone else he could not evade the problem of whether the observation diminished confidence in the authenticity of the New Testament, though he tried to avoid it by refusing to put into words what his peers proclaimed openly. Instead, he stipulated that he would speak to the issue of scriptural impeccability when they reached the relevant category, and thereby declined to openly endorse or dispute the others' reproach.<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand, the propositions condemned Erasmus's annotation on Luke 1:35 for what sounded like a similar offense, but that accusation engendered a much lower level of opposition. The scriptural passage in question concerned the Annunciation: Erasmus had proposed that the angel's statement to Mary should simply read "would be born," without "ex te"; he adduced Greek and Latin manuscripts, as well as the testimony of the eleventh-century commentator, Theophylactus, as the basis for the alteration. Out of the twelve who responded, only five delegates rebuked his suggestion, and from that group only Quintana, as usual, referred to Erasmus's codices and insisted that they were wrong. Several disliked the omission but offered no reason why; Lerma, who objected strenuously to Erasmus's proposal for Romans, dismissed the change in Luke with the comment that Greek manuscripts did not contain the clause, and Lefèvre d'Étaples already had removed it. Even Córdoba, who thought the annotation on Romans was erroneous and heretical, believed Luke was acceptable. The discrepancy in their reactions is notable, since Erasmus worked from the same editorial principles in both cases,

<sup>48</sup> "De hoc autem quod dicit Erasmus adjectas esse in sacro canone particulas, an videlicet invalidet sacrae scripturae auctoritatem, cum deveniemus ad articulum cuius titulus est, 'contra auctoritatem sacrae scripturae,' dicam quod sentio." Ibid., 62.

namely that manuscript evidence could reveal the true scriptural canon, but that the sources themselves could be corrupted.

The reason for the contrast probably lies in the overt circumspection of the one annotation and the indistinct boundaries of the other. Erasmus's decision about Luke 1:35 was limited to that verse alone, and explicitly depended on manuscripts; although the specific proposition reiterated none of his reasons for the deletion of the verse, the seven respondents who allowed the comment to pass uncensored probably knew the *Annotations* and were affected by his fulsome rationale. Furthermore, he had specified that "ex te" was missing in Latin as well as Greek manuscripts, and thereby provided an extra measure of philological security from sources that most of the respondents regarded as preeminent. In the case of Romans 9:5, however, his reflections connoted a hypothetical skepticism that might extend to any part of the Biblical text, and the participants reacted as if his comments were dangerous. Quintana, who stated at length what others submitted more succinctly, warned that if the authenticity of biblical passages were debated whimsically, then "nothing of authority shall remain in sacred scripture, because I can say that any particular clause whatsoever is added on . . . and thus the authority of sacred scripture will perish."<sup>49</sup> Though he recognized the possibility of textual divergence, he backed scriptural conservation more.

The Valladolid propositions chastised Erasmus's emendations of scriptural language as well as his expurgations or theoretical suggestions. One of the most famous of these substitutions occurred in the second edition of his New Testament, when he replaced "discourse" [*sermo*] for "word" [*verbum*] in John 1:1.<sup>50</sup> Lee and Stunica already had berated him for the innovation; in keeping with their general strategy, the Spanish indictment quoted his justification for the change from the 1522 version of the *Annotations*, in which he wrote that there was no crime in rendering "word" as "discourse," "prayer," "voice," or any other analogous term in a private book.<sup>51</sup> What the

<sup>49</sup> "... tunc nihil autoritatis maneret in sacra scriptura quia quacumque particula signata dicam quod est adjecta . . . et sic peribit auctoritas sacrae scripturae." Ibid., 97.

<sup>50</sup> On the substitution, Jarrot, 35-40, and Boyle, chap. 1.

<sup>51</sup> "Next, in the annotations of John 1, apologetically excusing himself because he had translated, 'In the beginning was the Discourse,' etc., 'what' he says, 'is the crime if in a book which is privately read I say "discourse" for "word," or "prayer," or "voice," or something else that means the same?' ["Item in annotationibus Joan. 1 apologetice se excusans quod transtulerit, *In principio erat Sermo*, etc., 'quid,' inquit,

indictment construed as two more linguistic offenses also found their way into the repertory, and came from the *Annotations* as well: regarding Mark 6:3, Erasmus called Joseph "the stepfather of Christ"; on Romans 8:3, he stated that "because Christ assumed the character of a criminal, he was a sort of hypocrite."<sup>52</sup> Out of twenty-three respondents, ten affirmed that Erasmus's language was wholly acceptable, while seven rejected it outright as fruitless and novel. Six others accepted one passage while spurning another, with Estevam de Almeida, one of the Portuguese delegates, condemning the use of "stepfather" but recognizing that "hypocrite" could have a positive import, while Pedro de Vitoria argued the reverse. In general, fewer participants had difficulties with *sermo* because it occurred frequently in patristic discourse, although a number still insisted that Erasmus had altered the usual reading of the Church, and some objected to the unfettered way in which he explained the change. Their disapproval of the other passages arose out of the terms' reverberations in contemporary usage, for "stepfather" signified either a second husband or the husband of a woman whose children were by another man, thus implying that Mary either had married twice or cuckolded Joseph. And four theologians noted that the label "hypocrite" always had an evil import.

But if a notable proportion of the respondents exhibited some flexibility toward theological language, particularly when the terms had precedents, they and their peers were less amenable to the straightforward remarks on a saint that Erasmus had offered about Jerome in his 1521 apology against Stunica. The background to the charge is complex. In his first polemic, Stunica had used Jerome's inclusion of the *comma Johanneum* to demonstrate that Erasmus's Greek manuscripts were fallacious and his omission of the verse unwarranted. In his counter-attack, Erasmus tried to turn the evidence back onto his adversary when he retorted that Jerome actually suspected the verse was fraudulent, trusted Greek manuscripts, and finally, by including the *comma*, changed the common reading of the Church.<sup>53</sup> In the process, unfortunately, Erasmus also observed that Jerome was impetuous, imprudent, and inconsistent, and the architects of the Valladolid repertory deliberately entwined those charac-

'erat piaculi si in libro qui privatim legitur pro Verbo dicam Sermonem, aut eloquium, aut orationem, aut vocem, aut aliud quod idem polleat?'] Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 21.

<sup>52</sup> See the relevant verses in Reeve, ed., 1986, 125; and idem, ed., 1990, 382.

