

Basel 1516

Erasmus' Edition of the New Testament

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Reconsidering the Relationship between the Complutensian Polyglot Bible and Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum*

IGNACIO GARCÍA PINILLA

1516 would be still remembered as unique in Occidental cultural history simply for being the year in which such important works as Thomas More's *Utopia* and Erasmus' *Institutio principis Christiani* came to light. In addition to these however, it was at the beginning of that year that the *Novum Instrumentum* was first published, setting a new milestone in the history of Biblical studies.

It is well known that this was not the first time the Greek New Testament had been printed, since two years earlier, in January 1514, the fifth volume of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible had already come off the press at Arnao Guillén de Brocar's workshop in Alcalá de Henares (Fig. 1).¹ This explains why in 2014, a diverse agenda of activities was planned and many publications appeared in celebration of the fifth centenary of the Polyglot Bible.² Yet the anniversary might

¹ This is accurate if we disregard the *Magnificat* and *Benedictus* hymns included in the Greek Psalter (Milan 1481, Venice 1486 and 1496/97), the first six chapters of the Gospel of John printed by Aldus Manutius in 1504 and the 14 verses from chapter six of that same Gospel displayed in Tübingen in 1514. For a panorama of the situation before the Complutensian Polyglot, see A. Schenker, 'From the First Printed Hebrew, Greek and Latin Bibles to the First Polyglot Bible, the Complutensian Polyglot: 1477–1517', in M. Saebo (ed.), *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament. The History of its Interpretation*, vol. 2 (= *From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*) (Göttingen 2008), 276–291; 286–291 contains a bibliography on the Polyglot up to 2006. A good description of the project and its circumstances can be read in E. Rummel, *Jiménez de Cisneros. On the Threshold of Spain's Golden Age* (Tempe, Ariz. 1999), 57–66.

² In 2013 an exhibition called *Preparando la Biblia Políglota Complutense: los libros del saber* (*Preparing the Complutensian Polyglot Bible: the Books of Knowledge*) was held at the Biblioteca Histórica Marqués de Valdecilla (Madrid). In April 2014, scholars gathered at a scientific conference entitled *El libro de los libros. La Biblia Políglota Complutense y su edición* (*The Book of Books. The Complutensian Polyglot Bible and Its Edition*); one month later, in May, a joint ceremony was held at the Complutensian and Alcalá de Henares Universities (ironically enough, the name of "Complutensian" is nowadays held by a university located in Madrid, so that the new Complutensian can only be called "of Alcalá"); and in October, a *Symposium on the Complutensian Polyglot Bible* (*Encuentro sobre la Biblia Políglota Complutense*) was organised by the Alcalá de Henares University. The most relevant publications concerning this anniversary are the following: E. Ruiz García (ed.), *Preparando la Biblia Políglota Complutense: los libros del saber* (Madrid 2013); the monographic issue of *Estudios bíblicos* 72,1 (2014), also published as a book: I. Carbajosa (ed.), *Una Biblia a varias voces. Estudio textual de la Biblia Políglota Complutense* (Madrid



Fig. 1: Title page of the fifth volume of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible.

well be repeated in 2017, for that date will mark 500 years after the completion of the edition and the death of its patron, Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros.

The Gaps in Our Knowledge about the Complutensian Bible

As mentioned above, on 10 January 1514, the first volume of the Polyglot – volume five out of the complete series of six – came off the printing press in Alcalá de Henares. Volumes one to four would contain the Old Testament, volume five the New Testament and volume six (but second in order of printing) would include a Hebrew-Latin Dictionary and a Hebrew Grammar, providing an important clue to understanding the didactic aim of the whole Bible project, which was thought to serve as an instrument for students of the sacred languages.³ The last volume, the fourth of the Old Testament, was not finished until 3 July 1517, soon before Cardinal Cisneros' death. The printing of the entire Bible thus took three and a half years. However, the complete works were not published until 22 March 1520, when Pope Leo X finally issued his *motu proprio* approving all the works of the Polyglot. It was at that time that open distribution began.⁴

At a distance of five centuries, it now seems clear that the Polyglot Bible was doomed to misfortune. Despite being the first New Testament in Greek ever printed, it was Erasmus' *Novum Instrumentum* that was the first to be distributed under the Privilege of Emperor Maximilian I and Pope Leo X, earning the right to be considered, for practical purposes, as the *editio princeps*. A similar fate awaited the volumes of the Old Testament of the Polyglot. Although Jews had already printed their Bible with Hebrew characters in Brescia in 1488, the Complutensian was the first one to be published by Christians, together with an Aramaic *Targum*. Nevertheless, recognition for this "first" fell – together with the Pope's Privilege – to the *Biblia Rabbinica*, printed in Venice between 1516

2014); J. L. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero (ed.), *V Centenario de la Biblia Políglota Complutense. La Universidad del Renacimiento. El Renacimiento de la Universidad* (Madrid 2014); M. Jiménez Monteserín (ed.), *Exposición "El sueño de Cisneros"* (Alcalá de Henares 2014); A. Alvar Ezquerro, *La Biblia Políglota Complutense y su contexto* (Madrid, forthcoming).

³ On this pedagogical concern, see J. A. L. Lee, 'Dimitrios Doukas and the Accentuation of the New Testament Text of the Complutensian Polyglot', *Novum Testamentum* 47 (2005), 250–290, at 271. J. H. Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ. New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J. 1983), 73 f. offers a wider description of Cisneros' reasons for publishing his Bible.

⁴ The first references to the reading of the Complutensian Polyglot date to 1522, see Allen IV, ep. 1213, n. 82 and Allen V, ep. 1274, n. 1; J. P. R. Lyell, *Cardinal Ximenes. Statesman, Ecclesiastic, Soldier and Man of Letters. With an Account of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible* (London 1917), 100 mentions a copy of the New Testament kept in the Harvard College Library which bears the following ex-libris: "De Nicolas Astam Sacerdote Yngres Anglicani Jesu Anno 1514". It has been thought to be a witness of the early distribution of the Polyglot, see P. Botley, *Latin Translation in the Renaissance. The Theory and Practice of Leonardo Bruni, Giannozzo Manetti and Desiderius Erasmus* (Cambridge 2004), 122; but probably the date was misread by Lyell.

and 1517 by Daniel Bomberg and Felice da Prato and enriched with medieval commentaries.

