ERASMUS AND MORE: A FRIENDSHIP REVISITED

by DOMINIC BAKER-SMITH

Writing in 1532, the elderly Erasmus reflected on the hazards of marriage and parenthood: friendship, he concluded, is the prime source of comfort in human life, *praecipuum humanae vitae solatium*, 'but even there trust is rare and inconstancy is common'.[1] Given the span of acquaintance covered by the eleven volumes of correspondence collected by P. S. Allen in his *Erasmi epistolae*, Erasmus had plenty of opportunity to test this rather pessimistic view. Indeed, one suspects that it derived as much from his own touchiness as from the unreliability of his friends. Few of his friendships have received so much attention as that which he established with Thomas More, a relationship which lasted some thirty-six years, from Erasmus' first visit to England in 1499 down to More's execution on 6th July 1535, and indeed until Erasmus' own more domestic death in Basel almost exactly a year later. From an early date this was seen as a model friendship, something to be celebrated in the Republic of Letters. As we shall see, its religious implications were to prove more complex; but for much of the twentieth century More and Erasmus were conveniently paired as representatives of Christian humanism, a perception reinforced by More's canonization in 1935.

In the course of the 1970s, on the other hand, the received image of More was subjected to severe revision, a process initiated by G. R. Elton. This iconoclastic tendency was consolidated by Richard Marius in his 1984 biography of the humanist-statesman (it was certainly not one of a saint), and inevitably this touched the relationship with Erasmus. As Marius rather sardonically notes, 'It is a commonplace to say that their friendship was one of the jewels of the Renaissance'. The commonplace was certainly not what Marius was after, and by the end of his book the More–Erasmus relationship bears little resemblance to the traditional conception. This is achieved by taking a resolutely negative view whenever that option is available. Referring to Erasmus' melancholy words to Piotr Tomicki, the bishop of Cracow, written some weeks after More's execution, that 'In More I seem to have become extinguished myself, seeing that, as Pythagoras said, the two of us shared one soul,' he reads this as evidence of self-pity rather than compassion for More.[2] Such a reading is certainly possible, but does it seem the most likely? After five centuries the emotional tone becomes hard to interpret, especially in the case of an author whose letters are so often composed with an eye to publication.

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But Marius was by no means the first to try to prise the two friends apart. It was those who were concerned to promote the cause of More as a Catholic martyr who found the association with the ambivalent Erasmus something of an embarrassment. By no means all of his contemporaries interpreted More's death as a religious statement; many, especially on the continent, viewed it as an admirable demonstration of private integrity rather than one of confessional adherence. Those who wished to establish More as a model of fidelity to the received traditions of the Catholic Church found it necessary to disengage him from the compromising friendship of one who was increasingly regarded as unsound, if not actually a crypto-Lutheran, especially after his works were placed on the Index by Paul IV.

Some of the blame must lie with Lucian of Samosata. Erasmus' first visit to England had introduced him to a stimulating group of friends, all of them—with the partial exception of Colet—advocates of Greek studies. Listing them with evident pride, he mentions a youthful resident of Lincoln's Inn, 'Did nature ever create anything kinder, sweeter, or more harmonious than the character of Thomas More?'[3] It was More, nonetheless, who exposed him to the embarrassing visit to Eltham Palace when Erasmus found himself without any literary offering to give to the precocious Prince Henry.[4] But it was his second visit to England, in 1505, that led to actual collaboration with More, when they resolved to advance their Greek by translating some dialogues of Lucian into Latin, and their efforts were duly published at Paris by Josse Bade in November 1506. Lucian clearly did advance their Greek, but he taught them other things as well. One was the use of satire as a social weapon, but underlying that was the recognition of custom as a source of false legitimacy in social practice. As Erasmus would put it later, in his outspoken attack on war, 'so true it is that nothing is too villainous, or too cruel to gain approval if custom recommends it'.[5] Custom, meaning here the uncritical adoption of established values or the unreflective enactment of familiar rituals, can constitute a threat to the moral health of society. This distrust of custom might be said to be the most lasting legacy of their joint encounter with Lucian, but it would also provide one of the most controversial elements in their relationship. More than twenty years later, writing against Luther's claim that sin is endemic to human nature, Erasmus detects its origins also in our social inheritance, 'For the most part it comes not from nature but from corrupt education, bad company, from a habit of sinning, and a will that is malicious'.[6] In this relatively optimistic reading of human nature Erasmus admits a negative tendency, the malice of the will, but also puts a significant emphasis on the corrupt influences seeping in from our received social order. This is very much the perspective which governs More's *Utopia.*

Lucian was, of course, well-known as an atheist, and his name carried dubious overtones; when More's evangelical opponent John Frith

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wished to slur him he labelled him 'another Lucian, neither regarding God nor man'.[7] More was well aware of this dangerous reputation when he dedicated his clutch of Lucianic translations to Thomas Ruthall, the King's secretary, and carefully points out the way in which Lucian 'everywhere reprimands and censures, with very honest and at the same time very entertaining wit, our human frailties'. Moreover, the atheism is quietly put aside, 'what difference does it make to me what a pagan thinks about those articles contained in the principal mysteries of the Christian faith? Surely the dialogue [*Philopseudes*] will teach us this lesson: that we should put no trust in magic and that we should steer clear of superstition, which obtrudes everywhere under the guise of religion'.[8] It is the last clause that is particularly relevant: More clearly has in mind some of the more disreputable aspects of popular religion, and he goes on to attack abuses of hagiography. We can, he concludes, put our trust in the stories of inspired Scripture, but other narratives must be subjected to rigorous scrutiny, 'we should either accept or reject them if we wish to free ourselves from foolish confidence and superstitious dread'. The responsible believer must therefore aspire to a mean between these two extremes of *inanis fiducia* and *supersticiosa formido*, in effect, of nonchalant presumption on one hand and of abject scrupulosity on the other. This carefully judged poise was to prove a characteristic feature not only of More's own writing but that of Erasmus as well, as they embarked on a campaign to expose the dangers of custom as it distorted both religious and secular values.

