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## **Alvaro-Agustin de Liano and His Books in Leopold von Ranke's Library**

Gail P. Hueting

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SPRING 1985

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- Foresight and Courage: A Tribute to Louis Krasner  
by Howard Boatwright, Professor of Music,  
Syracuse University 3
- Recollections from a Life in Music  
by Louis Krasner, Professor Emeritus of Music,  
Syracuse University; and Instructor of Violin,  
New England Conservatory of Music 9
- Unusual Beethoven Items from the Krasner Collection  
by Donald Seibert, Music Bibliographer,  
Syracuse University Libraries 19
- Álvaro-Agustín de Liaño and His Books in  
Leopold von Ranke's Library  
by Gail P. Huetting, Librarian, University of Illinois  
at Urbana-Champaign 31
- Lady Chatterley's Lover*: The Grove Press Publication of the  
Unexpurgated Text  
by Raymond T. Caffrey, New York University 49
- Benson Lossing: His Life and Work, 1830-1860  
by Diane M. Casey, Syracuse University 81
- News of the Syracuse University Libraries  
and the Library Associates 97

# Álvaro-Agustín de Liaño and His Books in Leopold von Ranke's Library

BY GAIL P. HUETING \*

One of the most intriguing aspects of working with rare books like those in the George Arents Research Library is their provenance, or former ownership. Often a distinguished former owner is the main reason for considering a particular book or group of books rare in the first place; in other cases provenance is incidental to the importance of the item. Except when a collection of books is known to have belonged to one person and is acquired for that reason (the books may or may not bear ownership marks), provenance is typically noted from evidence in the books themselves—from such marks as book-plates, stamps, owners' signatures, and annotations. Provenance is especially important when the former owner is a famous person, for annotations by such a person may contribute to the body of knowledge about him or her. Ownership marks and annotations can also be a source of information about a less prominent person. Annotations in particular, especially if they are extensive, can reveal something about the personality of the former owner. Yet, apart from some specialized types of annotations (such as glosses in medieval manuscripts and a few cases involving well-known former owners), little attention has been paid to the analysis of annotations in books.<sup>1</sup>

\* Librarian in the Original Cataloguing Department in the library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Ms. Hueting was von Ranke Project Librarian at Syracuse University from January 1982 to December 1983. She would like to express her appreciation to David Louis Jensen and Elizabeth A. Williams of the von Ranke Project staff for their assistance, especially since her return to Illinois.

1. One example of a study of medieval glosses is Gernot Rudolf Wieland, *The Latin Glosses on Arator and Prudentius in Cambridge University Library*, Ms. Gg.5.35, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Studies and Texts 61 (Toronto: The Institute, 1983). Several articles focusing on book collectors and annotations are included in A. N. L. Munby, *Essays and Papers*, edited by Nicholas Barker (London: Scolar Press, 1977).

This article is concerned only with one specific case of provenance, as traced from annotations in a group of books which are part of the Leopold von Ranke Library at Syracuse University, itself a special collection by virtue of its provenance. The von Ranke Library, which was purchased for the University after the historian's death in 1886, consists of approximately 6,500 titles, in addition to manuscripts, maps, and journals.<sup>2</sup> The materials deal chiefly with European history and related fields. When the recataloguing of the book collection began in 1977, cards were made for various special files maintained by the Rare Book Division of the George Arents Research Library, in addition to the standard author, title, and subject entries. These files record place of publication, publisher and/or printer, date of publication, and associated names. If an owner other than von Ranke could be identified from marks in the books, an entry was made under that owner's name.

The Liaño books, which are the focus of this article, bear annotations, often lengthy ones, some of which are signed with a distinctive device or monogram. Such inscriptions are an unusual feature in von Ranke's library; most of the books there that are associated with other owners are identifiable by bookplate or signature alone. Relatively few are annotated. By June 1985, nineteen books believed to have belonged to Liaño had been discovered. They are mostly eighteenth-century books in the fields of church history, commerce, and law. The annotations in four of the books include the owner's full name in an ex-libris statement in Latin, thus—Alvar-Augustinus-Maria de Liágno<sup>3</sup>—and hint at a very interesting personality in an unusual situation. They reveal that Liágno—or more correctly in his native Spanish, Liaño—was the son of a Spanish nobleman, had formerly been a Roman Catholic priest but had converted to Calvinism, and was living, at least for a time, in Berlin. Written in fluent French,

