

The School of Salamanca of the 16th century **prof. Juan Belda Plans**

Abstract: The School of Salamanca constitutes the top of the renewed catholic theology during the early modern age. The concept, the specific characteristics of their methods, the main professors and their works, as well as their international projection and topicality, are studied here.

Key words. Renewal of Theology, *Loci theologici*, Scholasticism-Humanism, Council of Trent

After an unsettled late medieval period, the sixteenth century in Europe presented itself as a new historical cycle, full of vitality and original perspectives. It was a time of significant changes as a consequence of the late medieval crises of plagues, famine, warfare, civil unrest, and the Great Western Schism, and also due to important phenomena such as Renaissance humanism and the budding Protestant Reformation.

Looking at the field of theology in the late fifteenth century, we might ask: what was the situation? We find a deteriorated Scholastic theology that was viewed with apprehension by the new cultural currents of the time. Among other defects, it was accused of being a theology susceptible to logicist dialectics in which disputes abounded among opposing schools of scholasticism. They were frequently occupied in the study of topics of little use and, moreover, distanced from the genuine theological sources (Sacred Scripture and the writings of the church fathers). Its formal method of the “*quaestio*” and its poor Latinity led to a negative image.¹ The University of Paris was the theological center par excellence (based on an old tradition and enjoying great prestige) where weak Scholastic theology dominated the scene. New humanist thinking soon appeared, creating a conflict between the Scholastics and humanists, each wanting to control the university.

Meanwhile, what was happening in Spain? The situation was somewhat peculiar; the country had just gotten over a long political, religious, and cultural confrontation with the Islamic world. In the year 1492 the eight centuries of occupation by Muslim invaders from North Africa ended with a Christian victory in the Reconquista War. The Catholic King and Queen unified the Spanish kingdoms and began the extensive task of promoting arts and letters in a country where there had been no time for study and culture.²

What Was the School of Salamanca? Defining Features

It must be affirmed before anything else that the School of Salamanca was a school of theology. The works of the Salamancan masters, however, also provide us with rich content in judicial and economic matters, which have in turn been studied by the specialists of those fields. Here we deal with some authors who were professors of the Faculty of Theology of Salamanca, although their studies went beyond theology.

So, what is understood by the “School of Salamanca?” It could be defined as a theological movement of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries made up of a group of professors of the

¹ Cf. Juan Belda Plans, *La Escuela de Salamanca y la renovación de la teología en el siglo XVI* (Madrid, 2000), 6-22

² John H. Elliot, *La España imperial 1469-1716*, 5^a edition, trans. J. Marfany (Barcelona, 1986), (orig. London, 1963), 132-5

Faculty of Theology of Salamanca University, who were considered disciples of the Dominican Thomist, Master Francisco de Vitoria. They followed his guidelines and methodology, thus forming a cohesive group of theologians with common characteristics. Vitoria's main objective was the renovation of Scholastic theology.³

All of these professors embodied a homogeneous response, consistent with the considerable challenges of the theology of the time and its renovation. Above all, they contributed to the essential characteristic a "spirit" or "style" of exercising theology, which incorporated traditional elements (the scientific ideal of theology, typical of the great medieval Scholastic) and modern elements (the recourse to the positive sources of theology, according to the typical methods of the Renaissance humanism), up till then dissociated and in mutual dispute. We find these elements of theological renovation united here for the first time, systematically developed and, above all, with the fixed rules of a School, forming a true investigational team.⁴

However, there is now a strong debate among scholars, which tends to redefine the concept of "School of Salamanca" from a broader (open) perspective, so that the Theological School of Francisco de Vitoria, would be only one part of a broader cultural phenomenon, whose list of leading authors would expand, and even have a transnational scope, given that many of the Masters coming from Salamanca taught in other European universities, in Spanish America, and even in the Philippines.

All of them have a certain connection with the University of Salamanca and its great Masters. The School of Salamanca as such would be like the "epicenter" of a great scientific earthquake that occurred at that time. It would, so to speak, constitute the "hard core" of this scientific phenomenon, where the process originates. From there, it expands throughout the civilized world (as we have said above), as in ever wider concentric circles, but perhaps also with less strength and brilliance than in its origin. The results were admirable, not only in the Sacred Sciences, but in many other fields⁵.

