

ERASMUS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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How can one encompass in a lecture the vast literature on Erasmus in the last century? How could one even make a synopsis of a 300-page book on the subject (my *Erasmus in the Twentieth Century*)? Where to begin? I first made an attempt at this for a symposium in Valencia a few years ago. I decided then to begin with an idea prevalent, even dominant, in the middle years of the twentieth century, about Erasmus and his place in history, Erasmus and his influence on his time, the idea of *Préréforme*. (I will continue to use the French word, partly because French historians first used it extensively, partly because there is no workable English version of it). Augustin Renaudet in Paris, who gave the term currency, saw *Préréforme* as “a vast attempt ... to effect a restoration of Christianity”, to rejuvenate its life and teachings.¹ One reason for starting in this way for that Spanish audience was that the most influential book developing the idea was about

Erasmus and Spain. Its author, Marcel Bataillon, called the spiritual movements encompassed by *Préréforme* “the most formidable thrust of the evangelical spirit since the formation of the church”.²

Let me begin then by doing three things: explain further the idea of *Préréforme* and ask why Erasmus was seen as central to it; say something briefly about Bataillon’s book; explore, briefly again, antecedents to the idea in historical writings of the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Around 1500, the argument goes, there was a great variety of movements for religious reform. Renaudet, who wrote a big thesis, published in 1916, about intellectual and spiritual life in Paris at that time instanced: monastic reform, reform of theology, the emergence of lay piety. These movements for reform and renewal were not necessarily consistent with one another. Bataillon liked dynamic and hydrological metaphors, and he described them as spiritual currents, running together, or in parallel, or criss-crossing one another. The *Préréforme* – so this argument popular at mid-century went – was a broad attempt at religious renewal, and even revolution, gathering force in western Europe after about 1490.

Erasmus was seen as a key figure because he expressed and promoted values and aspirations thought, for all its theological and cultural diversity, to be central to the *Préréforme*. He was a critic of empty ceremony and mere formalism in religion; he sought greater inwardness and authenticity and saw the foundation for that in the Bible. There are two sides to what came out of connecting Erasmus and *Préréforme* in this way. Studying Erasmus helped to explicate the notion of *Préréforme*, and the link worked a

change in the understanding of Erasmus' religion, one of the major changes in Erasmus interpretation in the twentieth century, as we will see.

Bataillon's book (published 1937) was essentially about the connection between a Spanish movement of religious renewal and the European movements designated as *Préréforme*. The Spanish movement was illuminism, spiritual, anti-formalist, to a degree anti-hierarchical and anti-institutional. The European movements were represented above all by Erasmus, whose spiritual writings began to be translated into Castilian in the mid-1520s. One can see easily enough how Erasmus' own resistance to ritualism and dogmatism could be grafted on the illuminist base. Bataillon goes so far as to say that this graft – illuminism and Erasmianism – took the place in Spain of the Protestant Reformation in northern Europe. This then was a major expression of the *Préréforme*.

The *Préréforme* idea had antecedents in both Protestant and Catholic historiography around the turn of the twentieth century. Liberal Protestant writers in England, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany were arguing that the calls for reform by Erasmus and others promised change that went beyond what was eventually realized in the Protestant and Catholic Reformations. The Netherlands case in particular is interesting. In the Netherlands, scholars of the liberal Protestant stamp were arguing that a distinctive form of piety developed in the Netherlands in the *Préréforme* era and eventually helped shape the character of the Dutch Reformation. They described this religious tradition in ways making easy a link with Erasmus: it was biblical rather than scholastic, lay rather

than clerical and ethical rather than dogmatic. In the words of a distinguished Dutch theologian (1909), it was a “peaceable, mediating and latitudinarian piety”.³