In a sense such a programme is already implicit in the *Enchiridion* of 1503 with its emphasis on the inner motives that should drive religious acts. This concern with the subjective self would remain a constant theme in Erasmus' religious writings, right down to his anguished response to Reformation debates in the 1530s, and it was precisely within the context of religious polemic that his arguments for affectivity could be so gravely misunderstood. His quasi-platonic focus on the inner self could be misread as indifference to customary acts and ritual. What was worse, his exposure of the empty husks of a merely outward religion could easily be read as an attack on traditional forms of piety. In reality, his aim is to alert the reader to the gap that lurks between a conventional act and its original, animating purpose, a strategy which finds its full expression in the *Moriae encomium* (1511), a work that he dedicated to More. As one typical instance one can take the Franciscan friar who, aping the spirit of the poor man of Assisi, never pollutes his hands with the touch of money but wears two pairs of gloves as he counts it.[9] Spiritual perception is thus reduced to a literal-minded performance. Not only does Erasmus dedicate the book to More but he even claims that the title springs from his name, *Morus* (i.e. a fool), 'which is as close in form to *Moria* as you are in fact remote from *Moria* (folly) itself'. Indeed, when Erasmus came to compose his portrait of More for

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Ulrich von Hutten in 1519, not only did he refer to More's special devotion to Lucian, but he even claims that 'it was he (yes, he can make the camel dance) who persuaded me to write my *Moriae encomium*'.[10]

By contrast, it has been suggested that More was embarrassed by the dedication of the *Moria*, but again this is pure supposition.[11] He could, after all, be as unflattering about the ecclesiastical scene as anyone, as some of the *Epigrams* make clear,

> Tam male cantasti, possis ut episcopus esse.
> Tam bene legisti, ut non tamen esse queas.
> Non satis esse putet, siquis uitabit utrumuis,
> Sed fieri si uis praesul, utrunque cave.

(You sang so badly you could be a bishop, but you read so well that you could not. Let no one imagine that it is enough to avoid success in the one or the other. No, if you want to become a bishop be careful on both counts.)[12]

One epigram of particular relevance to his relationship with Erasmus concerns the latter's version of the New Testament, the *Novum Instrumentum*, which he dedicated to Leo X in February 1515. In the course of the dedication Erasmus relates his belief that 'that teaching which is our salvation was to be had in a much purer and more lively form if sought at the fountain-head and drawn from the actual sources than from pools and runnels'.[13] More endorses this view in his lines on this 'holy work', lines that would in years to come fall under the ban of the Spanish Inquisition:

> Lex noua, nam ueteri primum est interprete laesa,
> Scribentium uaria post uitiata manu.
> .....
> Tota igitur demptis uersa est iam denuo mendis,
> Atque noua CHRISTI lex noua luce nitet.

(For the new law was first marred by the ancient translator and then further damaged by the inaccurate copying of scribes... That is why the whole work has been corrected and translated anew. And Christ's new law shines forth with new splendour'.)[14]

The inquisitorial censure, somewhat ironically, provides retrospective confirmation of the close bond between More and Erasmus at what was to prove the most productive period of their relationship, that is between the publication of the third edition of Erasmus' *Adagia* by Froben in the spring of 1515 and the appearance of More's *Utopia* at the close of 1516. Included in the *Adagia* are the most radical of Erasmus' essays on social and political themes, all of which cohere with the preoccupations of More's exercise in travel fiction. Indeed, Erasmus, who was responsible for the preparation and printing of *Utopia*, seems to have devised its ingenious title by himself.[15] Then there was the *Novum Instrumentum*, published by Froben in March 1516, a work that raised a storm of criticism from those who considered it irreverent to go

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behind Jerome's Vulgate and positively dangerous to introduce variant readings from Greek, the tongue of schismatics. More's unwavering support for his friend's achievement is the clearest evidence we have of their shared ideals. Years later, just six weeks after More's death, Erasmus wrote to Conrad Goclenius, his closest friend in Louvain and a fellow Lucianist, to deplore the misrepresentation of More in Etienne Dolet's *Dialogus de imitatione Ciceroniana* where 'he presents the commanding figure of More as a timid speaker'.[16] Given the difficulty of pinning down an exact image of More, it is quite salutary to be reminded that an encounter with him was in all likelihood an intimidating experience. Certainly, *imperiosus* is a very fitting description of More's tone in the sequence of letters which he composed in defence of Erasmus and his aspirations between that addressed to Martin Dorp in 1515 and the *Letter to a Monk* of 1519. The latter example, in particular, leaves one with a momentary twinge of pity for his opponent.

More's resolve to defend Erasmus from the attacks of hostile theologians gives these letters—'in defence of humanism' as the Yale edition calls them—an aggressive tone that would shortly be redirected in his polemical writings against the reformers. But his underlying motive is in fact pastoral, to counter the disputatious theology of the schools and its self-regarding engagement with *questiunculae*: 'the problems that these men pursue most of all are the ones that pertain least of all to sustaining the faith or encouraging virtue'. Against this rationalizing theology of the schools he appeals to the 'positive' theology proposed by Erasmus and manifested in his editions of those scriptural and patristic texts which constitute the sources of Catholic tradition. As he argues in his *Letter to the University of Oxford*, theology, that venerable queen of heaven, is not so confined within the schools 'that she does not also inhabit and dwell in holy scripture as her proper home, from which she makes her pilgrimage through all the cells of the oldest and holiest fathers'.[17] What unites More and Erasmus here is their understanding of theology as the cumulative experience of the Christian community under the guidance of the Church. Hence that perambulation through the cells of the Fathers. Against scholastic metalanguage, with its assumptions about the rational availability of truth, they present a more sceptical view of human language and its capacity to accommodate talk about the sacred. Language offers no escape from the restrictions of being human. In the *Letter to a Monk* there is a point where More challenges his opponent, who is generally taken to be the Carthusian John Batmanson, over the issue of patristic fallibility.[18] Batmanson is incensed at the very idea that Jerome, Hilary, or Augustine, 'those illustrious instruments of the Holy Spirit', might be in error. But, as More and Erasmus frequently assert, to be human is to err.

More responds with a catalogue of disagreements between Jerome and Augustine which closely anticipates Erasmus' exploitation of the same

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theme in his later efforts to limit the rancour of theological dispute. The latter's most extensive treatment of patristic fallibility comes in the *Enarratio in Psalmi 38* of 1532, where he provides a positive litany of divergent opinions. One instance is Chrysostom's claim that Joseph had a better knowledge of the Scriptures than Mary, who was unversed in religious matters and ignorant of the prophets: what would modern theologians make of this, 'those who now consider it blasphemous to doubt that the Virgin had a perfect and immediate understanding of the fact that her baby was both God and man?'[19] Not only do the Fathers disagree among themselves but they may also fall foul of the development of doctrine, 'if we now attempt to make the works of the Doctors of the Church conform to contemporary standards, it is impossible to put forward even one of them whose work cannot be censured on a large number of points'. What Erasmus is trying to do in 1532 is to soften the edge of orthodoxy, to make it rather an attitude of mind than conformity to a check-list.