The Complutensian Septuagint's text did not enjoy a better fortune. The Aldine edition was printed later – in 1518 – in Venice but enjoyed a wider and more influential diffusion.⁵ As if that were not bad enough, the death of Cardinal Cisneros (which occurred some months after the text's completion) sparked a series of setbacks that concluded with the text's confiscation, ordered by Emperor Charles V, as part of the University's property.⁶ Additionally, the War of the Communities of Castile (also known as “the Revolt of the Comuneros”) prevented its distribution until midway through 1521. To make matters even worse, a significant number of the 600 printed copies (plus six more on vellum) were lost in a shipwreck, further straining its distribution.⁷ The only undeniable fact is that Cardinal Cisneros' project resulted in the first Polyglot Bible ever to be printed, leading the way for others to follow in the centuries to come.

Such an ambitious project, endorsed by Cardinal Cisneros, required the setting-up of a team of scholars capable of facing such challenges. Hebraists like Pablo Coronel, Alonso de Zamora and Alonso de Alcalá sat alongside Hellenists and humanists such as Elio Antonio de Nebrija (who remained only briefly on the taskforce), Hernán Núñez de Toledo y Guzmán (known either as “Pintianus” – the country name for those born in Valladolid – or “the Greek Commander”), Demetrius Ducas of Crete and Diego López de Zúñiga (Jacobus Lopes Stunica, the polemicist against Erasmus). A number of minor contributors should also be included here, such as Juan de Vergara, Bartolomé de Castro and, perhaps for a short time, Nicetas Faustus. Our current knowledge about the tasks assigned to each is rather lacunose, due to the scarcity of documentary sources. Even so, the ongoing efforts of modern scholars are broadening our knowledge of the teaching in Alcalá and the heads of the editorial work of the Polyglot (i. e. Pablo Coronel, Alonso de Zamora, Hernán Núñez de Toledo y Guzmán and Diego López de Zúñiga).⁸ However, not all statements commonly made in studies

⁵ The Aldine Bible is Πάντα τὰ κατ'ἔξοχὴν καλοῦμενα Βιβλία θείας δηλαδὴ γραφῆς παλαιὰς τε καὶ νέας (Venice 1518).

⁶ The problems derived from Cisneros' will are described in J. Pérez, *Cisneros, el cardenal de España* (Madrid 2014), 87.

⁷ See J. Martín Abad, ‘Cisneros y Brocar. Una lectura tipobibliográfica de la Políglota Complutense’, *Estudios bíblicos* 72 (2014), 23–73, here 65. The only source which mentions this shipwreck is a letter from Philipp II of Spain to the Duke of Alba, dated 25 March 1568, that is, nearly 50 years after the disaster. It is partially reproduced in B. Macías Rosendo, *La Biblia Políglota de Amberes en la correspondencia de Benito Arias Montano (ms. Estoc. A 902)* (Huelva 1998), xx.

⁸ Cf. S. O'Connell, *From Most Ancient Sources. The Nature and Text-Critical Use of the Greek Old-Testament Text of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible*, *Orbis biblicus et Orientalis* 215 (Göttingen 2006); R. Jiménez Zamudio, ‘La Biblia Políglota Complutense’, in A. Alvar Ezquerro (ed.), *Historia de la Universidad de Alcalá* (Alcalá de Henares 2010), 187–222; A. Domingo Malvadi, ‘El Pinciano y su contribución a la edición de la Biblia Políglota de Alcalá (1514–1517)’, *Pecia Complutense* 10 (2013), 49–81; J. de Prado Plumed, *Al lasso, fuerza. La convivencia de impresos*

of the Complutensian Polyglot are entirely correct, as can be demonstrated with the following two examples.

Firstly, it has often been stated that Diego López de Zúñiga dealt with the Latin interlinear translation accompanying the text of the Septuagint. This assertion is based on a claim made by Cisneros' biographer, Álvaro Gómez de Castro, who used materials (gathered by Juan de Vergara) for his *De rebus gestis Francisci Ximenii*, one of the most important sources for the study of the Cardinal's life and the history of the University of Alcalá.⁹

However, the translation of the Septuagint was carried out with such good results – in part by some learned men of the Complutensian University who had already made great progress in Greek under the teaching of Demetrius and Pintianus, in part by Demetrius, Pintianus and Astuniga, that nothing was said by the LXX translators according to Greek learning – so great was their knowledge – which was left out by our countrymen, despite their conciseness.¹⁰

However, the statement of Álvaro Gómez, which includes a clumsy repetition of names, is not acceptable as it stands. We should recall that *De rebus gestis* went through at least three stages of drafting, with significant alterations in both style and content. The above-quoted passage belongs to the last printed version, the only one accessible to scholars.

But this passage underwent an alteration after the second writing stage, as examination of the margin of the manuscript 9/2213 in the Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid) shows: the correction was handwritten by Álvaro Gómez himself. The problem originated with a *saut du même au même* (*partim*) made by the copyist. When Álvaro Gómez noticed a part of the phrase was missing, he tried to solve the problem, but by adding words he slightly altered the content. On the left hand side below, the transcription of the first version of the text is shown, from a manuscript kept in the Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid); here, the words

y manuscritos en la carrera del hebraísta converso Alfonso de Zamora († ca. 1545), final draft (14 March 2013) available with a Creative Commons license on URL: http://www.academia.edu/6170889/Al_lasso_fuer%C3%A7a._La_convivencia_de_impresos_y_manuscritos_en_la_carrera_del_hebra%C3%ADsta_converso_Alfonso_de_Zamora_ca._1545_ (controlled 2 November 2014).

⁹ The most detailed study of this work is still A. Alvar Ezquerra, 'Álvar Gómez de Castro y la historiografía latina del siglo XVI: la vida de Cisneros', in M. Revuelta Sañudo / C. Morón Arroyo (eds.), *El erasmismo en España* (Santander 1986), 247–264, along with A. Alvar Ezquerra, 'Álvar Gómez de Castro y la bibliografía del cardenal Cisneros', *Anales Complutenses* 13 (2001), 23–38.

¹⁰ Álvaro Gómez de Castro, *De rebus gestis a Francisco Ximenio Cisnerio Archiepiscopo Toletano libri octo* (Alcalá de Henares 1569), 43: "LXX tamen translationis explicatio, partim ab aliquot Academiae Complutensis eruditus hominibus, qui iam tunc sub Demetrio et Pinciano praeceptoribus in Graecis literis non vulgariter profecerant, partim a Demetrio, Pinciano et Astuniga, adeo feliciter confecta fuit, ut nihil a LXX interpretibus iuxta Graecam eruditionem sit dictum, qualia permulta apud eos habentur, quod a nostris in tanta brevitate fuerit praetermissum."

missing in the next stage are in bold. In both columns there are some words which have been crossed out, indicating attempts to improve the text.

