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THE INTENTIONS OF THE SPANISH
ERASMIAN LIBRARY PROJECT "*BEHISP*"

C ontents

- The intentions of the Spanish Erasmian Library project: *BEHisp* 1
- Phases of the *BEHisp* project 2
- How to use the “extant copies” database 3
- How to use the “historic copies” database 7
- Selected bibliography 10



THE INTENTIONS OF THE SPANISH ERASMIAN LIBRARY PROJECT

(*BEHisp*)¹

¹The following text, except for some minor modifications, was written by J. Solana Pujalte and I. Vicente García, "*Bibliotheca Erasmiana Hispanica: Erasmo en las bibliotecas españolas actuales e históricas. Un proyecto abierto*", in *La memoria de los libros: estudios sobre la historia del escrito y de la lectura en Europa y América*, supervised by Pedro M. Cátedra and María Luisa López-Vidriero; published by María Isabel de Páiz Hernández [Salamanca]: Instituto de Historia del Libro y de la Lectura, [2004], t. II, pp. 307-317 (Talks and communications given during the I Congreso Internacional del Instituto de Historia del Libro y de la Lectura, held in Salamanca from 29 October to 2 November 2002).

There is no doubt that for various decades during the XVI century the works of Erasmus enjoyed more prestige in Spain than in any other European country. This lasted until the Spanish Inquisition took issue with Erasmus and subjected his writings to censorship and expurgation, all of which is ably explained in Marcel Bataillon's comprehensive book on the subject².

² Bataillon 1961 and 1966. Despite some later caveats and adverse criticism, it cannot be denied that since the publication of these works Erasmian historiography in Spain has centred upon Bataillon. A critical assessment of Bataillon's work can be found in GARCÍA CÁRCEL, 1996, 2002. Proof of the interest that Erasmus continues to generate was amply demonstrated by the two exhibitions which were devoted to the Dutch humanist in Salamanca and Valencia in 2002, without the pretext of any anniversary. The catalogues to these exhibitions are entitled: *Erasmo en España: La recepción del Humanismo en el primer Renacimiento español (Escuelas Menores de la Universidad de Salamanca, 26 Septiembre 2002 to 6 January 2003)*, s. l.: Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior, 2002; *Humanismo y Reforma en el s. XVI*. Valencia: Biblioteca Valenciana, 2002, which, despite its title, was devoted entirely to Erasmus.

Bearing this in mind, it seems paradoxical therefore that scarcely no effort has been made to locate the works of Erasmus in either historic or present-day Spanish libraries. Those publications which are available [Marín Martínez 1975; Wagner 1980; Peña Díaz 1993; Sánchez-Molero 2000; Bécares Botas 2002; Gil 2003]³ are very interesting but they focus upon cases that cannot really lead to any general conclusions, although they do indeed indicate clearly the interest that exists in this line of research and the possibilities it offers.

³ Although these do not deal strictly with the same subject (*cf.* also SANZ HERMIDA, 2002, 129-139).

Thus, aware of the pressing need for such a study into the presence of Erasmus' works in Spanish libraries, a study that will put at our disposal inventories similar to those that are being compiled or have already been compiled in other European countries and in America⁴, we decided to undertake this *Spanish Erasmian Library* project with the intention of contributing as far as possible, within the limits of the material available to us, to our knowledge of how Erasmus' works were received in Spain and how his thoughts were interpreted during the XVI century (and to some extent the XVII and XVIII centuries) via a study of the works still extant in Spanish libraries and those which are recorded as having existed in historical libraries in the past⁵.

⁴ VAN DER HAEGHEN 1893; BIBLIOTHECA BELGICA 1964-1975; BEZZEL 1979; MOREIRA DE SA 1979; VD 16 1986; ERASMO (B. N. LISBOA) 1987; CATALOGUE (ROTTERDAM) 1990; DE REUCK-COLIN-HOVEN 1993; GLOMSKI, RUMMEL 1994. S. Seidel Menchi has announced the publication by Droz of her *Bibliotheca Erasmiana Italica* (SEIDEL MENCHI 1997: 182). We acknowledge our debt for both the idea and the name of the project to this Italian scholar.