<sup>53</sup> De Jonge, ed., 1983, 254.

terizations into their complaint over the *comma*'s deletion.<sup>54</sup> When the theologians perused the inventory, they first saw that Erasmus had emended Jerome's text, and then that he had abused him personally: the implication was that he was out to diminish his stature as well as his works.

Almost all the twenty-five respondents censured Erasmus's affront to Jerome's dignity, though nine wondered if his incivility had anything to do with the Trinity: Martín de Samunde, the provincial vicar of the Merced order, noted that the delegates were not set up as judges over rude language, and suggested the matter be remitted to Erasmus's confessor.<sup>55</sup> Others tried to exonerate Erasmus by wondering whether the depiction was true, even though they took care to also deplore it. Miguel Carrasco, a theology professor at Alcalá, left it to others to decide whether the characterization of Jerome fit, but wrote that Erasmus was uncivil, impudent, and brash. Guevara could believe that Jerome was rather changeable, but asserted that Erasmus spoke impertinently. And López de Bejar daringly claimed that Erasmus's remark was apt, though its terms were inappropriate.<sup>56</sup> Even Gómez disowned the language while protesting that Erasmus venerated Jerome nearly everywhere else.<sup>57</sup> But seven others concentrated instead on what they saw as Erasmus's insolence, which they found infuriating. The most vehement reaction came from Gouvea, who envisioned Erasmus's statements as having a pernicious effect on the status of holy figures and texts.<sup>58</sup> Even those who tried to excuse Erasmus's remarks on the basis of relevancy, accuracy, and context clearly regretted them; as Coronel admitted, he himself would never have

<sup>54</sup> "Erasmus in annotationibus primae Joannis 5 corruptos codices defensat, in beatum Hieronymum debaccatur, arrianorum causam agit atque tutatur. . . . divum Hieronymum his verbis impetit: Quamquam ille, scilicet Hieronymus, saepenumero violentus est, parum prudens, saepe varius parumque sibi constans." Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 18.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 45, 74, 80.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>58</sup> Gouvea expostulated, "What authority will preachers of the word of God, in the seat of truth, have in sermons if they cite Jerome's testimony? What steadfastness in these things that he translated, if the statements of his translation are produced against heretics?" ["Quid auctoritatis in praedicationibus habebunt Dei verbi praedicatores in cathedra veritatis, si citent Hieronymi testimonium? Quid firmitatis in his quae transtulit, si dicta suae translationis contra haereticos afferentur?"] Ibid., 72.

written such words against Jerome, for they plainly displayed irreverence.<sup>59</sup>

If the repertory suggested that Erasmus had weakened the New Testament's authority by altering or criticizing its text and its translator, it also implied that he denigrated the Bible and Catholic doctrine by his proposals that certain dogmas were deduced rather than expressed in scriptural narratives. His observation "that only the Father was called true God in the Gospel," which the formulators of the inventory drew from the *Modus orandi Deum*, but which had counterparts in the first two editions of the *Annotations* and the *Apologia* to Stunica, drew some of the most heated debate at the conference.<sup>60</sup> Much of the debate revolved around the circumscriptions of Erasmus's terms. The theologians tried to determine whether he had intended "true God" to be rendered as the literal denomination "verus Deus" or whether the phrase could encompass deductions as well; they also disagreed over whether he meant "Gospel" to include just the first four books or all of the New Testament. Their decisions affected their reactions. Francisco de Vitoria, who expounded the proposition to the assembly, carried some theologians with him when he objected that since "God" had to signify "true God," then wherever Christ was called God, He was designated as the true one. He also asserted that he did not believe Erasmus conceived of the "Gospel" as only the first four books of the New Testament — probably because Erasmus's annotation mentioned the apostolic letters as well — and warned that whether Erasmus intended a Catholic meaning or not, his statement was scandalous, dangerous, and should be expurgated.<sup>61</sup> Fernando de Prejano, from the college of Santa Cruz in Valladolid, concurred with Castillo and pronounced the notion an abomination even if Erasmus had uttered it while pretending to be a heretic in the *Apologia ad Stunicam*. And Quintana rejected the possibility that Erasmus had spoken out of ignorance or a faulty memory, though some participants invoked comments to that effect from Erasmus himself. Nevertheless, Vitoria ultimately conceded that if Erasmus supposed "true God" as a literal utterance, and "Gospel" as only

<sup>59</sup> "Verba autem quae in Hieronymum scripsit, ipse non scripsissem; irreverentiam enim prae se ferunt." *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 18; Reeve, ed., 1986, 221; de Jonge, ed., 1983, 124-30, in which Erasmus attempted to prove that the equation between Jesus and God only was implied in certain scriptural passages. Carranza de Miranda had attacked the annotation and Erasmus's response to Stunica in his polemic, 3v-14v.

<sup>61</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 117.

the first four accounts of the Apostles, then his declaration could be tolerated; most agreed with him, though they also found Erasmus's aim obscure.

As for other indictments that pertained to scriptural and patristic style, the theologians had time to consider those that revolved around the designation of Holy Spirit. The third category cited Erasmus's prologue to his edition of the *corpus* of Hilary of Poitiers (315-67), in which he proposed that the saint hesitated to call the Holy Spirit God because his reverence for the biblical text prevented him from enunciating what was not there.<sup>62</sup> In this instance no one argued that Erasmus intended his remark to pertain solely to the Gospel: Castillo, Arrieta, Córdoba, Almeida, and, reluctantly, archdeacon Antonio Rodríguez de la Fuente adduced examples from all over the New Testament, as well as patristic commentaries, to disprove Erasmus's statement. Alcaráz and the canon Pedro de Ciria, on the other hand, resorted to personal experience and contended that *they* couldn't find the cognomen "God" openly bestowed on the Holy Spirit in Scripture, or in Hilary's writings either. And Gómez again evinced his familiarity with Erasmus's critical apparatus when he suggested that if the equation of the Holy Spirit as God had been expressed in the Bible, no one would have had to demonstrate it later.<sup>63</sup> But out of the seventeen who wrote on this proposition, only six endorsed Erasmus's suggestions about the Holy Spirit, Hilary, and the New Testament.