AHN Univ. leg. 717, fol. 78^r

RAH 9/2213, fol. 90^v

LXX tamen translationis explicatio, quam in spacio ~~uersus~~ [+lineas] dirimente, interiectam esse demonstraui~~mus~~, **partim a uiris illis doctissimis operi praefectis confecta fuit**,

partim ab aliquot academiae Complutensis iuuenibus qui cum iam in ipsis scholae primordiis [+primitiae quaedam bonarum in Hispania literarum et spes maximae praesentis ubertatis] sub Demetrio et Pinciano praeceptoribus in Graecis literis non vulgariter profecissent ...

LXX tamen translationis explicatio, ~~quam in spacio lineas dirimente, interiectam esse demonstraui~~mus~~~~,

partim ab aliquot academiae Complutensis ~~iuuenibus~~ [erudit~~is~~ hominibus] ~~qui cum iam in ipsis scholae primordiis, primitiae quaedam bonarum in Hispania literarum et spes maximae praesentis ubertatis,~~ [qui iam tunc] sub Demetrio et Pinciano praeceptoribus in Graecis literis non vulgariter ~~profecissent~~ [+profecerant], [+partim ab ipsis Demetrio et Pintiano et Astuniga etiam nonnunquam adiuuante] ...

It seems that during the revision of the second manuscript (right hand column), the author noticed the lack of a necessary correlate for *partim*. He did not solve the problem by recovering the earlier text however, but by composing a new syntagm. Presumably, when Álvaro Gómez reviewed this copy he did not have either the prior manuscript or the materials used for its composition at hand. His wording was careless as well, for he introduced an unfortunate repetition of proper names in close proximity. The third name was added later with an obvious reservation (*Astuniga etiam nonnunquam adiuuante*, “with the occasional help of Zúñiga”). But this restrictive nuance was finally deleted. Thus, the real value of this passage for implying the involvement of Zúñiga in the interlinear translation of the LXX in fact relies on a weak basis, namely a hasty intervention which cannot be related back to the notes of Juan de Vergara used by Álvaro Gómez as a source.

The second example of inaccuracy is the unreserved naming of Juan de Vergara in the preparatory and editorial work of the Polyglot. In fact, Álvaro Gómez made clear in his first draft of this same passage that Ducas and Hernán Núñez delegated several tasks to some of their most brilliant students – mere students after all –, doubtless working under their supervision. Prominent among them was the young Juan de Vergara, who was responsible for the Latin translation of some wisdom books of the LXX. His role in the task was almost certainly supervised by more experienced scholars however. Indeed, Vergara’s youthful inexperience is described by Ángel Sáenz Badillos, who examined the translations.¹¹

¹¹ His role as a collaborator is rightly shown, for example, by A. Sáenz Badillos, *La filología bíblica en los primeros helenistas de Alcalá* (Estella 1990), 327–336; I. Pérez Martín, *Las bibliotecas del doctor Juan de Vergara y de Alonso de Cortona* (Madrid 2008), 18f.; and T. López

Nonetheless, authorship is not the most elusive question in research on the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. Scholars have not yet managed to identify the sources used to establish the Greek text of the Complutensian New Testament, unlike our knowledge on the same matter for Erasmus' edition. It is relatively clear which Hebrew and Septuagint manuscripts were used by the Complutensian scholars, but all attempts to establish the sources of the text of the New Testament have so far failed, despite the numerous efforts of scholars, starting with Delitzsch in the mid 19th century and continuing up to the present day.¹² The comparison between the Complutensian New Testament and known manuscripts has revealed a certain closeness to *Codex Laudianus* 2 (Ev. 51, Act. 32, Paul 38), kept in the Bodleian Library, and to *Codex Hafniensis* 1 (Ev. 234, Act. 57, Paul 72), which, although now held in Copenhagen, was located in Venice until 1699. Some scholars have also pointed out similarities between the Polyglot New Testament and *Codex Seidelianus* II (Act. 42, Paul 48, Ap. 13), as well as the *Guelpherbytanus* (Act. 69, Paul 74, Ap. 30).¹³ These connections, however, do not identify any of the manuscripts used by the Complutensian scholars, even if they do help assign the Polyglot's text to certain families of manuscripts.

Erasmus himself expressed his distrust of the authority of the Complutensian text of the New Testament. In his correspondence with Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda he showed his negative assessment based on an alleged lack of scientific precision, the lack of reliable manuscripts, and the text's servile subordination to the Vulgate. Erasmus was not entirely right about this, nor was he entirely justified in disregarding the value of the celebrated Codex B or the prominence granted to patristic sources. In any case, our ignorance regarding the nature of the manuscripts used by the Complutensian Polyglot to establish the text of the New Testament, including the lost *Codex Rhodiensis* mentioned by Zúñiga, hinders any conclusive statement.

If we were to compare the Polyglot with modern critical editions of the Bible we would notice the following points: a) it is not possible to identify the peculiar features of any specific family of manuscripts in the Polyglot; b) since almost none of the Polyglot's variants are exclusive, it seems that the text was established strictly on the grounds of the readings found in the manuscripts at hand; c) the proportion of cases where the readings are close to those in the Vulgate is not greater than the contrary, so there is no reason to consider a deliberate attempt to assimilate the Greek text to the Latin. These three conclusions are taken from

Muñoz, 'Juan de Vergara (1492–1557)', in I. J. García Pinilla (ed.), *Disidencia religiosa en Castilla la Nueva en el siglo XVI* (Ciudad Real 2013), 131–157, here 140f. Concerning Vergara's trial cf. L. A. Homza, *Religious Authority in the Spanish Renaissance* (Baltimore, Md. 2000), 1–40.

¹² See F. Delitzsch, *Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der complutensischen Polyglotte* (Leipzig 1871), 30–38.