⁵ We do not use the term “historical libraries” to refer to libraries that were founded in the past and survive to this day, such as the library of the University of Salamanca, but rather those that existed during the XV to the XVIII centuries, either in private hands or belonging to institutions such as convents, colleges and universities, for which we have written records of their existence.

The project, therefore, has a dual aim: firstly to catalogue and study the copies of Erasmus’ works that have survived to the present day and are kept in Spanish libraries, and secondly, to compile a record of the copies of his works known to have been kept in historic libraries.

This dual intention will give rise to two databases, one known as “EXTANT COPIES”, and the other “HISTORICAL COPIES”, which we will deal with more fully later.

An essential characteristic of this project is its openness, in all senses of the word: open to participation and contribution, and eventually open to public access. We are fully aware of the fact that a project such as this can only be successful if it can rely on a numerous group of enthusiastic collaborators. From its very conception it has required the co-operation of anyone and everyone who might feel interested in its content and intentions: scholars involved in Erasmus’ works or humanism in general, historians, librarians, bibliophiles and linguists. This openness also extends to the way in which we intend to publish our results via the internet.

PHASES OF THE *BEHisp* PROJECT

1. To draw up an inventory of the copies of Erasmus’ works extant in our libraries. This is a very simple inventory containing the following details: author, brief title, place of printing, printing house, publisher, year, format, library where it is kept and shelf mark. Its prime use will be as an initial working tool.

We have decided upon a series of stages to draw up this inventory of extant copies previous to their more detailed study:

a. Searches via the internet of Spanish libraries which have catalogued, at least to some extent, their collections of old editions and have made them available on the internet (Catálogo colectivo del Patrimonio Bibliográfico Español, Catàleg Col.lectiu de Catalunya, Catàleg Col.lectiu del Patrimoni Bibliogràfic de la Comunitat Valenciana, Rebiun, catalogues of state-owned public libraries, catalogues of university libraries and so on).

b. Searches in printed catalogues.

c. Writing to as many libraries as possible which have not published any catalogues or information available on the internet in order to gather directly information about any copies of Erasmus’ work that they might hold. If any librarian or scholar whom we may not have contacted reads this and can help by giving us information about editions held in any library in Spain would he/she please get in touch with Julián Solana Pujalte (ca1sopuj@uco.es). We thank all our collaborators; their names will appear in a list of acknowledgements on the main

page of the final publication. Every entry in the databases will include the name of the person who contributed it.

2. To catalogue and analyse the documentation collected in the above-mentioned search. To this end we intend to create a manual of procedure to standardize criteria and thus facilitate the task of our collaborators. Furthermore, once we have received all the information for our inventory we will send every contributor the most complete catalogue that we have of each edition in order to make his/her task easier.

3. To enter all the information catalogued into the database. Project co-ordination and the transmission of information between collaborators will be carried out via the project web site to simplify their work as much as possible and render it more effective (collaborators will be given a password).

HOW TO USE THE "EXTANT COPIES" DATABASE

The "Extant copies" database presents the user with the following query module:

1. In the field "**Authors**" the user can either type in a name or click on the magnifying glass that appears alongside this field and choose one or various names from the menu that will appear, which will offer the choice of:
 - a) Erasmus
 - b) The authors or works that he translated, edited and/or criticized.
2. In the field "**Secondary Author**" the user can either type in a name or click on the magnifying glass that appears alongside this field and choose one or various names from the menu that will appear, which will offer the choice of:
 - a) The translators, editors and critics of Erasmus' works.
 - b) Authors whose works appear in the same editions as work(s) by Erasmus.
 - c) Other authorities connected with the publication of any work by Erasmus and not included in the fields "author(s)" or "printer/editor".
3. In the field "**Work**" the user can either type in the name of the work in question or click on the magnifying glass that appears alongside this field to open a menu which contains only the names of works written by Erasmus himself. Works translated, edited and/or criticized by Erasmus can be found in the field "**Author**", as instructed above.
4. In the field "**Title**" the user can require information about the title of the work as it appears in the editions in question. In this field we transcribe the title *verbatim*, reproducing it exactly as it appears on the title page according to strict bibliographical usage. Notwithstanding this, the user can carry out his/her search without following these norms, using upper-case or lower-case letters indiscriminately, for example. The system has also been designed to allow for discrepancies in the writing of the letters u/v and i/j (both upper and lower case) in this and other fields used to identify and describe copies and editions.

5. In the field "**Place**" the user can search for the location of the place of printing. This information is also transcribed *verbatim* from the title page or colophon according to strict bibliographical usage.
6. In the field "**Printer/Publisher**" the user can search for information about the printers, publishers and book sellers of Erasmus' works, whose names will also appear transcribed precisely from the title page or colophon according to bibliographical usage.
7. In the field "**Year**" the user can ask about the year in which any work included in the data base was published. Arabic numerals with no full stops or commas between figures are used for the date. If the year appears in Roman numerals in the printed edition it will be included as such in brackets after the year written in Arabic numerals, plus any additional information that might be given about the date, e.g. 1532 (MDXXXII XI Cal. Aprilis).
8. In the field "**Format**" the user will find the format/size of the printed editions.
9. In the field "**Index (year)**" the user will find a list of all the indexes concerning censorship and expurgation which were applied in Spain during the period studied, with references to the year of publication. If, for example, 1612 is included in the year search, a list will appear showing all the printed works that contain a censorial-expurgatorial note saying that this publication has been reviewed and corrected according to the index of that year. The user may make simultaneous searches with various indexes.
10. In the field "**Censor**" the user can find out the names of the censors and expurgators of the works included in the database.
11. The field "**Owner**" allows the user to search for the name of the person(s) or institutions who currently own the works included in the database.
12. The field "**BEHisp Reference**" allows the user to search for the *BEHisp* reference given to every edition or copy in the database.

N.B. In all fields of the database the user may make searches by truncating a sequence of characters with the % sign. Thus, for example, if in the field "Place" the user types in "Basile%" or "Basilea%" a list will appear of all the editions in the database in which "Basileae" or "apud inelytam Basileam" reveals the city where they were printed. Similarly with the year, if 154% is typed in, a list will appear containing all the editions dated between 1540 and 1549.

The response of the database to any consultation will offer initially a list of the editions that comply with the conditions expressed in the search order. If the search order contains no conditions all the editions collected in the database will appear either in alphabetical order or in chronological order of publication. The information provided about every edition will be title, year, author(s), place and printing house. Once the list of editions has appeared on the screen the user may click on "see" for any of them and will find the following blocks of data:

1. **Identification of the edition**, containing the following information:

= Author(s)

- = Secondary author
- = Work
- = Title
- = Place
- = Printer
- = Editor
- = Publisher
- = Year
- = Format
- = Foliation.
- = Typographical symbols
- = Notes about the edition
- = Bibliographic references
- = Digitalization (with its corresponding link if the copy is digitalized)

2. Copies of the edition

A list will appear of all the libraries holding copies of the edition and their shelf mark.

3. Record of the edition

The reference number of the edition in *BEHisp* will appear together with the name of the person who recorded the entry.