Erasmus did not comment on scriptural and patristic style in order to tally up the number of times a particular combination of

<sup>62</sup> The specific charge read, in part, "Erasmus in the prologue to the works of St. Hilary: 'Divine Hilary,' he says, 'at the end of twelve books dares to pronounce nothing about the Holy Spirit except that it is the Spirit of God, nor would he have dared this except that he read it in the writings of Paul.' And below, 'On no occasion did St. Hilary write that the Holy Spirit must be adored, on no occasion did he attribute to him the name of God.' And below, 'In which,' namely divine volumes, 'although the formal title of God is applied to the Son several times, in this manner nowhere openly to the Holy Spirit.'" ["Erasmus in prologo operum sancti Hilarii: 'Divus Hilarius,' inquit, 'in calce libri duodecim nihil audet de Spiritu Sancto pronuntiare nisi quod Spiritus Dei est, nec hoc ausurus nisi legisset apud Paulum.' Et infra: 'Nusquam sanctus Hilarius scribit adorandum Spiritum Sanctum, nusquam tribuit ei Dei vocabulum.' Et infra: 'In quibus,' scilicet divinis voluminibus, 'ut aliquotiens Filio tribuitur Dei cognomen ita Spiritui Sancto nusquam aperte.']] Ibid., 21. No one seized on this excerpt to prove a related point, that Erasmus admitted the term "God" was attributed to Jesus in the New Testament.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 70.

words occurred in divine literature. Instead he intended to highlight the historical development of Catholic theology and practice, throw into relief the discrepancies between his own epoch and that of antique Christianity, and thereby facilitate the *imitatio* of an earlier era.<sup>64</sup> As far as the Valladolid collection was concerned, his historicist approach was not only obvious in his considerations of manuscript transmission, but in his reflections on patristic dogma and practice. Furthermore, in his polemic against Stunica he had portrayed apostolic scruples as akin to patristic ones when he tried to justify his annotation that Christ was called God openly in only two or three scriptural passages. Some delegates expropriated his reflections when they began to debate the plausibility of historical differences between their rites and dogmas and those of the earliest Christians.<sup>65</sup>

Twenty theologians had written on whether Christ was literally called true God in the Gospel, but only six reacted to the possibility that the equation might have emerged gradually in the apostolic Church, despite the fact that the two issues were entangled in the accusation. The ones who replied rejected Erasmus's idea out of hand. Córdoba wrote that the statement should be damned. Pedro Sánchez Ciruelo, a former professor of Thomistic theology at Alcalá, contended that since the entire New Testament witnessed Christ as God, someone obviously dared to proclaim the designation out loud; he also pointed out that the Apostles did not write down all the words they preached. Quintana tried to make the same point from the opposite tack, which was somewhat less successful: he too maintained that Christ's divinity was stated throughout the New Testament, but then stipulated that the evangelists preached what they transcribed. In addition, he found Erasmus's remarks insulting to men in such a

<sup>64</sup> On the incongruity of recognizing texts as removed in time and drawing models of behavior from them anyway, when their example surely ought to be irrelevant, see Grafton, 1991, 23-42. The paradox of the historically distant and the eternally relevant was especially sharp where religious sources were concerned.

<sup>65</sup> He had written "Perhaps one could suppose that this [denoting Jesus as God] was seldom done by the respectful apostles, lest the profane ears of certain persons of that time not have borne the name of God bestowed on man, and thus it happened that they rather recoiled from evangelical doctrine than began to learn the mysteries of the Gospel. So Christ first ordered them to preach repentance, and be silent about Christ." ["Fortasse suspicari poterat aliquis hoc parcius fuisse factum ab apostolis verentibus, ne id temporis quorundam aures profanae non ferrent homini tribui Dei vocabulum, fieretque ut prius resiliunt ab evangelica doctrina quam coeipissent evangelii mysteria discere. Sic primum Christus suis mandavit, ut penitentiam praedicarent, de Christo tacerent."] De Jonge, ed., 1983, 124.



state of perfection, and consistently repulsed any statement that would highlight the human over the divine qualities of early Christians.<sup>66</sup> His attitude toward the apostles duplicates the expansive sense of sanctity he and his peers exhibited toward Jerome; they responded in a similar if more restrained way to the problem of Hilary's nerves and the Holy Spirit.

At least seventeen participants treated the historical question of exactly when and by whom the Holy Spirit was proclaimed as God. There must have been some public discussion of how the Nicene Council had affected holy nomenclature, because several participants cited it as a watershed; references to it made sense since it produced a creed, and Hilary could have been affected by its proclamations. Accordingly, Matatigui noted that if "ancient orthodox fathers" meant those who preceded or attended Nicaea, then Erasmus's statement about their hesitancy was true, though their books should be surveyed to make sure; Rodríguez de la Fuente substantially agreed with him. Lerma and Alonso Enríquez, nephew of the Admiral of Castile and the highest-ranking attendee, explained that the Church Fathers recoiled from descriptions of the Holy Spirit because they recognized the limits of their own understanding, and hesitated to put their opinions forward lest they contradict sacred letters.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, a clear majority of the respondents objected to the possibility that the Holy Spirit's divinity was conceptualized over time, whether the matter concerned only Hilary or all the members of the early Church. Almeida thought the ancients whom Erasmus described never lived. He also intimated that the articles of the faith existed in the same form now as they did in the fourth century, for he stipulated that since Hilary was a bishop and a saint — and would have been bound to endorse those articles — he must have confessed the Holy Spirit as God.<sup>68</sup> Prejano, Córdoba, Arrieta, and Castillo, among others, agreed with him: Hilary believed, but did not write it down, exactly;

<sup>66</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 55 (Córdoba), 51 (Ciruelo), and 96 (Quintana).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 66, 78.

<sup>68</sup> "... blessed Hilary dared to proclaim the Holy Spirit God, since these words 'The Holy Spirit is God' is one of the articles of the faith which was proposed must be believed by the baptized. If therefore he was a bishop and a saint, then how did he not dare?" ["... beatus Hilarius ausus est pronuntiare Spiritum Sanctum Deum cum haec, Spiritus Sanctus est Deus, sit unum ex articulis fidei quem baptizandis proponebatur credendus. Si ergo episcopus et sanctus fuit, quomodo igitur non ausus est?"] *Ibid.*, 29.

and if early Christians regarded the Holy Spirit as God — which they did — then they confessed it.

In most of the excerpts presented at Valladolid, Erasmus's approval of and preference for the theological style and ceremonial restraint of the patristic era was simply implied, though the principle of emulating that age underlay his editorial efforts and devotional recommendations. But a passage from *Modus orandi Deum* that apparently championed a purely scriptural foundation for Christianity also found its way into the repertory, and answers to it may have reflected the power of Protestantism as well as custom. Erasmus had written, "Perhaps this is the moral foundation of the Christian religion, to revere everything among divine matters, but to sanction nothing except that which is clearly expressed in sacred letters," and the assemblers of the accusations attempted to employ that statement as proof of his rejection of the *comma Johanneum* and his support for Arians.<sup>69</sup> The theologians were smarter than that, however: none used the quotation to convict him of Arianism, but eight of them implicitly and explicitly used it to connect him with Luther.

