



STUDIES

IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

FORGOTTEN SAINT:
THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF
ALFONSO SALMERÓN, SJ

SAM Z. CONEDERA, SJ

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a word from the editor...

Nicholas Bobadilla (1511–1590) and Simão Rodrigues (1510–1579), not St. Francis Xavier (1506–1552), were supposed to go to India. Their mission came in response to a request by King John III of Portugal (1502–1557), who had asked Ignatius for several Jesuits to convert the peoples in his colonial empire.

Ignatius's initial choices did not pan out. Bobadilla fell seriously ill, so Ignatius turned to his dear friend Xavier, who is said to have replied with a free and simple, "Here I am." But when Xavier and Rodrigues arrived at the royal court, they impressed the king so much that he asked Rodrigues to remain and work in Portugal instead.

These unexpected developments raise interesting questions. If Bobadilla had not gotten sick at precisely the moment he did, would Jesuits be calling him St. Nicholas today? If Rodrigues had joined Xavier in India, would he, too, be on the Roman calendar?

I am not suggesting that Xavier's canonization was a matter of happenstance. That Xavier was a saintly and industrious man who deeply loved Jesus and the Society that bore his name, I imagine most Jesuits will consider beyond question. Nevertheless, two points are worth noting.

First, the Society and King John had many practical motives for promoting Xavier's cult, among them to increase the status of the Society in the eyes of its critics, to recruit men to the Society, to inspire men to serve in the overseas missions, and to promote religious and political stability in the East Indies. Indeed, as early as March 1556 (Ignatius was still alive), King John instructed his viceroy in the East Indies to begin

conducting interviews about Xavier's holiness and activities.¹ In this light, it is fair to wonder whether the reputations of Bobadilla and Rodrigues would have received a similar, saintly post-mortem boost had they gone in Xavier's place.

Second, is there really any reason to believe that Bobadilla and Rodrigues loved Jesus and the Society any less than Xavier? Or that they would not have labored just as zealously for souls in India and Japan?

Oh, it is true that the reputations of Bobadilla and Rodrigues suffer from their conflicts with Ignatius. But whatever their sins in that regard, it bears noting that some of the more revered members of the early Society were guilty of similar misdeeds, at least in essence if not in gravity. For example, Diego Laínez (1512–1565) angered Ignatius by withholding information from him, by criticizing his decisions in front of other Jesuits, and by making indiscreet comments to externs that they could use to put pressure on Ignatius.² Another time, when Laínez insisted on his own opinions to Ignatius, the latter responded, "Very well, you take over the Society and govern it."³

Likewise, St. Peter Faber (1506–1546) greatly upset Ignatius by failing to obey his instructions about writing letters to Rome; Faber thought the letters were not worth the time and effort required of him. Ignatius wrote a response that frankly can be a little bracing for anyone accustomed to think of Faber as a gentle, accommodating soul:

I recall telling you frequently face to face as well as writing you frequently when we were apart that any member of the Society

¹ See Franco Mormando, "The Making of the Second Jesuit Saint: The Campaign for the Canonization of Francis Xavier, 1555–1622," in *Francis Xavier and the Jesuit Missions in the Far East: An Anniversary Edition of Early Printed Works*, eds. Franco Mormando and Jill G. Thomas (Chestnut Hill, MA: Jesuit Institute of Boston College, 2006), 9–22, at 9.

² Martin E. Palmer, SJ, John W. Padberg, SJ, and John L. McCarthy, SJ, eds., *Ignatius of Loyola: Letters and Instructions* (Saint Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources [IJS], 2006), 395–97.

³ *Gonçalves Mem.* 104; Alexander Eagleston and Joseph A. Munitiz, SJ, eds., *Remembering Iñigo: The Memoriale of Luís Gonçalves da Câmara* (Leominster, Herefordshire, UK: Gracewing Publishing, 2005), 62.

intending to write us here ought to write out a main letter that can be shown to anybody. [...]

And so I will now repeat once more what I said previously, so that we will all fully understand one another. [...]

And so, unless I see you doing this from now on for the greater unity, charity, and edification of all, I myself, unwilling to have to answer to God our Lord for negligence in matters of such importance, will be forced to write and command you under obedience to [follow my instructions]. Having thereby done all that is in my power, I will rest easy, though I would much rather you did not give me cause to write you this way. [...]

Busy as some members of the Society may be, I am sure that I am, if not overly so, at least no less busy than anybody else—and with poorer physical health. So far there is none of you I can commend in this manner, though I say this not to point blame but in a general way. [...]

If your memory fails you, as mine often does, keep this letter or some equivalent reminder in front of you when writing your main letter.⁴

So as not to belabor the point, I will simply add that Jerome Nadal (1507–1580) and others provide examples of their own.

Today, Jesuits and friends are readily familiar with the names Ignatius, Xavier, and Faber. Yet I suspect that many would be hard pressed to name all ten of the First Companions. Fr. John W. O'Malley (UMI) rightly observed that the others “somewhat shared the same glory” by their simple association with Ignatius and Xavier.⁵ Fr. John W. Padberg (UCS) went a bit further by suggesting that three of them “are often forgotten” when Jesuits tell the story of the Society’s founding.⁶

⁴ Palmer, *Ignatius of Loyola*, 90–93.

⁵ John W. O'Malley, SJ, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1.

⁶ John W. Padberg, SJ, “The Three Forgotten Founders of the Society of Jesus: Paschase Broët, Jean Codure, Claude Jay,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 29, no. 2 (March 1997): 1.

When one considers what each of the First Companions accomplished in his own right and on his own terms—the incredible dedication to a novel and controversial form of religious life, the indefatigable labors and travels, the mortification and prayer and zeal—one can imagine that all of them—yes, even Bobadilla and Rodrigues—could have been canonized in an alternate universe where their fortunes had broken a little differently.

In this issue of *STUDIES*, Fr. Sam Conedera (UWE) tries to rescue from unjust obscurity one of those First Companions, Fr. Alfonso Salmerón (1515–1585). Fr. Conedera argues, for instance, that Salmerón sheds great light on the early Jesuits' preferred method of doing theology. But I admit that what really grabbed my attention in this essay was Fr. Conedera's assertion that upon Salmerón's death, the people of Naples acclaimed him a saint and clamored for his relics. I was both touched and shocked. It had never occurred to me that people might think this way about any of the First Companions except the Big Three. Shouldn't every Jesuit know about this?

And so thank you, Fr. Conedera, for reminding Jesuits and friends of what we so often need to hear: that God often saves the best fruit of our labors for centuries yet to come.

Barton T. Geger, SJ
General Editor

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Forgotten Saint: The Life and Writings of Alfonso Salmerón, SJ

Sam Z. Conedera, SJ

Fr. Alfonso Salmerón, one of the founding fathers of the Society of Jesus, was a brilliant theologian and preacher, and at the time of his death, many revered him as a saint. For reasons unclear, subsequent generations of Jesuits relegated him to the shadows of Ignatius, Xavier, Faber, and Laínez. Yet his writings and personal example illustrate well how the early Society understood its charisma and its preferred theological method.

Introduction

In his *Life and Death of Alfonso Salmerón*, the early Jesuit biographer Pedro de Ribadeneira (1527–1611) offers the following narration of Alfonso Salmerón’s (1515–1585) final hours on earth:

At last, after he had received the sacrament of Extreme Unction with great tranquility, responding to all the prayers himself, he asked when the octave of St. Agatha (to whom he had particular devotion) would begin. When they told him that it was the following day, he replied, “Then tomorrow is the end,” and that night he said over and over, “To eternal life, to eternal life, and after today we will be free of labors.” And he also said with great joy, “Rejoice, my soul, rejoice, my soul, rejoice.” When they asked him why he was so happy, he replied, “Because the Lord is beginning to show me the ways of his mercy.”¹

¹ Ribadeneira wrote the original version of this text in Spanish as an addition to his *vita* of Laínez that was published in 1594. The Flemish Jesuit Andreas Schott (1522–1629) translated it into Latin (minus Ribadeneira’s introductory paragraph) and included it in the first volume of the Cologne edition of Salmerón’s *Commentaries*. The

Ribadeneira reports how moved were the Jesuits at Naples by the demeanor of this great scholar and founder of the Society, and how they asked him for his prayers after he had finally passed from this life.

Subsequent generations of Jesuits, however, have been less assiduous in seeking his intercession; indeed, both the person and the work of Salmerón were mostly forgotten after his death.² Modern scholars tend to pass over him fairly quickly, and the few who have studied him have been rather critical. Fr. William V. Bangert (1911–1985), the only modern author to have written a biography of Salmerón, skims lightly over his theological work and offers a rather unflattering assessment of the man.³ John Hughes, who wrote on Salmerón’s labors at Trent, criticizes his commentary as “overloaded” and his theological exposition as “fragmentary.”⁴ Even Fr. John W. O’Malley, who praises Salmerón’s erudition as “outstanding,” rarely cites his work in *The First Jesuits*.⁵

Spanish text has been published most recently in Miguel Lop Sebastia, *Alfonso Salmerón, SJ (1515–1585): Una biografía epistolar* (Madrid: Comillas, 2015), appendix, 359–72. The English translation is mine.

² David Martín López provides an account of the bibliographical attention that Salmerón has received over the centuries, including an entry in the *Imago Primi Saeculi*, and concludes that the neglect of him needs to be remedied. David Martín López, “Claroscuros de la vida de Alfonso Salmerón Díaz, un jesuita exemplar de primera generación,” *Magallánica* 2 vol. 4 (2016): 29–56. Miguel Lop Sebastia’s “epistolary biography” offers a list of secondary works that contains fewer than two dozen entries. Lop Sebastia, *Alfonso Salmerón*, 37. Salmerón merits only a passing mention in Michel Fédou, *Les théologiens jésuites: Un courant uniforme?* (Brussels: Éditions Lessius, 2014), 12. Marius Reiser’s overview of Jesuit biblical exegesis in the sixteenth century notes the neglect of Salmerón. Marius Reiser, “The History of Catholic Exegesis, 1600–1800,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology, 1600–1800*, ed. Ulrich L. Lehner, Richard A. Muller, and A. G. Roeber (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 75–88, at 78. Salmerón’s exegesis was not forgotten, however, by Cornelius a Lapide (1567–1637), author of a *Great Commentary* on the whole Bible.