2. *Syracuse University Library Associates Courier* has published articles about the von Ranke Library. See Jeremy C. Jackson, "Leopold von Ranke and the Von Ranke Library", *Courier* 9 ([September] 1972): 38–55; and James M. Powell, "The Place of the Ranke Collection at Syracuse University: Some Brief Remarks", *Courier* 15 (Summer 1978): 32. The manuscripts in the collection are described in Edward Muir, *The Leopold von Ranke Manuscript Collection of Syracuse University: The Complete Catalogue* (Syracuse: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1983).

3. His full name in his native Spanish is Álvaro-Agustín de Liaño; when writing in French, he used the form Alvar-Augustin de Liágno.

Latin, and Italian, they demonstrate a considerable knowledge as well as decided opinions about theology and church history.

Who was this man, then, and what was he doing in Berlin? Intrigued, I began trying to find out.

Though not famous, Liaño was sufficiently well known to have left tantalizing traces of his scholarly presence in Europe during the early 1800s. *The National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints* and the *General Catalogue of Printed Books* of the British Museum have listed Liaño as the author of several books on Spanish history and literature, of which the second volume of his *Répertoire portatif de l'histoire et de la littérature des nations espagnole et portugaise* is to be found in von Ranke's library. Continuing my search, I discovered in a brief entry in *Das gelehrte Teutschland* that Liaño had been a royal librarian in Berlin.<sup>4</sup> Historical accounts of the Royal Library in Berlin, now the German State Library in East Berlin, confirmed that he was one of several librarians there between 1811 and 1822.<sup>5</sup> Curt Balcke's *Bibliographie zur Geschichte der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek* listed the articles by F. Boll and A. Risop that make use of most of the available primary sources on Liaño. Their primary materials were the archives of the Library, the records of the French congregation in Berlin, and Liaño's own posthumous papers.<sup>6</sup>

From the various secondary sources, especially from Boll's article, Liaño's life story can be sketched briefly. He was born in Menoba, Granada, on February 17, 1782, the son of a Spanish nobleman. At the age of eighteen he became a Carmelite monk and was sent to Africa as a missionary. Having become disaffected with the Catholic

4. Georg Christoph Hamberger and Johann Georg Meusel, *Das gelehrte Teutschland* (reprint, Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1966), 18: 525; see also 23: 407.

5. Two general histories are *Deutsche Staatsbibliothek 1661-1961* (Leipzig: Verlag für Buch- und Bibliothekswesen, 1961) and Eugen Paunel, *Die Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin: ihre Geschichte und Organisation während der ersten zwei Jahrhunderte seit ihrer Eröffnung 1661-1871* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1965). A study focused on the early nineteenth century is Gustav Abb, *Schleiermachers Reglement für die Königliche Bibliothek zu Berlin vom Jahre 1813 und seine Vorgeschichte* (Berlin: Breslauer, 1926).

6. Curt Balcke, *Bibliographie zur Geschichte der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek*, *Mitteilungen aus der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek*, 6 (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1925), 12; Fr. Boll, "Briefe von Friedr. Aug. Wolf, Heinr. Luden und Friedr. Jacobs an Alvar Augustin de Liagno", *Blätter für das Gymnasial-Schulwesen* 31 (1895), 1-16; A. Risop, "Die romanische Philologie 1810-1910", *Kritischer Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der romanischen Philologie* 10 (1906), pt. 4.



Frontispiece and title page, both showing annotations. From Antonio Genovesi, *Della Diceosina* (Naples, 1777).