Their responses to the charge were equivocal. At first they appeared to elevate tradition over scripture, since twenty-one of the twenty-eight who initially reacted pronounced the sentence heretical if uttered so baldly. Nevertheless, some of them mitigated their views in light of extenuating evidence, for there were ways to get around the passage's apparent heterodoxy. As Carranza pointed out, Erasmus had modified the passage in the second edition of the work in 1525 in order to demonstrate that such a sentiment was not his own; he had planned it to refer to private individuals only, and finally, he only had echoed the sentiments of previous doctors such as the Pseudo-Dionysius.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, Coronel and Enríquez adduced the context of Erasmus's other works and affirmed that he could not have intended the passage to be read literally: after all, he used other authorities than Scripture, and frequently submitted himself to the Church, which obviously had instituted practices that were not in the Bible.

More than half the respondents, or sixteen out of twenty-eight, found these arguments persuasive to some degree, if only because, like Quintana and Vázquez, they became confused as to Erasmus's aim, or acquiesced like Francisco de Vitoria despite their better judg-

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 44.

ment.<sup>71</sup> But a slightly greater number also noted Erasmus's ostensible concordance with Luther and wanted to excise the offensive material. Four theologians — Gómez, Enríquez, Ciria, and Virués — explicitly maintained that Erasmus was not mimicking Luther in the *Modus orandi Deum*, not only because he eventually altered his prose, but because he already had clarified his differences from him in *De libero arbitrio*. But four more respondents — Rodríguez de la Fuente, Lerma, Alcaráz, and López de Bejar — asserted that the statement was not Lutheran as Erasmus intended it, and yet wanted it censored anyway. The latter group, practically speaking, therefore can be classified with fourteen others who stipulated the heresy of Erasmus's sentiment, because what all eighteen finally advocated was the same. Ultimately, then, a majority of the theologians either believed Erasmus never meant to convey that notion as his own, or could be persuaded into that opinion. But an even larger portion also evinced great unease over the statement, not for any intention behind it but simply because it was in print. Indeed, most of the Valladolid theologians believed Erasmus was a Catholic, but they also wished he would exercise more caution in his treatises.

Yet just as the case of Luke 1:35 demonstrated that concrete proposals could be endorsed but theoretical ones rejected, the participants could apparently sanction scriptural and patristic examples over more recent conventions when it came to precise instances of imitation. One of the themes they debated was the role of contention and coercion within Christianity; they had to decide whether Erasmus disparaged past and present efforts to define orthodoxy, as well as contemporary labors to enforce it. In the *Apologia* against Stunica, Erasmus had argued that perhaps the Arians, and by implication heretics in general, would be persuaded to orthodoxy more readily through pious rather than inquisitive endeavors.<sup>72</sup> In the *Paraphrases*

<sup>71</sup> Vázquez wrote, "Whether that proposition is from Erasmus's mind, or from the minds of others — inasmuch as I see Erasmus's [added] examples persuade against it — is not established for me from the contents of the writing; nevertheless I see that Erasmus in the end certainly pronounces that to be false." ["An illa propositione proposita sit ex mente Erasmi, vel potius ex mente aliorum, quandoquidem video Erasmi instantias adversus eam inducere, non mihi constat ex serie literae; video tamen Erasmum tandem illam dicere certo esse falsam."] Ibid., 112.

<sup>72</sup> The proposition quoted him as writing "Perhaps it would have been better to effect this with pious studies, so that we likewise may be restored with God, than to fight it out with curious ones, as in how the Son may differ from the Father, or the Holy Spirit from both." ["Fortasse praestiterat hoc piis studiis agere uti nos idem reddamur cum Deo, quam curiosis studiis decertare, quomodo differat a Patre Filius,

on Matthew, he had counseled that heretics probably should be reserved to God's judgment, and suggested that adolescents undergo a catechetical examination on the meaning of their baptismal vows. And in the colloquy *Inquisitio de fide*, one of his characters called excommunication something that terrified only children, and reserved the real power over the human soul to God.<sup>73</sup>

When the attendees had to side with either pious studies or meddlesome ones, nineteen out of the twenty-three who responded favored the former, with or without qualifications. The evidence indicates that they basically understood the same thing by the term, namely the importance of moral theology over the speculative, Aristotelianized variety. Though some members, led by Francisco de Victoria, cautioned that Erasmus's dichotomy should not apply to the patristics' efforts to delineate the faith, and a few more insisted that contemporary scholastic inquiry was spiritually beneficial too, over half endorsed Erasmus's attitude without reservation. Carranza wrote that the doctrine was pious and holy, instructed the emotions and incited the will, and turned humans from useless disputes.<sup>74</sup> Virués concurred that love was better than contention, Carrasco repeated St. Paul's dictum that the end of the law was charity, and Samunde rhapsodized that the notion was charming. The vast majority, then, accepted the value of "pious study" over argument for its own sake. They went on to implicitly criticize an institution that was grounded on the soundness of confrontation over religious beliefs: the Spanish Inquisition.

Matthew 13:25-30 detailed Jesus's parable about servants who wished to gather the tares too soon and thereby endangered the wheat growing alongside. Erasmus identified the tares as pseudo-apostles and heretics, and suggested that the scriptural directive to tolerate rather than rip them up was a precept to endure religious offenders; his recommendation seemed to arise from the imitation of antique

aut ab utroque Spiritus Sanctus."] Ibid., 18. The only difference was the inclusion of "spiritus," which was missing from the *Apologia*; de Jonge, ed., 1983, 258.

<sup>73</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 22-23.

<sup>74</sup> "I pronounce this teaching to be pious and holy, since it may teach our disposition and incite the will to the love and affection of God, turning us from curious studies and useless debates, which are so valuable for purposes of disputation, and avail too little for the instruction of the understanding." ["... dico hoc dogma pium esse et sanctum, cum erudiat affectum nostrum et incitet voluntatem ad amorem et caritatem Dei, avertens nos a curiosis studiis et inutilibus disceptationibus, qui tantum valent ad contentionem, et parum ad intellectus doctrinam."] Ibid., 43.

practice.<sup>75</sup> Out of sixteen responses, twelve described Erasmus's comment as Catholic, pious, and indicative of the Church's mercy toward the heterodox; even Guevara, an inquisitor, declared that Erasmus's exegesis could be overlooked, though it certainly would make his job more difficult. But if a sizeable proportion agreed that heretics should sometimes be ignored, and thus tacitly rebuked overly enthusiastic prosecutions, their forbearance extended only so far.