³ “Open and friendly in his youth—Ignatius used to tease him about his naïveté—he became grave and solemn, even gloomy, under the burdens as religious superior and conciliar theologian. His chief weakness was excessive sensitivity, petulance, even a tinge of hysteria, when criticized or challenged. In some ways this brilliant man never grew up” (Bangert, *Jay and Salmerón*, 355–56).

⁴ John Hughes, “Alfonso Salmerón: His Work at the Council of Trent” (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 1974), 34. Hughes cites numerous other critics, including St. Charles Borromeo (1538–1584).

⁵ John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993), 259.

This inattention has hampered understanding of the early Society, for Salmerón offers something unique among the first companions: a major theological oeuvre of his own. At the end of his life, he composed, under holy obedience, his *magnum opus*: twelve volumes of *Commentaries on the Gospel History and Acts of the Apostles* (hereafter *CEH*) and four volumes of *Commentaries on all the Letters of St. Paul and the Canonical Letters*. These were published in three editions at Madrid and Cologne between 1597 and 1615.⁶ These New Testament commentaries, which have never been subjected to systematic study, are quite possibly the best source for how the first companions sought to integrate learning, holiness, and apostolic zeal, and for how they thought about theological method, especially the relationship between positive and Scholastic theology. This topic is mentioned numerous times in the *Constitutions* and the “Rules for Thinking with the Church,” but the *Commentaries* provide a live demonstration of the theory and practice behind the Society’s earliest theological labors. Salmerón’s work was the fruit not only of study and erudition, but also of his immersion in apostolic endeavors, especially preaching, and in the church’s public prayer and worship. Even if history has mostly ignored Salmerón, Ribadeneira was not mistaken to write a *vita* of this distinguished and eminent man, as he called him.⁷ This forgotten saint can aid in understanding the theological training, vision, and priorities of the Society’s founders.

It is a testimony to Salmerón's talent and diligence that . . . he was able to pass doctoral exams in theology at Bologna in 1549.

Born into a family of relatively humble origins at Toledo in 1515, Salmerón entered the new Trilingual College at the University of Alcalá

⁶ In this article, I am limiting my treatment to the twelve volumes of commentary on the Gospels, using the second Cologne edition for all references. Wherever the pagination is dubious or hard to locate, I cite the signature as well. Alfonso Salmerón, *Commentarii in Evangelicam Historiam et in Acta Apostolorum*, 12 vols. (Cologne: Antonius Hierat and Johannes Gynmnicus, 1612–1615) (hereafter *CEH*).

⁷ Lop Sebastia, *Alfonso Salmerón*, 359.

in 1528, the year after Ignatius had departed the city.⁸ There he distinguished himself for his knowledge of languages and poetry. In 1533, he and his friend Diego Laínez (1512–1565) arrived in Paris to continue their studies, where they quickly came under the wing of Ignatius. Salmerón made the Spiritual Exercises under Ignatius's direction and was present at Montmartre on August 15, 1534. And owing to his tender years, he was the last of the companions to receive holy orders in Venice.

After a few preaching journeys and an unsuccessful diplomatic mission to Scotland and Ireland, Salmerón received the important task, together with Laínez and Claude Jay (ca. 1504–1552), of representing the pope at the first convocation of the Council of Trent. The Jesuit from Toledo distinguished himself there, not least for his homily on the feast of St. John the Evangelist in 1546, which would become the first original published work by a Jesuit author.⁹ Subsequent popes renewed his assignment to the council's second and third convocations, where he made significant contributions to the decrees on the sacraments and the relationship of the bishops to the pope.¹⁰ He sat for doctoral exams at the University of Bologna in 1549 prior to taking a short-lived teaching assignment at Ingolstadt. Most of his mature years were spent in Naples, where first he administered the Jesuit college and then became provincial, overseeing the establishment and growth of the Society in southern Italy.¹¹ In his latter days, he became something of an elder statesman

⁸ The University of Alcalá was founded in 1499 under the patronage of Cardinal Cisneros and distinguished itself for humanistic and biblical learning even before the Trilingual College came into existence.

⁹ The text has been published numerous times, most recently in Juan Tejada y Ramiro, *Colección de cánones y de todos los concilios*, vol. 4 (Madrid: 1859), 755–62. An English-language translation is available in Hughes, “Alfonso Salmerón,” 236–52.

¹⁰ O'Malley is reticent about Salmerón's work at Trent. John W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013), 5, 188. More information is available in Hughes, *Alfonso Salmeron*, and Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, 2 vols., trans. Ernest Graf (London: Nelson, 1957–1961), passim. Only Jedin's first two (of four) volumes were translated into English. He follows Salmerón's participation in the debates without rendering anything like an overall judgment of him, whether as a man or as a theologian.

¹¹ There was some controversy in Rome concerning his governance, leading Laínez to dispatch a visitor. Bangert, *Jay and Salmerón*, 256. For more on Salmerón's work as an administrator, see Esther Jiménez Pablo, “El P. Alfonso Salmerón S.I. y el gobierno

within the order, as the praise that he received at the 3rd General Congregation indicates.¹² Salmerón died in 1585, second only to Bobadilla in longevity among the order's founding members.

I. A Reluctant Theologian

Although he was university trained and enjoyed brief stints as a lecturer in Rome and Ingolstadt, it would be mistaken to say that Salmerón was an academic theologian in the normal sense of the term. Apart from teaching, his theological labors were exercised primarily in the pulpit and in the halls of Trent. He was also an enthusiastic promoter of the Spiritual Exercises, earning praise from Ignatius himself for this work.¹³ Occasionally, Salmerón was called upon to give theological counsel to Ignatius on various questions, such the drafting of a compendium of theology (which never came to light). However, he did not set out to “do theology” in the sense of publishing written works.

The reason the *Commentaries* were published at all was the mandate of General Francis Borgia (1510–1572), who told Salmerón to prepare his scriptural material for publication.¹⁴ He was skeptical of the assignment at first, for he replied to Borgia in June 1569 that, “My writings are a great sea, and no man knows where to begin or end.” He said that he lacked both time and assistance for the task, but that he would pursue it nonetheless.¹⁵ In other words, not only did he not set out to

de los colegios de Nápoles,” *Magallánica* 2, vol. 4 (2016): 57–79.

¹² William Bangert, *Claude Jay and Alfonso Salmerón: Two Early Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1987), 331.

¹³ Ignatius says that Faber and Salmerón are the best at giving the Exercises. *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu. Monumenta Ignatiana. Fontes narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola et de Societatis Jesu initiis*, vol. 1, *Narrationes scriptae ante annum 1557* (Madrid, 1943), 658.

¹⁴ The original letter from Borgia does not seem to be extant, as it was not included in the *Monumenta* edition of his correspondence. Boero indicates that numerous important personages, such as Cardinal Carrafa, Peter Canisius, and Pius V, had also made this request of Salmerón. Joseph Boero, *Le Père Alphonse Salmeron* (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1894), 289.

¹⁵ *Epistolae Salmerónis, Societatis Jesu, ex autographis vel originalibus exemplis potissimum depromptae a patribus eiusdem Societatis nunc primum editae*, 2 vols. (Madrid 1906–

publicize his theological views, but he was positively reluctant to do so, and only undertook it out of obedience.

Ribadeneira offers a glimpse of Salmerón's daily regimen in his latter years, when the latter had been relieved of administrative duties and dedicated himself to writing. In the morning, he prayed, said his Office and litany, and said Mass with great devotion and recollection, which he never failed to do on account of any other task.¹⁶ In the afternoon and evening, until the hour of supper, he gave all his attention to writing, despite his chronic catarrh and abdominal pains. Ribadeneira notes that the Jesuit from Toledo always kept to his customary austerities, despite old age and chronic health problems.¹⁷

Furthermore, the fact that Salmerón undertook the project out of obedience does not mean that his effort was stinting. The *Commentaries* are a formidable work, running to over 7,700 double-columned folio pages in sixteen volumes. When and how they came to completion is something of a mystery. Salmerón did receive some of the help he had asked for, including, for a very brief period, from Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621). In his correspondence, Salmerón complains about the difficulties he ran into along the way, but it seems likely that he finished the *Commentaries* before his death.¹⁸ It is unclear, however, why thirteen more years passed before they finally came to light.¹⁹ The long history

1907) (hereafter *ES*), vol. 2, no. 317, 185–88.

¹⁶ Lop Sebastia, *Alfonso Salmerón*, 365. The Roman Divine Office in this period was much more demanding than it is now: on a Sunday, the hour of Matins alone consisted of eighteen psalms.

¹⁷ He did, however, begin fasting on eggs because fish harmed his health. Lop Sebastia, *Alfonso Salmerón*, 370.

¹⁸ *ES*, vol. 2, no. 319, 191.

¹⁹ The chronicle of Giovan Francesco Araldo (1522–1596), excerpts of which were included in the *Monumenta* volumes on Salmerón, says that Salmerón completed the *Commentaries* a few years after 1569. Supposedly, he then discovered Cornelius Jansen the Elder's biblical commentary (almost certainly the *Concordia Evangelica*) and decided that the publication of his own work was unnecessary. This explanation is quite unlikely, for several reasons. First, Salmerón occasionally refers to Jansen's volume throughout the *Commentaries*. Second, the *Concordia* was a very different and much shorter commentary. Third, Araldo exhibits diffidence concerning the theory, and says that at the time of his writing (1595) there was no plan to publish the *Commentaries*. *ES*, vol. 2, ap-

of the *Commentaries* reaches far back into the sixteenth century, to their author's training and apostolic labors.