Meantime, there were Catholic scholars who found in Erasmus and the *Préréforme* antecedents of the Catholic Reformation, if not of the more defensive and negative Counter-Reformation.⁴ If circumstances had allowed, they argued, these might have prepared the way for the spiritual renewal of the whole church. Pierre Imbart de la Tour wrote of such movements in France under the name “*évangélisme*”, which was intended to convey the hope, widespread in the early sixteenth century, of recovering the gospel and restoring the pristine character of the church.⁵ Bataillon approved that usage.⁶

There were also antecedents in a more secular historiography. Lucien Febvre, in a famous article on the origins of the Reformation (1929), claimed that historians had been misled by the fact that what emerged from the diverse reforming movements of the early sixteenth century was institutional change, the formation of new churches and the restructuring, to a degree, of the old church. But the desire for institutional change did not drive the enormous transformations of the sixteenth century. The dynamic came from the spiritual tendencies we are here calling *Préréforme*, including (some would say, above all) Erasmus. These tendencies were various and ecumenical, not confined by confession or denomination, even after the threat of disunity materialized in the 1530s. Nor were they defined nationally.

To understand this historiography we need to bring in the circumstances of the early twentieth century. Bataillon, in reflecting later on his own work, recognized that it was not a purely intellectual achievement, that the preoccupations of the time had an effect. One was ecumenism. He was writing his book, Bataillon recalled, when the hatreds of three centuries between Catholics and Protestants were being assuaged, and Western Christianity, in both forms, was reviving as a spiritual force, not as a force of tradition and authority. Erasmus was a ready symbol for this mood.⁷ In 1929, when Febvre published his article, Europe was heading into the age of the dictators with their frenetic nationalism and militarism. Erasmus, if no counterweight, could raise, however faintly, an alternative voice. So it was through the 1930s. Indicative was the popular biography of Erasmus (1934) by the Austrian Jewish writer Stefan Zweig. For Zweig, Erasmus was a model of the intellectual caught, like Zweig himself, in brutal conflicts, confronting, as he put it in a letter of 1938, “men who have a battering-ram in place of forehead and brain”.⁸

In the second half of the twentieth century, the idea of the *Préréforme* fragmented and faded, without losing all usefulness. There was a recognition of the persistence of medieval cultural forms into the sixteenth century and an awareness of how complex the forces at work were at the beginning of the century and how tangled the threads. It was said of some situations that contingency, the political and the personal, rather than deep spiritual currents, worked the great changes of the century, and of others that change could be wrought only by movements more radical and thoroughgoing than those summed up in the term *Préréforme*. All this represented a gain for historical inquiry

because it showed how diverse situations then were and how generalizations could mislead. But it also reopened questions about Erasmus and his influence and made his role more, rather than less, problematical. A startling question was thrown up: could Erasmus be linked in some way to the movements promoting radical change?

Take first the Netherlands case. Modern scholarship has cast doubt on the notion of a distinctive reformation native to the Netherlands. The challenge to the traditional piety and the existing structures, intellectual and ecclesiastical, came from Luther and his movement after 1520. Yet, Erasmus has not disappeared completely from studies on the Netherlands Reformation. His writings, critical and pietistic, were part of the mix and ferment of the 1520s and 1530s. What of the Spanish case? In 1952, Eugenio Asensio published a long article, appreciative of Bataillon's achievement but questioning whether, from the tangled skein of the religious history of the time, he had singled out the Erasmian strand and given it too dominant or too exclusive a place.⁹ Bataillon accepted the point; his subject, he said, was like a frontier zone where the frontiers were imprecise.¹⁰ And, as Bataillon himself had shown, while around 1530 many sections of the Spanish population were open to the Erasmian influence, including (perhaps especially) the "new Christians" (i. e. Jewish converts), by mid-century the stream was blocked; the government changed front, "Erasmians" were purged from the hierarchy, illuminism was suppressed by the Inquisition.

The English case has perhaps special interest for this audience. Not until the 1960s did the idea of *Préréforme* enter seriously the historiography of the English Reformation.