By clicking on the option “**see**”, which appears with every copy located in a library, the user will be presented with the following blocks of information:

A. Identification of the edition and whereabouts of the copy

Within this block of data the user will find the following fields:

- = Title
- = Year
- = Author(s)
- = Secondary author
- = Work
- = Place
- = Printer
- = Publisher/Book seller
- = Format
- = Foliation
- = Typographical symbols
- = Notes to the copy
- = Bibliographic references
- = Shelf mark
- = Digitalization (with the corresponding link if the copy has been digitalized)

B. The presence of censorial-expurgatorial indexes in the copy

In this block of data the user will find the following fields:

- = The censor’s name
- = The censor’s rank
- = The place where the censorship or expurgation was undertaken

- = Year
- = Other relevant data
- = The location of the censored and expurgated passages

The data in these fields are *verbatim* transcriptions of the manuscript annotations and have not been “normalized” in any way. For a detailed explanation of the procedure followed to recognise the censored and expurgated passages in each copy the user should consult the “Help in using the *Index of banned and expurgated books in 1612*” menu to be found in the “Documentation” section, where there is also a pdf reproduction of the *Index of banned and expurgated books in 1612*.

C. Condition of the copy

In this block of data the user will find the following fields:

- = “Title page”: missing/censored/untouched
- = “*Erasmus* on the title page”: rubbed out/crossed out/untouched
- = “*Erasmus* in the text”: always rubbed out or crossed out/sometimes rubbed out or crossed out/untouched
- = “*Auctor damnatus*”: on the title page/in the page headings/on the end pages/does not appear.
- = The appearance or not of the following warning: “Opera omnia Erasmi caute legenda... vix omnia expurgari possint”.
- = The appearance or not of the following warning: “Opera hactenus prohibita, nunc cum expurgatione permissa”
- = Missing pages
- = Other forms of censorship
- = Binding
- = State of preservation

D. Indications of reading and criticism

Where there are readers’ hand-written annotations in the copy that show evidence of its having been commented upon in some way, the following fields will appear:

- = “Language”
- = “Date”
- = “Position on the page”
- = “Distribution throughout the text”
- = “Length in words”
- = “Typology”

E. Owners

In this block of data the user will find the names of the owners of the copy and the date of the note of ownership if it is known. Any readers’ annotations are also transcribed here *verbatim* with no normalization.

F. Record of the copy

In this final block of data the user will find:

- = "Reference": The reference number of the copy consulted.
- = "Entered by": The name of the person who recorded the entry.

HOW TO USE THE "HISTORIC COPIES" DATABASE

The intention of the "Historic Copies" database is to afford information about the presence of Erasmus' works in private and institutional libraries during the XVI, XVII and XVIII centuries.

The "Historic Copies" database presents the following query module:

1. In the field "**Owner**" the user can ask for the name of the person or institution (convent, college, university and so on) who owned a copy of Erasmus' work.
2. In the field "**Profession**" the user can find out the profession of the owner. There is a prepared list of the most usual professions to facilitate this search.
3. In the field "**Author**" the user can ask about Erasmus' original works and works translated, edited and/or criticized by him.
4. In the field "**Work (verbatim title)**" the user can see the title of the work in question transcribed *verbatim ac litteratim*.
5. In the field "**Work (key word)**" the user can ask about a list of "key words" that include all Erasmus' original works. Works translated, edited or criticized by Erasmus can be retrieved in the field "**Author**".
6. In the field "**Type of document**" the user can ask in what type of document we have found the information included in the previous fields (*post mortem* inventories, auction lists, catalogues, indexes etc.).
7. In the field "**Place of issue**" the user can find out in which city/town the document providing the information afforded in the previous fields was issued.
8. In the field "**Year of issue**" the user can find out in which year the document providing the information afforded in the previous fields was issued. (Either the exact year or a range of years can be asked for, e.g. 1525 – 1550).
9. In the field "**Archive/Library**" the reader can discover the whereabouts of the original document.
10. In the field "**Source of information**" the reader can ask about the author, title of book or journal, year and place of publication of the document providing the information afforded in the previous fields. Searches can be carried out for any of these items of data ⁶.

⁶ A list of these works is to be found in DADSON 1996 and an introduction to the subject in DADSON 1998.

