

Juan de Valdés's Authorship of *Dialogue on Christian Doctrine* (1529)

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This article responds to a proposal made by Francisco Calero and Marco Antonio Coronel, which offers the defence that the *Dialogue of Christian Doctrine* was not written by Juan de Valdés but by Juan Luis Vives. The article relates the historical evidence, presents arguments from its contents, and then evaluates the proposal of Calero and Coronel. The historical evidence around the *Dialogue* is both distinguished and numerous, directly involving related witnesses and the declarations of eminent figures of sixteenth-century Christianity. Its contents, particularly since the discovery of Charles Gilly concerning the textual dependence of the *Dialogue* on Luther, depict an author whom it is impossible to identify with Juan Luis Vives. The arguments presented by Calero and Coronel are built upon inferences, not answering or questioning the historical evidence that points to Valdés's authorship. The authorship of Valdés, therefore, is confirmed with the analysis and arguments presented in this article.

Keywords

Juan de Valdés; sixteenth-century Spain; *Dialogo de Doctrina*

Introduction: The person and the Writing

Juan de Valdés is a religious figure of sixteenth-century Spain. He was the first Bible commentator to write in Spanish, providing an important example of translation of the biblical text in that language around the time of the Reformation. His significance, more than theological or linguistic, is found in the field of spirituality as well as in his relationship to Luther, the Roman Catholic Church, Erasmus, and the *Alumbrados* of Castile. The study of Valdés and his religious environment reveals an interesting momentum in sixteenth-century Castile, with a number of religious currents which would later develop into the condemned *Alumbrados*, Spanish Mysticism, Spanish Erasmianism, and Valdés's contribution to the Reformation in Italy. Among other eulogies, his contemporaries spoke of Valdés as '*scriptore superbiat orbis*'.¹ After his demise, however, the consolidation of a polarised dualism

¹ Daniel Roger, 1573, cited in Juan de Valdés, *Dos Diálogos Escritos por Juan de Valdés*, Reformistas Antiguos Españoles, vol. IV (Madrid:1850), title page.

of Catholicism versus Protestantism sadly diluted his distinctive contribution and progressively made him unattractive to either of those antagonistic positions.

Valdés's writings have steadily been discovered throughout the years. In the second half of the nineteenth-century, Benjamin B. Wiffen and Luis de Usoz y Río recovered his writings and biography from the past oblivion of heretics, publishing most of his spiritual, theological, and biblical works.² Their work was followed by Edward Boehmer, in an endeavour to vindicate significant Spanish Reformers and their writings suppressed by religious intolerance. In Wiffen and Usoz's initial publication, two dialogues by Valdés's brother were wrongly attributed to Juan de Valdés.³ Later other writings of Valdés were discovered.⁴ Most were brief, confirming the character and thought expressed in the previously published works. The case of *Dialogue on Christian Doctrine*, however, was clearly different.

Dialogue on Christian Doctrine was discovered by Marcel Bataillon in 1925 in the Library of Lisbon, Portugal. It remains today, the only extant copy of this work. The facsimile edition was published with an introduction by Bataillon. Eighty-nine pages of Bataillon's approximately three hundred, were dedicated to notes which mostly connected the *Dialogue* with the rest of Valdés's works.⁵ The evidence in favour of Valdés's authorship drawn from both history and its contents was such that no question ever arose concerning the matter until almost a century later, in 2009.

Even though Valdés's authorship of the *Dialogue* was never questioned, the debate over its teachings and characteristics indirectly confirmed it. On the one hand, recognised scholars on the period and geography of the *Dialogue* have confirmed Valdés's authorship. An example is José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras, Professor of Church History at the Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca.⁶ Works centred on Valdés, and the contents of the *Dialogue* also confirmed the affinity between this writing and

² Edward Boehmer and Benjamin Barron Wiffen, *Bibliotheca Wiffeniana: Spanish Reformers of Two Centuries from 1520, Their Lives and Writings, according to the Late Benjamin B. Wiffen's Plan and with the Use of His Materials* (Halle, Germany: K. Trübner, 1874).

³ *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*, and *Diálogo entre Lactancio y un Arcediano* (also known as *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma*).

⁴ For example, Juan de Valdés, *Cartas inéditas de Juan de Valdés al cardenal Gonzaga*, introduction and notes by José F. Montesinos (Madrid: impr. de S. Aguirre, 1931); Juan de Valdés, *Las ciento diez divinas consideraciones: recensión inédita del manuscrito de Juan Sánchez (1558)*, ed. by Jose Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras, Centro de Estudios Orientales y Ecuménicos «Juan XXIII» (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia, 1975).

⁵ Juan de Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, reproduction en fac-similé de l'exemplaire de la Bibliothèque nationale de Lisbonne (édition d'Alcala de Henares, 1529), avec une introduction et des notes par Marcel Bataillon, ed. by Marcel Bataillon (Coimbra: Impr. da Universidade, 1925).

⁶ See Juan de Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, introduction and notes by J. Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras (Barcelona: Proa, 1994); A. Gordon Kinder, *Valdés, Juan De*, vol. IX, *Biblioteca Dissidentium: Répertoire Des Non-Conformistes Religieux Des Seizième Siècles*, ed. by Oswald Glaid and Simone Simoni (Baden-Baden: Valentin Koerner, 1988).

the rest of Valdés's works.⁷ Even as late as 2019, Jorge Orlando Gallor Guarín defended a doctoral thesis on the *Dialogue on Christian Doctrine* as being by Juan de Valdés. This doctoral thesis was led by Professor Francisco Chico Rico, Professor of Literature Theory and Comparative Literature at the University of Alicante, and by José María Ferri Coll, a literature teacher from that same university. Tomás Albaladejo, of the University of Madrid, took part in the tribunal and gave a prologue and encomium to the publication of that thesis.⁸ Different scholars, therefore, from different theological perspectives and areas of expertise, have agreed and built upon Valdés's authorship.