Then, James McConica in his *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* presented Erasmus as the chief propagandist and “most prolific proponent” of a broad reforming movement which, despite splits and crises, shaped the character of the Reformation under Henry VIII.¹¹ McConica’s initiative was soon overtaken by revisionist studies presenting the English Reformation as the outcome of factional politics in a country still highly conservative and traditional in religious sentiment. This revisionism allowed little space for reforming and spiritual movements of the *Préréforme* kind. It went along with a restrictive view of humanism and its influence. Erasmus appears as a rather backward-looking and otherworldly figure. Here is the extreme case of the downgrading of Bataillon’s Erasmus.

The picture presented by Silvana Seidel Menchi’s study of 1987 on Erasmus and Italy is totally different from this negative outcome. That book occupies, for the second half of the twentieth century, the place that Bataillon’s did in the first half, not only because they deal with comparable subjects (in each case, Erasmus’ destiny in a Catholic country) and are on a comparable scale, but also because each represents the cultural assumptions and methodologies of its era. She has moved from intellectual history to social history; she is deliberately writing history from below and using the appropriate texts, the Inquisition records, which give the humble dissidents a voice. Above all, she has shifted attention from Erasmus’ intentions (the preoccupation of most Erasmus scholarship hitherto) to how his readers received and understood him. What emerges is a fresh and surprising Erasmus. His Italian readers took him in a radical way. Without discriminating, they associated him with Luther and even more radical Reformers. This

was not necessarily to distort him; his Italian dissident readers had discerned genuinely radical elements in his thought.¹²

By the end of the twentieth century, we have, beginning from the idea of *Préréforme*, a very mixed result. Erasmus has been presented as the model, on the one hand, of the unworldly intellectual and, on the other, of the subversive activist. His influence on his own and subsequent generations is then, by no means, a settled question. His image in the literature on the *Préréforme*, that of a leader in spiritual formation and proponent of a tranquil reform of the undivided Catholic church, if also its severe critic, has rivals. Controversy relates both to the character and the scale of his influence.¹³

Nevertheless, that image played a crucial role in another connection. “Erasmus pietista” is how Asensio sums up Bataillon’s view of Erasmus, which he accepts.¹⁴ That view opened the way to one of the two major changes in the interpretation of Erasmus in the twentieth century (to the second we will come shortly). That was the recovery of his reputation as a serious religious thinker, many would say as a theologian.

The dominant view of Erasmus’ religion at the end of the nineteenth century was that it was critical, sceptical, adogmatic, moralistic, scarcely theological. Indeed, the most substantial work on his religious thought from the first decades of the twentieth century depicts it as a kind of universal wisdom, a morality, a spirit of tolerance and goodwill.¹⁵ Some Catholic writers up to the 1950s criticized it, so depicted, very harshly. In the 1950s, still attractive presentations of this older view came from the agnostic side. But

by then works were beginning to appear on Erasmus' theology, described as such. In 1966 was published the first full-length study under the title *The Theology of Erasmus* and, in the 1970s, there followed a spate of important monographs on related themes.¹⁶ We have here passed a turning-point in Erasmus studies.

I want to demonstrate the deepening appreciation of Erasmus' religion from the 1950s to the 1980s by marking the shifts, over that period, in scholars' interests among his various writings. In the 1950s and 1960s, the concentration was on his earlier writings, especially his handbook of spiritual method for the laity, the *Enchiridion*. Translations of the *Enchiridion* were a common way of spreading his ideas in the early sixteenth century. In 1954, Alfons Auer published a study of the *Enchiridion* as a guide to lay piety.¹⁷ The 1950s were a particular moment in church history. In the Catholic Church, as in the other Christian churches, the laity were emerging from under the shadow of the prevailing clericalism, although the traditional structures remained. The *Enchiridion* came at a stage of Erasmus' thinking when he was most influenced by Platonism: what mattered in the Christian life was the movement from visible things to the invisible, from the material and worldly to the spiritual, from the external to the inward. That was the ideal Erasmus offered the lay Christian, but, Auer insists, the idealizing and spiritualizing tendency was held in check by Erasmus' essentially orthodox understanding of the incarnation. Christ was not an ideal, but a saving Person. Here is an early, worked-out presentation of the view that Erasmus, theologically speaking, was an orthodox Christian.