II. Salmerón's Studies

One cannot readily understand Salmerón's theological writings without some acquaintance with the education he received. The first notable feature is his extraordinary memory and the effort he put into training it. He won prizes at Alcalá for oratory in Greek and Latin.²⁰ One reason for the great length of the *Commentaries* is that their author constantly cites sources verbatim. While it is impossible to be certain just how much of this material came from memory, it is clear that he knew a great deal of Scripture and the Fathers by heart, and his recall impressed those who knew him.²¹

The University of Alcalá in the early sixteenth century was committed to new developments in research and pedagogy, and was cautiously sympathetic to figures like Erasmus.²² Its great achievement during these years was the publication of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, which arranged the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Aramaic texts in parallel columns.²³ The Trilingual College, founded in 1528, was more oriented toward instruction in languages for biblical and theological purposes than toward classical Humanism, although ancient authors were part of the curriculum. Unfortunately, little documentation for

pendix 3, 834–35. We know, however, that Bartolomé Pérez de Nueros (ca. 1548–1614), a Jesuit theologian and Salmerón's final assistant as editor, promised Salmerón on his deathbed that he would bring his works to publication, and he made good on his word. *ES*, vol. 1, xxv–xxvi.

²⁰ Lop Sebastia, *Salmerón*, 359.

²¹ Bangert, *Jay and Salmerón*, 154.

²² During the conference of theologians held in the summer of 1527 to discuss the work of Erasmus, the representatives from Alcalá were notably more open to him than were their counterparts from Salamanca. Grantley McDonald, *Biblical Criticism in Early Modern Europe: Erasmus, the Johannine Comma, and Trinitarian Debate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 44.

²³ "Complutensian" comes from the Latin name for Alcalá. For a variety of reasons, this endeavor failed to attain the success and notoriety of other editions of the period, most notably those of Erasmus.

the college survives from this period, but it is clear that the students received a rigorous education.²⁴ At Alcalá, Salmerón internalized an appreciation for languages and biblical studies but not sympathy for Erasmus, as will be explained below.

The move to Paris placed the Jesuit from Toledo in the midst of ferment and controversy over the university's curriculum. There were several key issues: the relationship between Humanism and Scholasticism, especially the role of philology; the attention given to Scripture and the Fathers versus *summas* and manuals; the relative competencies

Ribadeneira marvels at Salmerón's mastery of the sacred and profane sciences.

of the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Theology. A curricular reform carried out just before Salmerón's arrival ensured greater focus on the Bible.²⁵ The *Commentaries* indicate that their author paid keen attention to these debates. At

Paris, he obtained a strong grasp of Scholastic philosophy and theology and pursued his love of Scripture. It is not altogether clear why or how he became immersed in the Church Fathers, but he did learn to draw on the strengths of both patristic and Scholastic authors, and later on tried to synthesize them in his own theological work.²⁶

²⁴ The course of study for each language lasted three years, during which time students were forbidden to communicate in the vernacular. It seems reasonable to hypothesize that Salmerón completed a full course of one language and two-thirds of another, most likely Latin and Greek. See Antonio Alvar Ezquerro, "El Colegio de San Jerónimo o Colegio Trilingüe" in *Historia de la Universidad de Alcalá*, ed. Antonio Alvar Ezquerro, 215–22 (Alcalá: Universidad de Alcalá, Servicio de Publicaciones, 2010) It is not clear where he learned Hebrew, although he does say that the man who first taught him Hebrew grammar thought that all of human history was foretold in Scripture, and that this teacher consistently accommodated current events to it in favor of the King of France against Emperor Charles V. This would suggest it happened at Paris rather than at Alcalá. *CEH*, vol. 1, 79.

²⁵ Philippe Lécrivain, *Paris in the Time of Ignatius of Loyola (1528–1535)*, trans. Ralph Renner (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2011), 141–46.

²⁶ Bangert sees here the influence of Lefèvre d'Étaples (Stapulensis) on the Collège Sainte-Barbe. Bangert, *Jay and Salmerón*, 158. This is a point that merits further study. There is little evidence in the *Commentaries* that Salmerón had particular esteem for d'Étaples, and the Jesuit often sounds like d'Étaples's nemesis, Noël Bédá, in arguing on behalf of the Vulgate. Lécrivain says that Laínez came to Paris with a great desire to learn Scripture and the Fathers, and was encouraged in this by Ignatius. Salmerón may

It is a testimony to Salmerón's talent and diligence that, largely on the basis of the studies he undertook in his youth, he was able to pass doctoral exams in theology at Bologna in 1549.²⁷ Ordinarily this process took at least twelve years of formal study of theology, but the Jesuit from Toledo had had only five years at Alcalá and not quite three years at Paris, most of which was spent studying arts. His preparations for the first convocation of the Council of Trent undoubtedly helped him, as did his extraordinary memory.

Salmerón's education did more than provide him with a great richness of theological data to internalize; it also gave him access to a variety of ways of approaching theological questions. Although the Scholastic-Humanist division of theology in the sixteenth century admits of greater nuance, there was a basic split between these two approaches.²⁸ Salmerón learned both of them thoroughly and attempted a methodological synthesis that drew upon the best features of both.

III. Preaching the Gospel

The origin of the *Commentaries* in Salmerón's preaching and worship is evident in a number of their features. In the first place, their rhetorical style, not least the regular use of *exempla* and arresting images, suggests an origin in preaching. One gets a sense of Salmerón's passion and eloquence when he poses rhetorical questions or when he repeats a particular phrase multiple times in succession. Second, the *Commentaries* are quite repetitive. A point or reference that is made in one chapter (*tractatus*) will often appear in subsequent ones, which is more intelligible if they have their origin in sermons or lectures given on separate occasions to live assemblies. Third, there is a great deal of moralizing content (also repetitive)

have shared this interest of his close friend. Lécivain, *Paris*, 150.

²⁷ A letter confirming his doctorate can be found in *ES*, vol. 1, no. 34a, 84–86. Salmerón was one of several early Jesuits who took his degree *per saltum* (by examination) rather than by completing the dozen years of study normally required. Paul Grenler, *Jesuit Schools and Universities in Europe 1548–1773* (Boston: Brill, 2019), 80.

²⁸ See Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

that is suitable to someone who is trying to move his audience. Each chapter ends with a doxology, which may have been a signal to listeners that the sermon or lecture was almost finished.

The most explicit testimony to the preaching context is found in volume 7, in which Salmerón treats the Lord's parables. In the volume's final chapter, Salmerón explains how to correlate his commentaries with the liturgical calendar of Lent. He says that he has undertaken this labor specifically for the benefit of preachers, and recalls that he himself has preached on the parables during Lent, to the great enjoyment of his hearers (*non sine magna auditorum voluptate, et iocunditate*).²⁹ He divides the whole work into forty different chapters to correspond to the forty days of Lent, which can be adjusted as necessary. For example, on the first Sunday of Lent, when the Gospel is the temptation of Christ in the desert (Matt 4), Salmerón recommends using the parable of the strong man who is overpowered and despoiled by a stronger one (Matt 12, Mark 3, Luke 11).³⁰ Mindful of the variations of the liturgical calendar, he gives additional recommendations for how to adapt the parables to the sanctoral cycle, applying suitable parables to the feasts of Matthias, Gregory, Joseph, Benedict, and Thomas Aquinas that occur during Lent.³¹

It was customary during this season to preach outside the Mass as well as during it. The procedure that Salmerón and his fellow Jesuits followed was adapting the format of the university lecture to the comprehension of the ordinary faithful by putting it into the vernacular and making it more intellectually accessible. Often, they would expound a single book of the Bible—or a genre, as in the case of the parables—during their stay in a city, stressing the literal sense along with doctrinal and moral applications. This became a popular form of adult religious education in the Italian cities.³²

²⁹ CEH, vol. 7, 283.

³⁰ CEH, vol. 7, 283.

³¹ CEH, vol. 7, 286. As these examples indicate, the sanctoral cycle has undergone significant rearrangement since the sixteenth century.

³² Bangert, *Jay and Salmerón*, 198–99.

Salmerón was quite proud of his success and renown as a preacher and lecturer, a fact that he did not seek to conceal in his correspondence. He reports on the success of his scriptural lectures in Verona in late 1548 and 1549, noting that his hearers are content and that many have turned over their Lutheran books for burning thanks to his efforts.³³ A few months later, similar fruits were obtained in Belluno, about sixty miles north of Venice, where the people said they had not heard such preaching since the times of St. Bernardino of Siena.³⁴ In 1554, Salmerón reports that the assembly was three or four times larger than it had been the year before, and full of important people from Naples, some of whom said they wished Lent were longer so they could hear him more.³⁵ Also, Salmerón says that those who heard his homily on Trinity Sunday in 1560 received great consolation, and that two learned priests were moved to enter the Society on account of his Lenten preaching that same year.³⁶ By his own account, he easily spoke for ninety minutes at a time, and two hours was well within his reach.³⁷ The evidence indicates, however, that he was not boasting idly about his success, for he seems to have been in demand wherever he went.³⁸ Most famously, he was invited to preach Lent to the Roman Curia in 1569, although by that time he was already too worn out from age and labor to take much pride in it.³⁹

Throughout the *Commentaries*, Salmerón directs words of counsel and exhortation to all classes of people, including fellow preachers. He warns them against the appearance of avarice, and says that preachers throw themselves down from the pinnacle of the temple when they seek glory and temporal gain from their labors, or insist on having the

³³ *ES*, vol. 1, nos. 28–29, 71–72.

³⁴ *ES*, vol. 1, no. 32, 74.

³⁵ *ES*, vol. 1, no. 46, 114–15.

³⁶ *ES*, vol. 1, no. 142, 375.

³⁷ *ES*, vol. 1, no. 46, 115.