But as well as this 'positive' attitude to theology as a dialogue through time, another thing that emerges in the *Letter to a Monk* is More's resistance to creeping credulity. As we have seen, there is already evidence of this in his preface to Lucian, with its caveat against superstition, 'which creeps in everywhere under the guise of religion'. In the *Letter* he narrates the story of the Franciscan Conventual at Coventry who preached that anyone who recites the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin daily will escape damnation. It is left to a local parish priest to discover that the practice is being adopted most enthusiastically by all the worst people, evidently without any change in their manner of life. In other words, it is being adopted as a licence to sin. The point raised is not so far removed from that which would later be made about the moral apathy encouraged by faith in predestination.

More's personal involvement with the case ends with the friar citing miracles from a *Mariale* to defend his teaching while More, to whom the whole affair is a *problema ridiculum*, raises doubts about their authenticity; a view, he quietly adds, which is by no means at odds with Christian faith.[20] The incident is used as a parable to stress the danger of reliance on ritual—on merely outward performance—along with the false confidence that it can encourage. This is exactly the sort of thing that Erasmus set out to challenge. More, in his turn, extends the challenge to monastic life itself, 'The more confidence you place in the common virtues of Christianity the less faith you will come to place in your own private ceremonies or in those of your order; and the less faith you have in such things the more good they will do you'.[21]

In the account of More that Erasmus sent to von Hutten in 1519, at the very time that More wrote the *Letter to a Monk*, one of the characteristics which he picks out is More's religious commitment, *verae pietatis non indiligens cultor est*, but he adds the important rider, 'though far

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removed from superstition'.[22] This is very much a statement of policy, a declaration for a Christian faith stripped of those practices which substitute outward acts for an inner encounter with God. A slightly more nuanced reference occurs in the letter which Erasmus wrote in 1532, just after More's resignation as Chancellor, to Johannes Fabri, the bishop of Vienna. It offers a brief sketch of his friend, and once again the issue of superstition is raised: '[More] hates those seditious teachings which are currently tearing the world apart. He makes no pretence about this, nor does he wish to hide it, being so whole-hearted in his religious practice that if he has an inclination in either direction, he seems to be closer to superstition rather than to impiety'.[23] This has been read as an implicit criticism of More, though that hardly fits with the context. It is important to note just what is being said: in a spectrum running from *superstitio* to *impietas*, More deviates slightly from the mean towards the former. He could hardly be expected to lurch towards impiety. What Erasmus has in mind here may well be illustrated by Seneca when he uses *superstitio* mean a subjective devotion, in his case to virtue.[24] It is possible that there is a note of reserve, but it is hardly a Lucianic case.

Erasmus' campaign against superstition is particularly marked in the *Colloquia*, the most persistently Lucianic of his writings, and some of these worried readers otherwise in sympathy with him. The *Colloquia* were certainly an important factor in later reaction, when the onslaught of the reformers made Catholics sensitive to criticism of ceremonies and popular forms of devotion. Indeed, the later reserve of the recusant community was anticipated by some of his English supporters in the 1530s. The earliest rumblings of discontent were heard in Louvain in response to the publication in 1522 of an enlarged edition of the *Familiarum colloquiorum formulae* printed by Froben. By June Erasmus' old enemy, the Carmelite Nicolaas Baechem, had detected passages which he labelled heretical on vows, indulgences, confession and fasting. Erasmus was driven to defend himself not only by denying the specific charges but by sending up a smokescreen about the intentions of the *Colloquia*, 'it must be remembered that in the book I impart, not the doctrines of the faith, but phrases for those who wish to speak Latin, although I bring in some things in passing which contribute to the building of character'.[25] So he persisted, adding provocative additions down to the final collection in 1533.

By 1526, when he was fully engaged in his dispute with Luther, Erasmus writes to Wolsey, clearly concerned at a report that the *Colloquia* had been banned in England. In fact the report was erroneous, but he does suggest that the book should be vetted by someone 'who knows both Greek and Latin', in other words, not someone like More's monk. Neither More nor Tunstall will do since they are known to be his supporters.[26] His correspondence with John Longland, the bishop of Ely, provides evidence that hostile moves were planned in England, and Longland urged him to

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revise his writings, and in particular the *Colloquia*. Tunstall, too, counselled revision, citing just those charges against the *Colloquia* that had been raised in Louvain. Certainly, when a recusant community developed around Buonvisi's house in Louvain after 1558, any doubts they harboured about More's association with Erasmus must have been strengthened by local memories. For his part, Erasmus appears to have been unmoved by the pleas for revision, claiming that nothing in the *Colloquia* went against orthodoxy or offended decency. Referring to one of the more provocative additions to the 1526 edition, 'Peregrinatio religionis ergo', he insisted that in it he only teaches 'that in pilgrimages we must steer clear of all superstition, which fills the world even to the point of madness, driven more by the profit of the custodians than by devotion'.[27]

The colloquy itself, 'A pilgrimage for religion's sake', recalls visits that Erasmus had made to Walsingham and to Canterbury between 1512 and 1514; quite why these memories were held back until 1526 is not clear, but it does mean that they reflect a response to the earlier stages of the Reformation. The alleged letter from the Virgin of the Rock, addressed to a follower of Luther who appears to be identified with Zwingli, ironically expresses relief at the decline in petitions, a consequence of the attack on intercessory prayer, 'Up to this time I've been all but exhausted by the shameless entreaties of mortals'. In view of its date, this sort of satirical elaboration might seem to border on the reckless, unless, of course, one allows for its Lucianic inspiration in the figure of Zeus from the *Icaromenippus* as he adjudicates between just prayers and the unholy ones, such as petitions for a bumper garlic crop. Yet it is made clear that Erasmus is not dismissing the cult of Mary, any more than he is that of the saints; his target, as usual, is the materialistic and quasi-magical abuse of intercessory prayer. What emerges from his exposure of manipulative piety is the thought that the best approach to virtue is to imitate it, and against the more grotesque aspects of Marian devotion, such as the extraordinary quantity of her milk preserved in reliquaries ('it's scarcely credible a woman with one child could have so much'), we are confronted by the exemplary prayers uttered by the pilgrim Ogygius,

