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‘¿PORQUE ESTE LIBRO ES MÁS ANTIGUO?’: THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE *DIÁLOGO DE LA LENGUA* REVISITED¹

Abstract

Juan de Valdés was one of the most interesting figures of 16th-century Spain. Apart from his theological works, his *Diálogo de la lengua* typified the humanistic fervour of his day. On the preliminary folio of its earliest known manuscript appears this annotation: ‘No Parece toca el expurg^{ro} Nouiss^o del año de [...] aeste quaderno. Fray Pedro de Carvajal, Predicador general’. The brackets represent a date, which looks very much like 1540, but has been traditionally transcribed as 1640. Neither this date nor the identity of the annotator has ever been investigated before. Next to Carvajal’s annotation appears a puzzling, later one, used as the main heading for this article, which also has not been understood or seriously considered before. The aim of this article is to problematize these issues and investigate the identity of the first annotator, his motivation for the annotation, when he carried it out, the suspicious date he alluded to, and the meaning of the second annotation. It is hoped that this research will not only expand the current state of our still limited knowledge about the early history of the *Diálogo* – recently characterized by one scholar as bordering on complete ignorance – but also open up some fresh avenues for further work on this unique Renaissance work.

1. Introduction

Hispanists will unanimously agree that of all works in Renaissance linguistic thought in Spain, the one whose circumstances have aroused the most curiosity is Juan de Valdés’s *Diálogo de la lengua* (henceforth ‘Valdés’ and ‘the *Diálogo*’, respectively). Those circumstances include the socio-cultural background of its author, the place and purpose of its composition, the status of the work and the nature of its content, the restricted early circulation of the manuscript, including how it might have reached Spain from Naples, the possible dates of its earliest extant manuscript (MS 8629), held in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, in Madrid (henceforth ‘the BN’), and the fact that it took two centuries for its first edition to appear (prior to MS 8629 coming to light). Some of these issues have been addressed quite conclusively in a recent work (see Anípa 2007). Others, although not entirely ignored by scholars, have only been mentioned in passing or touched on only tentatively. It is, therefore, not surprising that, in his recent edition of the complete works of Valdés, Alcalá Galve (2006) describes our knowledge of the early history of the *Diálogo* as naught (‘ignorancia total’), strong words that I prefer to interpret as an exhortation to scholars that there is still more research to be done on the manuscript.

¹ Research for this work was funded with a grant provided by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland.

The aim of this study is to cast some light on the early history of the *Diálogo* by scrutinizing two interesting annotations found on the preliminary folio of MS 8629. It attempts to trace the identity of the earlier annotator, the date he referred to, and to decipher an enigmatic second annotation in the form of a query, as well as provide an answer to it. The results, it is hoped, will push out the current frontiers of our knowledge about the *Diálogo* and possibly open up fresh avenues for future work on this unique Renaissance work and its controversial author – a worthwhile response to Alcalá Galve’s exhortation.

2. MS 8629 and the First Annotation

A great deal has been written about the nature and condition of the manuscripts of the *Diálogo*,² details of which will not be replicated in this brief work. Of interest here, first and foremost, is the annotation by Fray Pedro de Carvajal, which reads: ‘No Parece Toca el expurg^o Nouiss^o del año de [...] aesto quaderno’. The brackets represent a date, which I have left out, because it was the starting point of my quest. The second digit of the date looks very much like a ‘5’, rather than the traditionally accepted ‘6’; in other words, it has been accepted wisdom that, in his annotation, Pedro de Carvajal referred to a censorship event of 1640. Thus, the central research question took the form of an initial curiosity about this date, the possibility that it might be 1540 and, if it were, the potential implications for the early history of the *Diálogo*.

In the context of much uncertainty in palaeography, including the fluidity of the boundaries between one type of script and another, the impact of individual hands, national bias, which have generated confusing classifications existing almost entirely in a vacuum (Derolez 2003), some specialists in the field advocate a more hands-on approach, taking the morphology of scripts themselves as the focus of examination. In that respect, the end results of ductus – i.e., the forms resulting from the way letters are constructed by means of a sequence of strokes – are essential. Derolez writes:

Complete descriptions letter by letter [...] are off-putting, and descriptions of select letter forms are only useful if the chosen letters are really significant. Which letters are significant depends of course on the type of script being considered [...] It will consist in studying principally those graphs which, within a given type of script, display distinctive characteristics, the forms that differ from the ‘normal’ ones, and other features that are readily identifiable and can be described in an unequivocal manner (pp. 7-9).