In the prologue to the same work, Erasmus had reflected on ways to rejuvenate Christianity, and pondered whether children should be examined about the significance of their faith. He mused that if they understood its import, they could be asked whether they considered their baptism valid, and if they did, they could publicly renew the promises their godparents had made for them, which would have a stirring effect on the audience. Besides appearing to repeat a sacrament, however, Erasmus admitted that his scheme presented another obstacle, namely what should ensue if the person chose to spurn rather than endorse his or her baptism. He subsequently noted that everything should be attempted to prevent such a renunciation, but that if it occurred it might be better to leave the offenders alone until they came to their senses, and in the meantime only exclude them from the sacraments.<sup>76</sup> The Valladolid repertory included his proposal for patience over constraint, but typically omitted the surrounding material that would put the quotation in context.<sup>77</sup>

Still, the theologians reacted as much to the background of the statement as they did to the accusation itself, with six out of thirteen viewing religious instruction for older children as a wise suggestion, and Lerma and Ciria recognizing Erasmus's reference to the rites of

<sup>75</sup> The proposition read, "On the paraphrase of Matthew 13, 'servants who wish to gather the tares too soon are those who think that pseudo-apostles and heretics should be driven from public with swords and deaths, when the head of the household does not wish them to be extinguished, but tolerated, in case they may come to their senses and be turned from tares into wheat. Because if they do not come to their senses, they may be reserved for his judgment, to whom finally they will cause suffering.' He says these things there." ["In paraphrase Mat. 13: 'servi qui volunt ante tempus colligere zizania sunt qui pseudoapostolos et haeresiarchas gladiis ac mortibus aestimant e medio tollendos; cum paterfamilias nolit eos extinguere, sed tolerari, si forte resipiscant et e zizaniis vertantur in triticum. Quod si non resipiscant, serventur suo iudici cui paenas dabunt aliquando.' Haec ille."] Ibid., 22.

<sup>76</sup> Erasmus's regard for irenicism and inclusion in the preface correspond to his general thoughts on heterodoxy in the patristic era; see Tracy.

<sup>77</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 22. Their French counterparts included the passage in its entirety: Du Plessis d'Argentré, 2, part 1:54.

catechization and confirmation. But not one favored what they called his "second proposition," in which Erasmus advised only minimal interference with adolescents who spurned the faith. Matatigui found the counsel erroneous, Alcaráz and Rodríguez de la Fuente thought it unpleasant, and Lerma believed it implausible, doubting that any boy would resist the faith in Church and in front of the entire town — though if he did, he should be dragged back to it by force, fear, scourges, and even the threat of death. As Córdoba wrote, "happy the compulsion that compels toward the good."<sup>78</sup>

The last proposition reviewed in 1527 came from the opening of the dialogue entitled *Inquisitio de fide* and charged Erasmus with doubting the efficacy of excommunication, though hardly any of the fifteen respondents reacted to his alleged deprecation of papal powers.<sup>79</sup> Instead, they focussed on the threat posed by the *Colloquies* as a whole. Even though nine dismissed the indictment because Erasmus acted the part of a heretic in this particular colloquy (Almeida), intended his dialogue as a joke (Rodríguez de la Fuente) or generally issued works such as *De libero arbitrio* (Gómez), a clear majority nevertheless wanted the *Colloquies* removed from the public arena, restricted to a learned audience, or corrected by the author. Their Italian counterparts also found that work particularly dangerous.<sup>80</sup> It was Erasmus's tone that bothered them so much; indeed, the respondents may have favored pious studies, but they disapproved of ones that employed satire to advance their point. Even the translator of the Spanish version of the *Enchiridion* felt the same way: though Alonso Fernández de Madrid rejected any criticism of that particular text, he told Coronel in 1526 that if anyone slandered the *Praise of Folly* or the *Colloquies*, they would simply have to endure it.<sup>81</sup>

The Valladolid opinions look like straightforward testimony, however kaleidoscopic their evidence, but the question remains as to whether we can trust them to divulge their authors' real sentiments. After all, the theologians were summoned by the Inquisitor General, expounded their views in front of the *Suprema*, deposited their written opinions in the hands of inquisitorial notaries, and in certain in-

<sup>78</sup> "Et felix necessitas quae compellit ad bona." Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 59.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>80</sup> Seidel Menchi, 141, determined that ecclesiastical and inquisitorial figures first aimed at the censorship of the *Colloquies* out of all Erasmus's treatises.

<sup>81</sup> Allen, vol. 6, app. 18, letter 3, lines 50-52.

stances actually lodged with Inquisition officials.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the architects of the repertory listed wrongs against the Inquisition fourth out of twenty categories, behind transgressions against the Trinity, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, but before violations of sacraments, scripture, and patristic dignity, among other things. Their arrangement of the list was hardly coincidental, and if they intended to inflame inquisitorial hostility, at least some of the theologians may have reacted to a heightened atmosphere and framed their responses carefully, whether they tended to endorse, endure, or repudiate the ideas they were scrutinizing. Rodríguez de la Fuente signed *Lerma's* written replies on the initial category of accusations, while Matatigui stated his sentiments in single sentences.<sup>83</sup> Guevara prefaced nearly all his responses with a profession of belief in the particular doctrine under discussion, though his orthodoxy was not ostensibly in question.<sup>84</sup> And almost all his peers acted similarly when it came to the *comma Johanneum*.

Yet to leap from such evidence to the conclusion that the participants disguised their views is a problematic inference, for a variety of reasons. For one thing, the oath they swore at the assembly's onset explicitly constrained them to secrecy, but with an extra condition: that nothing they said, even in casual conversation, could be used by anyone else to damage their reputations, and that constraint presumably included the inquisitorial audience.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, the same

<sup>82</sup> The AHN file, 14, includes a partial list of attendees and their accommodations, and places certain theologians in inquisitors' residences.

<sup>83</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 77, 89-91.

<sup>84</sup> In one instance, he began with a partial reiteration of the Nicene Creed: "As far as the first proposition, as a servant of the servants of God and a true orthodox, I confess Christ the Lord and our redeemer to be God from God, light from light, true God from true God, one in being with the Father, through whom all things were made." ["Quod primam propositionem ut servus servorum Dei ac verus orthodoxus, confiteor Christum Dominum ac redemptorem nostrum esse Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt."] Ibid., 74.