Church for reasons we can only guess at, he went to Pistoia, Italy to join the famous bishop Scipione de Ricci, whose diocese was a center of reforms and new ideas, such as Jansenism. Later he fled to Paris, then to Holland, where he converted to the Reformed Church, then to Vienna. It is unclear what led him to these places. He came to Berlin in 1809, apparently with prestigious letters of introduction, because he was soon in the favor of the royal family. On June 25, 1810, King Frederick William III of Prussia instructed his minister of state to place Liaño in a suitable position. He was duly appointed to be a teacher of Spanish and French at the newly founded University of Berlin, but he refused this position on the grounds, apparently, that it was less prestigious than he was expecting. Following that, although he barely knew German, he was made a librarian at the Royal Library and became one of five members of the librarians' administrative council. He was at first assigned to supervising the copying of the new catalogue and, from 1812 on, to cataloguing manu-

scripts.<sup>7</sup> The Library's quarterly report of October 1813 lists Liaño as primarily responsible for the areas of Catholic theology, church history, the church councils, and history and literature of Italy, Spain, France, and England. Along with another librarian, he had regular public service hours on Tuesdays and Saturdays.<sup>8</sup>

Historians of the German State Library tend to emphasize Liaño's status as a court favorite and minimize his contributions to the library. According to them, his lack of fluency in German and his inconsistent working habits kept him from making much progress on the catalogue of manuscripts.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, Eugen Paunel in his *Die Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin* argues that Liaño's knowledge of languages must have been an asset to the project.<sup>10</sup> But whatever the case, his departure from Berlin in 1822 was clouded by ugly charges. K. A. Varnhagen von Ense in his *Blätter aus der preussischen Geschichte* noted that Liaño was said to have taken 1,800 books from the library home with him and to have lost or stolen many of them.<sup>11</sup>

Liaño married, had a son, and became an elder of the French congregation in Berlin. Even though he was close to the royal family, especially to Prince Heinrich, he never really felt at home in Prussia. Proud, prickly, unable to write in German, he believed his intellectual gifts were not appreciated. Indeed, after the war against Napoleon, few Prussians were interested in foreign history and literature. However, it is known that in 1814 Liaño did give lectures on Spanish language and literature. Also, he published in 1818–1820 two volumes on the history of Spain and Portugal, *Répertoire portatif de l'histoire et de la littérature des nations espagnole et portugaise*, but the project was never completed in five volumes as planned. In 1817, hoping to have more influence on Prussian politics, he submitted a number of articles to Heinrich Luden for his periodical *Nemesis*, and three of them were published. They were "Brief eines Berliner Presbyterianers an eine edle preussische Frau über den heiligen Bund der europäischen Herrscher" (which was translated into German from

7. *Deutsche Staatsbibliothek*, 1: 143, 332.

8. Abb, *Schleiermachers Reglement*, 105–106.

9. *Deutsche Staatsbibliothek*, 1: 24, 332.

10. Paunel, *Die Staatsbibliothek*, 142.

11. Karl August Varnhagen von Ense, *Blätter aus der preussischen Geschichte* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1868), 2: 237.



Liaño's French), "Factum contre l'esprit de la censure prussienne", and "Censure de Berlin". At the end of 1817 (and probably even before then), Liaño seriously sought to leave Berlin for a more congenial environment. Luden gave him a frank, gloomy impression of Jena (where Luden taught) and suggested that he look instead to Weimar, the intellectual center of German classicism. Liaño was not able to leave Berlin until 1822. Finally, at that time, he managed to settle as a private scholar in the small principality of Neuwied (in the Rhineland), where he enjoyed the confidence of the ruling princes and lived until his death in 1848.

It was during this last period, probably in the year 1828, that he returned to the Catholic Church. Also, in 1829 and 1830, he wrote two parts of another book, *Noticias literarias y históricas*, ostensibly a continuation of his earlier work but actually an extended advertisement for a series of Spanish classics edited by Joaquin Maria de Ferrar. The publisher, J. A. Meyer, was apparently trying to attract a market in Germany for these titles.<sup>12</sup> After the publication of this book, Liaño became so obscure and forgotten that *Nouvelle biographie universelle* was to claim that he had died "about 1830".<sup>13</sup>

It is clear that Liaño never achieved either the fame or the peace of mind he was looking for. He tended to attribute his problems, both in Spain and in Germany, to enmity and to intrigue against him rather than to any shortcomings of his own. Certainly, he had a great deal of knowledge, especially of languages and of church history; his interests extended in many directions, and he was very well-read. However, he appears to have been unable to finish anything (except his short articles), and he tended to embark on open-ended projects. Both *Répertoire portatif* and *Noticias literarias y históricas* suffer from an extremely rambling style, with digressions in footnotes equal in length to the text. Whatever insights into Spanish history and literature they offer are very hard to extract from the mass of words. The facts and ideas are also colored with suspicions of conspiracy against himself.