> 'Virgin Mother, who hast had the honour of suckling at thy maidenly breast the Lord of heaven and earth, thy Son Jesus, we pray that, cleansed by his blood, we may gain that blessed infancy of dovelike simplicity which, innocent of all malice, deceit, and guile, longs without ceasing for the milk of gospel doctrine until it attains to the perfect man, to the measure of the fullness of Christ, whose blessed company thou enjoyest forever, with the Father and Holy Spirit. Amen'[28]

Such a prayer embodies most effectively the positive ideals implied by More as well as Erasmus in their shared campaign to purify religious sentiment, but the colloquy taken as a whole does call for a high degree of sophistication in its readers. Moreover, the date of its appearance

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would, in some eyes at least, raise the issue of expediency: by 1526 More was actively engaged in opposing the spread of heresy, and in February, the month which saw the publication of the 'Peregrinatio', Erasmus wrote the preface to the first part of the *Hyperaspistes*, his major attack on Luther.

The process by which More was purged of Lucianic associations and detached from Erasmus has been charted by James McConica in his definitive essay of 1963, and his conclusions have been reinforced by the rise of interest in Marian Catholicism. However bewildering many found More's stance in 1535, there is no doubt that by the later 1540s his death provided an important focus for those remaining loyal to Catholic tradition. In Harpsfield's resonant terms, 'he was the first of any whatsoever laye man in Inglande that dyed a martyr for the defence and preservation of the vnitie of the Catholike Churche. And that is his speciall peerelesse prerogative'.[29] More was in fact central to Cardinal Pole's campaign to reassert Catholicism, and the publication of his *English Workes* in 1557 was linked in with the preparation of Harpsfield's *Life*; in the words of William Rastell's prefatory letter to Queen Mary, the *Workes* 'will forward youre Maiesties most godly purpose, in purging this your realme of all wicked heresies'.[30] Yet even his writings gained their validity from his death; it was the uncompromising fact of his martyrdom that made him such a powerful icon in the Catholic cause. But Erasmus was to endure a rather different fate: as Wizeman remarks, Marian authors might follow his principles of biblical scholarship, 'but they also demonstrated a strong ambivalence towards the scholar himself and his vision of church reform'.[31]

The final severance of the two friends is, as McConica notes, chiefly a product of the second Catholic exile, after 1558, when Erasmus was tossed to the Church of England—in Lord Falkland's terms, 'generallie disavowed as no Catholicke, and given to us (whom wee accept as a great present)'.[32] But the discarding of Erasmus, however understandable, was not achieved without some loss.

One minor but revealing example of the process by which More's image was cleansed of unwelcome associations can be found in the text of *Utopia* as it appeared in the *Opera latina omnia* printed at Louvain in 1565.[33] The recusant credentials of this version are confirmed by the inclusion among the prefatory materials of the moving letter addressed by More from his prison cell to Antonio Buonvisi, '*nunc Lovanii sepultum*'.[34] In the course of the episode in Book 1 set at Cardinal Morton's house, we witness the clash between a friar and a hanger-on (*parasitus*) which might be seen—at any rate from a post-Tridentine perspective—as anti-clerical. Following on Raphael's account of the dispossessed, the parasite proposes to solve the problem of the vagrant poor by putting them into Benedictine houses as lay-brothers or nuns. The friar, a theologian who is probably to be identified as a Franciscan, is delighted by this hit at the monastic order

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but enquires about the fate reserved for mendicants. The reply of the parasite is deliberately offensive: 'The Cardinal provided for you splendidly when he said vagabonds should be arrested and put to work, for you friars are the greatest vagabonds of all'.[35] Not surprisingly, this sets the friar off on a tirade which includes some embarrassing misappropriation of biblical texts; despite the efforts of Cardinal Morton to restrain him, the friar ends with an appeal to the grim tale of Elisha who, when he was mocked for his bald head, called down a curse on his tormentors with the result that they were eaten by bears (2 Kings 2:23–4): 'if the many mockers of Elisha, who was only one bald man, felt the zeal of a baldhead, how much more of an effect shall be felt by a single mocker of many friars, among whom are a great many baldheads. And besides, we have a papal bull, by which all who mock at us are excommunicated'.

Clearly, in 1565 this would not do, at least in recusant circles. And there is that final, facetious, reference to excommunication: this matches tellingly with one of Erasmus' adages which dates from the same period, *Esernius cum Pacidanio* (*Adagia* II.v.98). This reports a dispute between an Italian Servite and 'that great figure, Standish, the archimandrite of the Franciscans who in that isle are called conventuals, a powerful speaker and tireless Scotist who knows not fear'. The basic issue of contention was the Servite's argument that Friars Minor sin if they accept money, as do those who give it to them. This malicious appeal to the Franciscan *usus pauper* was a riposte to a sermon by Standish in which he had warned the congregation that out of the mendicant orders only the Franciscans and the Dominicans had papal authority to absolve all penitents. To confess to a member of another order was to run the risk of an invalid absolution. The final act is a public debate in the presence of Cardinal Wolsey himself where Standish, faced by the prospect of a technical defeat, appeals to a papal bull 'which excommunicates everyone who dares to say the conventual Friars Minor commit a sin if they accept money'. The Servite wriggles out of this by making a distinction between the Friars Minor and the *conventuales*; the latter, he asserts, are Friars Minor only 'in the same way that a dead man is a man', a hit that evidently amused Wolsey.[36] In these two episodes which expose religious to satirical laughter and are presided over by smiling cardinals we can detect the Lucianic spirit that More shared with Erasmus, and which clearly worried the Louvain editors.