¹³ M. Revilla Rico, *La Políglota de Alcalá. Estudio histórico-crítico* (Madrid 1917), 118; and M. V. Spottorno, 'El texto griego del Nuevo Testamento en la Políglota Complutense', *Estudios bíblicos* 72 (2014), 161–175, here 168f.

the work of Sáenz Badillos, who collated several sections of the Polyglot's New Testament. The latter is especially relevant, since it is the opposite to what Jerry H. Bentley and others have affirmed.¹⁴

Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum* and the Complutensian Polyglot Bible

The question about how the Polyglot could have contributed to Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum* naturally stands out from the others.¹⁵ However, before attempting an answer, it should be noted that there have also been supporters of a reverse influence, that is to say of Erasmus' New Testament on the Complutensian Polyglot. The first to defend this point of view explicitly was M. Johann Nicolaus Kiefer,¹⁶ who stated that the dedication of the first volume of the Polyglot resembles the dedication of the *Novum Instrumentum* "like one egg to another."¹⁷ He argues that the same reasons for publication are proposed in both cases: the need to purge copyists' errors found in the text of the Holy Scripture, to restore the purest readings, to shed light on darkness, the existence of a mystical sense, and the need to go back to the *Graeca veritas*. Kiefer adds other observations on expressions from the prologue to the Polyglot that imply a late redaction. Here in particular, the proposal was attractive, because it dealt with a part of the work likely drafted toward the end of the printing (as is usual with prologues) in July of 1517, when one or more copies of the *Novum Instrumentum* could already have

¹⁴ See Sáenz Badillos, *Filología* (op. cit. n. 11), 427–440; Bentley, *Humanists* (op. cit. n. 3), 110f. Bentley, following the lines of Walton, Wettstein, Tregelles and others, harshly criticizes the Polyglot on p. 101: "The Complutensian editors often chose to employ their philological talents in such a way as to protect the reputation of the Vulgate", but this does not fit with the fact that there are more than 1,000 places in the Polyglot where the Greek and the Hebrew text diverge from the Latin, as it is pointed out in three books by Johann Melchior Goeze, *Vertheidigung der Complutensischen Bibel* (Hamburg 1765); id., *Ausführliche Vertheidigung des Complutensischen griechischen Neuen Testaments* (Hamburg 1766); id., *Fortsetzung der ausführlicheren Vertheidigung des Complutensischen griechischen Neuen Testaments* (Hamburg 1769). It seems that the Complutensian editors did not feel the need to adapt one text to the other; we find the opposite in the copy of volume V kept in the *Seminario Conciliar* in Pamplona. Somebody with a different idea added a new interlinear Latin translation in red ink, and the result is a Latin text different in many places and closer to the Greek. This text still awaits a specific study.

¹⁵ After the sharp controversy held between Semler and Goeze in the 18th century, many studies have been devoted to the coincidence and disparity between the readings of the New Testament of the Complutensian Polyglot and those of Erasmus'. They are registered in E. Reuss, *Bibliotheca Novi Testamenti* (Braunschweig 1872), 15–25. A few years later, F. H. A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament for the Use of Biblical Students* (Cambridge 1883), 432 plainly asserted that the text of the Polyglot, especially in the Book of Revelation, is "decidedly preferable".

¹⁶ See M. Johann Nicolaus Kiefer, *Gerettete Vermutungen über das Complutensische N. Testament. Gegen den Hn. Senior Götz in Hamburg* (Halle 1770), §§ 1, 8–10.

¹⁷ "Man wird finden, dass der spanische Inhalt den Erasmischen so ähnlich sehe, als ein Ei den andern" (ibid., 29).

reached Alcalá.¹⁸ However, the content of both dedications is so commonplace that it is difficult to draw any reliable conclusions about the relationship between them, especially since they are both clearly influenced by the prologue of Lorenzo Valla's *Annotationes* and faced the same kind of criticism.¹⁹

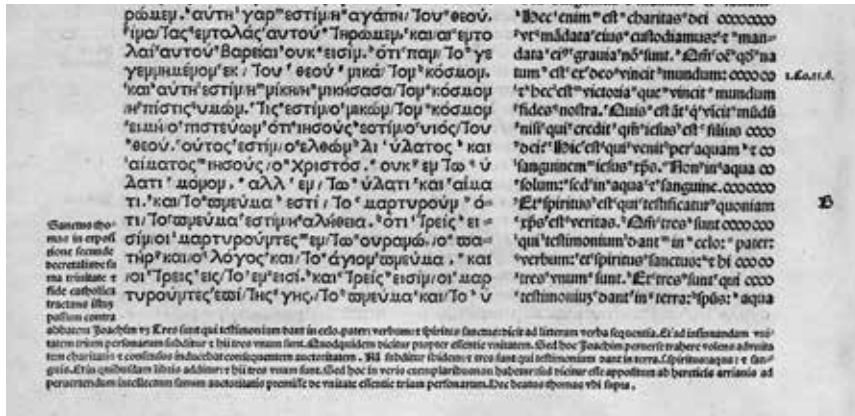


Fig. 2: Marginal note to the comma Iohanneum (1 John 5,7–8).

Screech's more recent proposal stands in a completely different category. He turned his attention to one of the few marginal notes (five) that exist in the New Testament volume of the Polyglot, namely that of 1 John 5,7–8, the *comma Iohanneum*.²⁰ He suggests that the gathering of the Polyglot which contains these verses (fols. KK2 and KK5) are cancels reprinted following the controversy over its omission in Erasmus' *Novum Instrumentum*. This would mean that the leaves were printed again, not before 1517. In order to defend this hypothesis, Screech relies on some typographical features in which he thinks this intervention can be detected.²¹ These arguments are however weak and inconclusive. Furthermore, Screech declares that, as long as it is indisputable that the *comma Iohanneum* was

¹⁸ It is not necessary to push back its printing until 1520 on the grounds that it includes the *motu proprio* of Pope Leo X, issued in March of that year. On the contrary, the existence of some copies of this quire having that page blank (state C) shows that, during printing, it was left that way in order to add the Pope's document later, and that, except in those few copies, the initial quire passed a second time under the press (the most common state A), see Martín Abad, 'Cisneros' (op. cit. n. 7), 66 and id., *La imprenta en Alcalá de Henares, 1502–1600*, 3 vols. (Madrid 1991), vol. 1, 222–233.

¹⁹ Erasmus was the editor of this work, and one of the copies of the *editio princeps*, now in Madrid, is closely related to the circles of the Complutensian scholars, see Domingo Malvadi, 'Pinciano' (op. cit. n. 8), 53–55.

²⁰ See M. A. Screech, 'Introduction', Reeve (1990), xi–xxv, here xxi–xxiii.

²¹ His arguments are: The Greek text on KK2^v over-runs into the lower margin and has the maximum of lines (54, most have 53) (Fig. 2); one can see that the capital letters are worn, especially one capital "I" on KK5^v (Fig. 3).