It is this expert view that has informed the scrutiny of the problematic digit in the date under investigation. Pedro de Carvajal’s hand in the annotation is a cursive one

² See, in particular, E. Boehmer (1895); Cotarelo y Mori (1918, p. 35, 1919, pp. 665-670 and 1920); Montesinos (1928); and Barbolani de García (1982).

with pronounced ligatures, largely hairline strokes and little shading; and the two features that I focused on were: (i) the supposed expected single downstroke, as opposed to a likely downstroke followed by an upstroke, of the digit's ascender and (ii) a clear break in the loop between the headline and the baseline.

One of the notorious difficulties of historical studies of any kind is that posed by the manner in which names were used in the past. Whilst this is a widespread problem, the case of Spain is a particularly challenging one, given that even its present-day use of two surnames – designed in late 19th century with the aim of solving the age-old problem – still harbours ambiguity, for various reasons. As Piñero Rivera (2003: 3) remarks, 'Resulta un consuelo saber que los castellanos del siglo XV también se confundían con este enredo de apellidos'. In the literature on Pedro de Carvajal, I have come across as many as six versions of his name (excluding orthographical variation): (i) Pedro Carvajal; (ii) Pedro de Carvajal; (iii) Pedro de Carvajal y Girón; (iv) Pedro Girón de Carvajal; (v) Pedro Carvajal Girón de Loaisa; and (vi) Pedro de Carvajal Girón de Loaisa.

In the search for the identity of the annotator, the date of composition of the manuscript as well as early works of scholars, such as Graux, San Román, and Fernández Pomar, provide a useful guide that helped to quickly eliminate some of the few Pedro de Carvajals that I initially encountered. Also, the publication of the last will and testament of a prominent 16th-century humanist, Álvaro Gómez de Castro, provided interesting information. It established, for the first time, the fact that MS 8629 had been circulating amongst a network of humanist collaborators in and around Toledo by the second half of the 16th century. Within that circle of friends were, amongst others, Juan de Vergara, Álvaro Gómez de Castro, Diego de Castilla, García de Loaisa Girón [y Carvajal],³ Pedro de Carvajal (nephew of Loaisa), Garcilaso de la Vega and Diego Hurtado de Mendoza.

In his will, Gómez de Castro stated that he had copied the *Diálogo* and expressed his desire to have it bound together with Nebrija's *Gramática de la lengua castellana* and kept in a church library, where he had been chaplain:

Ansi mesmo la *Gramatica de Romançe de Antonio de Nebrija* quiero que se enquaderne con el *dialogo de valdes de la lengua española*, q̄ tengo escrito de mano, y que se ponga en la librería de dicha sta yglesía, lo qual ella mandara enquadernar en tablas, pues es libro raro para guardarse allí, y si en esto oviere olvido, mando a mi costa se enquaderne y se ponga en el dicho lugar (after San Román 1928, p. 553).

³ I use brackets here because, although this personality definitely had the Carvajal part to his surname – for his sister's full name was Costanza Girón de Loaisa y Carvajal – I have not yet seen it used specifically in any records. The decision to show it is based on the fact that it makes the family relationship between him and Pedro de Carvajal more explicit: the brackets will, therefore, be maintained throughout this article.

San Román, who found and published the will, did not consider the clause ‘, *q̄ tengo escrito de mano*,’ carefully enough and thought MS 8629 was the manuscript mentioned in the will; but a careful reading shows that the clause means ‘, which I (have) copied, ’. This topic is beyond the scope of this study (see Anipa 2010), but it can be noted that we are yet to find Gómez de Castro’s copy of the *Diálogo* and that the chance of even looking for it has never existed before.

A number of interesting implications can be drawn from Gómez de Castro’s will. First, he nominated Diego de Castilla as one of the executors of the will, an indication of the close friendship between them. Second, we find the close relationship between him and another colleague, García de Loaisa Girón [y Carvajal] and, by implication, also Pedro de Carvajal. This is because, in the will, he deferred the ultimate decision regarding some potentially suspicious materials to those two men (‘Es mi voluntad se ponga en la librería de la sta yglesia, con *q̄* lo vea primero el s’ dean *don diego de Castilla*, o en su ausencia el s’ *García de loaysa Giron* Arçediano de Guadalajara, y hagan en esto lo que les pareciere’ (San Román, p. 551)).⁴ Third, both Gómez de Castro and Valdés were students and, later, very close friends of Vergara. It is, therefore, not surprising that the first direct mention of Valdés as the author of the *Diálogo* was that found in this will.⁵ Moreover, San Román established that seven annotations across the actual body of MS 8629 were from the hand of Gómez de Castro (‘Puedo afirmar, en efecto, y con absoluta certeza, que son de nuestro humanista, pues habiendo examinado multitud de autógrafos suyos, tal escritura me es perfectamente conocida’ (pp. 553-554)).