However, the consensus over Valdés's authorship was questioned by Francisco Calero y Calero and Marco Antonio Coronel in 2009.⁹ Calero and Coronel first deprived Alfonso de Valdés, Juan de Valdés's brother, of the authorship of his two dialogues, attributing them to Juan Luis Vives. Upon that new and not-yet-debated proposal, they proceeded to link its Erasmian similarities to Valdés's *Dialogue on Christian Doctrine*, suggesting that Juan Luis Vives was its author. It is surprising that in the face of the strong and previous general consensus over Valdés as its author, their argument did not address the historical attestation and Valdesian characteristics.

This article will present the historical evidence of the Holy Office (the Inquisition) in Toledo, a tribunal noted for its archives and the careful recording of their proceedings. Furthermore, the article will briefly analyse some crucial teachings in the *Dialogue*, particularly in light of what recent decades have more clearly revealed about its religious context and sources. After the assessment of external and internal pieces of evidence, this article will evaluate the proposal of Francisco Calero and Marco Antonio Coronel. The historical evidence and evaluation of the internal arguments will confirm Valdés's authorship and also underline the difficulty with Luis Vives as the author.

⁷ See Juan de Valdés, *Le dialogue sur la doctrine chrétienne*, introduction and notes by Christine Wagner (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995); Carlos Gilly, *Juan de Valdés, traductor y adaptador de escritos de Lutero en su «Diálogo de Doctrina cristiana»* (Montserrat: Abadía de Montserrat, 1982); Margherita Morreale, 'J.de V. come traduttore dei Vangeli ed il Nuovo Testamento di Erasmo', *Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, vol. 125 (1976–77): 507–540.

⁸ Jorge Orlando Gallor Guarín, *Diálogo de Doctrina Christiana de Juan de Valdés: Retórica cultural, discurso, y literatura* (Alicante: U. de Alicante, 2019), p. 13ff.

⁹ Juan Luis Vives, *Diálogo de Doctrina Christiana*, intr. ed. y notes of Francisco Calero y Calero y Marco Antonio Coronel Ramos (Madrid: BAC, 2009); Marco Antonio Coronel Ramos, 'Juan Luis Vives y Juan de Valdés ante Mt. 5–7: traducción y exégesis', *Studia Philologica Valentina*, 10, no.7 (2007): 231–378.

The Historical Case for Valdés's authorship of *Dialogue on Christian Doctrine*

The existing documentary evidence for the authorship of this anonymous dialogue is remarkable. The attestation comes from individuals with a direct acquaintance with Valdés and of distinguished rank and relevance. The most significant testimony is found in the declarations from 1532 by Alonso Sánchez and Juan de Medina, both canons of the Church of Santiuste in Alcalá de Henares. Their declarations were given in the trial of the Holy Office against Juan de Vergara, a professor at the University of Alcalá de Henares, an eminent and emblematic figure of Spanish Erasmianism who had travelled with the Imperial Court of Charles V through the Low Countries and Germany. The declarations of these two witnesses, as well as that of Juan de Vergara concerning the *Dialogue* and its author, were corroborated in a parallel trial against María de Cazalla, sister of Bishop Juan de Cazalla.¹⁰

The content of the declarations in both trials is clear and explicit. The author of the *Dialogue* is identified as Juan de Valdés, a student in Alcalá de Henares. The title is identified almost verbatim except for the word *Dialogue*, which is exchanged for the word *book*, and the adverb 'a new', which is omitted: *Libro de Doctrina Cristiana hecho por un Religioso*. Its Valdesian authorship is particularly strengthened by the personal involvement of Juan de Vergara in favour of the *Dialogue*. Juan de Medina declared that 'it appeared to him that Vergara had a friendship with that one Valdés, and he [Vergara] felt bad at any offence which that one Valdés might receive'.¹¹ Alonso Sánchez also affirmed that Vergara had pleaded with him to use moderation with the *Dialogue* because Valdés was his friend.¹² Juan de Medina explicitly stated that Juan de Valdés himself had 'intensely pled'¹³ with him to ignore dissident propositions in the *Dialogue*, swearing that he had never written them in that wrong sense. Regarding María de Cazalla's declarations, there is also the personal involvement of Bernardino Tovar, half-brother of Juan de Vergara. María referred to Tovar's censure of Valdés for having published his book quickly without further revision and corrections.

The controversial reception of the *Dialogue* increased its attestation. In the trial against Vergara, Alonso Sánchez, also linked with the University of Alcalá, stated that Hernán Vázquez had the manuscript in Toledo 'many

¹⁰ Juan de Cazalla was chaplain of Cardenal Cisneros in the conquest of Orán. Juan was appointed to write the chronicle of that significant event.

¹¹ Inquisición de Toledo, *Proceso de Fe contra Juan de Vergara* (Archivo Histórico Nacional, leg. 223, n. 42, 1533–1537), fol. 182^v.

¹² *Ibid.*, fol. 181^v.