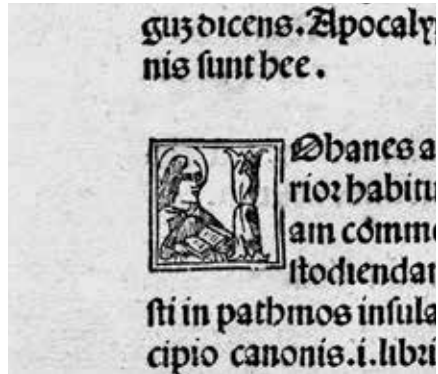


Fig. 3: Capital “P” on KK5^v.

present in the original printing, the decision to add *a posteriori* a marginal note would imply the re-composition of the whole gathering. This is not accurate, as it would have been enough to pass the existing copies through the press (as happened with the first quire of volume I). In fact, Screech proposes the existence of two issues, but without having identified a single copy of this supposed first issue. Regarding other typographical features, it is evident that, if the authors had decided to add a marginal gloss even in the first issue, the typesetter would have needed to organize the material differently, so the presence of some unusual features is not telling.²²

More recently, Jan Krans has suggested that something similar could have happened with the gloss to Matthew 6,13b in the Polyglot: he writes that in that place “Erasmus’ remark seems to have influenced the Complutensian Polyglot”.²³ But it must be stated that the reasons provided by the gloss in the Polyglot to athetize the words are not the same as those in Erasmus’ *Annotationes*, especially in the first two editions of that work. It was only in the 1522 edition that Erasmus added a reference to the Greek liturgy, and only from an indirect source (Chrysostom).²⁴ The Polyglot’s gloss, on the other hand, is not based on any authority, but it explains the custom of Byzantine Mass from direct observation. Therefore, Krans’ remark is of similar value to that of Screech’s proposal. As long as there are no witnesses to the first issue, these suggestions will remain too hypothetical to prove the influence of Erasmus’ *Novum Testamentum* on the Complutensian Polyglot Bible.

²² I am indebted to Julián Martín Abad and to Inmaculada García-Cervigón for the discussion of Screech’s hypothesis. Some scholars accept it unreservedly, see Botley, *Latin Translation* (op. cit. n. 4), 122.

²³ J. Krans, *Beyond What Is Written. Erasmus and Beza as Conjectural Critics of the New Testament*, *New Testament Tools and Studies* 35 (Leiden 2006), 35. At n. 29 he quotes Bentley, *Humanists* (op. cit. n. 3), 78 as a supporter of this hypothesis, but the latter does not refer the gloss in the Polyglot to Erasmus, not even in the fuller description in pp. 96 f.

²⁴ See *Annotationes in Matthaëum*, ASD VI-5, 159 f.

Returning to the main question of how the Polyglot may have contributed to Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum*, it is important to stress the figure of Juan de Vergara, who was the only contributor to the Polyglot (albeit a minor one) who also knew Erasmus in person. After his philological experience, Vergara moved to the court of Cardinal Cisneros, worked as his secretary and joined the Chapter of Toledo Cathedral. In 1520, after the Cardinal's death, the Chapter entrusted to Vergara the task of petitioning for a hearing with the new Archbishop (the permanently absent Guillaume de Croÿ) and so he joined the entourage of Charles V on his trip to the Netherlands. Thanks to this mission, he reached Bruges on 25 July 1520, where he met with Erasmus. The Spaniard had to begin by presenting his apologies for forgetting a copy of the *Annotationes Iacobi Lopidis Stunicae contra Erasmum Roterodamum*, published in Alcalá shortly before his departure. This annoyed Erasmus, who was looking forward to reading the book. However, it seems that from the meeting – held not without a certain tension in the room – and from the complimentary dinner that Vergara was invited to by Erasmus several days later, a mutual sympathy arose between the two humanists. This resulted in year-long epistolary contact, despite their age difference. The abundance of Erasmus' works in Vergara's library provides unequivocal evidence for the extraordinary appreciation he felt for the *Roterodamus*.²⁵

To learn what exactly happened in that first meeting, we rely on a single letter from Vergara to Zúñiga. This letter was written over a year after the meeting, in early October 1521 (after a second meeting between Erasmus and Vergara, which this time took place in Leuven).²⁶ This missive provides but a constrained and cautious account of that dinner, limited to the matters directly related to the controversies between the two humanists. Is it thus reasonable to think that Erasmus and Vergara, both with expertise in biblical text editing, had no interest in exchanging their respective knowledge? On this matter, we only find a brief reference in the letter, where Vergara mentions how he informed Erasmus that the second edition of his *Novum Testamentum* had not yet arrived in Spain, whilst Erasmus announced that he was already preparing its third edition. In fact, it seems plausible that Vergara informed Erasmus how his *Novum Instrumentum* had been received in Alcalá, but that he deliberately concealed this in his letter to Zúñiga due to the latter's previous temperamental response.²⁷ Would Erasmus not have been keenly interested in knowing how enriching volume V

²⁵ See Pérez Martín, *Bibliotecas* (op. cit. n. 11), 171–175. She identifies at least 52 Latin books written by Erasmus in Vergara's library.

²⁶ See ep. 1 from the Vergara-Zúñiga correspondence, Allen IV, pp. 623–625 (= CWE 8, pp. 337–340).

²⁷ A recent and detailed account on him can be read in L. Carrasco Reija, 'López de Zúñiga, Diego', in J.F. Domínguez (ed.), *Diccionario biográfico y bibliográfico del humanismo español (siglos XV–XVII)* (Madrid 2012), 510–526. Not much can be profited from C. Chaparro, 'Erasmus de Rotterdam y Diego López de Zúñiga: una polémica áspera y prolongada', *Ágora. Estudios Clásicos em Debate* 16 (2014), 157–187.

of the Polyglot, printed six years before but still unavailable to him, might have been? Sharing an evening with one of the contributors of that work was no doubt an opportunity he could not miss, but progress would not be substantial until he had a copy of the book in his hands. It is obvious that Erasmus would have sought a commitment from his guest to have a copy sent as soon as possible, or, if that were not possible, at least a detailed description of the work.

The first time Erasmus acknowledged the use of the Polyglot was in the *Annotationes* to the 1527 edition, by incorporating readings explicitly taken from it, especially in the Book of Apocalypse.²⁸ As a result, it seems to have been accepted that the Polyglot did not influence the first three editions of Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum*, because Erasmus does not mention it. Here is where I would like to raise the following question: is this an undisputable assertion? Was the criticism of Zúñiga and Sancho Carranza the only Complutensian contribution prior to the fourth edition? I would like to suggest an alternative hypothesis: that before the date of the third edition (1522) Erasmus had at his disposal, not the whole volume V of the Complutensian Polyglot, but at least some detailed information collected from it. To test this hypothesis I will use a philological method of checking the variants inserted in the Greek text of the 1522 edition. To aid in this task it is now possible to take advantage of the excellent work of Andrew J. Brown in the volumes of the sixth *Ordo* of the *Opera Omnia*.