³⁸ *ES*, vol. 1, no. 75, 198; *ES*, vol. 1, no. 84, 232–33; *ES*, vol. 1, no. 121, 326; *ES*, vol. 1, no. 204^a, 519; *ES*, vol. 1, appendix no. 4, 582–83; *ES*, vol. 1, appendix no. 8, 592–93; *ES*, vol. 2, no. 245, 10.

³⁹ He tried to get out of the assignment, citing reasons of ill health, but the pope proved inflexible on the point. *ES*, vol. 2, no. 315, 182–83.

seats of the most honorable churches with large stipends.⁴⁰ Like Jesus, preachers must withdraw from human praise so that they may pray, and they have to fulfill all righteousness.⁴¹ They should know how to protect their labor from undue affection for their families.⁴² And they cannot do anything in themselves, but must receive Jesus coming in the name of his Father.⁴³

The Jesuit also has advice more specifically on the art of preaching. He stresses the importance of human preparation as well as receptivity

It is clear that Salmerón thought he was practicing “armored theology,” for military metaphors and polemic abound in his work.

toward the Holy Spirit, saying that the office of preaching should be given only to *peritis et doctis* (the learned) who know the Gospels, Paul, and indeed the whole Bible.⁴⁴ Preachers must offer the bread of Christ rather than their

own bread—that is, their own ideas.⁴⁵ It is absurd for them to put aside faith in favor of reason, the law, poets, or fables, which should only be used discreetly to adorn Christian truth.⁴⁶ They should know how to play the flute as well as the dirge—that is, communicate joy and sorrow alike.⁴⁷ It is essential that, like Christ, they accommodate themselves to their audience.⁴⁸ They should not be left to this task without oversight, for popes and bishops have a responsibility to investigate new preachers and to ensure they are teaching sound doctrine.⁴⁹

⁴⁰ CEH, vol. 4, 49, 132, 615.

⁴¹ CEH, vol. 6, 73, 182; vol. 4, 67.

⁴² CEH, vol. 4, 313.

⁴³ CEH, vol. 8, 103.

⁴⁴ CEH, vol. 4, 358, 530. This includes possessing what one teaches by having it committed to memory. CEH, vol. 8, 49.

⁴⁵ CEH, vol. 6, 204.

⁴⁶ CEH, vol. 4, 526.

⁴⁷ CEH, vol. 4, 283 (Aa4r).

⁴⁸ CEH, vol. 9, 527.

⁴⁹ CEH, vol. 4, 146.

Salmerón shows himself sympathetic to the challenges that preachers encounter. People get angry hearing their sins condemned, as if the preacher were targeting them personally.⁵⁰ In order to avoid discouragement, preachers should remember what kind of hearers Jesus had, and that a disciple is not above his master.⁵¹ Salmerón notes that princes rarely love and often fear true preachers of God's word, and sometimes try to silence them.⁵² Despite his insistence upon learning, Salmerón says that the people should not condemn or ignore preachers of lesser erudition, if their teaching is good.⁵³

IV. Scripture

In his *vita*, Ribadeneira marvels at Salmerón's mastery of the sacred and profane sciences, and the *Commentaries* show just how broad and deep Salmerón's learning was.⁵⁴ He has an extraordinary command of the Catholic tradition and gives a great deal of attention to the correct method of expounding it. He considers the exposition of Scripture to be the highest sort of theology, and it constantly flows from his pen.⁵⁵ Salmerón draws forth from the written Word of God the mysteries of faith and the Lord's life. This emphasis on the mysteries is characteristic of Salmerón's theological mindset.⁵⁶ He does profess and formulate conceptual propositions and search for correct theological conclusions, but he also seeks to plumb their depths for spiritual and affective richness. He was evidently a man who *meditates on the law of the Lord day*

⁵⁰ CEH, vol. 4, 523. He compares this indignation to the often greater harm that demons do after they are driven out. CEH, vol. 6, 65.

⁵¹ CEH, vol. 4, 336.

⁵² CEH, vol. 4, 179; vol. 3, 363.

⁵³ CEH, vol. 8, 150.

⁵⁴ Lop Sebastia, *Salmerón*, 369.

⁵⁵ He speaks of Scripture as the "Lydian stone" of theology. CEH, vol. 1, 3. In the preface to the *Commentaries*, Salmerón says that it is good to drink from the font of Scripture even from infancy and all through adolescence, adulthood, and old age. CEH, vol. 1, ††3r. He also says that the higher theology of Scripture is preferable to Scholastic studies. CEH, vol. 1, 333.

⁵⁶ Salmerón defines a mystery as *arcanum sive rem secretam aliquam et occultam, id est quae fugiat omnem sensum, et rationem humanam*. CEH, vol. 9, 101.

and night (Ps 1). This partially explains the repetitive character of the *Commentaries*. Salmerón was not in a hurry to “get to the point,” but rather delighted in ruminating on and returning to the same verses and teachings of Scripture.

There are two ways that Salmerón organizes the mysteries. In the first, he expounds on the events of the Lord’s life in which the truth of his identity and teaching shines forth. Salmerón offers a list of these principal mysteries of the life of Jesus, and in treating them, he often gives a crucial ancillary role to the Blessed Virgin and John the Baptist.⁵⁷ The second way of organizing and presenting the mysteries is by returning again and again to the three that articulate the abiding presence of God, whether in heaven or on earth: the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist. Together, these three make for a thread of continuity and constant touchstone for the greatness of God as well as for God’s nearness to the human race.⁵⁸ In addition to his ubiquitous passing references, Salmerón dedicates more space exclusively to these three mysteries than to any others.⁵⁹ The difference between the two approaches is that the mysteries of the Lord’s life are, for the most part, treated discretely according to their appearance in the Gospels, whereas the three mysteries of God’s presence are never allowed to fade from the narrative, but experience variations of intensity of emphasis throughout the *Commentaries*.

Salmerón invests considerable time and effort in explaining the various senses of Scripture and how they are to be used. Although he

⁵⁷ The ten principal mysteries of the Messiah are: Incarnation, Nativity, Adoration of the Magi, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism, Entrance into Jerusalem, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Sending of the Holy Spirit. *CEH*, vol. 3, 98. Salmerón’s commentary on the infancy narratives contains extensive treatments of these two figures, and he says that they dwell in the highest heaven (*coeli coelorum*) with Christ, the apostles, and the foremost angels. *CEH*, vol. 5, 291.

⁵⁸ Salmerón calls the Incarnation and the Eucharist the two highest mysteries of our faith, and brings out the deep connection between them, calling the latter a kind of image of the hypostatic union. *CEH*, vol. 8, 223; vol. 9, 151. The Trinity is the first mystery that Salmerón treats, and it is constantly recalled by his doxologies.

⁵⁹ Volumes 2, 3, and a large section of 9 are dedicated to the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, whereas all of volume 9 and a good chunk of volume 8 treat the Eucharist.

gives clear priority to the literal sense, particularly when arguing a point of doctrine, the spiritual senses are thoroughly integrated into his exegesis. In some places, he mounts an explicit defense of spiritual readings against writers who neglect them.⁶⁰ In other instances, he claims for the literal sense meanings that modern theologians might more readily place in the spiritual category.⁶¹

In his regard for the primacy, authority, and majesty of Scripture, Salmerón was of a mind not only with many intellectual currents of the age, Protestant as well as Catholic, but also with the patristic authors and high Scholastics. His greatest love is the exposition of the sacred page, to which he dedicated countless hours in the pulpit. This is not for Salmerón merely an academic exercise, but rather an opening up of the mind and heart to the glory of God that is revealed therein. Salmerón took this priority of Scripture a step further by his decision to allow the written Word of God to order his treatment of theology. The *Commentaries* are a more or less complete theological treatise, in that they explain in a fairly thorough way the whole of the faith, but they are not laid out topically after the fashion of a theological manual. Salmerón deals with various topics as the flow of the Gospel narrative dictates. In this respect, the Jesuit theologian was imitating the Fathers he knew so well rather than the medieval *summas*.

In addition to the Christian sources, Salmerón also has a respectable command of Jewish authors, mostly Talmudic scholars and medieval rabbis.

Salmerón does not shy away from the textual and translation issues that were debated in his day, usually taking conservative positions. There is tension between his familiarity with, and occasional esteem for,

⁶⁰ He attacks Erasmus for rejecting the spiritual sense and defends the allegorical reading of the Good Samaritan against Calvin. *CEH*, vol. 1, 69; vol. 7, 91.

⁶¹ He claims that there are Old Testament passages that speak of Christ according to the literal sense, as some of the Fathers taught. *CEH*, vol. 1, 68. A particular verse may also have multiple literal senses, as when Hebrews 1:5 cites Psalm 2, “you are my son, today I have begotten you.” Here, the literal senses include: the eternal generation of the Son from the Father, the Son’s glorious resurrection, and the fact that the Father made the Son a priest. *CEH*, vol. 1, 80. Salmerón also thinks that the literal sense of the banquet of Isaiah 25 refers to the Last Supper. *CEH*, vol. 9, 7.

the new biblical scholarship of his age and his partisanship on behalf of the church's authorized versions. He spends a good deal of space narrating and defending the Jewish legend of the origin of the Septuagint, claiming that this was a truly miraculous event that produced a translation inspired by the Holy Spirit.⁶² Remarkably, Salmerón uses a similar sort of reasoning concerning Jerome's Vulgate, which he thinks was also inspired by the Holy Spirit.⁶³ He invokes a historical argument in defense of these versions: the Holy Spirit was working to make available to the wider world the truth of the Scriptures, as well as to overcome the limitations and ambiguity of the Hebrew original.⁶⁴ As such, he opposes the endeavors to completely retranslate the Old Testament into Latin on the basis of Hebrew manuscripts. If this were truly necessary, he says, then it would mean not only that the church had been bereft of Holy Scripture for fifteen centuries, but also that she would have to turn to the synagogue for knowledge of it, which Salmerón considers absurd.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, although the Tridentine decree on the Vulgate is clearly a touchstone for him, Salmerón does not argue merely from church authority, but also seeks to defend the Vulgate on textual grounds.⁶⁶

V. The Fathers and the Doctors

Salmerón's understanding of the priority of Scripture was never a *Sola Scriptura* approach, for he hardly ever mentions the Bible without bringing in tow the Fathers, who provide the rule for understanding it—and Salmerón's knowledge of the patristic sources extends to the Greek Fathers as well as their Latin counterparts. He knows the

⁶² *CEH*, vol. 1, 41–48. According to Salmerón, a translation was necessary for two main reasons: first, because Hebrew is a confusing language; and second, because God knew that the Jews would later corrupt the Hebrew texts to falsify the claim that Jesus was the Messiah. *CEH*, vol. 1, 39, 37.