It seems that Diego de Castilla and García de Loaisa Girón [y Carvajal] made a few decisions against Gómez de Castro’s wish, because, unlike Nebrija’s grammar, neither the *Diálogo* nor other sensitive materials mentioned in the will have been ascertained to have ever been held in the library of Santa Catalina, in Toledo.

One thing that is known for certain is that MS 8629, which Gómez de Castro copied from and annotated, became part of the library of Pedro de Carvajal, Dean of Toledo Cathedral, who later became Bishop of Coria. That library remained in the possession of the Carvajals for a couple of generations, before being donated to the Dominican convent of San Vicente Ferrer, in Plasencia.

⁴ In some cases, however, he was decisive (‘*Otros libros de mano diversos y mocedades mias* [...] quiero que se rōpan o se quemen’ (original italics; see San Román, pp. 550-551)). It may be useful to add that the long arm of the Inquisition eventually caught up with Vergara, who was prosecuted and imprisoned for many years, in connection with his favourable views about Valdés’s first work.

⁵ Although a great deal of work had pointed to Valdés’s authorship (see Cotarelo y Mori 1918, 1919 and 1920), the discovery made by San Román was the most definitive proof of all.

2.1 *Pedro de Carvajal, Inquisitor-General?*

Scholars have documented the status of Pedro de Carvajal, in respect of the annotation being investigated, as an Inquisitor or Inquisitor General (the records held in the BN also attribute to him both positions). It is, however, necessary to establish whether he was, indeed, one such figure in the Inquisition. Extensive search along those lines proved negative. Thus, in the current state of our knowledge of the early history of the *Diálogo*, something has been amiss, as regards the identity of the Pedro de Carvajal who was connected with MS 8629.

Fernández (1627) recorded that Pedro was a member of the Consejo Real de Castilla and that for the post of Bishop of Coria, his name was put forward by King Philip II himself. He is described as erudite and intelligent, generous and affable, to the extent that the king would consult him about all important matters:

Don Pedro de Carvajal [...] siendo canonigo de Toledo le consultaba el Rey Filipe [sic] Segundo en muchas ocasiones [...]. Por su exemplo, muchas letras, y notable urbanidad, y apazibilidad, que en todos los negocios que han tenido, le consultaban (pp. 324-325).

In spite of the overall close connection between the Council of State (i.e., the Government) and the Inquisition, especially with the upper echelons of the latter, there is ample evidence that, in matters of censorship, the two bodies had separate remits. The Council of State reserved for itself the jurisdiction of vetting manuscripts and issuing printing permits; the Supreme Council of the Inquisition, on the other hand, were constantly kept in check by the former and reminded that they should concentrate on policing printed books. Until the mid-17th century, even the decision to publish an Index of prohibited books was the prerogative of the Royal Council.⁶ According to Pinto Crespo (1983: 60), 'A él [i.e., el Santo Oficio] correspondía todo lo referente al control de los libros, salvo la censura previa de los que se imprimían en los reinos peninsulares, que correspondía al Consejo de Castilla'. Bujanda (1984: 44) reports in that respect:

Le Conseil royal n'a pas toujours vu d'un bon œil l'octroi de licences d'impression par l'Inquisition. Par exemple, en 1535 et 1536, il s'adresse aux inquisiteurs de Valence en leur signalant le danger qui existe du fait qu'on imprime des ouvrages avec la permission du Saint-Office. En 1550, la Couronne ordonne que l'Inquisition ne donne pas de licences pour l'impression des ouvrages. La loi de 1554, comme nous l'avons vu, réservait l'émission de licences au Conseil royal. Il semble que l'Inquisition s'est rendue compte elle-même du danger qu'entraînait une telle pratique. En accordant le permis d'impression, elle reconnaissait d'une façon officielle que le livre ne contenait pas de choses répréhensibles contre la foi et la

⁶ As noted by Llorente (1980 [1822]: 21), the 1640 Index 'fue el primero que los inquisidores generales se atrevieron a publicar por autoridad propia, sin ser excitados por el gobierno, pues hasta entonces sólo procedían en virtud de orden'.

morale, et par la suite, elle pouvait se trouver dans une situation difficile si elle devait revenir sur sa décision pour interdire l'ouvrage.

It is, therefore, unlikely that a member of the Royal Council, Pedro de Carvajal, so close to the king, could have been acting at the same time as an Inquisitor/Inquisitor-General. Moreover, it has been ascertained that there was no Carvajal Inquisitor-General in the entire history of the Inquisition.

