

Renaissance and Reformation
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Colahan, Clark, Jagoda Marszalek, and Pedro Manuel Suárez-Martínez, eds.
El Colloquium elegans de Bernal Díaz de Luco. Tradición senequista, eclesiástica y picaresca.

Noctes Neolatinae, NeoLatin Texts and Studies 31. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2018. Pp. x, 294. ISBN 978-3487-15663-7 (paperback) €58.

This volume provides both a study and a critical edition of the neo-Latin dialogue *Colloquium elegans* by Juan Bernal Díaz de Luco (1495–1556). A rigorous reformer of the church and prolific writer of early modern “best-sellers” on religious instruction (2), Díaz de Luco was also secretary to the archbishop of Santiago Juan Tavera (1525), a member of the council of the Indies (1531) on the side of Bartolomé de las Casas, where he was an advocate for evangelization over conquest in the New World, and a participant at the Council of Trent. Díaz de Luco was appointed bishop of Calahorra in 1545 (4). This dialogue was first published at Paris in 1542, but it was written between 1522 and 1525, relatively early in his ecclesiastical and literary career (4). It involves a bishop, a priest, and a shepherd on their journeys to the afterlife, a demon, guardian angels, and at the end, St. Peter. At the conclusion, the priest and bishop are condemned to Hell while the pastor of sheep is allowed into Heaven. The preliminary study by Clark Colahan contextualizes this work in early modern literary culture and draws comparisons with classical works such as the Greek dialogues of Lucian of Samosata, which were a popular influence and model in the Renaissance, and also Seneca’s Menippean satire *Apocolocyntosis* of which the structural and thematic similarities to this work are noted in detail. The comparisons with *Apocolocyntosis* are paralleled with the resemblances to both works as well as Erasmus’s influential *Iulius exclusus e coelis*. Points of comparison with other Renaissance dialogues, such as those by Leon Battista Alberti and Maffeo Vegio (25) are also touched on and could be studied in the future. The dialogue is aptly discussed in relation to efforts to reform the church and end ecclesiastical abuses in early sixteenth-century Castile, but in light of its publication in Paris, connections with Erasmian humanism, and the author’s involvement in the Council of Trent, more remains to be written about this work in the wider context of European humanist and pastoral literature. The preliminary study also draws many parallels with the novella *Lazarillo de Tormes*, helping us to see this work in the development of the picaresque. A broad comparison with *Lazarillo* and Seneca highlights their shared moral objections and use of

irony (44). The dialogue is often ironic, and sometimes veers into satire, but should also be of interest for its pastoral theology and the light it shines on early modern advocacy for church renewal.

The second selection by Pedro Manuel Suárez-Martínez is a linguistic and stylistic analysis. The work's Latinity is typical of its time and the deeper analysis yields few surprises but helpfully draws one's attention to the style and diction of the work. The pointers it provides on the influence of Lorenzo Valla's *De linguae latinae elegantia* (45) and the author's demonstrated familiarity with Erasmus's works on style, such as evinced in the use of salutation formulas from *Colloquia familiaria* (47), are particularly useful for assessing composition and style. Examples in the work which depart from classical norms are noted with some commentary on how these departures relate to medieval and humanistic practises. The Latin text provided by Jagoda Marszalek is a transcription from the 1542 edition. Each page corresponds to one from the original text. There is limited textual intervention except for resolving abbreviations and emending a few capitalization and grammatical errors, which escaped the sixteenth-century printer. Punctuation is for the most part left as appears in the original; that is, slightly erratic. It is sometimes argued that in order to aid contemporary readers the punctuation of early modern Latin texts should be more severely standardized, but in the few passages where a change in a comma or a period is truly needed, one finds the adjustment has been made (e.g., 122, 190). However, though even the text of the title page and the errata which appear in the original are copied and translated into this edition, two texts conspicuously omitted from the end of this book are one letter from Franciscus Galindus (Francisco Galindo) to the author and three pages of exhortations from biblical passages on the duties of bishops. As these highlight some aspects of the reception of this work and shed light on the role of the dialogue as an instructive text for bishops, their omission is unfortunate. The Spanish translation is clear throughout while adhering closely to the original.

The dialogue is an intriguing call for religious and social reform. It should appeal to anyone interested in the development of picaresque and satirical literature, the reception of classical texts, the influence of Italian and Northern humanism in Spain, and church history.

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