As has already been well documented, the 1522 edition did not mark any progress regarding the inspection of Greek manuscripts by Erasmus, apart from some information drawn from Codex B.²⁹ On the contrary, the Aldine edition of the Greek New Testament, 1518–19, had a great influence on it.³⁰ In this Bible, Erasmus often found confirmation of the readings he had selected, not realising that the Aldine derived mostly from his own first edition, although in several cases it corrected errors thanks to manuscripts available in Venice. Sure enough, there are many changes, supported by the variants of the Aldine Bible, in the third edition of the Greek text of Erasmus. But in that same edition there is another, large group of corrections that do not have the support of the Aldine but are to be found, however, in the Complutensian Polyglot.

Here are some examples, which have all been taken from the Gospel of St. John.

²⁸ Erasmus acknowledges it, although in a vague way, in the *Apologia* of the fourth edition, that of 1527, fol. A4^{r/v}: “Nos in prima recognitione quatuor graecis [codicibus] adiuti sumus, in secunda quinque. In tertia praeter alia accessit editio Asulana, in hac quarta praesto fuit et Hispaniensis.”

²⁹ See A. J. Brown, ‘Introduction’, ASD VI-2, 1–10, here 7.

³⁰ See A. J. Brown, ‘Introduction. Part 1’, ASD VI-4, 1–25, here 11 f. The same point of view about the use of manuscripts can be found in P. F. Hovingh, ‘Introduction’, ASD VI-5, 1–50, here 7 f.

1) *John 1,25. Τί οὖν βαπτίζεις, εἰ σὺ οὐκ εἶ ὁ Χριστός οὔτε Ἡλίας οὔτε ὁ προφήτης;*
 προφήτης AB (+Aldus) : ὁ προφήτης Complut. CDE

Brown considers that the suppression of the article here and in John 7,40 was possibly unintentional, perhaps a slip made by the printers.³¹ Despite this and given the long explanation in the *Annotationes*,³² Erasmus did not doubt, having established this reading in the first edition, that it was indeed the reading he had found in the manuscripts. Erasmus first made mention of the absence of the article in his 1519 *Annotationes*, where he tries to defend that reading, in spite of having found the variant with the article in *nonnullis Graecorum exemplaribus*. The restoration of the article occurs in the third edition, but without any explanation for the change in the *Annotationes*. That is to say, at the time of the second edition he already knew of the variant with the article and yet he rejected it, and the Aldine Bible seemed to reinforce the reading initially selected. So, what led him to alter his initial preference, and to do so without providing a reason? If that change is to be attributed only to philological reflection, is it not surprising that it has left no trace in the *Annotationes*, especially after the clear reasons given for excluding the article in previous editions?³³

2) *John 2,22. ὅτε οὖν ἠγέρθη ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐμνήσθησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι τοῦτο ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς*
 αὐτοῖς Complut. CDE om. AB (+Aldus)

Brown's reflection on this variant is very interesting:

The reading αὐτοῖς is found in just a few of the later manuscripts, but not in any which Erasmus is known to have consulted. He did not include it in his text of 1516, as it was not in the manuscripts which he used for that edition, nor was it in the Vulgate. It is striking that αὐτοῖς is found in the Complutensian Polyglot, whose distribution was in progress during 1522, but it is unlikely that Erasmus received a copy of the Polyglot in time to use it for his own third edition which was published in that year. He does not directly mention the Polyglot in his *Annotationes* until 1527. The existence of a number of other unusual Greek variants in his 1522 edition, most of them not coinciding with the Complutensian Polyglot ..., may indicate that he at that time had a passing enthusiasm for a particular manuscript which had come to his attention between 1519 and 1522.³⁴

³¹ See ASD VI-2, 20, n. 25.

³² See *In annotationes Novi Testamenti praefatio*, ASD VI-5, 56.

³³ Erasmus was working on the third edition at least since 20 December 1520, see P.F. Hovingh, 'Introduction', ASD VI-6, 1–26, here 9. I have not found any information about the printing order of the parts of the third edition of the Bible in Froben's press, but if the *Annotationes* were printed before the Greek text, the conflict between them (as it is in this case) could be explained by the late arrival of the material, which gave rise to some changes in the text.

³⁴ ASD VI-2, 35, n. 22.

Brown claims not to know where the reading αὐτοῖς might come from. Mentioning the Complutensian Polyglot at this point suggests, however, that it is only a problem of dating that prevents him from proposing it as a source for the variant.

3) *John 6,11. διέδωκε τοῖς μαθηταῖς, οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ τοῖς ἀνακειμένοις· ὁμοίως καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὄψαριων ὅσον ἤθελον*

ἤθελεν AB (+Aldus) : ἤθελον Complut. CDE

Again, Brown's commentary sheds light on the passage:

The reading ἤθελεν, in the 1516–19 editions, appears to be unsupported by Greek manuscripts, and those which Erasmus usually consulted all have ἤθελον. His citation of ἤθελεν in 1516 *Annotationes*, and later, might be thought to indicate that he had found this reading in an unknown manuscript. Possibly, however, it was caused by his misreading the script of codex 817, in which the last two letters are represented by an abbreviation ... Nevertheless, his *Annotationes* continued to cite the spelling, ἤθελεν, and when he found the same reading in the 1518 Aldine Bible, he took this as further support for his earlier printed text, not realising that the Aldine was itself largely derived from his own edition of 1516.³⁵ Despite this confusion in *Annotationes*, he inserted the correct reading, which can be read in the Complutensian Polyglot, in the Greek and Latin text of 1522–35.³⁶

However, in spite of the ingenious explanation regarding the origin of the -εν reading, the same question arises: what made Erasmus change his mind in 1522, just at the point when the Aldine seemed to confirm the initial reading? And how did the inconsistency between the Greek text and the *Annotationes* originate?

4) *John 19,28. Μετὰ τοῦτο εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι πάντα ἤδη τετέλεσται*

εἰδὼν AB (+Aldus) : εἰδὼς Complut. CDE

For this change in the third edition, Erasmus had Codex GA 1 as a witness, but not the support of the Aldine, which featured the reading of the previous editions. The εἰδὼν variant is grammatical, so the decision to modify it must have arisen from an alternative source, currently unknown. Again, we ignore what led Erasmus to change his mind, especially given that Erasmus did not seem to place much value on Codex GA 1. So the presence of the alternative reading in the Polyglot leads to the same question: can we be sure that Erasmus did not have the Polyglot at hand during the preparation of the third edition?