<sup>85</sup> "Likewise they swore to hold as secret what was said and talked over in this Catholic congregation, in particular that they will not say anything from which could ensue some troublesome and vicious opinion about someone among those who are gathered here and attended said congregation." ["Assi mesmo que juran de tener secreto en lo que en esta catholica congregacion se hablara y platicara en special que no diran cosa alguna de que a alguno de los que son aqui congregados e interviniere en la dicha congregacion se pueda seguir algun inconveniente y sinistra opinion."] Legajo #4426, 3. While a number of the attendees were either prosecuted or deposed by the Inquisition in the 1530s, among them López de Bejar, Virués, and Lerma,

vow obliged them to offer their opinions as dictated by God and their consciences. Finally, from a purely practical standpoint, in the majority of cases we cannot measure their testimony from within the assembly against anything composed outside of it, for most of them never wrote another line on Erasmus either before or after 1527. As for the few exceptions who voiced opinions in other venues, nearly all maintained consonant stances, though Carranza, whose case was unique, followed Stunica's lead in 1520 and then shifted to a more positive outlook seven years later.<sup>86</sup> Even more to the point, several of the delegates, such as Gómez, Cabrero, and Enríquez, felt sufficiently safe to endorse Erasmus in rather replete terms, and if they expressed themselves with zeal, their counterparts presumably could have too.

Other factors could nevertheless have mitigated the sincerity of the Valladolid testimony, such as the role political factions might have played in the rendition of the opinions, and the chance that the Lutheran threat induced the delegates to take up harsher positions than they would have done otherwise. If it is a cliché of early modern history that Spain was split between pro- and anti-erasmians, the corollary to that maxim is that those groups corresponded to "European-ness" and to xenophobia, and again to contingents headed by imperial chancellor Mercurio Gattinara on the one hand, and royal secretary Francisco de los Cobos on the other. Besides the obstacle of knowing relatively little about the internal workings of Charles V's government in the 1520s, however, as well as a dearth of testimony that would link the Valladolid participants to such networks, the disadvantage of such an approach is that it reduces the theologians to mannequins who simply parroted views set out for them by higher

none of them could have predicted that in 1527. For an overview of those prosecutions, see Bataillon, 1991, 1:473-522; for Virués in particular, Beltrán de Heredia, 1935, 242-57. Both López de Bejar and Virués acted as witnesses in Vergara's trial.

<sup>86</sup> Castillo circulated anti-erasmian pamphlets immediately before the assembly was convened. Enríquez wrote a defense that was prompted by the Sorbonne's condemnation, devoted to the dissimilarities between Erasmus and Luther, and placed on the 1551 Index: *Eiusdem Defensionum pro Erasmo Roterodamo contra varias Theologorum Parrhisiensium annotationes liber unis . . .*, Naples 1532. And Ruíz de Virués commented on Erasmus in his seven *Collationes* (1526, now lost), a vernacular letter (1526) to the guardian of the Franciscan monastery at Alcalá, and the last of his *Philippicae disputationes XX adversus Lutherana dogmata per Philippum Melancthonem defensa* (Antwerp, 1541): in each, he emphasized his merits but also recognized his faults. See Bataillon, 1991, 1:236-40, and Bonilla y San Martín, 1903, 693-98.



powers.<sup>87</sup> As for the problem of an intensified response to Erasmus because of Luther, again the obstacle is a lack of comparable evidence, for we have no Spanish context for the former's works before the latter's existence. The perception of a Lutheran threat undoubtedly had some effect on the opinions, but the question is in which direction. For if a number of the theologians alluded to the "dangerous epoch" in which they lived, or connected Erasmus to Luther when they responded to the quote from the *Modus orandi Deum*—or in one case repeated the aphorism that Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched—several other delegates actually revealed a fear of sending Erasmus over to Protestantism by criticizing him too harshly.<sup>88</sup> Accordingly, we have to admit the possibility that the European atmosphere of religious contention might have diminished censure as well as augmented it; the final result is that we cannot measure the effect of that environment on the extant evidence. If the delegates nevertheless curtailed their enthusiasm for Erasmus in consequence of it, then ultimately they did not think his exoneration worth the risk. Such hesitation in itself would be highly significant.

Despite the possible effects of inquisitors, ministers, and Lutherans on the proceedings at Valladolid, I would argue that the theologians' statements can be read as basically authentic reactions to Erasmus's writings. Contrary to a scheme that characterizes early modern Spaniards as either erasmians and humanists, or anti-erasmians and scholastics, their opinions confute the historiography, for they reveal that endorsement or rejection of Erasmus's ideas was neither as extensive nor as profound as we have been led to believe. Significantly enough, most of Erasmus's reputed partisans at the conference did not embrace his notions unequivocally. The ones who reacted to his advice on rebellious adolescents — Lerma, Matatigui, Alcaráz, Gómez, Ciria, and Rodríguez de la Fuente — unanimously condemned it. Four of the five who replied to the passage on excommunication

<sup>87</sup> Avilés Fernández, 1986, 175-94, attempted to evaluate the Valladolid testimony according to wider political proclivities, though he failed to present persuasive evidence to tie the theologians to Gattinara or de los Cobos, or proved that their testimony derived from party loyalty.

<sup>88</sup> Among others who mentioned the trials of their era, see Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 51 (Ciruelo), 59 (Córdoba), and 72 (Gouvea); the last relayed the anecdote about the egg, *idem*, while Cabrero and Ciria implied a danger of pushing Erasmus too hard, *idem*, 36, 48. Vergara told Erasmus that representatives of the monastic orders leveled the same charge of trepidation at Inquisitor Manrique; Allen, vol. 7, #1814, lines 155-58.

regretted the content and tone of the *Colloquies* in general, and some of them, in particular Lerma, advocated the excision or correction of troublesome passages almost as frequently as anyone else.<sup>89</sup> Such recommendations raise serious questions about the erasmians' methods of reading the very works that supposedly guided them: when coupled with the fact that the Spanish translations of the *Enchiridion* and the *Colloquies* lacked the more controversial sentiments of the originals, it becomes clear that the architects of the Valladolid propositions were not the only ones who could treat sources selectively.<sup>90</sup>

The element of discrimination was equally clear among Erasmus's antagonists, for his critics could relent on occasion. Guevara, who considered many of the statements useless and most of them heretical, wrote that Erasmus's comments about the Inquisition were legitimate. Córdoba, who persistently criticized his remarks irrespective of context or intention, thought his satire of papal excommunication "open to a wholesome understanding." And Arrieta not only termed his advice about religious instruction beneficial, but wished it were implemented all the time.<sup>91</sup> In sum, to arrange the authors of the Valladolid opinions into dichotomous groups of followers and foes imposes a coherence on the testimony which usually is not there, and which masks the critical faculties of the historical subjects.