¹³ *Ibid.*, fol. 182^r.

days [...] before it was printed'.¹⁴ Hernán Vázquez had initially been reluctant to publish a number of things which he thought were wrong. Hernán 'procured and laboured to defend and expound and excuse all he could of that book'.¹⁵ After its publication, the book was discussed by a committee of doctors and theologians in the house of Mateo Pascual, the university's Rector. Other distinguished personages, sensitive to Spanish Erasmianism, were present, such as Abbot Pedro de Lerma, Hernán Vázquez, Balvas, Francisco de la Fuente, Loayasa, Diego de la Puente, Vargas, and Bernardino Alonso.¹⁶

General Inquisitor Manrique was also aware of the *Dialogue*, as the trial against Vergara records. Manrique sent a message requiring that Valdés was to make corrections and subsequently print the book 'soundly'.¹⁷ Furthermore, Vergara, in his own house, pleaded with Juan de Medina that 'if there were anything erroneous or heretical in the book', it was not to be made known.¹⁸ María de Cazalla corroborated the controversy in her trial. García de Vargas, her husband's tailor, and a friend of Diego Hernández affirmed being in María's home and hearing her partially favouring the book.¹⁹ When María was asked about it, she confirmed having 'praised it many times [...] even though [...] some things could be better said and without scandal, as in reference to [...] tithing and [...] confession'.²⁰ María acknowledged Friar Pedro de Vitoria's²¹ preaching against the book, which caused her to hide her copy in the lowest parts of a chest. Finally, the *Index* of prohibited books of 1551 and 1559 registered the *Dialogue* with Valdés as its author.

Evidently the publication of *Dialogue on Christian Doctrine* was marked by a controversial environment, inquisitorial pressures, and the impulse for alternative perspectives of the Christian faith. The rank and number of individuals involved in those declarations are particularly distinguished. The individuals involved, when compared with the contents of the *Dialogue*, reveal that the raging controversy was not over the *Dialogue* itself nor due to *Alumbrado* suspicions. What was at stake was Spanish Erasmianism, as Marcel Bataillon has appropriately called it. Erasmus was the enemy against whom traditional, sixteenth-century Spanish Catholicism

¹⁴ Ibid., fol. 181^r.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., fol. 182^r.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Inquisición de Toledo, *Proceso de la Inquisición contra María de Cazalla*, ed. intr. y notas, Milagros Ortega-Costa (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1978), pp. 88–89.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 118.

²¹ Pedro de Vitoria was a Dominican Friar, Prior of his convent in Burgos, known for his defence of monasticism against Erasmus in *Septem Collationem ad Erasmus* (see, Bataillon, *Erasmus y España, Vol. I* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1966), pp. 255–258).

contended, particularly addressed by the prominent theologian of the period Diego López de Zúñiga (d. 1531). This scenario is what led to the significant historical evidence that accompanied the publication of the *Dialogue on Christian Doctrine*.

Internal Evidence for Valdés's Authorship

To the manifest historical evidence attesting Valdés's authorship of the *Dialogue*, its internal evidence adds confirmation. As Valdés's known works display a strong Erasmian connection, this would be expected in the *Dialogue* too, and since Bataillon, scholarship has shown a dependence in Valdés on Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz and also parallels with Luther. Beyond a dependence relationship, research has proven that Valdés glossed both Erasmus and Luther, adding or excluding phrases and thus expressing his own thought. This particular use of sources, which I contend is a notable characteristic of the *Dialogue*, also confirms Valdés's thought and his authorship of the *Dialogue*.

The discovery of the *Dialogue* by Bataillon certainly strengthened the Erasmian perspective of Valdés that had existed since the nineteenth century.²² Its eulogies to Erasmus as 'excellent doctor' and 'true theologian' certainly indicate an affinity. Furthermore, the *Dialogue* was found to translate Erasmus's *Inquisitio de Fide* as its first teachings. However, this textual dependence included some particular glosses that clearly differed from Erasmus's teachings, some of which this article will indicate.

While evidence testifies to common grounds among the diverse initiatives for reform in the sixteenth century, Valdés's use of Erasmus goes much further than a Pauline emphasis on internal virtues and ethics to the neglect of external ritualism. Before entering into the particular translation or gloss of Erasmus's dialogue, it is important to note that the choice of this work is significant. From its outset, the *Inquisitio* refers to the 'smell of brimstone', 'ex-communication',²³ or thoughts such as 'lest I should seem to favour heretics', or 'how comes it about then, that there is so great a war between you and the orthodox'.²⁴ These expressions unequivocally portray a hypothetical conversation between the author, Erasmus, and Luther concerning the understanding of the Apostle's Creed. This particular dialogue, as Craig Thompson states, argues the supremacy and sufficiency of the teachings of the Creed 'for establishing and preserving concord among

²² Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, *Los Heterodoxos Españoles*, Vol III (Madrid: Librería Católica de San José, 1880), pp. 187–255.

²³ Desiderius Erasmus, *Inquisitio de Fide: A Colloquy, 1524*, trans. and notes by Craig R. Thompson (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1975), p. 55.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

Christians'.²⁵ *Inquisitio* actually manifested Luther's agreement with those Christian essentials.

A significant difference between the *Dialogue* and Erasmus is with regard to anthropology. The view of the person, their will and capacity to choose was a cardinal teaching at the time of its publication. The *Dialogue* expresses a clear inclination towards the thought of Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, Valdés's first teacher, if not also towards Luther. This is expressed in the *Dialogue* even when translating Erasmus's *Inquisitio*. Erasmus defended a Platonic perspective of humanity, according to which God 'printed with his finger [...] an eternal law' in the individual's spirit 'through which we almost always incline ourselves to do that which is good and honest'.²⁶ Furthermore, 'the spirit makes us divine beings, the flesh [makes us] beasts', and the soul is in the middle, 'indifferent'.²⁷ The *Dialogue*, however, added to Erasmus's words that humanity fell down to 'misery' through Adam.²⁸ The individual — added by the *Dialogue* to Erasmus's translation — is 'blind' and 'blundering', 'not knowing that which we ought to do, externally or internally'.²⁹ The human heart, writes the author of the *Dialogue* in a section of his own, 'cannot stop loving [...] himself and things for [his own] interest'.³⁰ The individual 'is blinded by his own self-love', and on account of that 'disordered heart', he will never be able to do any good thing before God.³¹ These words significantly agree with Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, and also agree with Luther's thought as portrayed in *Exurge Domine*.³² Later on, the *Dialogue* translated verbatim from Luther the statement that the individual's will is evil,³³ and the *Dialogue* added, 'even when it appears very good'.³⁴

²⁵ Erasmus, *Inquisitio*, ed. by Thompson, p. 43.