⁶³ *CEH*, vol. 1, 26.

⁶⁴ He does accept, however, that the autographs would be authoritative if they were still extant. *CEH*, vol. 1, 23.

⁶⁵ *CEH*, vol. 1, 65–66.

⁶⁶ *CEH*, vol. 1, 23–28, 418–22. Salmerón admits that the current edition of the Vulgate needs correction in some places, but he thinks that these instances are all the result of scribal errors.

famous ones like Augustine, Basil, Jerome, Chrysostom, as well as lesser-known figures like Fulgentius, Theophylact, Oecumenius, and Peter Chrysologus. Salmerón has an expansive sense of who ought to be classified as a Father, for he includes theologians of the second millennium, such as Rupert of Deutz and St. Bernard. And while he is aware that Origen and Tertullian fell into various errors, he does not hesitate to cite them when their teaching agrees with the faith.

Salmerón habitually assembles long and elaborate catenas of patristic sources. Sometimes he does this to demonstrate the consensus of the Fathers, whereas at other times he brings forth their disagreements and attempts to adjudicate between them. Well aware that these disputes sometimes require higher judgment than his own, Salmerón appeals to the authority of the church, whether expressed in the teaching of general councils or the Roman Pontiff.⁶⁷ On this note, he is just as capable of assembling catenas of the decrees, canons, and decisions of the councils and popes as he is of the Fathers. Defense of the authority of the pope, which became a hallmark of the Jesuit thinkers of this period, is very much in evidence throughout Salmerón's writings. At the same time, he is clear to subordinate papal teaching authority to Scripture and tradition, and occasionally lays out concrete limits for its exercise.⁶⁸

Although he prefers Scripture and the Fathers, Salmerón is attentive to Scholasticism as well. A word must be said in particular on his use of Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1226–1274). On the one hand, he does not explicitly state a preference for Thomas's theology and prefers to speak of "the Scholastic doctors" in general, and on a number of issues rejects the position of the Angelic Doctor.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Thomas

⁶⁷ Salmerón seems to give to the decrees of a council priority over the writings of the popes as theological sources, but he is also clear that councils are null without papal approval.

⁶⁸ While the church and the Roman pontiff have no power over the Gospel and cannot dispense with it, Salmerón allows that the pope can change ceremonies, except those that pertain to the celebration of the sacraments. *CEH*, vol. 1, 388. Also, the pope and bishops in a general council are not above Scripture. *CEH*, vol. 1, 415. Furthermore, if a pope were to believe or assert false dogmas, he would cease to be the Vicar of Christ or even a member of the church. *CEH*, vol. 4, 403.

⁶⁹ Most notably concerning the Immaculate Conception and the status of a ratified but not consummated marriage. Salmerón wrote a fascinating letter to General

is by far his most frequently cited source among the Scholastics, and Salmerón's architectonics of the Christian mysteries, as well as his conclusions on particular issues, generally follow Aquinas.⁷⁰ Salmerón is also familiar with a variety of Thomist commentators and compares their opinions to those of their master.

Salmerón mounts a vigorous defense of Scholastic studies against the attacks of heretics and some Humanists.⁷¹ One can see this as an expansion of the terse defense of Scholasticism in the Rules for Thinking with the Church and the *Constitutions*.⁷² He traces the origin of Scholasticism not to the twelfth century, but to Christ himself, who engaged his adversaries with arguments and the tools of reason and rhetoric. The apostles and the Church Fathers also took this approach in imitation of the Lord, and that tradition was continued by such writers as Albert, Bonaventure, Alexander of Hales, Peter Lombard, and Thomas.⁷³ On the basis of this method, Salmerón even distinguishes between two kinds of theology:

One is armored or helmeted theology, bearing shield and spear. The shield is for catching the enemy's darts, that they may not inflict harm, while the spear is for slaughtering and overcoming their errors. For this reason the poets used to depict Minerva, whom they called the light of wisdom and Pallas, armed with helmet, and breastplate, and javelin. The other kind of theology is unarmed, and meeker. It is not strong enough to go forth onto the battlefield to meet the enemy, but is suitable for all the faithful, even the little ones, to whom it is not given to dispute the mysteries of faith or Christian theology.⁷⁴

Aquaviva on the need for freedom in intellectual inquiry, claiming that no Catholic doctor, not even Thomas, ought to be followed in all things. *ES*, vol. 2, no. 522, 709–15.

⁷⁰ This is evident in his treatment of the relationship between faith and reason, the Trinity, and various other teachings.

⁷¹ Salmerón says that it is a credit to Thomas that Luther called him one of the seven vials of the wrath of God. *CEH*, vol. 1, 336.

⁷² *Spiritual Exercises* 352–70, at 363; *Constitutions* 366, 446, 464, 466.

⁷³ *CEH*, vol. 1, 335–36.

⁷⁴ *CEH*, vol. 1, 338. My translation.

It is clear that Salmerón thought he was practicing “armored theology,” for military metaphors and polemic abound in his work.⁷⁵ He advocates a period of training in Scholastic methods for all who wish to pursue theology, primarily so that they can quickly learn the mysteries and the art of disputation.⁷⁶ Salmerón’s effort to combine the Scholastic and Humanist approaches has a downside, however. Following the Scholastics, he was more concerned with accuracy and clarity than beauty, but he explicitly favors the use of common speech over syllogisms, technical vocabulary, and tightly worded arguments.⁷⁷ These tendencies make the *Commentaries* exceedingly verbose, which is probably one reason they have received so little attention.

Salmerón saw the church’s public rites and prayer as an expression of the splendor of the faith and the sacraments, especially the Eucharist.

If the Jesuit from Toledo was inclined to speak of “Scripture, the Fathers, and the Doctors” as opposed to “Scripture and tradition,” that does not mean that he ignored the theoretical issues surrounding tradition. Salmerón uses the term *tradition* in both the singular and the plural, sometimes with a clear distinction between the two, other times not. His two most general definitions are “anything given to us by God to believe or do,” and “all revealed doctrine of the Old and New Testaments.” In the stricter sense, tradition is anything given to us by our ancestors (*maioribus nostris*) outside of the specific mandate of Sacred Scripture.⁷⁸ Elsewhere, he treats tradition as the canon of Scripture and

⁷⁵ Salmerón describes the temptation of Christ in the desert as a great battle with Satan, likening it to gladiatorial games and to the devil’s duel with Adam. *CEH*, vol. 4, 113–14. Likewise, at the beginning of his treatise on the Last Supper, he says that it would not be right for him to make his attack on heretical arguments against the Eucharist unprepared and bereft of the necessary weapons. *CEH*, vol. 9, 5.

⁷⁶ *CEH*, vol. 1, 335.

⁷⁷ He claims that the apostles themselves preferred the rhetoricians’ way of speaking to the syllogistic style of the Scholastics, since the former is better for common speech. *CEH*, vol. 8, 6.

⁷⁸ *CEH*, vol. 8, 238. Here the ambiguity of “testament” as a document and as a covenant makes for a fuzzy definition. It is not altogether clear whether Salmerón believed in the material sufficiency of Scripture. In one place, when speaking of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, he says that if something is not in Scripture,

the rule for its interpretation.⁷⁹ Here, he is careful to note the way that the Evangelists, the twelve apostles, Paul, and even Jesus himself make use of tradition as a norm and source.⁸⁰

Salmerón observes that even Protestant leaders like Luther and Calvin show their dependence on tradition, for they compose manuals (*libelli*) for the instruction and use of their ministers. This tradition of theirs replaces that of the holy Fathers and the law of the church, and they put themselves in the place of the Roman Pontiff.⁸¹ Despite these observations, “tradition” is not really a primary category for Salmerón because he divides most of its content between, on the one hand, the Fathers and the Doctors, and, on the other hand, “the custom of the church,” as will be explained below.

VI. Other Sources

Salmerón takes into account contemporary theologians, commentators, and textual editors. He is familiar with the new editions and translations of the Bible, such as the Complutensian Polyglot of his alma mater or the version of Santes Pagninus. Scattered about the *Commentaries* are citations of Lefèvre d’Etaples (1455–1536), Melchior Cano (ca. 1509–1560), John Fisher (1469–1535), Cornelius Jansen the Elder (1510–1576), and many other contemporary Catholic authors, whom he blames and praises by turns. He especially targets Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536) and Thomas de Vio, a.k.a. Cajetan (1469–1534).⁸² Salmerón has numerous grievances against the Dutch Human-

then it comes from tradition, or solid arguments deduced from Scripture and tradition. *CEH*, vol. 3, 401. Yet it is also clear that he thinks that Scripture provides ample testimony to the Immaculate Conception.

⁷⁹ *CEH*, vol. 8, 5.

⁸⁰ Salmerón claims that, whereas Matthew and Luke consulted temple records in composing their genealogies, Paul makes multiple references to keeping tradition. In his disputes with the Pharisees and others, Jesus always confirmed his teaching by the use of signs, tradition, and reason, as well as by the innocence of his life. *CEH*, vol. 8, 5, 239, 4.

⁸¹ *CEH*, vol. 8, 239.