The books in Leopold von Ranke's library that formerly belonged to Liaño raise some interesting questions. How and when did von Ranke acquire them? Were the two men acquainted with each other? Von Ranke first became prominent as a historian about 1830, long

12. Information on Liaño's later life is primarily from Boll, "Briefe".

13. "Liaño, Alvar-Augustin de", *Nouvelle biographie universelle* (Paris: F. Didot, 1852–1866), 13: cols. 108–109.

before Liaño's death, but he did not go to Berlin until after Liaño had left that city. Could any of these books have actually been the property of the Royal Library? What do Liaño's annotations reveal about his life and his working methods? Most of these questions cannot be answered. There is no evidence that von Ranke and Liaño knew each other. Unlike some of von Ranke's books, which were previously owned by men known to have been his friends and colleagues—for example, F. H. Rheinwald, Karl Friedrich von Savigny, and Christian Daniel Beck—these books do not contain anything that suggests a friendship between von Ranke and Liaño. Also, Liaño is not mentioned in von Ranke's letters nor in his few autobiographical writings. Von Ranke rarely wrote in his books and never indicated how he had acquired them. It seems clear that von Ranke took possession of the Liaño books after 1832, because Liaño dated one of his annotations in that year, and some of the notes refer to his reconversion to Catholicism. It is unlikely that the books originally belonged to the Royal Library. Von Ranke owned other books that bear the Library's crest on the bindings and have ownership stamps; indeed, some even indicate that they were sold as duplicates. The Liaño books have no such markings.

Liaño used various marks to identify the books he owned. The angular monogram or device mentioned above appears in eleven of the eighteen books, often more than once. Sometimes he signed his name in abbreviated form: A.-A.-M. de L<sup>o</sup>; or, just L<sup>o</sup>. Occasionally, he used the phrase: *Ex βιβλιοφυλακιω Alvari-Augustini-Mariae de Liágno*. Another kind of identifying mark appears in six of the books about religion; the fairly long annotations are prefaced with two religious symbols, the Tetragrammaton (the four Hebrew letters representing the name of God) and a combination of Greek letters, alpha, chi, rho, and omega (which joins together two symbols referring to Jesus Christ). Six books, chiefly in the fields of law and commerce, have notes stating when and where he acquired them. Sometimes this is the only annotation. Two examples are:

Work bought in Berlin at the palace bookstall 17 Oct. 1817.

L<sup>o</sup>14

14. I have translated all the annotations being quoted in the text of this article but retained Liaño's capitalization and punctuation. The notes are presented in the original French, Latin, or Italian, with Liaño's own underlinings, accents, spelling

5777

*α Χ ω*

**L'ESPRIT**

*de* **B. Jacq.** *Jph.*

**M. DUGUET.**

*par* André ancien Bi-  
bliothécaire du grand  
Saquefeau.

*Ε. Β. Βιβλιοφυλακιστρ*  
*Ο Αλvari-αυγουστινι-Μη.*  
*de Liagno, Γενεσιου Ηι-*  
*ρονι Σacerdoti et Mo-*  
*nachi red chent miseri*  
*Thretia percipat. 22 anno,*  
*nunc vero ex corde amarissi-*  
*me poenitens. Ε.*

Half-title page, showing religious symbols, an ex-libris statement, and Liaño's monogram. From Abbé André, *L'Esprit de Duguet* (Paris, 1764).

I bought this book together with the Latin work of Emman. Weber, entitled *Examen artis heraldicae* today, Berlin, 4 Sept. 1821. L.<sup>o</sup><sup>15</sup>

In addition to these ownership marks, Liaño used the end-papers, preliminary leaves, and sometimes the title pages of his books to record various kinds of factual and personal information. A frequent type of note is a brief description of the contents of the book, usually in the language of the book itself:

Third part of the Italian philosophy of the illustrious abbot Antonio Genovesi, or three volumes *Della diceosina*, which is to say—the art of the just and the honest; with a portrait of the author. [Annotation and book are in Italian.]<sup>16</sup>

(Calvinist) history of the Eucharist by Matthieu Larroque, Calvinist minister at Vitré. [Annotation and book are in French.]<sup>17</sup>