“Who knows the *Enchiridion*”, Auer said, “knows Erasmus”.¹⁸ That this proposition was at best debatable was demonstrated by the fact that later studies beginning from the *Enchiridion*, or concentrating on it, remained divided over the character of his theology. One, for example, argued that the dichotomy of flesh and spirit was the “fundamental principle” of his thought, thus bringing him close to the Platonist tradition.¹⁹ By contrast, E.-W. Kohls, in his book of 1966 on Erasmus’ theology (the first under that name, as I have said), made the Pauline doctrine of salvation central for him, as for the main Christian theological tradition from the Fathers through the high scholastics to the Reformers. To make progress in understanding his religious thought, it was necessary to move on to other writings of Erasmus. That is what happened with the substantial monographs of the 1970s, which treated above all the writings connected with his biblical editions and commentaries.

What emerges unmistakably from these monographs is that Erasmus’ theology was Christocentric. Marjorie Boyle, whose book of 1977 *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology* anticipated later work by relating theology and rhetoric, referred to Cicero’s rhetorical principle of having “a point of reference to which to refer all the lines of argumentation”. For the theologian, Erasmus said, the principle is: “Refer everything to Christ”.²⁰ The images he used illustrate the changes in Erasmus’ thought since the *Enchiridion*. In the Platonist or Neoplatonist imagery of the *Enchiridion*, the Christian life is an ascent, from the visible to the invisible, from the material to the spiritual, and so on. In the Christocentric imagery of Erasmus’ later biblical writings, the movement is, not upward, vertical, but horizontal, towards a centre. The appropriate image is, not a

ladder, but a circle. Christ is the centre of the believer's life, his incarnation, the drama of redemption portrayed in the story of his life, is central to Christian theology.²¹

Erasmus was moving, the studies of the 1970s demonstrate, towards a positive theology centred, above all, on the Bible. Dogmatics should, as one writer put it, be subject to exegesis.²² In the 1970s and 1980s, important work appeared, often in article form, on Erasmus' edition of the New Testament of 1516 and after. I can refer only to those writings that have changed our understanding of the priorities in Erasmus' biblical work. Traditionally, his edition of the Greek text, the first ever published, has had priority. Now, we see that his critical notes, the *Annotations*, were, as Erika Rummel has put it, "the nucleus of the project".²³ This exposes the radical edge to Erasmus' thought, how it came at the beginning of modern biblical criticism.

Some have drawn similar conclusions from work in the same era (from the 1960s to the 1980s) on Erasmus' relation to the Fathers. Jerome, Augustine: his bond with each attracted studies that were, in a certain sense, definitive.²⁴ Above all was the massive thesis of André Godin on Erasmus and Origen. His defence of Origen, Godin says, represented a new kind of religious culture, exegetical rather than speculative, biblical rather than dogmatic.²⁵

Theological thinking that had shifted from the vertical to the horizontal was inevitably social. The writers of the 1970s drew out the social extension of Erasmus' religious

thought. Christians in their respective circles and vocations are related, not only to Christ at the centre, but to one another. They are linked to one another, Erasmus said, not primarily by structures and organizations, though these have their place, but by Christian love. This reminds us of what is true for every stage of his theological thinking, that for Erasmus theology is dead if it does not issue in the ethical and the practical.

At this point, on the horizontal level, as it were, we can make an intersection between the writings on his theology and those on his political thought. Interest in Erasmus' political thought had grown in the early twentieth century. There had been significant work on its sources, especially in the classical political tradition, and on its philosophical foundations. At the four hundredth anniversary of his death in 1936, much, not surprisingly, was said about his attitude to the European nation states. But through most of this writing, there ran the prejudice that his political thought lacked depth, was shallow moralizing, giving rulers good advice which they would not take other than for propaganda purposes. In the 1960s and 1970s, works began to appear recognizing in his political writings unexpected substance, and even realism. This happened in two ways: his political commentary was seen, first, to be related to the actual structures and practices of early modern politics, and, secondly, to have theological robustness.