That the butt in both cases should be a Franciscan is no accident. 1516 was an important year for both authors: Erasmus' New Testament was published in March, and at the beginning of September More sent Erasmus, then in Antwerp, the manuscript of *Utopia*, still under its original name of *Nusquama*. At this point Erasmus would have read the Morton episode. Then, at the end of October, More wrote a letter of warning to Erasmus: John Fisher, we learn, is delighted with Erasmus' New Testament, but other people have approached it in a very different

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frame of mind. A group of friars, led by Henry Standish, 'that prince among Franciscan divines', have conspired to expose Erasmus' errors: 'they have divided your works among them, and taken an oath that they will read right through everything with the greatest care, and not understand anything'.[37] The tone here is ambivalent playful but not without a note of concern. More and Erasmus clearly have their own conspiracy. Writing to More from Louvain in April 1518, Erasmus draws his attention to two new adages in the latest Froben edition, 'mind you read the adage "Cum Bitho Bacchius", and also "Ut fici oculis inherentes" '.[38] It seems clear that the first is a slip, adage II.v.97 for II.v.98, and it should really refer to 'Esernius cum Pacidanio' which we have already encountered; the second, 'As warts grow on the eye' (*Adagia* II.viii.65), is an exposure of clerical abuses, including the tyrannical influence of the friars: 'It is they who, with severity too great for any censor, pass judgement on the faith a man professes: this man is a Christian, that a half-Christian, this man a heretic, that a heretic and a half'.[39] Both the new adages are stinging attacks on the mendicant orders, and More is obviously expected to share the joke (after all, Wolsey smiled), and the underlying criticism.

The anti-Erasmianism fostered by recusant tradition could be said to find its apogee in Thomas Phillips's *The History of the Life of Reginald Pole* (Oxford 1764). Father Phillips had close associations with the Jesuits, though he never progressed beyond simple vows. Just as important, perhaps, was the patronage of Prince Charles Edward since it must lie behind his rather Jacobite reading of the 1530s. Thomas More, as one might expect, is held up for general admiration as 'one of the greatest ornaments, if not the greatest, in every kind of various excellence, this nation has ever boasted'. His intellectual and moral qualities 'rendered the man, the magistrate, and the christian complete', and it was his competence in theology that enabled him 'to distinguish the proper extent of civil power, and of that jurisdiction, which the Lawgiver of Christianity would have exercised by those only to whom he committed it'.[40] It is a very apposite formulation.

When Erasmus is introduced, however, he is clearly identified as a fellow-countryman of William of Orange, born of mean parentage, 'and in a climate as little famed for ripening minds as improving morals'. While Phillips is prepared to acknowledge his deep knowledge of antiquity, his critical acumen, and mastery of languages, there is very little else to be said in his favour: 'There has scarce been any Error advanced against the Religion which he professed, and, I might almost add, against Christianity itself, which he has not revived; or any Tenet in that divine plan of Belief and Practice, which he has not oppugned, either by profane sneers or by sophistry'. Phillips's portrait is itself something of a Lucianic creation, betraying scarcely a single characteristic that might support a friendly relationship with More. Apart from the

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insincerity and 'unsteadiness' which led him to endorse Luther's teaching on the enslavement of the will and the sinfulness of human works, he is charged with coarseness in sexual matters, rating marriage above celibacy, and relating 'his Gallantries in England, in a stile more becoming the stews than the Monastery, in which, with other obligations of that state, he had vowed Chastity'.

Unhappy Erasmus. It seems that these heavy insinuations of immoral conduct must derive from the excited chatter that he sent to Fausto Andrelini on his first visit to England, describing the social custom of kissing, 'If you too, Fausto, once tasted the softness and fragrance of these same kisses, I swear you would yearn to live abroad in England'.[41] Nothing, it seems, can be too bad to be true where Erasmus is concerned, and Phillips's caricature shows just how far his reputation had slumped in the eyes of most post-Tridentine Catholics.

To put that in perspective, we need to glance back at his relations with More over the critical period from 1520 to the latter's execution in 1535. Three major considerations might be said to govern these—contrasts of personality, diverging views on the best way to tackle the religious crisis, and the sharply contrasted political contexts within which they had to operate. The earliest hint of trouble ahead can be found in a letter of Erasmus to More from March 1518; here he reports on progress towards the Froben *Utopia* and sends on some items of interest, including the 'Conclusions on Papal pardons' which must be Luther's ninety-five theses.[42] It is clear that to Erasmus, Luther appeared as a fellow worker for religious revival, and it would take some time for him to disabused of this belief. Initially Erasmus, who was already bruised by the attacks on his *Novum Instrumentum*, saw the outcry against Luther as an extension of the conspiracy against good letters. In May 1519, while More was belabouring Batmanson, he wrote in person to Luther, 'his dearest brother in Christ'. The letter is a characteristic performance in which he identifies their common enemies, that is, those who see the humanities as a threat to their kind of theology. At stake is the authenticity of Christian teaching, which will be furthered by courtesy and moderation rather than by clamour. But even as he seems about to assume the leadership of a common movement, he steps aside with the admission that he has not actually read Luther's writings (apart from a quick glance at the *Operationes in psalmos*) and 'could therefore neither approve nor disapprove anything'.[43]

Clamour was not Erasmus' way, and when eventually he came to take up his pen against Luther, in 1526, it was in order to write *de libero arbitrio* in the relatively restrained mode of an academic *diatribe* rather than a polemic. The work is intended, in other words, as an exposition of the debate for an informed readership; in spite of his occasional flights about all the faithful being theologians, Erasmus was not keen to see complex issues thrown to the populace. However, to him the issue, free-will, was critical: he could

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go a long way to accommodate the devotional inclinations of the reformers, but human responsibility was not negotiable. Behind all this we can detect the consequences of Erasmus' formation in classical rhetoric, the persuasive application of language. For one thing there is his vision of the ideal theologian as a master of Christian eloquence, someone who can stir the emotions and fire the mind to heavenly thoughts.[44] Theology, seen from this perspective, is directed at the springs of action within the human personality, a subjective resource beyond the reach of scholastic *quaestiones*. Indeed, he is even willing to call the emotions or inner disposition (*affectus*) the feet of the soul which propel it into action, 'it is with our emotions and not our feet that we ascend [the mountain of the Lord]'.[45]