²⁶ Desiderius Erasmus, *El Enquiridion o Manual del Caballero Cristiano; y la Paráclisis o Exhortación al estudio de las letras divinas*, ed. and prologue by Damaso Alonso, trans. by Alonso Fernández de Madrid, Arcediano de Alcor (first printed 1526; Madrid: S. Aguirre, 1932), p. 187.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 187, 188.

²⁸ Erasmus, p. 59 (See *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 9^v. For clarity here, Bataillon replicates the usage of folio, verso or recto found in the original documents from the *Inquisitio* in the facsimile edition of the *Dialogue*).

²⁹ Erasmus, *Inquisitio*, ed. by Thompson, p. 36.

³⁰ A characteristic issue for Alcaraz, evident in a letter from him (Inquisición de Toledo, *Proceso de Fe de Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, Isabel de la Cruz, y Gaspar de Bedoya*, Archivo Histórico Nacional, leg. 106 Exp.5, 1524–1539, fol. 34^r) as well as in the accusation (*ibid.*, fols. 67^v, 70^v, 77, among others).

³¹ Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, ed. by Bataillon, fol.38^v, words differing from Erasmus and Luther.

³² Papal Encyclical, 'Condemning the Errors of Martin Luther: Exurge Domine', *Papal Encyclicals Online* <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo10/110exdom.htm>. [accessed 27 May, 2015] (article 31, cf. also article 32).

³³ Gilly, *Juan de Valdés, traductor y adaptador*, p. 108. See *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 38^v corresponding to Martin Luther, 'Decem Praecept', *Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Herman Böhlau Nachfolger, 1883), II: 128. Henceforth, such correspondences and parallels will be indicated by the symbol =.

³⁴ *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 78^v; Luther, 'On the Lord's Prayer', *Luther's works*, vol. 42, ed. by J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, and H. T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), p. 42.

Regarding soteriology the *Dialogue* also varies from Erasmus. According to Erasmus, after baptism, man is cleansed from original sin and placed with freedom of choice in front of 'two ways'.³⁵ Man may serve Christ or the world's ugly and abominable vices.³⁶ For Erasmus, 'those of us who follow' the strength given by the Spirit and the spiritual law (i.e. virtue) will be 'justified'.³⁷ Salvation, in Erasmus's writings, is a recompense for austerity,³⁸ a 'reward' 'conquered' through virtue.³⁹

In contrast to Erasmus, the *Dialogue* presents justification through 'faith alone', a position that has been recognised since Bataillon's work in 1925.⁴⁰ Bataillon defended that concept in the *Dialogue*: 'the soul is invited to confess his own nothingness and to put all his trust in a supernatural intervention, which of this nothingness will make a fullness.'⁴¹ Bataillon furthermore asserted that corresponding to the rest of Valdés's writings, justification by faith is the 'root of religious life'.⁴²

When the use and glosses of Erasmus's *Inquisitio* are considered along with the *Dialogue*'s use of Luther, the authorship of Valdés is further confirmed. Erasmus's *Inquisitio* constitutes 9 percent of the *Dialogue*, but the translation of Luther's works constitutes 13 percent of it. This number does not justify the author as a 'translator and adaptor of Luther's writings', as Carlos Gilly contends.⁴³ However, the translation or adaptation of Luther's *Decem Praecepta* and *On the Lord's Prayer* is evident, as relevant authors of a more Catholic perspective, such as José I. Tellechea Idígoras or Christine Wagner, have accepted.⁴⁴

Adding to this use, but at variance with some of Erasmus's teachings, the *Dialogue* actually glosses Luther, expressing a clear affinity with him. Translating Luther, the author wrote,

O sinful man, know yourself, that neither through your own strength nor your exercises will you ever be able to reach a perfection that you would not pursue other gods, because [...] in your heart [...] you love creatures more than me.⁴⁵

³⁵ Erasmus, *Enquiridion*, p. 201.

³⁶ Erasmus, *Tratado del niño Jesús y en loor del estado de la niñez*, trans. by Diego de Alcocer, ed. by Eugenio Asensio (first printed Sevilla, 1516; Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1969), p. 68.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 210–211.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 83, 84–85, 117, 118. Cf. also *Demand of Jesus Christ*, a small writing attached at the end of the publication of *Treatise on the Child Jesus*.

⁴⁰ Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, pp. 135–36.

⁴¹ Bataillon, *Erasmus y España, Vol. I*, pp. 410–11.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 407.

⁴³ As stated in the very title of his book (Carlos Gilly, *Juan de Valdés, traductor y adaptador de escritos de Lutero en su «Diálogo de Doctrina cristiana»* (Montserrat: Abadía de Montserrat, 1982)).

⁴⁴ Juan de Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, introduction and notes by J. Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras (Barcelona: Proa, 1994), p. 22; Wagner, *Le Dialogue*, pp. 40–42.

⁴⁵ Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. Xxv = Luthers Werke, Weimar edn, I: 399. Referred to by Gilly, *Juan de Valdés*, 1997, p. 106.