Liaño often added biographical information about the author of a book. Sometimes this consisted only of the author's birth and death dates, as in Genovesi's book:

Born in Castiglione on 1 Sept. 1712, died at the age of 57 years on 22 Sept. 1769.<sup>18</sup>

At other times the biographical notes continue at great length. The notes on Matthieu de Larroque, mentioned above, fill much of the

and abbreviations, and include a short citation of the book in which each annotation appears; for full citations see the list of Liaño's books at the end of the article. "Ouvrage acheté á [sic] Berlin au bouquiniste du Château le 17 oct. 1817. L.<sup>o</sup>" In Dutot, *Réflexions politiques*.

15. "J'achette ce livre ensemble avec l'ouvrage latin d'Emman. Weber, intitulé: *Examen artis heraldicae* aujourd'hui. Berlin ce 4 sept.<sup>re</sup> 1821. L.<sup>o</sup>" In Toze, *La liberté de la navigation*.

16. "Terza Parte della filosofia italiana del chiarissimo abate Antonio Genovesi: o sia tre tomi della Diceosina vale a dire l'arte del giusto e dell'onesto; col ritratto dell'autore." In Genovesi, *Della diceosina*.

17. "Histoire (calviniste) de l'Eucharistie par Matthieu Larroque ministre du calvinisme à Vitré. 2<sup>e</sup> Edition." In Larroque, *Histoire de l'Eucharistie*.

18. "Nato in Castiglione il 1 di 9bre 1712 morto nell'età di 57 anni il 22 7bre 1769." In Genovesi, *Della diceosina*.

title page, and his son, Daniel de Larroque, is given another long paragraph which takes up a little more than one side of a leaf 10 x 15½ cm. A shorter account of David-Renaud Boullier and his son gives an example of this type of annotation:

By David-Renaud Boullier, whose origins were in the Auvergne, born of Protestant parents in Utrecht 24 March 1699, zealous minister among his coreligionists in Amsterdam, an inaccurate, obscure, and diffuse writer but useful to readers who study conscientiously, a respectable man, died as minister of his church in London 23 Dec. 1759. His son, who was like him a preacher, moved from London to Amsterdam and from Amsterdam to The Hague, where he died in 1797. He is the author of a small volume on exterior eloquence and of some sermons.<sup>19</sup>

Much of the biographical information comes from the large French biographical dictionary *Biographie universelle*, compiled by the Michauds. The long biographical annotation on François Véron de Forbonnais is taken almost verbatim from this source, as an excerpt shows. Liaño's annotation begins:

The author is the illustrious François Véron de Forbonnais, inspector-general of coinage and member of the institute, born in Mans in 1722, whose great-grandfather had founded in Mans a factory for strainers which in central Europe are called Vérones. After a good education and several trips to Italy and Spain in connection with his father's business affairs, he was called to Nantes in 1743, at the age of 21, by one of his uncles, who was a rich armorer there. The opulence of Nantes

19. "Par David-Renaud Boullier, originaire d'Auvergne, né de parents protest. à Utrecht le 24 mars 1699, ministre zélé chez ses coreligionnaires à Amsterdam, écrivain incorrect, obscur, diffus mais utile à des lecteurs qui étudient en conscience, homme respectable, mort ministre de son église à Londres le 23 déc. 1759. Son fils qui fut comme lui prédicateur passa de Londres à Amsterd. et d'Amst. à La Haye où il mourut en 1797. Il est auteur d'un petit vol. sur l'éloquence extérieure et de quelq<sup>s</sup> Sermons." In Boullier, *Lettres sur les vraies principes*.

turned his attention to the study of political economy and for 5 years he collected the material to excel in that field . . .<sup>20</sup>

The corresponding passage from *Biographie universelle* reads:

Forbonnais (François Véron de) inspector-general of coinage, member of the Institute, was born on 3 October 1722 at Mans, where his great-grandfather had founded a factory for strainers, known throughout central Europe by the name of Vérones. After finishing his studies in Paris, young Forbonnais traveled for two years in Italy and Spain on the business affairs of his father. One of his uncles, a rich armorer in Nantes, called him to join him in 1745. The extraordinary bustle of this opulent place, the richly-laden vessels received at the port there, astounded Forbonnais and turned his naturally reflective mind to the study of political economy. During a stay of five years in that city, he collected a great number of important observations about the industries, commerce, the navy, colonies, the value of coins, etc.<sup>21</sup>