The Lucianic purgation of religious practices was for Erasmus one aspect of his life-long campaign to reanimate the rites and signs of the Church, a campaign in which More was an active participant. This entailed restoring the subjective element so easily lost in a society preoccupied with outward observance. When Erasmus opened the campaign with the *Enchiridion*, Catholic observance could be assumed as its containing framework, but after 1520 that was no longer the case and his subjective emphasis was laid open to misappropriation. It is this, quite as much as any issue of personality, that explains the apparent ambivalence of his position; he is liable to judge a theological issue by its subjective implications while taking for granted the embrace of Catholic tradition. As an instance, there are his approaches to freedom of the will, a topic he describes as 'more productive of thorns than of fruit'. He is determined to uphold the principle of human responsibility, and yet at the same time he is anxious to convey the gratuitous mercy of a loving God. It is a paradox that he returns to repeatedly in the *Hyperaspistes*, where it constitutes his most radical disagreement with 'the hyperbolical doctor', as he calls Luther: 'I favour the opinion of those who attribute something to free will, but most to grace. For you must not give so wide a berth to the Scylla of arrogance that you are driven towards the Charybdis of despair or indolence'. Again, 'A person does not give thanks to God badly if he ascribes nothing to himself and attributes the sum and substance of a good work to grace, even if he does not measure with his thumb how much he ought to attribute to himself, how much to God'. Six years later, in the *De Concordia*, almost his final effort to promote reconciliation, he urges that the issue be 'handled cautiously in theological discussions. In the meantime it is enough for us to agree that man can do nothing of his own resources, and that if he able to accomplish anything whatsoever, he owes it all to the grace of him by whose gift we are what we are; so that in all things we may acknowledge our weakness and glorify the mercy of the Lord'.[46]

It is clear that in this context Erasmus is more interested in affective response than in theological precision, a consequence of his linguistic scepticism. For him orthodoxy is essentially an attitude of mind, one of

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adherence to the received consensus of the Church over the centuries; this is one reason why he is so appalled at the way in which the reformers could dismiss a thousand years of Christian history. To separate yourself from this consensus by heresy or schism is the worst of faults: 'put together priestly excess, lust, ambition, avarice and all such faults, yet this Lerna of vice is outdone by heresy'. Again, 'it is worse to leave the fellowship of the church and take oneself off into heresy or schism than to lead an impure life while remaining sound in doctrine'.[47] But heresy, as it turns out, is less a matter of doctrinal error than of active malice against the ecclesial community; as he writes in the last months of his life, 'I call heresy not so much error but the obstinate malice which for the sake of some advantage is disturbing the tranquillity of the church by perverted doctrine'. There may be few examples of a confirmed heretic returning to the fold, 'but those whose error is a merely intellectual one and whose emotions have not been seduced (*nondum corruptu affectu*) are easily brought back into the path'.[48] In the end it is a matter of disposition.

The *De concordia*, published in 1533 just after More produced his *Apology*, is an example of Erasmus at his most irenical. Its aim is to lower tensions between the conflicting sides within the Holy Roman Empire, and to promote an atmosphere of mutual tolerance during the interim (an important word for him) until a General Council may be called. At its heart is the Greek term *synkatabasis*, a spirit of accommodation, which had been applied by the Greek Fathers to the divine condescension of the Incarnation. In such a spirit, Erasmus hopes, both sides will offer concessions, though these must not impinge on those fundamental truths which have been handed down and confirmed by the practice of centuries. As an example, there is the sacrament of confession: to those who are unconvinced that it was instituted by Christ, he argues that it can still be accepted as a beneficial practice, one sanctified by long observance. To those, on the other hand, who accept its divine origin he urges greater reverence, while allowing others their own view—until a Council can settle the matter. 'In this way Christian concord will not be completely shattered, and the morals of the weak will not fall into total license'.[49] The *De Concordia* is an appeal for co-existence, but this is not open-ended toleration; the proposals are clearly placed within the period of the *interim* prior to a Council and it is directed principally at the domains of Charles V. Underlying it is the idea that exposure to truth will prove contagious and lead to a recovery of unity.[50]

If Erasmus' aim is to cultivate the middle ground, then More's aim might be described as rendering it uninhabitable. But it is important to note that both styles of reaction to heresy were significantly influenced by their respective political contexts. Writing to Adrian VI in 1523, Erasmus remarks on the way in which the Wycliffites in England had

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been suppressed by royal power; he is not wholly persuaded by such a severe policy, and in any case, 'what could be done at that period in a kingdom which was subject to the will of one individual is not practical here, I suspect, over such a vast area and cut up among so many princes'. Some years later, reacting to prodding from More and Tunstall that he complete the *Hyperaspistes*, he picks up the theme again, 'This plague can be the more easily checked in England since the highest matters there depend on the nod of a single man. In other regions it is not the same'. Erasmus may oversimplify the English constitution, but he does clarify the difference between his own and More's response to the challenge of heresy. This letter (Ep 1804) has been described as the extreme point in their mutual incomprehension: certainly More appears single-minded against heresy and Erasmus is still anguished in the middle, as hostile to the theologians of Paris as he is to the Lutherans.[51] Indeed, we can see here the origins of the later recusant interpretation of their relationship. Always prone to self-dramatization, Erasmus in a letter of 1531 compares himself to a certain monk John (in fact it is Telemachus) who was lynched by a Roman mob for trying to halt a gladiatorial combat.[52] The centre is a dangerous place. Yet if More did fail to grasp the complexities of life in the fluid context of Basel, there is no evidence that it strained his warmth for Erasmus.

More's rejection of a middle way related to the situation in England where the suppression of heretical influences did seem a viable policy, at least until the Crown allied with anti-clerical elements. It was precisely the 'Erasmian' or 'lyberal' character of Wolsey's handling of heresy that More so sharply disavows, 'And yet what amendement made his gentyll and courteyse intreatye in theyr stoburne stomake? Were they not worse then they were before?'[53] Notoriously, More describes himself in the epitaph that he composed and sent to Erasmus in 1532, along with news of his resignation, as 'furibus autem, homicidis haereticisque molestus', 'dangerous to thieves, murderers and heretics'. His animus was directed principally at those who spread false doctrine, an act he saw as spiritual murder. In his role as Chancellor he was bound by oath to assist the church authorities in suppressing heresy, a survival of Henry V's anti-Lollard legislation, and he saw this duty in terms of protecting the vulnerable from contagion by clinical excision; where a cure is not possible, 'then to the clene cuttynge out ye parte for infeccyon of the remanaunt: am I by myne offyce in verture of myne othe, and every offycer of iustyce thorow the realme for his rate, ryght especially bounden not in reason onely and good congrewence, but also by playne ordynauns and statute'.[54]

But there is no sense that this marks any denial of his earlier alliance with Erasmus. In the *Confutation* More defends Erasmus' use of *congregatio* as opposed to Tyndale's *congregacyon*, not least because 'Erasmus my derlynge' has no malicious intent. It is an issue of expediency,

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> I saye therefore in these days in whyche men by theyr owne defaute mysseconstre and take harme of the very scrypture of god, vntyll menne better amende, yf any man wolde now translate Moria in to Englyshe, or some workes eyther that I have my selfe wryten ere this, all be yt there be none harme therin, folke yet beynge (as they be) geven to take harme of that that is good, I wolde not onely my derlynges bokes but myne owne also, helpe to burne them both with myne owne handes, rather then folke sholde (though thorow theyr owne faute) take any harme of them...[55]

Perhaps the most revealing thing here is that reference to translation; it is not Erasmus' elite circle of readers that he has in mind.