There is another kind of evidence that helps to discard the possibility of the annotator having been an Inquisitor: the formalities involved in the issuing of printing licences. Within the limited space of this article, I only provide a representative sample from a single book to exemplify the average form of printing licences, to be compared and contrasted with the annotation under investigation. The following appear in Fernández (1627):

1. **APPROUACION**

Por Comission de V. P. muy R. he visto un libro que ha escrito el padre fray Alonso Fernandez, de Historia y Anales de la Ciudad de Plasencia, no tiene cosa contra nuestra Santa fè, ni contra buenas costùbres; antes todo el sera vtil, y provechoso à ambos estados, pues con su mucha diligencia y studio saca a luz los hechos ilustres de los unos, y las letras y santidad de los otros. Paresceme sera el imprimirse a hõra y Gloria de Dios, y de nuestra Sagrada Religion. En San Vicente de Plasencia a veinte de Iulio de mil y seiscientos y veinte y dos.

Fr. Geronymo Delgado.

2. **Aprouacion de Antonio Herrera Cronista de Su Magestad.**

Por Mando de V. A. he visto este libro Historia y Anales de la ciudad de Plasencia, escrito por fray Alonso Fernandez. Y porque me parece obra de provecho, escrita con mucho cuidado y diligencia. V. A. podra mandar, que se le dè la licencia y privilegio que pide para imprimirla, pues no contiene cosa, por donde se le deba negar, y lo firmè de mi nombre. En Madrid en diez y siete de Setiembre de mil y seiscientos y veinte y dos años.

Antonio Herrera.

3. **Licencia de nuestro Padre Prouincial.**

El Maestro fray Domingo Pimentel, Prouincial de la Prouincia de España de la Orden de Predicadores doy licencia al Padre fray Alonso Fernandez, Predicador general, y Prior de nuestro Couento de Santo Domingo de Cisuètes, para que pueda imprimir la Historia y Anales de la ciudad de Plasencia, auiendo presentadola primero al Consejo Real, y guardado en todo las prematicas y decretos destos Reynos, que tratan de las impresiones de los libros, por quanto está vista y examinada por los Padres Presentado Fr. Geronymo Delgado Prior de nuestro Conuento de San Vicente de Plasencia, y Calificador de la Inquisicion, y por Fray Manuel Garcia Lector de nuestro Conuèto de Santo Tomas de Madrid, y Calificador del Consejo Supremo de Inquisicion; y assi lo firmè en nuestro Conuento de Santo Domingo de Benaunte en primero de Setiembre de mil y seiscientos y veinte y dos.

Fr. Domingo Pimentel
Prior Prouincial.

It can be noted that the licence in (3) contains additional information, including references not only to at least one of those who wrote the 'Aprobación', but also to prior approval of the Consejo Real, other figures who had played their part (behind the scenes, as it were) and the connection with the Supreme Council of the Inquisition. That the mechanisms of literary censorship were multi-layered and involved a range of officials is borne out by the frequent reference made to it during the Renaissance by publishers in the front matter of books:

No se deue ningún hombre discreto marauillar de las negligencias y faltas que se hazen en la impression, pues el primor del oficio es tan grande y pasa por tantas manos que no es mucho que en alguna parte quiebre (Simón Díaz 1983: 115).

Also, whilst the official documents were separately handed out to authors to be reproduced in the printed book, the annotation on MS 8629 was penned on the manuscript itself. It becomes obvious that this annotation is nowhere near a real printing licence. That being the case, the question then arises as to what the purpose of the annotation must have been. A careful study of Inquisitorial operations regarding literary censorship may provide a clue. The watchful eyes of the Inquisitorial establishment were ubiquitous, observing and vetting everyone, including high-ranking officials, such as Archbishops, Cardinals, and even kings and Inquisitors themselves.⁷

A watershed in the severity of literary censorship occurred rather early, in September 1540, with a memorandum sent out to Inquisitors, ordering them to initiate the practice of visiting bookshops and libraries, including those of university churches, colleges, cathedrals and monasteries.⁸ Thus, from 1540, the rules of the game changed drastically from reliance on casual spies reporting suspicious books to that of mandatory surprise visitations. In such an atmosphere, one can imagine the state of mind of those who had libraries full of books, some of which they might not even have read before. The nature of the annotation on MS 8629 was, therefore, most likely to have been a precautionary measure taken by the unidentified Pedro de Carvajal to forestall any problems that might arise from the content of the

⁷ The literature on the history of the Inquisition is littered with cases of high-ranking ecclesiastical figures getting their books prohibited (see Pinto Crespo 1981: 48) and themselves being investigated, accused, apprehended, judged and castigated; one of the most notorious examples was the case of Fray Bartolomé Carranza de Miranda, Archbishop of Toledo (see Bujanda, pp. 99-101). And as Pinto Crespo (1983: 45) has put it, 'Nadie podía estar seguro de que algún día no tuviesen que ver con el tribunal desde el banquillo de los acusados, aunque antes hubiera sido colaborador del Santo Oficio'. The case of Juan de Vergara and Fray Luis de León were also amongst well-publicized examples.