The intersection between the theological and political in Erasmus' thought is apparent in an article of unusual range by Otto Herding (1966). Much in his book of counsel for a young prince *Institutio principis christiani* (*Education of a Christian Prince*), Herding says, is at the level of good advice, practical moral philosophy. But three Erasmian

keywords point us to a deeper level: *libertas*, *caritas*, *crux*, freedom, love and the Cross. Because Christ died for all, for the people as well as the prince, and because ruler and people are joined by love as well as by political bonds, the Christian ruler cannot behave like a despot; he holds power differently from his pagan counterparts. This is the theological basis of Erasmus' preference for government, in some sense, by consent. Further, all Christians, laypeople as much as clergy, bear a cross. The prince's cross is to take responsibility for the people's welfare and to sacrifice for it his private interests, leisure and pleasures. That means hands-on administration, administrative activism. We can see a link between Herding's emphasis on the Cross and what the theologians were saying at exactly the same time about the centrality of Paul's: "we preach Christ crucified", in Erasmus' doctrine of salvation.²⁶

Writings from the second half of the twentieth century brought out an unexpected realism in Erasmus' political works. Even in his writings on peace, his most idealistic, there has been found "critical realism", since he exposed the illusions cultivated in rulers by the chivalric romances pressed on them by tutors and advisors imbued with the military ethos. His depiction of real dangers was, one author said, like political discussions of the Cold War era.²⁷ James Tracy, in his book *The Politics of Erasmus* and other works, showed how, in the politics of the Netherlands court and government, he sided with the peace party and wrote on its behalf.²⁸ Finally on this theme, one author at the end of the century (Brendan Bradshaw) attributed to Erasmus another kind of realism. He linked Erasmus' defence of the poor, his criticism of social hierarchy and inherited inequalities of wealth to modern "liberation theology".²⁹ Some of these cross-references

may appear anachronistic, but at least they show how far commentators on his political thought have moved on from seeing it as mere moral bombast.

Let us sum up where we have reached so far. Around the middle of the twentieth century, there set in a major change in the understanding of Erasmus and, in particular, of his religion. The dominant, though not the only, view before then was that his was a reasonable, even rationalist, version of Christianity and that he made ethics the core of the Christian proclamation, above all the Sermon on the Mount. Different observers responded differently to the Erasmus depicted in this way. For some, he was a pioneer of modernity, of the way Christianity must go in the modern world; for others, he was betraying Christian faith or civilization. The new view was that, on the essentials, he was an orthodox Christian thinker, on the centrality of Christ, for example, seen, not only as teacher, but also as redeemer. Not all would go as far as M. A. Screech who, from a study of the *Praise of Folly*, a work seen commonly as satirical or, at least, ambiguous and paradoxical, concludes that Erasmus was a devotee of religious ecstasy, of a form of divine madness. He draws this conclusion from the last part of the *Praise of Folly*, in which Erasmus depicts Christ and his disciples as divine fools. We are here at the greatest possible distance from the rationalizing and moralizing Erasmus.³⁰