In other cases, such as the information about the de Larroques and the Boulliers, *Biographie universelle* is clearly the source, but it is not followed so closely as in the case of de Forbonnais. However, Liaño does seem to have turned to *Biographie universelle* again and again, despite his expressed low opinion of it:

Salfi is the biographer of Genovesi in that miserable compilation of Michaud called *Biographie universelle*, v. 17, pp. 86–89.<sup>22</sup>

20. “L’auteur en est l’illustre François Véron de Forbonnais, inspecteur général des monnaies et membre de l’institut né au Mans en 1722 et dont le trisaïeul avait fondé au Mans une manufacture d’étamines qu’on appelle au midi de l’Europe Vérones. Après de bonnes études et des voyages bien faits en Italie et en Espagne pour les affaires commerciales de son père, il fut appelé à Nantes en 1743, âgé de 21 ans, par un de ses oncles qui y été un armateur riche. L’opulence de Nantes le tourna vers l’étude de l’Économie politique et pendant 5 ans il recueillit des matériaux pour y exceller.” In Forbonnais, *Éléments du commerce*.

21. *Biographie universelle, ancienne et moderne* (Paris: Michaud, 1811–1827), 15: 242.

22. “Salfi est le biographe de Genovesi dans la misérable compilation de Michaud dite *Biographie universelle*, tome 17 pp. 86–89.” In Genovesi, *Della diceosina*.

In his *Répertoire portatif* he called it “Biographie Universelle, which the cabal of obscurantist scholars in Paris is publishing with Michaud”.<sup>23</sup>

Liaño also used bibliographical reference works, and he was familiar with Barbier’s *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes et pseudonymes*. He often cited other editions of the work in hand, related works, or, in the case of anonymously published books, the author. It is clear that he exercised considerable skill in using reference books. However, he did not usually cite in his annotations the specific sources of bibliographical references. These are rarely as obvious as *Biographie universelle* is for biographical details; indeed, such information could have come from any of the catalogues or bibliographies that were available in the early nineteenth century.

In his copy of the 1723 edition of *Mémoires chroniques et dogmatiques*, written by Hyacinthe Robillard d’Avrigny but published anonymously, Liaño cites the author and the date of the first edition:

The 1st edition of this work is that of 1720, one year after the death of the author (d’Avrigny), published in Paris by Guérin. L.<sup>o</sup><sup>24</sup>

In *Exposition de la doctrine de l’Église Gallicane* by César Chesneau Du Marsais, he refers to another book by the same author:

In 1719 there appeared, printed in Rome, a book by Du Marsais entitled *Politique Charnelle de la Cour de Rome*, taken from the *History of the Council of Trent* by Cardinal Pallavicini.<sup>25</sup>

Writing in a copy of the anonymous *Essais sur les intérêts du commerce maritime*, he gives the author’s name:

23. Álvaro-Agustín de Liaño, *Répertoire portatif de l’histoire et de la littérature des nations espagnole et portugaise* (Berlin: Nauck, 1818), 1: pt.2, 302.

24. “La 1<sup>re</sup> édition de cet ouvrage est celle de 1720, un an après la mort de l’auteur, (d’Avrigny) de Paris chez Guérin. L.<sup>o</sup>” In Robillard d’Avrigny, *Mémoires*.

25. “En 1719 il a paru comme imprimé à Rome un livre de Du Marsais intitulé *Politique charnelle de la Cour de Rome*, tiré del’Hist. du Conc. de Trente du Card. Pallavicin.” In Du Marsais, *Exposition de la doctrine*.

Author: D'Héguerty, according to M. Barbier, Dict. des An. et Ps., but a man omitted in the Biogr. Univ. of Michaud.<sup>26</sup>

The author of another anonymous work, *Voyages d'un philosophe*, is identified by referring to a book by Cornelius de Pauw:

Voyages of M. Le Poivre. (See Paw [sic], who gives his name and praises him in the *Défense des Recherches philosophiq. sur les Américains contre Dom Pernety*, p. 201, chap. 36).<sup>27</sup>

As the example citing de Pauw shows, Liaño was well-read and adept at finding information in sources other than what can be considered standard reference works. A particularly detailed use of other books appears in a long annotation in Matthieu de Larroque's *Histoire de l'Eucharistie*, in which Liaño quoted two Latin theological works by Jacques Boileau and one French work by Abbé Philippe-Louis Joly.