⁸² While O’Malley notes Salmerón’s negative stance toward Erasmus, he exaggerates slightly in saying that Salmerón “could not bring himself to say a good word” about

ist. First, the two scholars were frequently at odds over textual and translation questions, which Salmerón discusses at length.⁸³ Second, although Salmerón was not unsympathetic to the search for the best possible reading, he was strongly defensive of Jerome's Vulgate and found Erasmus's attack on it impudent.⁸⁴ Third, and most seriously, Salmerón thought that Erasmus gave succor to Protestants, and especially to the new Arianism of figures like Michael Servetus (ca. 1509–1553).⁸⁵

In addition to the Christian sources, Salmerón also has a respectable command of Jewish authors, mostly Talmudic scholars and medieval rabbis. Sometimes these sources are of use to him in defending his positions, such as the inspired quality of the Septuagint translation or the prophecies of the Messiah contained in the Old Testament. More often, however, he cites these sources to show that by their rejection of Christ, the Jews have forfeited their status as God's chosen people.⁸⁶ In the context of the sixteenth century, it is worth noting that Salmerón's polemics against the Jews are strictly theological. The motif to which he returns time and again is that in Christ there is no longer Jew or Greek.⁸⁷

the Dutch theologian, since occasionally Salmerón approves of Erasmus's judgments. O'Malley, *First Jesuits*, 263–64.

⁸³ There are far too many such examples to offer anything like a comprehensive list. The issue of the Johannine comma should suffice. The authenticity of 1 Jn 5:6–7 was a hot topic in the sixteenth century, thanks to the research and writing of Erasmus. His position on the matter is complex, but the short version is that he had serious doubts about the verses, since they could be found in no ancient Greek codices. Salmerón fulminates against Erasmus at length on this point, accusing him not only of preferring schismatic Greeks to Latins, but also of impudently disputing the constant usage of the church and the citation of the comma by Lateran IV. *CEH*, vol. 2, 49–52.

⁸⁴ See note 51, above.

⁸⁵ In his defense of the consubstantiality of the Father and Son, Salmerón remarks that Erasmus is more Arian than Catholic on this question. *CEH*, vol. 2, 50. In numerous places, Salmerón discusses the error of Servetus and his role in spreading heresy in Central Europe. *CEH*, vol. 2, 35, 88, 100.

⁸⁶ The "Jewish question" in the early Society of Jesus has received considerable scholarly attention. Helpful introductions can be found in James Reites, "St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Jews," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 13, no. 4 (1981): 1-48; Robert Maryks, *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

⁸⁷ To take one typical example, Salmerón says that the healing of the leper and of the servant of the centurion in Matthew 8 shows that the Gospel is for the salvation of all believers, first Jew then Greek. *CEH*, vol. 6, 139.

It is curious, nevertheless, how much interest Salmerón takes in Jewish writings, and especially in Jewish ceremonial, given that he discourages others from following such a path.⁸⁸

Salmerón makes regular use of classical authors, mostly the Roman poets he had learned by heart as a schoolboy. His citations of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and others are most often for the sake of rhetorical adornment. Classical rhetoric and literature also provide Salmerón with the explanation of a great variety of tropes and figures of speech, a knowledge of which he considers indispensable for the proper understanding of Scripture. In volume 1, for example, he offers a catalogue of more than two dozen tropes and figures, complete with concrete instances of their use, that the exegete must know in order to understand Scripture correctly.⁸⁹ This material makes the *Commentaries* often read like an updated version of Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*, to which Salmerón regularly makes reference. Salmerón is familiar with the philosophical resources of antiquity and mostly uses them as a toolbox of skills in disputation and source of true and false doctrines.

The most distinctive aspect of the *Commentaries*, however, is their use of history. In the first place, Salmerón did not choose to organize the *Commentaries* in the manner typical of exegetes of the time and since—that is, by treating each of the Evangelists in order. Instead, he rearranges all the Gospel passages chronologically. This is not without precedent among the Fathers as well as contemporaries, Augustine and Cornelius Jansen the Elder being the two most prominent examples, but Salmerón's decision seems to be rooted in a particular understanding of history. He speaks of history as a *narratio rei alicuius verae gestae* (the narration of something that really happened) and he thinks of the Evangelists as true historians.⁹⁰ He contrasts the truth and reliability of the "Gospel history" with pro-

⁸⁸ Whenever a Jewish feast appears in the Gospels, Salmerón gives extensive commentary on its origin, context, and ritual performance. Yet he sternly warns his reader to learn from Jews only Hebrew grammar and not the senses of Scripture, and to shun the Talmud and the Kabbala. The only reason to read other Jewish sources, he says, is for making better arguments against them. *CEH*, vol. 1, 98.

⁸⁹ *CEH*, vol. 1, 234–43.

⁹⁰ *CEH*, vol. 4, 535; vol. 1, 412, vol. 2, 240.

fane history, which is subject to error and distortion.⁹¹ This means not only that the words and deeds described in the Gospels really took place, but also that they are ultimately harmonious with all other truths, whether those known only by faith or those narrated by other trustworthy historical sources. It might even be said that this concept of the Gospel history is the ordering principle of his theology.

Salmerón thus expends much effort correlating the Gospel history with Josephus, Tacitus, Eusebius, and other historians of the ancient and late antique worlds.

He thinks, for example, that it is possible to establish with precision the time of the Incarnation, Nativity, and Passion by comparison with the Olympiads, imperial regnal years, and other points of reference from profane

He thunders against the behaviors associated with Carnival (bacchanalia), saying that Satan instituted these days in memory of his triumph over Adam.

historians, but his historical interest extends far beyond the chronological.⁹² On this point, he mines the ancient writers for whatever information they can provide about the context and customs of the time. For example, he provides an introduction to the geography and history of Syria, mostly taken from Pliny, as a way of setting the stage for the Gospel history.⁹³ He explains Jewish and pagan dining etiquette as background for the frequent occurrence of banquets and related imagery in the Gospels.⁹⁴ Salmerón, like Melchor Cano, even considers history as a *locus theologicus* (theological source), placing it in the same category as the teachings of the philosophers.⁹⁵

⁹¹ CEH, vol. 4,)(2r.

⁹² CEH, vol. 1, 439–52.

⁹³ CEH, vol. 1, 471–505.

⁹⁴ CEH, vol. 1, 217–21.

⁹⁵ His complete taxonomy of the *loci* of theology is as follows: in the first category is divine authority expressed in holy letters (Scripture); in the second, divine authority expressed in the traditions of Christ and the apostles that were not written down but transmitted *viva voce* or in the authority of the Catholic Church, the general councils, the uniform testimony of the Fathers, or even the Scholastic doctors; and in the third, the claims of reason, at which all human disciplines, including philosophy and history, arrive. CEH, vol. 8, 7.

The Gospel history also determines the order in which he treats the Christian mysteries. He does not begin, as one might expect, with the infancy narratives or the Lord's public ministry, but with John's prologue, which tells of the pre-existence of the Word. His exegesis of this passage opens up into dogmatic treatises on the Trinity and the Incarnation, and this is the pattern he follows throughout the work. For example, he deals with the seven sacraments as he sees their connection to the narration of the Gospel history: baptism and penance are treated in his exegesis on the baptism of John in the desert and the repentant woman of Luke 7, the Eucharist is discussed in John 6 and the narratives of the Last Supper, and so forth.⁹⁶

In other words, Salmerón makes a conscious choice for a biblical-historical determination of the ordering of theology, as opposed to a systematic-topical one. He agrees with the Humanists on the need to return to the sources, especially Scripture, but chooses to employ history more than rhetoric or poetry as handmaid to theology, because history is concerned with the truth of the human past. And so, the criterion of truth is the thread that runs through Salmerón's pursuit of various branches of learning and his use of them in commenting on Scripture. His mastery of sacred and profane sciences allows him to compare a wide array of opinions on any given Scriptural passage or theological topic and to draw his own conclusions, but in such a way as to be in harmony with the Catholic faith, Scripture, and the Fathers and Doctors. Finally, although he usually asserts his views with vigor, he is careful to allow room for legitimate disagreement on points that church has not yet defined.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ *CEH*, vol. 4, 17–20, 298–308; vol. 8, 140–230, vol. 9, *passim*.

⁹⁷ He distinguishes, for example, between a pope speaking as a Catholic doctor and as defining an article of faith. *CEH*, vol. 4, 293. He notes that Trent refrained from defining the exact meaning of the words of John 6—a definition for which he had fought hard while the council was in session. *CEH*, vol. 8, 177; Hughes, *Salmerón*, 157–60.

VII. *Mos Ecclesiae*

Salmerón manifests great love for the customs and practices of the church, especially concerning prayer and worship. Part of this can be explained in terms of the Protestant challenge, and indeed it is not uncommon for him to engage in polemics against them concerning the church's practice.⁹⁸ More importantly, however, Salmerón saw the church's public rites and prayer as an expression of the splendor of the faith and the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, as well as a sign of the church's being constituted as a people with authoritative leaders. This is also the most likely explanation for his interest in Jewish ceremonial, for while he believes that those rites have been emptied of their meaning, as types they provide a model for public worship.⁹⁹

Salmerón readily cites the liturgy as confirming Catholic teaching and communicating its greatness. Sometimes these references fulfill a kind of decorative function, not unlike his use of the classical poets.¹⁰⁰ When discoursing on the dignity of the Gospels, he observes that when they are sung in church, there is a procession with lighted candles and incense, and people uncover their heads. This is such a fitting sign of reverence, Salmerón says, that even the Lutherans in Germany observe it.¹⁰¹ He notes that all genuflect at the elevation of the Host and bow their heads at the name of Jesus.¹⁰² Salmerón praises the Latin church's custom of kneeling during Mass, and laments that some sit or stand instead out of laziness and lack of devotion.¹⁰³ He explains the use of the three canticles from Luke's Gospel at the hours of Lauds, Vespers,

⁹⁸ For example, he defends against Protestant attacks the chanting or recitation of the Divine Office, even by those who do not comprehend Latin. *CEH*, vol. 1, 9, vol. 5, 337.