The changes in the religious culture, which Bataillon recognized as affecting his account of Erasmus, ecumenism and the recovery of Christian spirituality, were still present and at work in the second half of the century. Here I am, not so much establishing a causal connection between these changes and the new views on Erasmus,

as sketching an ambience within which scholarship was going its way and working out its own history. There was an exchange between the surrounding culture and the scholarly work. The evidence for that is, not only in what scholarship accomplished, but also in the unsolved questions and unresolved tensions. Take the case of the changes in the Catholic Church in and through Vatican 2. A relationship has been established between the documents of Vatican 2 and the new image of Erasmus. One scholar said of the Council's dogmatic constitution of the church *Lumen gentium* that it "reads at times like Erasmus himself".³¹ But we well know that the Council did not end debate among Catholics on various church issues, and some of those issues can be related to still open questions about Erasmus. It is clear that he wanted to restore the dignity of the lay life and that he disliked clerical ostentation. But how he stood to the traditional hierarchies, between marriage and celibacy, lay and clerical, is still debated. Perhaps Screech's work on religious ecstasy can be related to the renewed theological interest, in the last part of the twentieth century, in the work of the Holy Spirit, and even to the rise of Pentecostalism. What the balance is between the spiritualizing and the more down-to-earth elements in Erasmus' thought is not yet completely clear. The ongoing secularization of the West will affect judgments on such issues.

Some of these questions can be put in personal terms. They relate to Erasmus' personal vocation. Monasticism was for him both a public and a personal issue. Personally, he had broken with the monastic life; how fundamental was his rejection of the monastic tradition? Was his life as a scholar a secular version of the monk's withdrawal from the world, or was it more like the life of the modern public intellectual?

These issues are very much alive in the recent literature. The second great change in Erasmus scholarship in the second half of the twentieth century, to which we now come, has also raised the question of Erasmus' vocation. That change is the recovery of his relationship to the rhetorical tradition come down to the Renaissance era from classical antiquity, as represented supremely by Cicero and Quintilian. The high point of this development came in the 1980s, although it led later into studies inspired or, at least, affected by the contemporary critical theories grouped under the name of postmodernism. It raised the question of Erasmus' vocation, because some proponents of this development challenged the contention that he was, above all, a theologian. For them, his defining interest was in language; grammar and rhetoric gave his thought its distinguishing shape, even in religion.

This development was influenced, even more than the discovery of Erasmus as a serious religious thinker, by the contemporary scholarly and general culture. Around 1980, there was a revival of interest in the rhetorical tradition among scholars in both Europe and North America. At the same time, the humanities generally became preoccupied with language as both the source of their strength and what made them problematical. Strength came from recognizing language as the essential guide to cultural formations. It was a major channel of human creativity. Through it meaning could be constituted. But they became problematical because of the immense variety and mutability of language. Also, might not words obscure rather than illuminate things, rhetoric replace reality? It was not surprising that, among such debates, Erasmus research should turn to his attitudes to grammar and rhetoric.

A major work under just that title appeared in 1981, Jacques Chomarat's *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Erasme*. As Bataillon had predecessors, so Chomarat's work did not come unheralded. Both were, in their respective fields, endorsements of trends already at work. In Chomarat's field, there had been studies of Erasmus' relation to various rhetorical genres, the dialogue (as in his *Colloquies*), the declamation, history and biography (studied in a monograph of 1966 by Peter Bietenholz), the letter and the sermon (as in his last great work, the *Ecclesiastes*). What emerged from these studies is that starting from rhetorical principles, adopting the rhetorical approach, had consequences for anthropology (one's view of humanity) and theology. This is the explanation for Chomarat's contention that, for Erasmus, rhetoric is the primary discipline. Chomarat himself says: "Grammar and rhetoric involve a conception of man; the practice of 'eloquence' is linked to a certain idea of the other [person] and of oneself; piety comes to confirm, to complete, to crown what is born of a certain way of practising letters and reflecting on them".³²

What "conception of man" emerges from Erasmus' writings on grammar and rhetoric as Chomarat presents them? Each human being appears in his or her particularity. Erasmus was a herald of the subjective and the individual. "Erasmus", Chomarat says, "is one of those thinkers for whom every system is only a false trail and the more ambitious it is, the more it loses the particular, which alone exists, in its complexity and richness".³³ The essential bonds between people are not systems, institutional or ceremonial or intellectual, but person-to-person dialogue and encounter. The principles

of rhetoric, indeed the functioning of language itself, model and demonstrate these. To understand the human situation, one must begin, not from first principles, but with personal relations and the circumstances of real life. All this has consequences for theology and especially ecclesiology. For Chomarat, Erasmus marked a break from medieval culture and the medieval church, which stood supremely for system and authority. Chomarat does not deny that Erasmus was a sincerely Christian thinker, but he qualifies greatly claims that he was simply an orthodox Catholic.