Many similar examples can be found. If we discard obvious mistakes and itacisms, we find 31 significant new readings in the 1522 edition of the Gospel of St. John.³⁷ In 26 of these places Erasmus adopted a reading to be found in the

³⁵ See *In Evangelium Ioannis annotationes*, ASD VI-6, 88f. Erasmus even pointed out that he had found the alternative reading in Theophylact (addition in B, 1519) and in “some manuscripts” (addition in C, 1522). This note is mine.

³⁶ ASD VI-2, 69, n. 11.

³⁷ See the appendix at the end of this paper.

Polyglot but unsupported by the Aldine (which simply reproduces the reading of the first two editions of Erasmus). The overlap thus occurs in 84 % of the cases. Such a level of agreement seems reasonable only by admitting a real relationship – either direct or indirect – between the Polyglot and the third edition of the *Novum Testamentum*. That is to say, either the text of the Complutensian Polyglot was available to Erasmus around 1521, or both used a common source (although this seems highly unlikely, even if the sources for the Greek New Testament of the Polyglot are still unknown to us).

In the first case, we should bear in mind that a century has now passed since Mariano Revilla Rico rejected the hypothesis of a late diffusion of the Polyglot.³⁸ He located its origin two centuries earlier in Jacques Le Long's *Bibliotheca Sacra*. The Augustinian martyr³⁹ writes that the only argument for Le Long to support this delay is precisely that Erasmus does not mention its use until the 1527 edition, and since then his statement has been generally accepted. As such, those scholars who point to the late distribution of the Complutensian Polyglot as an argument to dismiss its influence on the edition of 1522 are engaging in a *petitio principii*. It is therefore necessary to reassess the terms of this question. We already have the tools to do this thanks to the philological work in the volumes of the *Opera Omnia*.

Returning to the question raised earlier, is it possible then, that Erasmus received Cisneros' Bible during the preparation of the third edition of the New Testament? In light of the results obtained during the inspection of the Gospel of John, it would seem so. However, it is necessary to put these findings into context, since the clear result in the Gospel of John disappear when carrying out the same test on the Epistles and Apocalypse. Although the third edition and the Polyglot share some readings not to be found elsewhere, they are insignificant in number.⁴⁰

An intermediate position is that occupied by the Acts of the Apostles, where (leaving aside questions regarding the form of Moses' name) there are nine cases (out of a total of 23) where the readings of the third edition agree only with those in the Polyglot. This represents 40 % of cases, far below the 84 % of the Gospel of John, but still significant. Now, if we remove from that list the six cases of obvious misprints in the 1522 edition (presumably unintentional), the percentage of matching variants between the 1522 edition and the Polyglot climbs to 53 %.

³⁸ See Revilla Rico, *Políglota* (op. cit. n. 13), 42 f.

³⁹ He was killed, along with his Augustinian brothers of El Escorial (more than 50), during the first months of the Spanish Civil War (1936) and was beatified in 2007.

⁴⁰ It is well known that the text of the Revelation in the fourth edition, that of 1527, displays the strong influence of the Complutensian Polyglot, which provides the corrected text in 144 places. Nothing similar can be said of the third edition, see Scrivener, *Introduction* (op. cit. n. 15), 434 and, especially, A. J. Brown, 'Introduction. Part 1', ASD VI-4, 1–25, here 12.

Finally, if we combine the data from both historical books, the percentage of new readings of the third edition coinciding with the Polyglot rises to 73 %.

I have not been able to take into account the Synoptic Gospels, because the first volume of the Amsterdam edition has yet to be published. There is no doubt however that examination of the first three Gospels will provide useful information regarding the possible influence of the Polyglot on the third edition of Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum*.⁴¹

With the data currently available, it seems unlikely that Erasmus had a copy of volume V of the Complutensian Polyglot at hand at an early date. Indeed, in the Epistles and Apocalypse, the number of coincident readings is fairly low, as mentioned above. On the other hand, it seems that such an influence can be legitimately argued given the distribution of corrections in the Gospel of John and the Acts of the Apostles. The disparity in the results suggests that Erasmus' access to information about the Polyglot may have been indirect and incomplete, perhaps mediated by Juan de Vergara or any of the other humanists from Alcalá (or Toledo or even Rome). By examining the distribution of variants in different quires, the theory that scattered printed parts of the Polyglot could have reached Basel can be rejected. Surely Zúñiga was not the only one in Alcalá who analysed thoroughly the *Novum Instrumentum* when the first copy arrived,⁴² and it might not have been difficult for Vergara, while he was in Germany, to ask one of his friends in Alcalá – or even his own brother, the Hellenist Francisco de Vergara – to send him a list of variant readings between the editions of Brocar and Froben. Such consignments were not infrequent, and Erasmus received at least two of them from Spain at virtually the same time. First, a copy of Zúñiga's book – the one forgotten by Vergara – and second, through the imperial secretary Guy Morillon, a copy of Nebrija's unpublished work *In Reuclinum Phorcensem et Erasmus Roterodamum quod de talita in Evangelio Marci et de tabita in Luca non*

⁴¹ Many scholars offer lists of variant readings in several bibles of the 16th century, but it is more difficult to find among them a collation including the five Erasmus editions. Some information can be taken from H. C. Hoskier, *A Full Account and Collation of the Greek Cursive Codex Evangelium 604 (with Two Facsimiles)* (London 1890), appendix B. According to it, Luke 11,12 (αἰτήση) and 17,1 (τοῦ μῆ) are examples of readings in the Synoptics where AB + Aldus are against CDE + Polyglot. In a preliminary survey, it seems that the situation in the Synoptics is quite different from that in John and Acts.

⁴² Among the witnesses of the early presence of the *Novum Instrumentum* in Alcalá, a letter sent by García de Bobadilla, abbot of Santa María de Husillos, to Cardinal Cisneros in November 1516 is remarkable. A photographic reproduction of it is available in the catalogue of the exhibition by Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero (ed.), *V Centenario* (op. cit. n. 2), 231–234, with a partial transcription. It is translated in Rummel, *Jiménez de Cisneros* (op. cit. n. 1), 61: “Given that he has anticipated Your Reverence with his publication, I believe that he could be of assistance in making your work appear somewhat more polished ... I believe that Your Reverence should not deprive yourself of a person like Erasmus. You should avail yourself of his assistance in the correction of the whole publication and hire his services for a certain period”.

bene senserunt.⁴³ If the material concerning the Polyglot was sent in successive deliveries, as the work progressed, it can be assumed that some of these arrived on time to be used in the third edition, while others (or the other) might have been lost or arrived too late.