⁸ Details of the instructions in the memorandum are rather extensive, but included, in any case, the provision 'que todas cualesquier personas de cualesquier condición que sean en cuyo poder agora estuvieren los dichos libros, que los manifestaren' (Bujanda, p. 55).

manuscript, if it should come to the notice of Inquisitors. Obviously, keeping the work of a first-category heretic was a highly risky thing to do at the time.

Today, it is widely known amongst scholars that lists of prohibited books began to appear as early as the 1520s and that they became particularly stringent from the 1540s, as can be seen in the following:

Carlos V mandó a la Universidad de Lovaina formar un índice de libros dañosos; obtuvo bula pontificia en 1539 para autorizarlo, y habiéndolo compuesto aquella, lo publicó para los estados de Flandes en 1546, después que tenía ya mandado, en el año de 1540, que nadie tuviera ni leyera los libros de Lutero, bajo pena de muerte. Pareció muy rigurosa la providencia (Llorente 1980 [1822]: 11).

De l'examen des traces qui restent de la correspondance entre le Conseil général de l'Inquisition et les tribunaux de district, il ressort que le Saint-Office continue pendant les années 1540 à publier des édits pour surveiller la diffusion des livres hérétiques [...] En 1540, un mémoire de livres interdits et suspects est envoyé par le Conseil général à l'inquisition de Séville [...] La même liste est envoyée à Barcelone et à Salamanque et probablement aussi à toutes les autres inquisitions de district. Cette liste est inconnue, mais on peut supposer qu'au moins en partie elle reproduisait les interdictions contenues dans le placard de Charles Quint publié en 1540 [...] Ces listes et mémoriaux peuvent être considérés comme l'embryon du futur catalogue qui apparaîtra après une période de gestation (Bujanda, pp. 48-57).

This knowledge, based on archival research, provides the opportunity for a re-examination of the suspicious date on MS 8629. The lack of impetus to spot and investigate the date issue was due to the fact that the work of early scholars, who were not familiar with the Index of 1540, shut away all avenues in that respect – witness in the quotation below the expression of shock from a well-read Jesuit, Padre Miguélez, at Cotarelo's lack of familiarity with early Indexes; interestingly, this was quoted by Cotarelo himself:

¡Cómo! ¿Que el *primer* Indice expurgatorio es el de 1559? ¡Ojalá hubiera sido así! (Cotarelo y Mori 1920: 688; original italics).

One should not lose track of the fact that the controversial date is *not* about the year in which the manuscripts were annotated; rather, it is about the date of a censorship event, which the annotator believed (even if feigned) did not affect the manuscripts in question.

3. The 'OOP'⁹ Date and the First Annotation

It is well known that the *Diálogo* was written in Naples, around 1535; and the question of its authorship was eventually settled in the early 20th century. Part of the gap in our knowledge of the early history of the manuscript has been about when and how it reached Spain. The next few paragraphs will present a number of hypotheses on this front, considered in order of probability.

According to San Román, the *Diálogo* manuscript was most probably brought to Spain by Valdés himself to his close friend, Juan de Vergara, from whom Gómez de Castro probably got (and copied) it, just as he did manuscripts on Aristotle and letters from Erasmus. It must have passed on to Diego de Castilla, who found Gómez de Castro's wish for it to be bound together with Nebrija's grammar too risky, given that the *Diálogo's* author was a known heretic.¹⁰ It might have been passed on from Diego de Castilla to García Girón de Loaisa [y Carvajal], who later bequeathed it to his nephew, Pedro de Carvajal.¹¹

This is a plausible hypothesis, although it leaves one key question unaddressed: the fact that traditional scholarship says that when Valdés hurriedly left Spain in the late 1520s, he never returned home for the rest of his life. This being the case, any evidence that could point to him having probably visited Spain discreetly would be a significant contribution to the hypothesis. Such evidence is found in one of his letters, written in Naples in October 1535, to Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, in which he says:

A mj me es grandíss.^o daño el no tener mis dineros pa. poderme aprouechar dellos en esta uenida de S. m.^l, donde podré comprar alg.^a cosa a q̄. poderme arrimar en ytalia quando por guerras los caminos d'españa estuuiesen cerrados.