Annotations in which Liaño expresses his strong opinions are lively, even entertaining. Lamenting the "Jesuitization" of Robillard d'Avrigny's works after his death, he wrote:

D. Clemenset assures us, on the report of a Jesuit (preface to *Lettres de Eus. Philalèthe & Fr. Morenas*, 3rd edition, p. iv), that d'Avrigny left these *Memoires* in the hands of his brother, from whom they were retrieved after the death of the author in order to accommodate them to the interests of the Pelagian and pharisaical Society of the Jesuits. L.<sup>28</sup>

Even when he has judged a book positively, he may add a negative remark about another person or group, as in this example:

26. "Auteur: D'Héguerty [sic], selon M. Barbier Dict. des An. et Ps. mais homme omis dans la Biogr. Univ. de Michaud." In O'Héguerty, *Essai sur les intérêts*.

27. "Voyages de M. Le Poivre. (Voir Paw [sic] qui le nomme et le loue dans la *Défense des Recherches philosophiq. sur les Américains contre Dom Pernety*, p.201, chap 36.)" In Poivre, *Voyages*.

28. "D. Clémenset assure sur le rapport d'un Jésuite, (Avertissement des *Lettres d'Eus. Philalèthe à Fr. Morenas*, 3<sup>me</sup> edition page iv.) que d'Avrigny laissa ces mémoires dans les mains de son frere d'où on les retira après la mort de l'auteur pour les accomoder aux intérêts de la Société pélagienne et pharisaïque des jésuites." In Robillard d'Avrigny, *Mémoires*.



Letters against the impious nominal and outward Roman Catholics and Protestants of Europe in the 18th century, and defense of the *Pensées* of the great Pascal and 3 letters about the philosophy of Voltaire.<sup>29</sup>

Some of the bitterest comments, entirely negative, are directed against Jean Martin de Prades:

Impious summary of the history of the church of Jesus Christ written by the execrable apostate Jean Martin de Prades, who dared to profane the name of the venerable abbot Claude Fleury in order to attract public curiosity with this contemptible rhapsody.<sup>30</sup>

Another passage in the same annotation reads:

This book is an excellent introduction to the art of speaking with the same blame of the Jesuits as of the Jansenists and of preaching a profound indifference to the substance of Christianity by spreading, according to the needs of philosophism, calumnies and lies in a style suited to having them received as so many truths.<sup>31</sup>

The book by de Prades is one of several in which Liaño prefaced his annotation with a prayer, presumably to be repeated before re-reading the book. The prayer reads:

O my Savior! may this book and all those which resemble it not leave my Library except to support polemical studies by

29. "Lettres contre les impies nominalement et extérieurement. Catholiques-Romains et Protestants de l'Europe du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle, et Défense des pensées du grand Pascal et 3 Lettres sur la Philosophie de Voltaire." In Boullier, *Lettres sur les vraies principes*.

30. "Abrégé impie de l'histoire de l'église de J. C. écrit par l'execrable apostat Jean-Martin de Prades, qui a osé profaner le nom du vénérable abbé Claude Fleury pour exciter la curiosité publique avec cette méprisable rhapsodie." In Prades, *Abrégé*.

31. "Ce livre est une excellente introduction à l'art de parler avec le même mépris des Jésuites que des Jansénistes et de prêcher une profonde indifférence en matière de Christianisme en répandant d'après les besoins du philosophisme les calomnies et les mensonges dans un style assorti au but de les faire recevoir comme autant de vérités." In Prades, *Abrégé*.

someone who, like me, does not want to live one moment except to adore you and to execrate the blasphemers who have wanted to destroy your church.<sup>32</sup>

Liaño explains the purpose of such a prayer in another annotation:

This book is one of those which should not be read without praying to the Lord beforehand to preserve us from all complicity with the perverse men who wrote it. We should not look for anything in it except to prepare ourselves to combat their sophisms.<sup>33</sup>