As Bataillon had already noted, the author's position is 'demonstratively identical' with that of Luther.⁴⁶

Another relevant characteristic of the *Dialogue* is the use of justification as a synonym of salvation. The term is either inserted in Erasmus's *Inquisitio* or translated from Luther.⁴⁷ The *Dialogue* first made the following insertion into Erasmus's *Inquisitio*, that 'through this highest sacrifice, we might be reconciled with him when we lay on his name all our trust and the hope of our justification'.⁴⁸ Also translating Erasmus, the author glossed the Latin *servaret*⁴⁹ into 'being participants of his [Christ's] glory, which he wanted us to obtain by virtue of his justice'.⁵⁰

In addition to the use of Erasmus and Luther, some traits of the *Dialogue* are clearly traceable to the thought of Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, as expressed in his inquisitorial trial, thus being a clear influence in Valdés's own thinking. Domingo de Sta. Teresa observed that the author of the *Dialogue* included 'substantial' additions to Erasmian teachings that expressed 'a different conception of the spiritual life which will become evident in the writings of the Italian period'.⁵¹ The author of the *Dialogue* strongly defends, for instance, the existence of 'saints' in his lifetime, reproaching the 'gross foolishness of many who crazily and with daring say that there are no saints in the world anymore'.⁵² This emphasis on 'saints', which, as Bataillon notes, is a continuing theme in Valdés's *Commentary on Matthew*, is much more than a 'discrete testimony of sympathy towards the *Alumbrados*', a sympathy which Bataillon dislikes.⁵³ Saints and Christian perfection constitute essential traits and emphases in Valdés, absent in both Erasmus and Luther, and traceable to Alcaraz and the *Alumbrado* conflict.

Regarding traces of Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz's teaching which was accused of *Alumbradism*, the *Dialogue's* teaching on perfection is significant, particularly as the *Dialogue* translates from Luther's *Commentary on the Ten Commandments* and *On the Lord's Prayer*. In this life, Luther stated that it is not possible to have 'perfect healing from all vices of body and soul'.⁵⁴ However, in the *Dialogue's* gloss of Luther regarding the fifth commandment, whereas Luther states that if the commandment is

⁴⁶ Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, p. 255.

⁴⁷ Inserted by Valdés. See Juan de Valdés, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Angel Alcalá, vol. I (Madrid: Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 1997), p. 22; translating Luther, see *ibid.*, pp. 33,37.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴⁹ 'Quo venit humilis ut nos institueret ac *servaret*'; in English, 'Who came in a low condition to instruct and save us' (Erasmus, *Inquisitio*, pp. 66–67).

⁵⁰ Valdés, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, vol. i, p. 25. Comp. Erasmus, *Inquisitio*, p. 66.

⁵¹ Valdés, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, vol. i, p. 62.

⁵² For example, *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵³ Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, pp. 231–233.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 515.

to be taken as it is 'none will be saved or too few',⁵⁵ the *Dialogue* adapts this statement to 'I would believe that this is only for the perfect'. The *Dialogue* continues,

It is true as you say, that in order to reach this as I say it is necessary that we be perfect [...] he that sees himself lacking in this regard, let him see through it that he is not perfect [...] so let him work with continual prayer to God, so that from imperfection [God] will make it perfect.⁵⁶

These references to perfect ones are clearly traceable to the religious environment of Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz and Juan de Valdés.

In addition to cardinal teachings, other elements confirm Valdés as the author of the *Dialogue*. Since its discovery, Bataillon pointed out parallel teachings and even common illustrations with the rest of Valdés's writings.⁵⁷ These correspondences refer to major themes of Valdés, such as the heart's necessity to love something,⁵⁸ or charity as perfect love.⁵⁹ These major parallels also include Valdés's classification of sinners,⁶⁰ the need of and prayer for a living faith,⁶¹ the possibility of only the spiritual man fulfilling God's commandments, and only with special grace from God.⁶² Most significantly, there is the parallel of Valdés's hermeneutic and theological distinction between the law and the gospel.⁶³ Domingo Sta. Teresa and Jose C. Nieto support this unity of authorship, and Domingo Ricart adds a further significant aspect: he points to similarities 'not only in the lexicon, but in the same phrase architecture'.⁶⁴

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 466.

⁵⁶ Ibid., fol. 31^v.

⁵⁷ Juan de Valdés, *Diálogo de doctrina Christiana y el Salterio*, transcription, introduction and notes by Domingo Ricart (Mexico City: U. Nacional Autónoma, 1964), p. 9.

⁵⁸ This 'love' theme was central in J. Cazalla's *Light of the Soul* and present in Spanish Erasmianism. Bataillon points to Raimond de Sabonde, *Viola Animae*, Chapter 24, livre III (1500), (Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 38 = Valdés, *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, p. 27; also *Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, ed. by Bataillon, pp. 247–249).

⁵⁹ Charity as perfect love of/from God (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 26^v) Bataillon appropriately sees it described in *Considerations*, n.70 and 98 (Bataillon, p. 243).

⁶⁰ This twofold classification of sinners would become threefold in the *Alphabet* (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 49^v = *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, p. 57; *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, p. 252).

⁶¹ (1) Recognition of weakness at the need of faith (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 83^r = *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, pp. 61–62; *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, p. 270). (2) On the conscience of not having faith (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 53^r = *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, p. 3; *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, pp. 253–254; also noted by David Estrada in *Juan de Valdés, Diálogo de Doctrina Cristiana*, Col. Obras de los Reformadores Españoles del Siglo XVI, (Sevilla: Ed. MAD S.L., 2007), p. 154). (3) On dead and living faith (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 53^r = *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, p. 60; *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, p. 253).

⁶² This parallel is noted both by Bataillon (p. 243) and Domingo de Sta. Teresa, *Juan de Valdés, 1498 – 1541; su pensamiento religioso y las corrientes espirituales de su tiempo* (Roma: Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1935), p. 74; (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 36^r = *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, p. 21).

⁶³ Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 137^r = *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, p. 20ff (Bataillon, p. 233).

⁶⁴ Valdés, *Diálogo y Salterio*, ed. by D. Ricart, p. 9.