11. The field "**BEHisp Reference**" allows the user to search for the *BEHisp* reference given to every historical copy in the database.

The response of the database to any consultation will offer initially a list of historic copies that comply with the conditions expressed in the search order. If the search order contains no conditions all the historic information collected in the database will appear in chronological order from the Field "**Year of publication**". The information provided about every historic volume will be: title (*verbatim*), year, author(s), possible identification of the title, name of the owner and his/her profession. Once the list of editions has appeared on the screen the user may click on "**see**" for any of them and will find the following blocks of data:

A. The identification and whereabouts of the copy

Within this block of data the user will find the following fields:

- = The field "**Work (title verbatim)**" gives the title of the volume in question precisely as it appears in the document.
- = The field "**Year**" gives the year in which the document was written/printed.
- = The field "**Author(s)**" gives the name of the author and the work: either Erasmus alone or with one of the authors or works translated, edited and/or criticized by him.
- = The field "**Possible identification of the title**" attempts to ascertain to which work the title typed in might correspond by referring to a list of key words including all of Erasmus' works.
- = The field "**Possible identification of the edition**" attempts to ascertain to which edition the title typed in might correspond.
- = The field "**Owner**" provides the user with information about the name of the person or institution (monastery, college, university etc.) which owned the copy in question.
- = The field "**Profession**" reveals the profession of the erstwhile owner.
- = The field "**Value**" gives the estimated value of the volume in question.
- = The field "**Type of document**" informs the user about the type of document in which the information afforded in the previous fields (*post mortem* inventories, auction lists, other catalogues, indexes etc.) was found.
- = The field "**Place**" reveals the town or city from whence the document in which the information afforded in the previous fields derives.
- = The field "**Source of information**" affords information concerning the author, title of the book or journal, year and, whenever relevant, the place where the document in which the information afforded in the previous fields was published.
- = The field "**Location of the inventory**" reveals the whereabouts of the original document.
- = The field "**Signature**" describes its topographical signature.

2. Record of the volume

Within this block of data the user will find the following information:

- = "**Reference**": the reference given to every historic volume stored in the **BEHisp** database.
- = "**Entered by**": the person who recorded the entrance.

Here is an example of how the information would be presented:

= **First Level**: a list of all the records that fulfil the characteristics entered in the search order and containing the following information:

1. **Title (*verbatim*)**: Libro de apotemas y dichos graciosos.
2. **Year**: 1604.
3. **Author(s)**: Erasmus.
4. **Possible identification of the title**: Apophthegmata.

5. **Owner:** BARROS, ALONSO DE.
6. **Profession:** writer.

= **Second level:** By clicking on the option “**see**” to the left of every brief record the user will find the complete list containing the 16 following fields:

1. **Title (*verbatim*):** Libro de apotemas y dichos graciosos.
2. **Year of publication:** 1604
3. **Author:** Erasmus.
4. **Possible identification of the title:** Apophthegmata.
5. **Possible identification of the edition:** 1. Libro de Apothegmas: que son dichos graciosos y notables de muchos reyes y principes illustres... (por Francisco Tamara). - Caragoça: por Esteuan de Nagera, 1552. 8º. 2. Libro de apothegmas: que son dichos graciosos y notables de muchos reyes y principes illustres, ... (por Francisco Tamara). — Enuers: En casa de Martin Nucio, 1549.
6. **Owner:** BARROS, ALONSO DE.
7. **Profession:** writer.
8. **Profession:** (other information).
9. **Value:** 2 reales
10. **Type of document:** *post mortem* inventory.
11. **City of publication:** Madrid ?
12. **Source of information:** T. Dadson, *Libros, lectores y lecturas...*, Madrid, 1998, p. 376, nº 69.
13. **Location of the inventory:** Archivo Histórico Provincial de Madrid.
14. **Signature:** Alonso Martínez, protocolo 3103, fols. 1149rº-1151vº.
15. **BEHisp reference.**
16. **Record entered by....**

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