If evidence from the conference smudges the line between allies and opponents, it also splinters another realm of alleged indivisibility, for the respondents generally endorsed Erasmus's devotional suggestions while hesitating over his philological and historicist ones. Everyone backed his elevation of pious studies over probing ones, and corroborated his recommendation for a more restrained pursuit of heretics; if all the respondents also dismissed his consideration of a relative religious freedom in the *Paraphrases* on Matthew, their sentiments illustrate the danger of interpreting calls for moderation as signs of toleration. Their prudence was equally evident, and even more significant, on issues of textual criticism and ecclesiastical development.

The theologians responded in ambivalent ways to Erasmus's hermeneutics. Ten out of twenty-nine linked his omission of the *comma*

<sup>89</sup> Lerma favored expurgation or correction in four instances; Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 77, 79.

<sup>90</sup> Alonso Fernández de Madrid's prologue to the *Enchiridion*, Alonso, ed., 104-05; Bataillon, 1991, 1:205-06. On Virués' rendition of the *Colloquies*, Bataillon, 1991, 1:321-22.

<sup>91</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 33, 59, 76.

*Johanneum* to its absence in Greek manuscripts, and so by default admitted the latter as valid sources for scriptural investigation. Nevertheless, if a third accepted the deletion of the verse on the basis of seven Greek codices, the same group condoned its restoration on the strength of a single one and expressed relief at its reinstatement. Only Gómez and Cabrero enunciated reasons behind the expurgation, and Cabrero alone maintained that Erasmus would still be justified in removing the verse because the evidence for it rested on a unique manuscript. Just two more respondents repeated Erasmus's own ploy that he had been acting as a translator, not a dogmatist, and thus edited as the manuscripts dictated.<sup>92</sup> The theologians exhibited no greater ability or willingness to expound or defend the matter further, and what makes their reluctance even more telling is that at least eight of them were very familiar with Erasmus's writings, and so presumably understood the foundations of his philological decisions. Cabrero stated again and again that he had read Erasmus's works, while Coronel had perused the latest edition of the *Annotations*. Virués, López de Bejar, Enríquez, and Gómez alluded to *De libero arbitrio*, and consequently insisted that Erasmus was not a Lutheran, while Lerma could cite the content of *Modus orandi Deum*'s second edition. Their knowledge of the texts allowed them to point out, as they frequently did, that many of the suspicious excerpts had been lifted out of context. But most of them declined to express their agreement with or comprehension of Erasmus's hermeneutics in any but the most nebulous terms. No one proposed to weigh the relative merits of the sources involved, just as no one suggested that the verse in the codex Brittanicus might have been forged, or advanced any theoretical statements on the relationship between Greek and Latin manuscripts. And if the *erasmistae*, as royal preacher Juan de Salamanca called them, refused to explain the interpretative principles of their alleged master when they had the opportunity to do so, then we have to address the depth of their endorsement and the potentially deceptive aura of their reputation.<sup>93</sup> In fact, even the erasmians preferred to maintain the Vulgate rather than modify it according to its original languages, though they recognized Greek and Hebrew as its potential archetypes: their loyalties in this sense paralleled those of the New Testament editors on the Complutensian Polyglot, who either sided

<sup>92</sup> Namely, López de Bejar and Virués: *ibid.*, 79, 114.

<sup>93</sup> For Salamanca's reference, the only one of its kind in the proceedings, see *ibid.*, 102.

with Jerome's readings or presented conflicting passages without resolving them.<sup>94</sup> The same tendency toward only a cramped hermeneutics recurred in the participants' reactions to Erasmus's comments on Luke 1:35 and Romans 9:5, for they accepted the one but rejected the other because it implied the unrestricted philological investigation of scripture. If a number of them revealed a hesitant penchant for critical assessment, ultimately they privileged religious authority over perspicacity.

An analogous balancing act between criticism and convention, with a similar resolution, occurred when the delegates handled slurs against Jerome's sanctity. If a sizeable minority were willing to distinguish between the man and the saint, most did not particularly like doing so. The principle of divine inspiration governed their concept of Jerome, and caused them to emphasize his holy rather than human character. This principle prevented them from confronting the ramifications of his "changeable" nature, and the implications of his inconsistency were enormous. If Jerome had written Biblical commentaries that differed from his translations, and had questioned the authenticity of the *comma* but included it in his own rendition, such contradictions might provoke the question of whether the Latin Bible that early modern Europeans possessed were really his version of it. Erasmus had made the point numerous times, but it found no supporters at Valladolid. In a way, the delegates were determined to maintain a certain reputation for Jerome against the evidence, just as they affirmed the *comma Johanneum* on the basis of a single manuscript; a similar impetus could induce their European peers to assert that Jerome must have written his biblical commentaries before he translated the scripture he expounded.<sup>95</sup>

The same emphasis on continuity, and the transformation of recent practice into tradition, guided their responses to historical questions of ecclesiastical nomenclature and doctrine. Not one alleged erasmian treated the issue of whether and when Christ was termed God by the apostles, though many addressed the formal equation of the two in the New Testament; if rather more confronted the problem of scriptural and patristic references to the Holy Spirit and agreed with Erasmus's statements where the ante-Nicene fathers were

<sup>94</sup> The Complutensian Polyglot reveals less adherence to humanist hermeneutics than scholars have supposed. See Nebrija, 493-96; Bataillon, 1991, 1:40-41; Bentley, 1980, 145-56; idem, 1983, 98-107.