Even regarding form and style and agreement with all the rest of Valdés's works, the *Dialogue* does present some particularities. It has some repetitious forms,⁶⁵ monotonous connections,⁶⁶ confusing expressions,⁶⁷ and an excessive use of interrogatives.⁶⁸ These aspects, which are usually taken as negative elements, constitute however a particular method of Valdés's didactic emphasis, repeated in his works written in Italy.

Coronel and Calero, and their Proposal: Juan Luis Vives as the Author of the *Dialogue*

In 2009, Francisco Calero and Marco Antonio Coronel Ramos presented *Dialogue on Doctrine*, contending that it 'had to wait 480 years [...] to be published with the name of its author [...] Juan Luis Vives'.⁶⁹ I do not agree with Calero or Coronel's arguments, neither in their relevance nor in their content. First of all, they propose the authorship of Vives against all previous research on *Dialogue on Doctrine*, without providing any response to or reconstruction of all the historical documentary evidence previously referred to. Furthermore, considering that Vives was a Valencian author, who studied in Paris in 1509, then travelled to Bruges (Flanders) and England, rejected an offer to study in Alcalá de Henares and retired to Bruges, Calero and Coronel give no account for how his writing in Spanish could end up in Miguel de Eguía's press in Alcalá de Henares. It is also telling that Vives wrote all his known works in Latin. Calero and Coronel do not provide any evidence for the motive that led Juan de Vergara, a close friend of Vives, to speak of Valdés as the author instead of Vives. In light of the later research on *Dialogue on Doctrine*, it would be interesting to hear Calero and Coronel's explanations of Juan Luis Vives's use of Erasmus's *Inquisitio de Fide* and Luther, but they give none.

To deny Valdés's authorship, Calero and Coronel present three basic arguments. The first argument is based on a theory suggested by Nieto and ratified by Tellechea Idígoras concerning Valdés's age.⁷⁰ Being very young,

⁶⁵ *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, pp. 181–182; Juan de Valdés, *Valdés' Two Catechisms: The Dialogue on Christian Doctrine and the Christian Instruction for Children*, introduction and notes by José C. Nieto (Lawrence, KS: Coronado Press, 1981), p. 14.

⁶⁶ Domingo Sta. Teresa, *Juan de Valdés*, p. 64.

⁶⁷ For example, 'and I say, turning to what I said before, that in addition to saying to you that which I first said, you should also say to them ...' (Valdés, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, pp. 181–182; *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 65^v).

⁶⁸ Nieto, *Two Catechisms*, p. 14.

⁶⁹ Juan Luis Vives, *Dialogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Calero and Coronel, p. ix.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 299–300, 342. Tellechea referred to Valdés as being 14 years old in Escalona due to his being called 'muchacho', and 18 in Alcalá in 1527 where he was called 'iuvenis' (*Diáleg*, pp. 12–13, 16). However, emblematic works like Sebastian Fox Morcillo's *De iuventute* (Basilea, 1556), would not reflect *iuvēnis* as just applied to 18-year olds. Ignatius Loyola arrived at the University of Alcalá aged 35, and in the Inquisitorial trial opened against him, a witness described him as a 'mancebo' or 'youth' (Ricardo

Valdés is considered too immature to have written *Dialogue on Doctrine*. That suggestion, in reference to Valdés's birth date, has been discarded by the evidence discovered by Dorothy Donald and Elena Lázaro⁷¹ as well as by Manuel Amores.⁷²

Donald and Lázaro, based on documents found in the diocese of Cuenca, cite a letter from Valdés's father in which he refers to his son, Juan (June 8, 1506). From the letter, Donald and Lázaro conclude that Juan was with his father in Benavente, where his father attended the Court as Cuenca's Procurator. Just as his brother Alfonso represented his father in a bureaucratic issue in Cuenca, so Juan represented his father in Cuenca's Council. This argument would place Valdés's birth around 1490. Manuel Amores, in contrast, discovered the declarations of Sancho Muñoz, a citizen of Cuenca who heard Valdés's father say that Juan and Alfonso had been born at the same time.⁷³ Calero and Coronel's argument, therefore, is based on a questionable and questioned theory.

Calero and Coronel's second argument is based on the supposed contradiction of the *Dialogue's* translation of Matthew 5–7 and Valdés's translation in his *Commentary on Matthew*.⁷⁴ Calero and Coronel particularly refer to the unfolding of some terms, 'translating two words out of only one in the original'.⁷⁵ This is presented as a contradiction with Valdés's intention to translate 'word by word', as stated in his *Commentary on Romans* and on *Matthew*. Margherita Morreale had already pointed to this difference, and concluded that it did not constitute grounds for any suspicion for a different authorship.⁷⁶ The natural changes of maturity and environment may fully account for differences in emphasis, definitions, and textual translation. Morreale, furthermore, states that Valdés's first translation came from the Latin Erasmian text, whereas his translation in the *Commentary* (comparing it with Matthew 5–7) was taken from the Greek text. As to the unfolding of a word in two synonyms, Morreale considers it typical of Spanish Erasmianism. Morreale's declaration fully aligns with the natural change that would have taken place as Valdés abandoned the Erasmian circle and its

García Villoslada, *San Ignacio de Loyola*, Nueva Biografía (Madrid, 1986), p. 281, cited in Monteserin, ed., *Alonso y Juan de Valdés*, 1995, xlviii). Valdés himself refers in the first pages of the *Dialogue* to a 30-year old friar and calls him 'mancebo' (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol. 5^v).

⁷¹ Dorothy Donald and Elena Lázaro, *Alfonso de Valdés y su Epoca* (Cuenca: Excma. Diputación Provincial, 1983).

⁷² Manuel Amores, 'Los Hermanos Alfonso y Juan de Valdés: Fueron Gemelos,' *Papeles del Huecar*, no. 15, Abril-Mayo (2004): 28.