⁹⁹ He contrasts the legitimate rites and ceremonies of the church with superstitious ones, among which he includes the ceremonies of the Jews, which once stood for future things that now belong to the past. *CEH*, vol. 8, 237–38.

¹⁰⁰ To take just one of countless examples: when writing on the eternal destiny of the just, he cites the offertory antiphon of the Requiem Mass, which promises that St. Michael will lead them into holy light. *CEH*, vol. 5, 108.

¹⁰¹ *CEH*, vol. 1, 387.

¹⁰² *CEH*, vol. 1, 387–88.

¹⁰³ *CEH*, vol. 5, 279.

and Compline, and offers allegorical interpretations of them based on the different states of life in the church.¹⁰⁴ Salmerón reflects on the symbolic meaning of each piece of the priest's sacred vestiture: amice, alb, cincture, maniple, stole, and chasuble.¹⁰⁵ He even offers a kind of theory *in nuce* of religious ceremonial, which he says has three aims: to bring Christians into one people and *into the house of one custom* (Ps 67), to adorn and protect divine worship, and to recall the Lord's teaching.¹⁰⁶

For all his love of the liturgy, though, Salmerón does give priority to other priestly labors.¹⁰⁷ At other times, however, he uses the liturgy in a more deliberate way as a true *locus theologicus*. Nowhere is this more evident than in his Mariology. He was an ardent advocate of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, and he used the church's celebration of these feasts as evidence in support of their truth.¹⁰⁸ In the end, he concludes that the greater number of Church Doctors in favor of the Immaculate Conception, the consent of the people, and (unnamed) miracles and revelations support belief in this teaching.¹⁰⁹ His lengthy treatise on the Assumption makes use of an unusual genre of texts known as *De transitu Mariae* (On the passing of Mary), which offer a wealth of details about when, where, and how the Blessed Virgin's earthly life came to an end.¹¹⁰ Salmerón is fond of citing the Marian antiphons and hymns of the Latin church to underscore a point.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ *CEH*, vol. 3, 98, 386–87.

¹⁰⁵ *CEH*, vol. 9, 251.

¹⁰⁶ *CEH*, vol. 8, 237–38.

¹⁰⁷ Preaching the Word of God, hearing confessions, and fraternal correction are to be preferred to hearing Mass, chanting the Office in choir, and fasting or abstaining out of devotion, because the first set of works helps bring souls back from sin. *CEH*, vol. 4, 246.

¹⁰⁸ He offers a brief history of how these feasts came into existence. Duke William of Saxony asked Pius II (1458–1464) to permit celebration of the Presentation. When Paul II (1464–1471) granted this, he included in his permission the Assumption. The liturgical celebration of the Immaculate Conception originates with Sixtus IV (1471–1484) and, despite some theological objections, was confirmed by the Council of Trent. *CEH*, vol. 3, 113. (Salmerón was not entirely correct in his historical account on this point).

¹⁰⁹ *CEH*, vol. 4, 296.

¹¹⁰ This lengthy treatment can be found in *CEH*, vol. 11, 298–322.

¹¹¹ These include the *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, *Gaude Virgo Mater Christi*, *Sola sine*

Although Salmerón regards Eastern Christians as schismatics, he does take an interest in their customs and occasionally appeals to them in support of certain teachings.¹¹² He supports his Marian teaching with citations from the Eastern Fathers as well as from the liturgical calendar of the Greek church.¹¹³ In his defense of the season of Lent and its discipline, he cites the confession of faith of the Ethiopian church, which says that the apostles were taught to fast on bread and water for the forty days of the season.¹¹⁴ He discusses also the fasting practices of the Greeks, noting without criticism their difference from the Latin ones.¹¹⁵ The Ethiopian celebration of the Holy Innocents says that Herod had fourteen thousand children killed, a figure that Salmerón seems to accept.¹¹⁶ Salmerón even gives a mild defense of the Ethiopian and Indian Christian practice of circumcision, which he says is not sinful because it is not done for Judaizing reasons, but on account of their belief that they are descended from Abraham according to the flesh.¹¹⁷ Although he favors the *mos* of the Latin Church generally, he appears to accept a legitimate plurality on most of these issues.

One can accuse Salmerón of being selective in his appeal to the East. On the one hand, he points to the presence of the words of institution in the Divine Liturgies of Saints James, Basil, and Chrysostom to

exemplo, Ut huius almi gratia, and numerous others. *CEH*, vol. 3, 36, 83, 233, 253. He notes that the church praises Mary in psalms, hymns, antiphons, and the tolling of the bells thrice daily. *CEH*, vol. 3, 108.

¹¹² He associates schismatics with heretics as enemies of the church separated from her body. *CEH*, vol. 4, 391, 40; vol. 7, 30; vol. 9, 8.

¹¹³ He says that he rejoiced greatly when he discovered that the Greeks celebrate the Feast of the Presentation, and he notes that the Roman Church allows this to be done privately and does not condemn public celebration, at least until Pius V reduced the number of feasts. *CEH*, vol. 3, 111, 112–13.

¹¹⁴ *CEH*, vol. 4, 104.

¹¹⁵ *CEH*, vol. 4, 98. Salmerón is more concerned to preserve the authority of the church to determine these matters than he is to impose particular Latin observances on everyone.

¹¹⁶ *CEH*, vol. 3, 415.

¹¹⁷ *CEH*, vol. 3, 318. He rejects as superstitious the motive of being circumcised to suffer as Christ did, for Christians are not to imitate everything that Christ did. Even this motivation of circumcised Christians, however, does not make for a mortal sin.

argue that *Hoc est corpus meum* is the form of Eucharistic consecration.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, in response to the Greek church's allowance of remarriage in cases of adultery, Salmerón replies that this was not the original practice, as the Greek Fathers themselves, especially Basil and Chrysostom, testify. Besides, he continues, the Greek church's current practice means nothing to Catholics, since its sins have robbed it of the Spirit of God and it has fallen into grave errors of faith.¹¹⁹

Finally, Salmerón's notion of the *mos Ecclesiae* is an expansive rather than a restrictive one, as his commentary extends to a wider set of social practices beyond the liturgy or ecclesiastical discipline

In his view, theology that neglects the Fathers will not be able to understand the true meaning of Scripture, while theology that neglects the Scholastics will lack the proper conceptual tools for making distinctions and definitions.

properly so called. He thunders against the behaviors associated with Carnival (bacchanalia), saying that Satan instituted these days in memory of his triumph over Adam.¹²⁰ Despite his classical education, he also is highly critical of the fashion of naming children after Greek gods and heroes, and he advocates the use of the names of saints and martyrs instead. In

the same vein, he censures the practice found among Anabaptists of naming their children after obscure figures from the Old Testament, which he thinks is a sign of Judaizing.¹²¹ Salmerón even made a small and inadvertent contribution to ladies' fashion, when in response to his preaching on immodesty some Venetian tailors produced the *salmeron*, a dress that went up all the way to the neck.¹²²

¹¹⁸ CEH, vol. 9, 80–89.

¹¹⁹ CEH, vol. 8, 388. Among these errors he counts the Greek imputation of heretical praxis to the Latins for using unleavened bread in the Eucharist. Anyone who makes this accusation, Salmerón says, is himself guilty of heresy. CEH, vol. 9, 24.

¹²⁰ Carnival was celebrated before the season of Lent and was associated with debauchery. Salmerón also says that Christian behavior on these days is like another handing over of Christ to pagans, Jews, and heretics. CEH, vol. 4, 573–74.

¹²¹ CEH, vol. 3, 131.

¹²² Bangert, *Jay and Salmerón*, 290.

VIII. The Society of Jesus

One of the most surprising features of the *Commentaries* is their reticence about the Jesuits. Outside of the preface of volume 1, in which Salmerón makes his membership in the order explicit, references to the Society are few and far between. There are moments when this is astonishing, as when Salmerón comments, without mentioning the Jesuits, on the discernment of spirits, the various governing structures of religious orders and their superiors, the name of Jesus, and action and contemplation.

The rare instances where he does choose to speak of his community, however, are pregnant with significance. The first of these comes near the beginning of volume 6, which treats of the Lord's miracles. Salmerón is frequently at pains to explain why miracles were so numerous in the time of the apostles and so rare in his own times. He says that miracles once greatly aided the expansion of the church, but now there is other compelling evidence to receive the faith, and frequent miracles would only lead to this evidence being held in contempt.¹²³ Salmerón even applies a kind of methodological skepticism about miracles to his exegesis when he rejects explanations that require multiplying miracles.¹²⁴ Now, God works signs when he wishes to demonstrate the singular holiness of a particular saint.¹²⁵ It should be no surprise, then, that Salmerón's first mention of a fellow Jesuit is "the great servant of God and my very close friend in Christ," Francis Xavier, who performed countless miracles during his missionary journeys.¹²⁶ Although Salmerón is attentive to the baptisms that Xavier performed, his emphasis is rather on the miracles.¹²⁷ The message

¹²³ *CEH*, vol. 6, 12.

¹²⁴ *CEH*, vol. 3, 222; vol. 4, 71; vol. 9, 136. Augustine seems to be the source for this idea.

¹²⁵ *CEH*, vol. 6, 13.

¹²⁶ *CEH*, vol. 6, 13–14. Salmerón says that he has this information thanks to the command of John III of Portugal to his ministers to collate testimonies about the saint.

¹²⁷ In volume 6, Salmerón says that Xavier brought over a hundred thousand people to the faith in one year. In volume 12, he reports that Xavier baptized four hundred thousand people over the course of his life. *CEH*, vol. 12, 89.

seems to be that in Francis Xavier, God was doing something unusual in post-apostolic times to demonstrate Xavier's extraordinary sanctity.