By this statement, we can understand that Valdés went back to Spain from time to time and returned to Italy with provisions, but he wanted to take the opportunity of Charles V's visit, in order to buy and save provisions, in case he got stuck there, when hostilities rendered the trip to Spain impossible. The clue to this understanding

⁹ 'OOP' is an acronym for 'Out Of Place' – a term employed in archaeology to objects that do not belong to the period, the place or the culture in which they were found.

¹⁰ Gómez de Castro had a very close relationship with the Court. He was personal tutor to Prince Philip III; and we have evidence that Philip II and his secretaries regularly consulted him on censorship matters, particularly when the Royal Library of El Escorial was being organized (see San Román, pp. 545-546). Consequently, one would expect him, in the real world, to have benefited from a certain degree of protection, even if only psychological or in the form of wishful thinking, in the context of Inquisitorial activities (see Nader 2004). As Bujanda (p. 52) remarks, 'On peut s'interroger sur les véritables raisons qui motivent la décision finale du Conseil de l'Inquisition à l'égard d'une œuvre dont l'auteur jouissait des faveurs de la Cour'. It is not difficult to see how Gómez de Castro's 'double life' would have caused him trouble with the Inquisition, if he had not been so close to the Court, or had not been clever, or, perhaps, simply lucky.

¹¹ The trajectory of MS 8629 from Plasencia to the BN is sufficiently well documented (see Fernández Pomar 1965) and will not be included in the theories here.

lies in the tone of the statement, for, given that the recipient of his letter was also residing in Italy, his reference to Italy the way he did comes across as if he was there only on a short stay, and not as his permanent home.

An equally strong hypothesis is that the manuscript could have been brought to Spain by Garcilaso de la Vega. First, both Valdés and Garcilaso lived in Naples when the *Diálogo* was composed; second, notwithstanding his own nominal exile at the time, Garcilaso freely moved around and visited Spain from Naples during the 1530s; and third, and most pertinent, there is another crucial statement by Valdés, this time made in the *Diálogo* itself, in which he mentions Garcilaso de la Vega as one of the intended recipients of the *Diálogo*: ‘mas quisiera satisfacer a Garcilasso de la Vega con otros dos caualleros de la Corte del Emp:^{dor} que yo conozco’ (Valdés MS 8629, fol. 53^r).

Another hypothesis is based on the Cardinal of Burgos, Francisco de Mendoza y Bobadilla. Famous for being an exceptionally gifted intellectual and an obsessed bibliophile (he completed a first degree at Salamanca and began lecturing there at the age of 16, took his doctorate at 20, was made bishop at 25, and cardinal at 36), he was one of the most trusted figures in the Court at the time (‘Fue obispo de corte, en la que gozaba de un alto prestigio [...] fue uno de los preladados que figuraron en el séquito que acompañó al cadáver de la emperatriz Isabel, esposa de Carlos V, hasta su lugar de enterramiento en Granada’ (Lobo 2007: 6)) and was known to have acquired a significant amount of manuscripts in Italy, where he spent a good deal of time on administrative and diplomatic missions:

Carlos V y Felipe II lo tuvieron empleado en misiones diplomáticas gran parte de su vida. Por su amplia cultura grecolatina, Mendoza es uno de los humanistas españoles de relieve en la época (Lobo, p. 6).

Even if we set aside the fact that it was his library that Girón Loaisa [y Carvajal] later bought and passed on to Pedro de Carvajal, it can be argued that his very close relationship with the Court and Italy and the fact that he was born in the same town as Valdés (Cuenca) around the same time, make him a strong candidate for one of the gentlemen that Valdés said he wrote the *Diálogo* for. He may have brought the manuscript to Toledo direct or via María de Mendoza y de la Cerda, one of the prominent female humanists of the day, whose home at Alcalá de Henares served as a salon for the Toledo circle. María was a student of Gómez de Castro, who admired her since her youth and was her spiritual mentor (see Vaquero Serrano 1996 and 2004: 8); she eventually left him her library, amongst other things, in her last will.¹²

¹² Scholars have unearthed archival evidence of Gómez de Castro, in spite of being a man of the cloth, having madly fallen in love with María – an escalation of his attraction to her from her teenage years. He wrote many poems to her, but perhaps the best-known work written for (rather than dedicated to) her was *De la orden y origen de las Vírgenes Vestales* [MS 5853] (see García Sánchez 1993).