⁷³ In Spanish, 'De una ventregada'. Declaration found in Inquisición, *Archivo Diocesano de Cuenca*, secc. leg. 780, expte 2.180, fol. 11. Cited in, Manuel Amores, 'Los Hermanos Alfonso y Juan', p. 28.

⁷⁴ Marco Antonio Coronel Ramos, *Juan Luis Vives y Juan de Valdés ante Mt 5–7*.

⁷⁵ Juan Luis Vives, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Calero and Coronel, p. 301.

⁷⁶ Margherita Morreale, 'Juan de Valdés come traduttore dei Vangeli ed il Nuovo Testamento di Erasmo', in *Atti dell'Istituto Veneto de Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* (Venecia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1977), pp. 507–40.

influence in Spain and moved to Italy, something which is also reflected in the contents of his writings in Italy.

On the contrary, the statement that Valdés did not use the translation of ‘two words out of only one in the original’ is incorrect. Valdés’s later writings in Italy not only present examples of expanded translations,⁷⁷ but there are also several examples of Biblical quotations and translations in which Valdés particularly unfolds one term in two. In Valdés’s *Christian Alphabet*, he translates Colossians 3:1 and expands ‘seek’ into two terms: ‘If you have, brethren, been spiritually raised with Christ, *lift up* your spirits⁷⁸ to the high things [...] *investigate* the high things, not those that are on earth.’⁷⁹ Also, in *Christian Alphabet*, as Valdés translates 2 Corinthians 10:13, he takes two terms and doubles them: ‘God is just and faithful, and will not allow [...] that we be tempted nor chastised more than that which our strength will endure.’⁸⁰

There are, furthermore, explicit examples of Valdés quoting in Latin and translating in Spanish, where that expansion takes place intentionally. In the third Consideration of *One Hundred and Ten Considerations*, as Valdés refers to Romans 8:14, he writes, ‘*Qui spiritu Dei aguntur ...*’ and explicitly translates, ‘He who is a son of God allows himself to be ruled and governed by God.’⁸¹ In a later Consideration, which would be numbered 113, Valdés translates Romans 8:26 and writes, ‘The Holy Spirit helps and supplies⁸² our foolishness⁸³ and weakness.’⁸⁴ In *Seven Doctrinal Epistles*, Valdés translates Luke 10:21 and, again, expounds his translation and doubles a single Greek term: ‘I thank you eternal Father [...] that you have hidden these divine secrets from human prudence and wisdom, and have revealed them to those who in the eyes of the world are vile and small.’⁸⁵ Even in his *Commentary on Matthew*, Valdés explains, ‘you are a scandal’ (Matthew 16:23) as, ‘you are cumbersome and an irritant’.⁸⁶ In his *Commentary on Romans*, Valdés

⁷⁷ For example, in *Consideración*, n.95 there is an explicit expanded translation from the Latin of John 3 ‘Tu es magister in Israel et haec ignores ...’ ‘If you are unable of this spiritual regeneration, of which, granted it is spiritual, but is such that it takes place here on earth and in the men on earth, how much more you will be unable to believe the divine generation, of which I could speak to you, because that one is not done from earth, but from heaven, and it does not perform an earthly but a celestial work!’ (Valdés, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, p. 705).

⁷⁸ In Spanish, *ánimos*.

⁷⁹ Valdés, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, p. 429. Italics mine, to point to the dual translation.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 453–4.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 498.

⁸² In Spanish, *favorece*.

⁸³ In Spanish, *imbecilidad*.

⁸⁴ Valdés, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, p. 763.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 842.

⁸⁶ Juan de Valdés, *El Evangelio según Mateo: Declarado por Juan de Valdés*, ed. by E. Boehmer (Madrid: Librería Nacional y Extranjera, 1880), p. 310.

specifies, 'Where it says "I serve", it may also be said "I adore, respect, and revere".'⁸⁷

These explicit examples demonstrate that whereas in his Commentaries — where he separately expanded his teaching — Valdés sought a 'word by word' translation, in his other works he maintains an expanded translation and the unfolding of important words.⁸⁸ No explanation is given by Valdés in the *Dialogue* after the translation of Matthew 5–7, and such a lack, rather than being surprising, would tend to indicate that Valdés was following a recognised and common Erasmian habit of unfolding words in order to make it more understandable. In any case, it is neither a difference between *Dialogue on Doctrine* and the rest of Valdés's writings nor a case for discarding Valdés's authorship of the *Dialogue*.

The third argument presented by Calero and Coronel deals with the characteristics of Valdés's thought as if the interpretation of Valdés's thought were not one of the most debated issues of the Spanish Renaissance. Calero and Coronel briefly outline the 'strengths' of Valdés's thought and the principles with which 'Valdés's thought seems to be characterized'.⁸⁹ Not only do they explicitly express their subjective estimation of Valdés's thought, but they take the similarities between *Dialogue on Doctrine* and the rest of Valdés's writings as the fruit of Valdés's affinity for Erasmus. The evidence, however, is contrary to Calero and Coronel's suggestion. The parallels between the *Dialogue* and Valdés's writings in Italy, evident and ratified since Bataillon in 1925, cannot in any way be explained only by an affinity with Erasmus. A decisive example of that is the verbatim translation of Luther's introduction *On the Ten Commandments*.⁹⁰ Are Calero and Coronel suggesting that we should think of the Erasmian Juan Luis Vives as more Lutheran than he is usually considered? I suppose they are not.

Quite the opposite, Calero and Coronel's positive arguments in defence of Vives's authorship are built on inferences rather than on evidence. To defend their position, Calero and Coronel find the study of Vives's letters 'truly important', even though they recognise that they are in 'very

⁸⁷ Juan de Valdés, *La Epistola de San Pablo a los Romanos* (Barcelona: Gómez Flores, 1982), p. 7.