As for its temporal duration, the School of Salamanca lasted during the sixteenth and part of the seventeenth centuries. It is usually divided into two periods. The first period covers the first fifty years of the School when all its characteristics were produced. The second period comprised the last third of the sixteenth century and beyond. This period presented some variations from the origins, namely, a return to the strict Thomism that conditioned all its theological aspects.⁶

What are the specific characteristics that distinguish this theological School?⁷

[*Investigational freedom*]. The first characteristic is the free search for truth, without ties to any system that could condition the scientific work of its members. It dealt with "open" theology, not a closed school. The golden rule of Master Vitoria was to set before everything the "search for the truth". Great freedom would be given for research in theology, avoiding following without question the theological doctrine of a particular school (Thomism, Scotism, or Nominalism) or a specific author. In the School of Salamanca, St. Thomas Aquinas was particularly appreciated, although authors of diverse tendencies were referenced without being tied to any

³ Cf. Juan Belda Plans, "La Escuela de Salamanca. Hacia una noción crítica," in: *La Escuela de Salamanca*, (Pamplona, 1999) 147-162

⁴ Cf. Melquiades Andrés Martín, *La Teología Española en el siglo XVI*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1976-1977) vol. II, 371-372

⁵ For all this current debate, not yet concluded, one can consult the recent studies collected in the Bibliography: Thomas Duve (2018). Marai Martín Gómez (2019). José Luis Egío and Celia Alejandra Ramírez (2020), among others. Cf. *infra*, section '*Contemporary and posterior influence*'.

⁶ Juan Belda Plans, *La Escuela de Salamanca*, 170-182.

⁷ Cf. *Ibidem*, chap. 2, ep. 7: *Características y notas específicas*, 183-198

one in particular. This enabled great liveliness and originality to the professors' theological work, while at the same time avoiding the reproach of the humanists who accused the Scholastics of uselessly wasting their energy in a proud fight between Schools.

[*Scholastic-Humanist Union*] For the humanist, theology had to consist in the scientific study of the Bible; an exegesis that was based on the original sources (Hebrew and Greek), and was carried out according to historical-philological methods. The Protestants agreed in great part with this approach.

In the presence of these criteria for a somewhat radical reform, the Salamanca masters followed their own way. It was evident that decadent Scholasticism had to change, but according to their criteria, it did not need to be suppressed altogether. Rather, it could be renewed and purified of its faults and defects and combined with the beneficial contributions of contemporary humanist culture. Thus, that which characterizes the School of Salamanca is the desired union between Scholasticism and humanism, resulting in a wider and comprehensive vision of theology.⁸ This was the most important novelty: the creation of a new theological method characterised by a sound equilibrium of positive theology and speculative theology.

It was, in effect, positive theology that took into account the calls of the humanists: *ad fontes!* Hence it demanded the comprehensive management of the sources and erudition that characterised it: Sacred Scripture, the church fathers, conciliar and papal decrees, and so forth. At the same time it was also speculative theology, that is, scientific and deductive. Reason was assigned a role in the theological work. It was neither exaggerated (as in the sophistic and verbose decadent Scholastic theologies), nor was it minimized (as the humanists advocated). In the School of Salamanca both positive and speculative aspects found a harmonious and balanced development, giving way to sound and effective theology.

[*New formal and literary style*] Another accusation of the humanists against scholastic theology was its use of non-classical Latin, lack of literary quality, and arid style in accordance with the complex formal structure of the "*Quaestio*." The Salamancan masters also addressed that challenge. The most significant external trait is perhaps their formal and elegant literary style. Care was taken for Latin diction, as opposed to the previous barbaric style.⁹ Melchor Cano would be a good example of its use; his Ciceronian Latin is of extraordinary quality. It is a theology that appreciated the classical Greco-Romano world: it cherished the classical languages and the use of Greco-Latin sources (writers of prose and poetry, lawyers, and philosophers were profusely quoted).¹⁰

Main issues addressed

The object of study was also achieved by the creativity of the School of Salamanca. It discarded the useless and obtuse issues of the previous scholastic Schools. The characteristic of this School is that, without overlooking habitual great issues, it was painstakingly concerned with existing, current problems: political, juridical, and economic. Many of these arose from the recent geographical discoveries, or those derived from the changes in Europe during that peri-

⁸ Martin Grabmann, *Historia de la Teología Católica*, trans. David Gutiérrez (Madrid, 1940; orig. Freiburg, 1933) 182-192