The last hypothesis concerns another uncle of Pedro de Carvajal, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, who could have acquired the manuscript in Italy: 'Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, while serving in Italy as Charles V's ambassador to Venice, the papacy, and the Council of Trent, also acquired the reputation as a poet, erudite, and collector of manuscripts and antiques' (Nader 2004: 8). References to Pedro's erudition point to him having quickly gone through the education system and taken up important posts rather early in life, including Spain's (interim?) ambassador to the Council of Trent, during which time he acquired many manuscripts (the catalogue record on him in the Biblioteca de Extremadura reads: 'PEDRO DE CARVAJAL. Este bibliófilo, que fue Obispo de Coria y primo de Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, sustituye a éste como embajador en el Concilio de Trento. Su estancia en Italia le permitió adquirir gran cantidad de manuscritos y encargar la copia de otros'), but having failed to find the year of Pedro's birth and the dates of his diplomatic services in Trent, I have deemed it safer to consider his likely acquisition of the manuscript through his uncle.

I found many other manuscripts annotated by the same person, 15 of which unequivocally refer to the Index of 1640, leading to the conclusion that the Pedro de Carvajal connected with MS 8629 could not have been the annotator, since he died in 1621, and that there was another Pedro de Carvajal, hitherto unidentified, who annotated those manuscripts.

The immense library inherited by Pedro de Carvajal included 500 manuscripts, according to the inventory prepared by his uncle, García de Loaisa Girón [y Carvajal]. Pedro also bequeathed it (together with his own) to his nephew, Diego Esteban de Carvajal y Nieto, who later passed it on to his son, Rodrigo Ignacio de Carvajal. It was Rodrigo who donated it to the Dominican convent, in Plasencia.¹³ That transaction, which took place on 29 May 1650, had, amongst other things, a provision that the Carvajal family shall have one of the keys to the library, in order to be able to use it whenever they so wished (see Andrés 1974). This is of most interest for the present investigation, as it documents continued access of the Carvajals to the library even after it had been offered to the Dominicans. Since an Index of prohibited books was published in 1707, but was not referred to in the annotation, Pedro's annotation (which mentioned the 1640 one on several manuscripts) must have been carried out between those two dates.

By inference, it can be appreciated that either before or after the library was given to the convent, another Pedro de Carvajal from the family went into the library and took out some manuscripts for his personal use. But then, well aware of the long arm of the Inquisition, he scribbled the comments as a precautionary measure, to indicate that the manuscripts had not been listed in the Indexes in question, and that he had not (yet) read (some of) them carefully enough to be able to determine

¹³ The Dominican convent of San Vicente Ferrer in Plasencia, at the time, enjoyed a university status and was one of the most important centres of learning in Spain, with two chairs of Theology and one of the Arts (see Graux 1880).

whether they contained anything reprehensible to be reported to the Holy Office – as he explicitly stated in some of the annotations. The striking variation in the wording and placement of his annotations from manuscript to manuscript also bear witness to the *ad hoc* nature of that exercise. Moreover, the fact that only a few of the hundreds of manuscripts in the library feature Pedro de Carvajal's annotations is self-explanatory evidence that this was an individual act on the annotator's part and for a specific purpose.

It can be surmised that the annotator was aware of the history of MS 8629 – that it had been in the family prior to the 1540 stringent list of prohibited books. And the trick was to feign innocence by indicating that it would have been discarded or reported to the Holy Office, had it been listed in the 1540 Index, all that in the hope of forestalling serious trouble. This is the only plausible explanation of the date puzzle. We can even imagine the possibility of the annotations having been prompted by rumours of a likely visitation by the Inquisition (which might or might not have taken place).

4. *The Identity of the Real Annotator*

The remaining piece of the jigsaw is the challenging task of trying to find another Pedro of the same family of the Plasencia Carvajals, who would have lived ideally in the second half of the 17th century. Extensive and frustratingly laborious search eventually yielded a positive result: a brief genealogy of the Plasencia Carvajals, held by the Real Academia de la Historia, reveals that Rodrigo Ignacio, the Carvajal who gave the family library to the Dominicans, had two brothers and a sister. They were: Pedro de Carvajal, Fernando de Carvajal and María de Carvajal. Mystery solved. The annotator must, therefore, be **Pedro de Carvajal, brother of Rodrigo Ignacio and great nephew of the earlier Pedro, bishop of Coria.**