But in other cases a prayer might be thankful in spirit and not refer specifically to the book in which it is written:

Lord Jesus, my only master! may everything that is in the writings of your servants be in accord with your doctrine, may everything that they owe to the ineffable action of your spirit be engraved upon my heart and produce that faith, alive and full of good works which is the masterpiece of your power and of your grace, that faith which justifies, sanctifies, comforts, and saves, that faith without which we can only be lost. Those things which are in accord with your will, God, may you impress them on our hearts. Amen.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to the prayers, the most emotional passages in Liaño's annotations are his autobiographical reflections. These are invariably

32. "O mon Sauveur! que ce livre et tous ceux qui lui ressemblent ne sortent de ma Bibliotheque que pour seconder des etudes polémiques de qui, comme moi, ne veut vivre un moment que pour t'adorer, et execre les blasphémateurs qui ont voulu anéantir ton église." In Prades, *Abrégé*.

33. "Ce livre est un de ceux qu'on ne doit lire sans prier auparavant le Seigneur de nous préserver de toute complicité avec les hommes pervers qui l'ont écrit. Nous ne devons y chercher qu'à nous préparer pour combattre leurs sophismes." Tragonne, *Sermons*.

34. "Seigneur Jesus, mon unique maître! que tout ce que dans les écrits de Vos serviteurs est d'accord avec votre doctrine, tout ce qu'ils ont dû à l'action ineffable de votre esprit soit gravé profondément dans mon coeur et y produise cette foi vive et féconde en bonnes oeuvres qui est le chef-d'oeuvre de votre pouvoir et de votre grace; cette foi qui justifie, sanctifie, console et sauve; cette foi sans laquelle nous ne pouvons que nous perdre. Quae dixere tuis consona sensibus, Nostris illa, Deus, cordibus imprimas. Amen." In Nicole, *L'Esprit de M. Nicole*.

written in Latin in the third person as a continuation of an ex-libris statement, as if the act of writing his name led him to ponder his life. One of the more concise statements reads:

From the library of Alvar-Augustin-Maria de Liágno, a most miserable man, a Spaniard, born of noble parents fervent in the Roman Catholic faith, in 1782, a Carmelite of St. Theresa, an unworthy priest of the Holy Roman Church, taught at a renowned Jansenist school but an apostate from papal tyranny, at last truly penitent from the heart.<sup>35</sup>

Another, more rambling autobiographical statement, which is too involved to quote in full, is couched in similar terms. It mentions the “horrible sin” of his leaving the Catholic Church and the period when “for the space of 20 years he lived as a Calvinist a most bitter life among schismatic deists” and “among the Prussians and the Germans”.<sup>36</sup> Annotations of this type were obviously written after Liaño’s reconversion to Catholicism. The first one quoted above is not dated, but the second has the date September 30, 1832.

The annotations in Liaño’s books can be followed for almost twenty years—the earliest one dates from 1814 and the latest from 1832. Not enough are dated to make it clear how the activity of writing in his books developed, but it is interesting to speculate what doing so meant to him at various points in his life. What seems to have begun simply as a means of recording his ownership of his books perhaps grew into a way of keeping notes about his reading and his reactions to particular books. Possibly, he even used such annotations to prepare his published writing, which is often so rambling that it seems to have been assembled from scattered notes and anecdotes that caught his attention. After he returned to Catholicism and, growing older, perceived that he no longer had any audience or influence in Germany,

35. “Ἐκ βιβλιοφυλακίῳ Alvari-Augustini-Mariae de Liágno miserrimi hominis—, Hispani, nobilibus et fervidis in catholico-romana fide parentibus nati a [MD]CCLXXXII, Carmelitae-teresiani, indigni S. Romanae Ecclesiae sacerdotis, a clara Jansenianorum schola edocti at ex tyrannide papali ἀποστατου, tandem vero ex corde poenitentis.” In Larroque, *Histoire de l’Eucharistie*.

36. “. . . per spatium XX annos Calvinianus vitam inter schismaticos deistas amarissimam egerit . . . inter borussos et germanos”. In Du Marsais, *Exposition de la doctrine*.

it seems probable that the blank leaves of his books became an important outlet for his opinions and emotions. It is this possibility that makes the later annotations so poignant.

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