The letter which More sends from his newly found leisure in June 1532, referring discreetly to his resignation as the consequence of angina and an indulgent king, seems to have been written as a testimonial for Erasmus, presumably against his Catholic critics, and intended for publication.[56] Certainly its tone goes beyond conventional praise: 'For, my dear Erasmus, we cannot all be Erasmuses; that talent which a generous God has given to you almost alone among mortals the rest of us must long for'. It, too, touches on the issue of expediency but with a gentleness that can be described as affectionate. If Erasmus has been intemperate in his exposure of abuses, this was because he could not foresee the rise of heresy; his situation can be compared to the Fathers who might well have modified their tone had they anticipated future developments. As it is, their writings were often abused by later heretics. It is worth recalling here the assertion in Harpsfield's *Life* that More counselled Erasmus to retract some of his writings, 'whose counsaile... if Erasmus had followed, I trowe his bookes would be better liked of our posteritie...'[57] The story is further elaborated by Stapleton in *Tres Thomae*, who adds that Erasmus rejected the advice and destroyed the letter containing it. No evidence for this survives, but in this testimonial letter More, having praised Erasmus for his virtuous qualities, gently suggests that he should not grudge a touch of accommodation to calm the anxieties of good men. It could hardly be milder in tone, and one is left with the impression that More, known through Europe for his stand on orthodoxy, is now giving Erasmus his public approval. This positive impression is borne out by the last letter that More sent to Erasmus, despatched in June 1533, the month in which he declined to attend the crowning of Queen Anne. On the one side he encourages Erasmus to publish his warm testimonial, on the other he appends his epitaph; the combination suggests that he did not see his friend as an impediment to his severe stance on heresy. When Erasmus sent on the testimonial to Johannes Fabri, the bishop of Vienna, he erroneously stated that no one had suffered death for heresy when More was Chancellor.[58] Perhaps there were some things that he did not know.

It can be dangerous to rely on surviving correspondence as an index to a relationship. There are indications that More and Erasmus remained in touch, even when letters fail to survive. Erasmus may well have felt

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neglected during the peak years of More's engagement with public life, but in its final years their friendship seems to emerge relatively unscathed. There are also some signs, especially as the political atmosphere thickened, that they communicated off the record by means of trusted couriers who could pass confidential information by word of mouth. Yet just how far Erasmus knew the real issues behind More's resignation is not clear—if he did, then he gives no hint of it. The earliest report of his imprisonment in the surviving correspondence is a letter from Vives dated in May 1534. Two months later Johann Koler wrote from Augsburg, lamenting the troubles of 'Morus tuus', and prophetically placing in his mouth the words of Seneca as he confronts Nero in the *Octavia*, 'Almighty Fate, why hast thou smiled on me with thy deceiving face?' The words were certainly apt, but it would still be nearly a year before Erasmus heard finally of More's beheading in a letter from Goclenius which compared his fate to the judicial murder of Socrates.[59] By the end of August Erasmus was regretting his personal loss to Tomicki in the Pythagorean terms we have already seen.

Could this letter to Tomicki really have been just an exercise in self-pity? Such a verdict hardly seems to fit. Erasmus was by now old, tired, and within a few months of his own death, yet he shows considerable energy in his dissemination of the news of More's death and in his expressions of regret for More and Fisher, 'a pair of men better and more holy than England has ever known'. Just how far he was involved with the *Expositio fidelis de morte D. Thomae Mori* is not clear, but its publication by Froben suggests at least his active approval. It was in the same month in which he wrote to Tomicki, August, that he dedicated his monumental work on the art of the preacher, the *Ecclesiastes*, to Christoph von Stadion and, as P. S. Allen notes, interest in the book was quickened by the references in the preface to the deaths of his friends. Here More stands out as one 'whose breast was whiter than any snow, whose brilliance outshone any other talent that England has had or is likely to have, and who never bore ill-intent towards anyone'.[60] If we leave aside that controversial final claim, this surely takes us well beyond self-regard, let alone self pity. Though some at the time felt that Erasmus might have done more, this was largely a matter of naming names, a tactic that did not appeal to him.[61] For one thing, he probably felt unsure about the nature of the struggle in England, and he was certainly reluctant to invoke the rhetoric of martyrdom. The fact that so many humanist responses to More's death lay stress on the Senecan ideals of moral integrity indicates that resistance to Nero rather than death in the coliseum is what they have in mind. Martyrdom only served to sharpen the lines of religious demarcation and it left no space for *synkatabasis*. The Erasmian ideal of accommodation stuttered out after the painful failure of the Diet of Regensburg in 1541, and with it went much of Erasmus' direct influence. It was left to Reginald Pole to develop the potential of More's death for a cause.