Volume 9 of the *Commentaries*, which is entirely dedicated to the Last Supper and Eucharistic doctrine, witnesses another reference to one of Salmerón's fellow founders of the Society. In chapter 37 of the volume, Salmerón takes up the question of whether or not it is expedient to offer the chalice to the laity at Mass in certain provinces or kingdoms where there is a demand for it. Salmerón was vehemently opposed to allowing the laity to partake of the chalice, and he cites the counsel that Father Diego Laínez "of happy memory" offered to the Council of Trent on this point.¹²⁸ Expressing his total agreement with his former superior general, Salmerón spends nearly twenty pages arguing against Communion under both species and warning of the dire consequences that would follow from it. Laínez distinguished himself at Trent for his contributions on many theological points, but evidently this is the one that Salmerón deemed worthy of mention.

Salmerón saves his most striking words about the Society for Ignatius. In the course of his treatment of the sacrament of penance, he says:

But here I will speak openly of that: our father of happy memory Ignatius of Loyola, the main founder of our Society, a man of remarkable holiness, adorned with extraordinary prudence, brought companions into his society and called them from the waves of life by which they were tossed, into the serene port of his religious order, by nothing more than that frequent and regular reception of the sacraments, by certain pious practices, by spiritual exercises of a holy life ordered toward general confessions, and by a method of meditating on the life of Christ and a regimen of adapted prayers. He himself also made use of frequent confession and the habit of receiving the Eucharist and of occasionally making general confessions, and both by his example and his words, he established and recommended it for all his spiritual sons and for his students. But while his men try to excel in this same matter, it [the Society] has fled to its present stature, which is now so great, from the humble beginnings that God favored. By no other stronger weapons or

¹²⁸ *CEH*, vol. 9, 307.

more potent aids does the Society of Jesus, wherever it exists, bring forth some spiritual fruit for neighbors than by encouraging and persuading this diligent practice of the sacraments: to tell the truth, they are nearly all of our Society's good, which it brings forth in itself and in others, the fruit of those seeds which that most holy and devout man sowed, since indeed the Spirit of God, who chose and sent this man, the founder of our Sodality, into the Church as a planter, foresaw, with the revolutions of Luther and the heresies of Calvin, that no more opportune or at-hand remedy could be brought forth to extinguish that conflagration than this recourse to frequent confession and communion, so that they might completely overthrow and shatter the heresies of those ones, which to a large extent strive to topple these two sacraments. Blessed be God who in his marvelous wisdom knew to send, on account of the time, suitable and useful workers into his vineyard, so that they might purge the Church of vices and defend her from heresies, and urge her, by words and example of life, to fulfill the commanded holy works of Christ.¹²⁹

There are several notable things about this passage. The first is that Salmerón places frequent confession and reception of the Eucharist as the most important factors behind Ignatius's gathering of the companions into the Society. The second is that Salmerón may or may not be offering his only explicit reference in the *Commentaries* to the Spiritual Exercises. The words he uses are *piisque quibusdam, ac sanctae vitae spiritualibus exercitiis ad confessionem generalem, ac meditandae vitae Christi rationem, precatationisque studium accommodatis*. The expression *spiritualibus exercitiis* may refer to the Exercises, or to general pious practices associated with a holy life. The former reading seems more likely, although it would entail the conclusion that Salmerón thought that the primary purpose of making the Exercises was the general confession.

A third feature of this passage is that Salmerón thinks not only that promoting frequent reception of the sacraments was the most important factor in forming the Society, but also that it constitutes the order's most important ministry to others. Finally, although he does not say that the Society was established to combat Protestantism, Salmerón

¹²⁹ CEH, vol. 11, 167.

clearly thinks that its appearance at the time of Luther and Calvin was providential, and that the sacramental ministry is the best measure for strengthening the faith against attacks.

Although it will take more research to ascertain the significance of Salmerón's work for our understanding of the first companions, two observations are in order. First, there is an obvious relation of closeness and dependence between Laínez and Salmerón, the two greatest theological minds in the group.¹³⁰ They studied together and became friends at Alcalá and Paris, they carried out similar inquiries into patristic theology, they were chosen to represent the Holy See at Trent for all three convocations, and they collaborated closely with each other there.¹³¹ With this in mind, it is unsurprising that Salmerón proclaims, in the general preface of his *Commentaries*, his indebtedness to Laínez.¹³² Ribadeneira too takes note of their closeness, saying that Salmerón was like Laínez's son and disciple, while also noting Salmerón's feelings of inferiority with respect to his friend.¹³³ It seems quite likely, therefore, that the *Commentaries* testify in considerable measure not only to the thought of Salmerón, but also that of Laínez.

The second observation is that Salmerón's work offers insight about how early Jesuits conceived of theological method, especially the relationship between positive and Scholastic theology. The *Constitutions*

¹³⁰ Paul Oberholzer says that there was widespread consensus within the early Society that Laínez had the most profound theological knowledge. Paul Oberholzer, "Desafíos y exigencias frente a un nuevo descubrimiento de Diego Laínez," in *Diego Laínez (1512–1565) and his Generalate: Jesuit with Jewish Roots, Close Confidant of Ignatius of Loyola, Preeminent Theologian of the Council of Trent*, ed. Paul Oberholzer, (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2015), 68.

¹³¹ Fichter and Hughes highlight the collaboration and agreement between these two Jesuits at Trent.

¹³² *CEH*, vol. 1, ††5r. An English translation of this passage may be found in Joseph Fichter, *James Laynez: Jesuit* (New York: Herder, 1944), appendix III, 271.

¹³³ Ribadeneira says that his words of praise for Salmerón redound to Laínez's credit, because the former sought to imitate the latter in all things. Ribadeneira also tells a story that one of Salmerón's close friends, a lay nobleman, once said to him that he could not believe that Laínez was as learned as Salmerón. Salmerón replied, "I promise that the difference between Fr. Laínez and me is as great as the difference between me and you." Lop Sebastia, *Salmerón*, 359, 370.

contain numerous paragraphs that praise both but without specifying what their mutual relationship should be, much less giving a concrete example of what that should look like in a work of theology. The *Commentaries* not only offer significant reflection on the relationship of positive and Scholastic approaches, but also give a demonstration of it. Unlike Erasmus, who inserted a wedge between positive and Scholastic theology, Salmerón seeks to integrate these sources as harmonious witnesses to the truth of the Catholic faith. In his view, theology that neglects the Fathers will not be able to understand the true meaning of Scripture, while theology that neglects the Scholastics will lack the proper conceptual tools for making distinctions and definitions. Salmerón does not have a *terminus ante quem* for theology either, as if there were a point in time when the enterprise went off the rails altogether. He is not prejudiced against new ideas simply for being new, but issues praise and blame by turns to contemporary thinkers based on the merits of their views on any given question.¹³⁴

IX. *In Hora Mortis Nostrae*

Given the theological richness of the *Commentaries*, it remains unclear why they were not published at Salmerón's death and did not see the light of day for another thirteen years. This fact nevertheless sheds light upon an important reality about the Jesuit from Toledo: when he departed this life, after having been one of the best theological minds of his generation and a star at the Council of Trent, he had no publications to his name, save the homily on John the Evangelist that he had given at the council. In fact, while the *Commentaries* had occupied most of the last sixteen years of his life, he never saw them in print. According to Ribadeneira, Salmerón passed his final days on earth not in recollection of his accomplishments, whether as an author or an administrator, but in recollection of the words of Scripture that he had learned by heart. After having confessed and received the Blessed Sacrament, he had intimate conversations with God, taking his words from Scripture, especially the Psalms: *I shall be satisfied when your glory*

¹³⁴ This explains why he is occasionally able to approve of certain opinions of even the theologians, such as Erasmus and Cajetan, whom he most bitterly opposed.

shall appear (Ps 16) and *As the hart longs after the fountains of water, so my soul longs after you, O God* (Ps 41). He liked to have the litanies of the saints and the Passion read to him as well.¹³⁵

Upon his death, the whole of Naples is said to have come out for the funeral, and so many people were cutting off pieces of his hair and clothing to take as relics that his burial had to wait until nightfall.¹³⁶ The city was sorry to lose the man it called “the Solomon of Naples,” in reference to his name and reputation for wisdom.¹³⁷ It might, then, reasonably be asked why there apparently was never any attempt to raise him to the altars. Clearly, Ribadeneira’s *vita* was not enough to promote a cult of him even in the Society. This question also requires additional study, but an observation by Rafael María Sanz de Diego Verdes-Montenegro (1940–2015) about Diego Laínez may provide a clue: the renown of the more illustrious early Jesuits overshadowed him.¹³⁸ Finally, despite his stature in the sixteenth century and the reaction of Naples to his passing, Salmerón lacked both a reception of his writings and a lasting cult of prayer and miraculous intercession that might have carried forward a canonization process.¹³⁹

Although he lags behind his companions in renown and honor, Salmerón, whom I consider a forgotten saint among the first Jesuits, has a great deal to teach the modern Society about how they brought together personal holiness, apostolic zeal, and theological labor for the greater glory of God.

¹³⁵ Lop Sebastià, *Salmerón*, 367.

¹³⁶ Lop Sebastià, *Salmerón*, 368.

¹³⁷ Lop Sebastià, *Salmerón*, 202, 230.

¹³⁸ This Spanish scholar suggests that Laínez is relatively unknown even in the Society because of Ignatius and Borgia. Rafael María Sanz de Diego Verdes Montenegro, “Diego Laínez: su entorno cultural y primera amistad con Ignacio de Loyola,” in *Diego Laínez (1512–1565): Jesuita y teólogo del Concilio*, ed. Jose García de Castro Valdés, 17–53, at 17–18. O’Malley observes that Salmerón in turn was overshadowed by his more gifted friend, Laínez. O’Malley, *First Jesuits*, 31.

¹³⁹ Salmerón himself warns that there can be deception regarding miracles, and even when they are true, they may not always testify to the holiness of the person under investigation. On this point, someone in a state of mortal sin can prophesy, teach Scripture, praise God, or perform miracles. This is why the church enquires about holiness of life in the canonization process. *CEH*, vol. 5, 410.

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