The debate about Erasmus is, then, not closed. Chomarat has been criticized for making medieval culture, including medieval theology, too systematic and Erasmus' thought not systematic enough.³⁴ There is a cultural difference, which can be put in very broad terms, between those approaching Erasmus from, respectively, the theological and the rhetorical sides. The former, those coming from the theology end, have linked him to the main traditions of Christian thought, if not necessarily to a theological system, though some have inclined in that direction, too. Those writing about his place in the rhetorical tradition have, by contrast and in line with the character of the discipline, brought out the openness, many-sidedness and even ambiguity of his thought. Dialogue, leaving the author's own position indeterminate, was for him a congenial form.

This, may I say in a final reference to the political aspect, has significance, still today. Erasmus resisted the idea of a closed system in theology and in thought. He also resisted closed systems in politics. He rejected, for example, the idea of universal monarchy, a seductive ideology in his time.³⁵ His preference was for small political constructions

where rulers and people (or the people's representatives) could be in open conversation with one another.

It is not surprising that, in the 1990s, there began to appear (perhaps belatedly) studies of Erasmus touching the preoccupations of postmodernism, the difficulty, for example, of establishing, for any text, its unequivocal meaning or discerning within it the clear intentions of the author.³⁶ In this case, the influence of such ideas is healthy. The ambiguities in Erasmus' thought are real. The temptation is to seek to reconcile into a unity, or even a system, ideas in Erasmus that are in tension or even in contradiction. The tensions are characteristic of the man, his thought and his personality, and are proof of his significance, in a time of cultural shift, and of his greatness.³⁷

¹ Augustin Renaudet "Paris from 1494 to 1517 – Church and University; Religious Reforms; Culture and the Humanists' Critiques", in Werner L. Gundersheimer (ed) *French Humanism 1470-1600* (London, Macmillan, 1969) 65

² Marcel Bataillon *Erasme et l'Espagne: Recherches sur l'histoire spirituelle du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, Droz, 1937) 2

³ Johannes Lindeboom *Erasmus: Onderzoek naar zijne theologie en zijn godsdienstig gemoedsbestaan* (Leiden, A. H. Adriani, 1909) 200

⁴ For a critical history of this terminology, see now John W. O'Malley *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2000).

⁵ Pierre Imbart de la Tour *Les Origines de la Réforme III L'Évangélisme (1521-38)* (Paris, Hachette, 1914)

⁶ Bataillon *Erasme* v

⁷ Bataillon "L'Espagne religieuse dans son histoire" (first published 1950), in *Erasme et l'Espagne*, 2nd French edition, 3 vols (Geneva, Droz, 1991), III 17-18