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NOTES

[1] *Enarratio Psalmi 38*, in *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi* (Amsterdam 1969—hereafter ASD) V-3 220: 859–61.
[2] Richard Marius, *Thomas More: a Biography* (London 1985) pp. 79, 445; the letter to Tomicki is Ep 3049 in P. S. Allen (ed.), *Erasmi epistolae* (Oxford 1906–58—hereafter Allen) XI 217–22 (for More see lines 163–4).
[3] Ep 118 in *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto 1974—hereafter *CWE*) 1 236.
[4] The visit is described in Ep 1341a, *CWE* 9 299.
[5] 'Dulce bellum inexpertis', *Adages* IV.i.1 in *CWE* 35 408.
[6] *Hyperaspistes II* in *CWE* 77 575.
[7] *A mirror or Glass to Know Thyself*, cited in *The Complete Works of St Thomas More* (New Haven 1965–1997—hereafter *CW*) 3:i xxiv.
[8] *CW* 3:i 5.
[9] *CWE* 27 32.
[10] *CWE* 7 19 (Ep 999).
[11] Marius, *Thomas More* p. 95; Marius attempts to impose a rather inappropriate template of personal intimacy on what was essentially a meeting of minds.
[12] *CW* 3:ii 234–5 (no. 204).
[13] *CWE* 3 222 (Ep 384).
[14] *CW* 3: ii 266–9 (no. 255) and note; the Spanish censure dates from 1584.
[15] As late as September 1516, when he sends the final manuscript to Erasmus, More refers to the work as *Nusquama*. For the links between the *Adagia* and *Utopia* see M. M. Phillips, *The Adages of Erasmus* (Cambridge 1964) pp. 96–121.
[16] 'Facit imperiosum Morum timide loquentem'. Ep 3052 lines 28–9 in Allen XI 225–6; Goclenius had dedicated his translation of Lucian's *Hermotimus* to More, see E. F. Rogers (ed.) *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More* (Princeton 1947) no. 113.
[17] *CW* 15 140/41.
[18] The issue is raised at *CW* 15 212–16.
[19] The section is found in *ASD* V-3 192–98.
[20] *CW* 15 289.
[21] *CW* 15 302–304.
[22] Ep 999, *CWE* 7 24.
[23] Ep 2750 in Allen X 137, lines 115–18.
[24] 'Let them be held by a sort of superstitious worship of virtue; let them love her; let them desire to live with her, and refuse to live without her'. *Epistulae Morales*, tr. R. M. Gummere (Loeb Classical Library) XCV.35.
[25] 'Tametsi quaedam admixta sunt obiter quae faciunt ad bonos mores'. Ep 1301 in *CWE* 9 130. See also Epp 1296, 1299, 1300.
[26] Ep 1697 in *CWE* 12 164–74.
[27] Ep 2037 in Allen VII 460–67, lines 22–38; see also Ep 1704, and for Tunstall Epp 2226 and 2263.
[28] *CWE* 40 621–50; for the two prayers see 633–4. The *Icaromenippus* was one of the dialogues translated by Erasmus.
[29] Nicholas Harpsfield, *The life and death of Sr Thomas Moore, knight*, ed E .V. Hitchcock (EETS, London 1932) p. 209; J. K. McConica, 'The Recusant Reputation of Thomas More', in R. S. Sylvester and G. P. Marc'hadour (eds), *Essential Articles for the Study of Thomas More* (Hamden 1977) 138–49. For the Marian developments see now Anne Dillon, *The Construction of Martyrdom in the English Catholic Community, 1535–1603* (Aldershot 2002); W. Wizeman, *The Theology and Spirituality of Mary Tudor's Church* (Aldershot 2006) and 'Martyrs and Anti-Martyrs and Mary Tudor's Church' in T. S. Freeman and T. F. Mayer (eds), *Martyrs and Martyrdom in England c. 1400–1700* (Woodbridge 2007) pp. 166–79; Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* (New Haven and London 2009).
[30] *The English Works of Sir Thomas More*, ed. W. E. Campbell (London 1931) p. 324.
[31] Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality* p. 79.
[32] *Sir Lucius Cary, Late Viscount of Falkland, His Discourse of Infallibility, with an Answer to it: And his Lordships Reply* (London 1651) p. 161; Falkland makes a supremely Erasmian observation on the Counter-Reformation Church, 'I do not believe all to be damned that they damne but I conceive all to be killed that they kill'. For Erasmus' adoption as an Anglican see Gregory R. Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus* (Toronto 2009).

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[33] In fact two parallel editions, by J. Bogard and P. Zangrius, appeared at Louvain in that year, and both were reprinted in 1566.
[34] *Omnia latina opera* (Louvain: P. Zangrius 1566) fol. Avi; the letter is no. 217 in E. F. Rogers (ed.), *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More* (Princeton 1947). On the Buonvisi connection see Duffy, *Fires of Faith* p. 181.
[35] *Utopia*, edited by George M. Logan, Robert M. Adams and Clarence H. Miller (Cambridge 1995) p. 81.
[36] *CWE* 33 286–90.
[37] *CWE* 4 115 (Ep 481).
[38] Ep 829 in *CWE* 5 400–2.
[39] *CWE* 34 75.
[40] *The History of the Life* (2nd edition, 2 vols, London 1767) I 130–31.
[41] *The History of the Life*, I 180–82; Ep 103 in *CWE* I 193.
[42] Ep 785 in *CWE* 5 327.
[43] Ep 980 in *CWE* 6 391–93.
[44] *Ratio verae theologiae* in H. and A. Holborn (eds), *Erasmus Ausgewälte Werke* (Munich 1933; repr. 1964) p. 193; cf *Paraclesis, ibid.* pp. 144–45.
[45] *De sarcienda ecclesiae concordia* in *ASD* V-3 289:100–01.
[46] *Hyperaspistes I* in *CWE* 76 86,151; *De Concordia* in *ASD* V-3 304:625–30.
[47] *Epistola ad fratres inferioris Germaniae* in *ASD* IX-1 422:1098–1101; *De Concordia* in *ASD* V-3 301:513–15. For Lerna malorum, 'A pile of troubles' see *Adagia* I.iii.27.
[48] *Ecclesiastes* in *ASD* V-5 338:536–38; *Enarratio psalmi 38* in ASD V-3 157:388–89.
[49] *ASD* V-3 306:714–307:746; for *synkatabasis* see 304:617.
[50] In the same way Erasmus sees such coexistence as a means to converting the Turk, *De bello Turcico* in *CWE* 64 265.
[51] See Yvonne Charlier, *Erasme et l'Amitié d'après sa Correspondence* (Paris 1977) 305.
[52] Ep 2522 in Allen IX 322:167–77.
[53] *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, *CW* 6:1 416.
[54] *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* in *CW* 8:1 28.
[55] *CW* 8:1 177, 179.
[56] Ep 2659 in Allen X 31–4; on its publication see Ep 2831, More's last letter to Erasmus.
[57] *The life* (see no. 29 above) p. 109.
[58] Ep 2750 in Allen X 137:120–22.
[59] Vives, Ep 2932; Koler, Ep 2953:24–46; Goclenius, Ep 3037:92–113.
[60] Ep 3036:102–04.
[61] So von Stadion, in response to the dedication of *Ecclesiastes*, regrets that Erasmus did not elaborate more on his allusion to Herod (i.e. Henry VIII); see also Ep 3085 from Damião de Gois.

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