<sup>95</sup> See Rice, 1985, on the various approaches to Jerome in the early modern epoch.

concerned, they also advised a thorough examination of those figures' works as a guarantee, and cautioned that Hilary never believed anything contrary to Catholic doctrine. Even their support for earlier rather than later ecclesiastical norms may have rested on nothing more than authority masked as patristic emulation, for if most of them sided with devout studies over inquisitive ones, they probably did so for a thoroughly medieval reason: namely, the fact that Erasmus literally described meddlesome queries as "*curiosa*," and thereby invoked the concept of *curiositas*, which had a very specific meaning and a history of condemnation from Saint Paul to Jean Gerson.<sup>96</sup> A similar rationale could have induced their approval of Erasmus's comments on Matthew and heretics, since his paraphrase evoked the *Glosa ordinaria* as much as humanist *imitatio*.<sup>97</sup> When the delegates wrote as if Arians still threatened Christianity, or identified patristic arguments against heretics with scholastic ones or attested the accuracy of Erasmus's manuscripts because of their location in the papal library, they evinced a preference for the sanctioned and for custom. When they had to choose, most sided with a seamless rather than contingent version of religious history.<sup>98</sup>

Not surprisingly, the delegates also exhibited the consistent presence of scholasticism as a conceptual and discursive method. Their struggles to delineate statements such as "only the Father is pronounced true God in the Gospel" demonstrated that language and logic were not casual matters. The extent of their references to scholastic technique varied, but everyone invoked the procedure to some degree, if only in *résumés* of authorities. In one remarkable passage, Coronel admitted to speaking like a dialectician as he attempted to show that Erasmus himself did not believe in the extra-canonical origins of Romans 9:5, for "he argued conditionally, from a preceding assertion to a consequent one, namely in this way: if this clause is not added on, certainly in this passage Paul pronounced Christ to be God. But this clause is not added on. Therefore in this place Paul,

<sup>96</sup> Oberman.

<sup>97</sup> Of course, Erasmus's own practice simply parallels the intricacy of the Valladolid testimony: both reveal the range of theoretical and discursive models that early modern intellectuals had at their disposal.

<sup>98</sup> Only Lerma adduced a milder version of Erasmus's own comment to Lee that no heresy was more extinct than Arianism; Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 77; compare to Erasmus's remark in LeClerc, 9:277. On the equivalence between patristics and scholastics on heresy, see Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 54, 116; Cabrero adduced the papal library as proof of the manuscripts' accuracy, *idem*, 36.

etc."<sup>99</sup> He therefore demonstrated what recent scholars have advanced, namely that sixteenth-century intellectuals could move between types of discourse for rhetorical purposes.<sup>100</sup>

Furthermore, whoever put together the inventory did not hesitate to pull statements from Erasmus's works — such as "the Father is called the origin of Himself because He may be from none other" — that smacked of imprecision and played directly to the discrepancy between the participants' and Erasmus's formal training.<sup>101</sup> Unlike their polemical counterparts from other parts of Europe, however, if the Spaniards mentioned that Erasmus's language was inappropriate, they usually followed up the caveat with a remark that his propositions could have positive meanings. Amazingly enough, no one ridiculed Erasmus's theological ability, rebuffed his right to pursue theology as a discipline, or seemed to care that he only held an honorary degree in the subject from Turin. Even Carranza, who previously had berated him for his lack of theological training, dearth of dialectic, and employment of unorthodox terms, simply wrote that Erasmus's propositions were true, although not uttered in the style of more recent theology.<sup>102</sup> Moreover, the delegates' breezy attitude did not arise from the stance that language choices were unimportant, either, for no one maintained that Erasmus's alterations of scripture were trivial. The relative absence of professional jealousy thus makes the Spanish testimony startlingly different from other critical responses, in which Erasmus's inferior level of theological acumen became a *topos*.<sup>103</sup> If the Spaniards did not lack a sense of hierarchy when it came to religious issues — especially since a few alluded to discrepancies in status between the laity and the clergy — the vast majority still exhibited, by implication, a certain elasticity over the practitioners and characteristics of theological discourse.

A comparable suppleness distinguishes the delegates' opinions in other ways as well from those commonly expressed in the controversial literature. If they shared Lee, Stunica, and Latomus's suspicion of

<sup>99</sup> " . . . (ut more dialecticorum loquar), argueret a conditionali cum positione antecedentis ad positionem consequentis, hoc videlicet modo: si haec particula non est adjecta, certe hoc loco Paulus Christum pronuntiavit Deum. Sed haec particula non est adjecta. Igitur hoc loco Paulus etc." Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 61.

<sup>100</sup> Grafton, 1991, 36-44.

<sup>101</sup> Beltrán de Heredia, 1972, 18.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 44; for an overview of Carranza's polemic, see Rummel, 1989, 1:157ss.

<sup>103</sup> Rummel, 1989, 1:4-5; the stipulation of Erasmus as a grammarian, or philologist, rather than a theologian, was a standard charge in the controversial literature.

Greek, at least a third of them recognized that language played a role in scriptural investigation and refused to condemn Erasmus outright for having employed it.<sup>104</sup> If most, like Frans Tittelmans, feared that philological criticism would shatter the prestige of the Latin Bible and by extension the status of Jerome, a portion also accepted some linguistic emendation and could extrapolate saints from their hagiographies, even if they finally endorsed the principle of authority.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, if nearly all retained Arianism as a conceptual category for heresy, at least no one specifically accused Erasmus of that particular heterodoxy. The relative pliancy of Spanish reactions may arise from the fact that the delegates were responding to a polemic, rather than launching one of their own; consequently, it really is the accusations rather than the responses from Valladolid that are directly comparable to the charges leveled by other Europeans. Nevertheless, the Spanish testimony furnishes a broader sample of hermeneutical stances than what individual controversialists provide, and if it confirms a generally conservative drift in the face of philology and historicism, as well as the atypicality of Erasmus's premises and practices, it also blurs the categories we tend to apply to the early modern era.

In fact, the documents composed at Valladolid substitute a more fluid vision for the rigid contrasts of the old interpretive grid. Rather than substantiating discrete classes of pro- and anti-erasmians, the responses of the theologians reveal that enemies could praise, supporters rebuke, and the audience in general actively select its degree of support or condemnation; they may preserve the veracity of the term "erasmian" for sixteenth-century Spanish culture, but the Valladolid documents also limit its connotations where Renaissance humanism is concerned. More importantly, the opinions elucidate degrees of philological and historical understanding, and combinations of seemingly incongruous elements, that engender more intricate conceptualizations of the possible relationships between humanism and scholasticism, despite the fundamental contradictions of those methodologies.<sup>106</sup> They redouble the impression that appearances can be supremely illusive in sixteenth-century discourse, and prompt us to nuance instead of homogeneity in our descriptions of it.

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., chaps. 4, 5, 7; Bentley, 1983, chaps. 4 and 5, and idem, 1979; Asso, 59-98.

<sup>105</sup> On Tittelmans, see Bentley, 1979; and idem, 1983, 199-211.

<sup>106</sup> Kristeller; Nauert, 11-13; Grafton, 1991, 37-44.

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