But, why would Erasmus disguise the use of such a source? Several reasons can be identified:

- First, if his access to that source was only indirect and also fragmentary, he likely would have used that witness with caution, for he would not have been able to guarantee the accuracy of the information provided.
- Second, in the midst of his controversy with Zúñiga, if Erasmus had explicitly recognized the value of many readings in the New Testament in which his opponent had worked, it could have seemed that he was admitting Zúñiga was right.
- Third, silence could prevent attacks on his friend Vergara (or whoever may have passed him the material). Although in Spain there was still no open prosecution against Erasmists, there were plenty of critics. Moreover, the contributors to the Polyglot had already borne attacks from the most conservative sectors,⁴⁴ and Vergara could have been bitterly attacked even by Zúñiga himself if it was found that he had cooperated with Erasmus by sending material for a new edition of his New Testament.

These suggestions, coupled with the interesting readings provided by his correspondents, would justify Erasmus dissimulating them by adopting variants of the Polyglot in some books of the 1522 edition.

At present, it is not possible however to arrive at any definitive conclusions, so this contribution is intended only to present a hypothesis for further consideration and discussion, one which could explain the reasons that led Erasmus to incorporate variants in the third edition of the New Testament that might otherwise appear arbitrary.

(Translated by Julián Morales and Alba Caballero)

⁴³ See C. Gilly, 'Otra vez Nebrija, Erasmo, Reuchlin y Cisneros', *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura* 74 (1998), 257–340, here 260 f.

⁴⁴ It is well known, for example, that Antonio de Nebrija was accosted by a furious Dominican in Burgos, because he was indignant at the news received about the preparatory works for the Polyglot Bible; the monk reviled the major contributors, labelling Coronel as a Jew, Nebrija as an heretic and Zúñiga as a fool. This account was transmitted by Álvaro Gómez de Castro but it is only to be found in the first versions of his life of Cisneros, because it was censored before going to press. It is contextualised in I. J. García Pinilla, 'El humanista ante la historia oficial: la podadera en el *De rebus gestis a Francisco Ximenio Cisnerio de Álvaro Gómez de Castro*', in E. Fosalba / M. J. Vega (eds.), *Textos castigados. La censura literaria en el Siglo de Oro* (Bern 2013), 173–187, here 182.

Appendix

List of places from St. John's Gospel where Erasmus' edition C (1522) differs from AB, with reference to the Complutensian Polyglot (Pol) and the Aldine Bible (Aldus). Source: ASD VI-2.

	AB	CDE
1,25	προφήτης (+Aldus)	ὁ προφήτης (+Pol)
1,33	ἀλλὰ (+Aldus)	ἀλλ' ὁ (+Pol)
2,15	φραγγέλιον (+Aldus)	φραγγέλιον (+Pol)
2,22	– (+Aldus)	αὐτοῖς (+Pol)
5,2	στωὰς (+Aldus)	στοὰς (+Pol)
5,10	– (+Aldus)	οἱ (+Pol)
6,11	ἦθελεν (+Aldus)	ἦθελον (+Pol)
6,29	πιστεύητε (+Aldus)	πιστεύητε (+Pol)
6,63	ὄφελει (+Aldus)	ὠφελει (+Pol)
7,45	– (+Aldus)	οὖν (+Pol)
8,39	ὑμῶν (+Aldus)	ἡμῶν (+Pol)
8,44	ἀνθρωπόκτονος (+Aldus)	ἀνθρωπόκτονος (+Pol)
8,51	– (+Aldus)	τον (+Pol)
9,10	ἠνεύχθησαν (+Aldus)	ἀνεύχθησαν (+Pol)
9,21	ὑμεῖς (+Aldus)	ἡμεῖς (+Pol)
10,4	ἐκβάλλη (+Aldus)	ἐκβάλη (+Pol)
10,33	λιθάζομεν (+Aldus, Pol)	λιθάσομεν
12,33	ἀποθνίσκειν	ἀποθνήσκειν (+Aldus, Pol)
12,38	ὑμῶν (+Aldus)	ἡμῶν (+Pol)
12,42	καὶ ἐκ (+Aldus, Pol)	ἐκ
12,47	πιστεύη (+Aldus)	πιστεύση (+Pol)
13,36	– (+Aldus)	ἐγὼ (+Pol)
14,4	– (+Aldus)	ἐγὼ (+Pol)
16,3	ἡμῖν (+Aldus) (Pol omits)	ὑμῖν
16,16	– (+Aldus, Pol)	ἐγὼ
16,21	τίκτει (+Aldus)	τίκτηη (+Pol)
19,28	ιδῶν (+Aldus)	ειδῶς (+Pol)
19,31	ἠρώτησαν (+Aldus, Pol)	ἐρώτησαν
19,36	αὐτοῦ (+Aldus)	ἀπ' αὐτοῦ (+Pol)
21,4	γινομένης (+Aldus)	γενομένης (+Pol)
21,7	ἐπενδύτην (+Aldus)	ἐπενδύτην (+Pol)

Abstract

The closeness in the publication dates of the first edition of Erasmus' New Testament (1516) and Volume V of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible (printed in 1514, but not released until 1521 or 1522) has led researchers to examine the relationship between the two works. The chronological issue is further compounded by the scarcity of documentary sources for the study of the Polyglot. This paper provides a quick review of studies of the Polyglot's New Testament, in addition to pointing out some difficulties in the use of the sources. A sample of one of these difficulties, taken from the first Latin biography of Cisneros, is included. That biography was written by Álvaro Gómez de Castro using the drafts of Juan de Vergara, who was Cisneros' final secretary; it was published in 1569.

Some scholars have suggested the possibility of a reverse influence of the *Novum Instrumentum* on Volume V of the Polyglot. This would mean that the initial quire, or even several quires (containing glosses) have been printed at a later date. The basis and strength of this hypothesis are analysed in the present paper.

The next section offers a critique of the commonly accepted opinion that the Complutensian Polyglot did not influence Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum* until its fourth edition of 1527. It refers to the analysis of variants showing that in some books of the third edition of 1522 (St. John's Gospel and Acts of the Apostles, at least) we find a significant number of new readings that tally with those of the Polyglot. Finally, we will consider how Erasmus could have been influenced, especially by Juan de Vergara (who was a humanist and a contributor to the Polyglot Bible of Alcalá), and why Erasmus might have been silent about the use of this source in the *Annotationes*.