- ⁸ Zweig to Alfred Wolfenstein, 15 October 1938, quoted D. A. Prater *European of Yesterday: A Biography of Stefan Zweig* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972) 270
- ⁹ Eugenio Asensio "El erasmismo y las corrientes espirituales afines (Conversos, franciscanos, italianizantes)" *Revista de filología española* 36 (1952): 31-99
- ¹⁰ Bataillon 1991 edn, II 9
- ¹¹ James McConica *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1965) 23
- ¹² Silvana Seidel Menchi *Erasmus als Ketzer: Reformation und Inquisition im Italien des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1993)
- ¹³ See M. E. H. N. Mout, H. Smolinsky and J. Trapman (eds) *Erasmianism: Idea and Reality* (Amsterdam, North-Holland, 1997)
- ¹⁴ Asensio "El erasmismo" 33-4
- ¹⁵ J.-B. Pineau *Erasmus: Sa pensée religieuse* (Paris, Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1924)
- ¹⁶ Ernst-Wilhelm Kohls *Die Theologie des Erasmus*, 2 vols (Basel, Friedrich Reinhardt Verlag, 1966)
- ¹⁷ Alfons Auer *Die vollkommene Frömmigkeit des Christen nach dem Enchiridion militis christiani des Erasmus von Rotterdam* (Düsseldorf, Patmos-Verlag, 1954)
- ¹⁸ Auer 53
- ¹⁹ John B. Payne *Erasmus: His Theology of the Sacraments* ([Richmond], John Knox Press, 1970) 220
- ²⁰ Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1977) 93
- ²¹ Boyle 108; Georges Chantraine "Mystère" et "Philosophie du Christ" selon Erasme (Namur/Gembloux, Secrétariat des publications Facultés universitaires Namur/Editions J. Duculot, 1971) 206-7
- ²² Manfred Hoffmann *Erkenntnis und Verwirklichung der Theologie nach Erasmus von Rotterdam* (Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1972) 31
- ²³ Erika Rummel *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: From Philologist to Theologian* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1986) 24-5
- ²⁴ John Olin "Erasmus and Saint Jerome: The Close Bond and its Significance" *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 7 (1987): 33-53; Charles Béné *Erasmus et Saint Augustin ou influence de Saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Erasme* (Geneva, Droz, 1969)
- ²⁵ André Godin *Erasmus lecteur d'Origène* (Geneva, Droz, 1982)
- ²⁶ Otto Herding "Isokrates, Erasmus und die Institutio principis christiani", in Rudolf Vierhaus and Manfred Botzenhart (eds) *Dauer und Wandel der Geschichte: Aspekte europäischer Vergangenheit* (Münster, Neue münstersche Beiträge zur Geschichtsforschung Bd. 9, 1966) 101-43 at 130-7
- ²⁷ Robert P. Adams *The Better Part of Valor: More, Erasmus, Colet, and Vives on Humanism, War, and Peace, 1496-1535* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1962) 78, 165
- ²⁸ James D. Tracy *The Politics of Erasmus: A Pacifist Intellectual and His Political Milieu* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1978)
- ²⁹ Brendan Bradshaw "Transalpine Humanism", in J. H. Burns (ed) *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991) 127-8
- ³⁰ M. A. Screech *Ecstasy and the Praise of Folly* (London, Duckworth, 1980)
- ³¹ John W. O'Malley "Introduction" *Collected Works of Erasmus* 66 (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1988) xv
- ³² Jacques Chomarat *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Erasme*, 2 vols (Paris, Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres", 1981) I 25
- ³³ Ibid I 378
- ³⁴ See Walter M. Gordon *Humanist Play and Belief: The Seriocomic Art of Desiderius Erasmus* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1990) 11, 259; Manfred Hoffmann *Rhetoric and Theology: The Hermeneutic of Erasmus* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1994) 4, 17-18
- ³⁵ John M. Headley "Gattinara, Erasmus, and the Imperial Configurations of Humanism" *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 71 (1980): 64-98
- ³⁶ James D. Tracy "Erasmus among the Postmodernists: *Dissimulatio*, *Bonae Literae*, and *Docta Pietas* Revisited" in Hilmar M. Pabel (ed) *Erasmus Vision of the Church* (Kirkville, Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1995) 1-40
- ³⁷ I have, of course, been unable to mention many important twentieth-century works on Erasmus. For a fuller treatment, see my *Erasmus in the Twentieth Century: Interpretations c 1920-2000*, University of

Toronto Press, 2003. I have covered some of the same ground in my talk "An Erasmus Project" to the Evangelical History Association in 2005 (to be published shortly in *Lucas: An Evangelical History Review*), but the framework there was different. The present lecture is a revised version of my paper to the symposium "Erasmus: Current Humanism" at Valencia in October 2002, hitherto unpublished.