⁸⁸ Other examples of Valdés unfolding words: Ex.3:14 'I am who I am', as if it said 'I am he who am by myself, and who give being and life to all things that are and live' (Valdés, 'Seven Doctrinal Epistles', n.2, *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, p. 841); Luke10:21 'You have revealed them to those who in the eyes of the world are vile and small' (Ibid, p. 842); Phil 2:12 'pay attention and work our your salvation' ('Little Treatises', *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, p. 899); 1 Cor 10:13 'God is faithful and just that will not allow [...] that we be tempted nor punished' ('Alphabet', *Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, p. 453).

⁸⁹ Calero and Coronel's language is a subjective appraisal (Vives, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Calero and Coronel, pp. 304, 305); also, 'These thoughts *we believe* are on the foundation of the concept of the soul in Juan de Valdés' *Alphabet*' (*Obras Completas*, ed. by Alcalá, p. 345).

⁹⁰ Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, fol 19^vl.16–22 = *Luthers Werke*, Weimar edn, I: 398, lines 6–9; Valdés, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, 19^v, lines1–9 = *Luthers Werke*, Weimar edn, I: 398, lines 10–14, 16–17. Taken from Gilly, *J. Valdés translator of Luther*, see *Alfabeto Cristiano*, ed. by Usoz, p. 56.

incomplete condition', and their edition 'needs many⁹¹ clarifications'.⁹² Vives's authorship would also need to be verified through the comparison of the contents of his *De Veritate Fidei Christianae* or *Treatise on the Soul* with *Dialogue on Doctrine*, but these reflect no close affinity with the *Dialogue*.⁹³ In Vives's letters to Juan de Vergara, his 'best friend in Spain', Calero and Coronel offer the defence that Vives appears to write with 'enigmatic sentences' and with 'a coincidence between his writing [...] and the subject matter of the works *Dialogue on the Things that Happened in Rome*, and *Dialogue of Mercurio y Caron*'.⁹⁴ These events obviously had repercussions and echoes among all Erasmians; there is no wonder Vives referred to it in his letters to his friends. Contrarily, Donald and Lázaro clearly present the genesis and important historical attestation of Alfonso de Valdés's authorship of this dialogue on Rome.⁹⁵

Nevertheless, Calero and Coronel, not taking into account evidence such as Castiglione's reproach to Alfonso for having written those two dialogues,⁹⁶ attributes their authorship to Juan Luis Vives. Subsequently, Calero and Coronel trace similarities between these two previously mentioned dialogues with *Dialogue on Doctrine*, even bringing *Lazarillo de Tormes* — a famous Spanish anonymous work previously attributed also to Alfonso de Valdés — into the comparison. Considering the close relationship of these twin brothers, it is fully reasonable that there would be some affinity. However, to set aside positive documentary evidence, to usurp the authorship of Alfonso's dialogues because of a questionable reference in one of Vives's letters, and then use it to deprive Valdés of his authorship of the *Dialogue*, is a weak argument for discarding historical attestation and past research on both Alfonso and Juan de Valdés.⁹⁷

It is beyond our purpose or reach to discern the reason behind Calero and Coronel's proposal. I would agree with Calero and Coronel's view of Vives: 'One of the highest summits of humanity, in which his contributions to pedagogy, psychology, philosophy, history, pacifism, help for the poor, and spirituality in general shine.'⁹⁸ But Vives's eminence does not force his authorship on all the anonymous, supposedly Erasmian writings of his time. Vives's authorship of the *Dialogue* is neither the 'solution' which 'perfectly

⁹¹ In Spanish, *muchísimas* (superlative).

⁹² Vives, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Calero and Coronel, p. 370.

⁹³ Juan Luis Vives, *Joannis Ludovici Vivis Valentini Opera omnia* (London: Gregg, 1964). There is no extant evidence of Vives's works except in Latin.

⁹⁴ Vives, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Calero and Coronel, pp. 372, 373.

⁹⁵ Donald and Lázaro, *Alfonso de Valdés*, pp. 200–220.⁹⁶ Letter of Castiglione from Madrid, October 1528, repr. in Wiffen, *Life of Juan de Valdés*, p. 82.

⁹⁶ Letter of Castiglione from Madrid, October 1528, repr. in Wiffen, *Life of Juan de Valdés*, p. 82.

⁹⁷ A similar unsuccessful endeavour happened concerning Valdés's authorship of *Diálogo de la Lengua*, clearly referred to by Bataillon (*Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Bataillon, p. 155ff).

⁹⁸ Vives, *Diálogo de Doctrina*, ed. by Calero and Coronel, p. ix.

fits' the *Dialogue's* authorship, nor 'Occam's razor, according to which, the easiest explanation is the more plausible one', as Calero and Coronel claim.⁹⁹ Calero and Coronel's thesis does not engage with the consensus or arguments that previous scholars from all backgrounds, such as Bataillon, Jose I. Tellechea Idígoras, José C. Nieto, and Gordon A. Kinder among others, have agreed for decades.

Conclusion

The weight of evidence in favour of Valdés as the author of the *Dialogue* corresponds to the confidence of individuals and to years of Valdesian research. Scholars of different perspectives and areas of expertise have only built upon and added considerations that confirm Valdés's authorship. The declarations registered by the Inquisition are remarkable and clearly point to Valdés. Theological positions and textual dependences in the *Dialogue* fit the influences on and thought of Valdés. A deeper comparison with Valdés's thought and writings could be considered, but the examples presented are representative and relevant, particularly the historical environment of the publication of the *Dialogue*. If a new proposal that denies Valdes's authorship were to be considered, it should include the existing historical evidence and its internal characteristics. Considering all the facts and inferences presented, therefore, the evidence of Valdés's authorship appears to remain as the most appropriate conclusion.

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⁹⁹ Ibid., p. xi.