5. *Deciphering the Second Annotation*

MS 8629 was amongst the acquisitions of the BN in 1753. It has another annotation – a query in a late 18th-century hand, only legible from the original – believed by the BN to have been made by a librarian at the time. It reads: '¿Porque este libro es más antiguo?' Understanding this query provides additional proof for 1540, in the sense that the date in Carvajal's annotation aroused the librarian's curiosity. To the best of my knowledge, no serious effort has been made so far to explain it. A well-meaning effort by the BN to explain it to me in person did not go beyond just paraphrasing the query. And I know of one unsuccessful attempt by Alcalá Galve (2006), who left out the interrogation marks, before trying to explain it. The resultant interpretation was expressed as follows: 'Como solía ocurrir, cada nuevo *Index* añadía a los anteriores las censuras de libros nuevos, y éste es, realmente "antiguo" ' (p. xxxix); in other words, MS 8629 was, indeed, old for the 1640 Index. None the less, this interpretation is easily invalidated by the discovery of

other annotated manuscripts, as reported above, five of which predate the *Diálogo*, in terms of date of composition. Of the five, four were from the 15th century, whilst the fifth one was from as early as the 11th century.

It is impossible to understand the baffling query of the (puzzled) 18th-century librarian, without being aware of, and factoring in, the fact that Pedro de Carvajal annotated other manuscripts as well. It is when one notices, as the librarian certainly did, that a few of them were older than MS 8629 that the logic of the query comes to light. The thoughts of the librarian can be reconstructed as follows: why refer to the 1540 Index for a work written around 1535, but to that of 1640 for some much older works (is it – with a tinge of sarcasm – because this book is the oldest of them all)? The ‘OOP’ date should, therefore, be traced within the context of three crucial issues: first, Valdés’s first-class heretic status, which meant that any work of his, irrespective of content, would be automatically classified as dangerous; second, his life-long connection with the Toledo circle, in spite of his exile; and third, the fact that 1540 was a watershed in literary censorship, going down as the year that saw probably the most stringent controls in the history of the Inquisition and served as the template for subsequent Indexes:

Generalmente se ha admitido que los primeros índices inquisitoriales no fueron tales índices, sino unas listas de libros prohibidos promulgados en 1540, 1545 y 1547. Todas en la década de 1540, *década en la cual la censura de libros conoció una importante reactivación en todo el mundo católico* (Pinto Crespo 1981: 2; see also Pinto Crespo 1977: 231, 151-155) (my italics).

Of further interest is the fact that two of the other seventeen annotations did not refer to any specific date. They read as follows: ‘De estos sermones deeste quaderno No habla el expurg^o el q los leyere Veá si ay q Aduertir enellos Al Santo offo. Fray P^o de Caruajal Pred^o General’ (MS 6076), and ‘Destos sermones No trata el expurg^o el q los leyere Vera si ay Algo q aduertir al santo offo fray Pedro de Caruajal Predicador general’ (MS 6080). This poses an intractable problem to the investigator, because we simply do not know which date they could refer to. With the experience of the MS 8629 annotation, the best we can manage is to speculate about the possible date(s) and Index(es) that Carvajal had in mind. In principle, he could be referring to any list of prohibited books from the 1520s to that of 1640; and it would be logically and scientifically inappropriate to try to argue that the missing dates should be 1640, in line with the majority of the manuscripts.

6. Concluding Remarks

Whilst, over the years, a few scholars have expressed some interest in Pedro de Carvajal’s annotation of the earliest extant manuscript of the *Diálogo* (see, for example, Cock 1879, Andrades Gómez 2001 and Alcalá Galve 2006), the subject *per se* has never been investigated before. The same can be said of the later

annotation. The lack of impetus for problematizing the date issue was due to lack of familiarity, at the time when the bulk of the work on the *Diálogo* was carried out, with the stringent Index of 1540. This investigation has killed at least two birds with a stone. It has ascertained that the censorship date referred to on MS 8629 is **1540**, and not 1640 as traditional scholarship has believed. It has also, in addition to explaining the enigmatic 18th-century annotation that apparently queried something about the earlier one, provided an answer for it: not because this is the oldest of the (annotated) manuscripts, but because it had been in the possession of the humanists in Toledo prior to the 1540 Index. The study has equally established that the manuscript was, certainly, not annotated by the Pedro de Carvajal who first possessed it as has been traditionally thought, nor was the annotation carried out by any Inquisitor or Inquisitor-General as conventional knowledge has had it. It has equally been hinted that MS 8629 was not the copy that Gómez de Castro alluded to in his will and that his copy of the *Diálogo* is yet to come to light.

The prospect of MS 8629 having been copied in Valdés's lifetime (not to mention the likelihood that he himself brought the *Diálogo* to Spain) is immensely significant, especially from a linguistic perspective. It can now be proposed that the dating of MS 8629, traditionally placed in the second half of the 16th century, should be revised to the first half of the century, even narrowed down to the late 1530s.

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