⁹ Cf. Vicente Beltrán de Heredia, *Orientación humanística de la teología vitoriana*, in [*Miscelánea Beltrán de Heredia*, 4 vols.] (Salamanca, 1972-73), vol. II, 38-39

¹⁰ Cf. Juan Belda Plans, *Melchor Cano humanista*, in: Juan Belda ed., Melchor Cano, *De locis theologicis* (Madrid, 2006), XCIV-CXXXVI

od.¹¹ This required the opening of theology to new cultures and to human problems that were springing up at that moment. The inviolable dignity of all men, as well as the ethical perspective of international law and of social and economic structures were included in the theological work and examined in the light of Christian revelation.¹²

Hence, the great Salamancan masters, owing to in their status as theologians, were consulted by monarchs and princes to obtain Christian criteria, when considering the significant issues of the era. A catalogue of these issues could include the following: the lawfulness of the American conquest, human dignity, political freedom of the American Indians, the ethics of peace and war, the origins of political power, the value of money, just prices, usury and loans, begging and alms-giving.

The efforts made by the Salamancan theologians in the study of such disciplines as law, economy, or philosophy contributed to important progress in those fields of knowledge. Francisco de Vitoria is recognized as a founder of international law.¹³ Domingo de Soto and Martin de Azpilcueta are considered pioneers of economics and mercantile law.¹⁴ Metaphysics and psychology experienced important advances in line with discussions on the relationship of grace and freedom. The result was an excellent symbiosis between theology and human sciences.

Issues like the interaction of grace and freedom (the *De Auxiliis* controversy), theological epistemology, the meaning of the Biblical words, and the relationship between the Roman pontiff and ecumenical councils, among others, were topics of special interest.

Theologians most representative of the School and their adversaries

There were about thirty members of the School of Salamanca, not all of the same ability. Among the pioneers of the first generation, three great teachers should be highlighted: Francisco de Vitoria, Domingo de Soto, and Melchor Cano, all being university professors in the Faculty of Theology, holding the first chair “*Prima*”, as well as members of the Dominican order. In the second generation of the School were the Dominican Domingo Báñez, the Augustinian friars Juan de Gueverra, the “*Visperas*” university professor of theology, and Luis de Leon, the “Bible” professor of the same Faculty.¹⁵

Of all the members of the school, Francisco de Vitoria (1483-1546) occupied a place of special consideration. The precious fruits of theological renovation that sprouted from the School are due to his genius and to his extensive teachings. His earlier prolonged stay at the famous University of Paris, in the College-Convent of St Jacques, had a determinate influence upon his future formation. There he was exposed to humanism, especially from already famous professors such as the Italian Hellenist Girolamo Aleandro (1480-1542). Francisco experienced a revival of Thomism hand-in-hand with his master Pieter Crockaert (c. 1470-1514), who in the convent of St Jacques commented on Aquinas’ *Summa theologica*.¹⁶

¹¹ Cf. Vicente Beltrán de Heredia, *Orientación humanística de la teología vitoriana*, [Miscelánea, vol. II], (Madrid: 1947), 47-50

¹² Cf. John Paul II, *Discurso a los teólogos españoles*, Salamanca, noviembre 1, 1982, in: *Mensaje de Juan Pablo II a España* (Madrid, 1982), 50

¹³ Cf. Ramón Hernández Martín, *Francisco de Vitoria. Vida y pensamiento internacionalista* (Madrid, 1995), 211

¹⁴ Abelardo del Vigo Gutiérrez, *Cambistas, mercaderes y banqueros en el Siglo de Oro español* (Madrid, 1997), 109-115

¹⁵ Cf. Juan Belda Plans, ¿Quiénes forman parte de la Escuela de Salamanca? in: *La Escuela de Salamanca*, chap. 2, ep. 4: 162-169

¹⁶ Ricardo García-Villoslada, *La Universidad de París durante los estudios de Francisco de Vitoria* (Roma, 1938), 64-71

Francisco's Salamanca period began when he was appointed to the *Prima* Chair of theology in 1526. His teaching gained him more and more followers. He commented on St Thomas' *Summa* with an open spirit and he surrounded himself with the best pupils who were to become the initial School. Vitoria was called the Spanish Socrates for his refusal to write. He rather favored oral teaching in the university courses, wherein he formed a large number of disciples who would be the ones to carry out the necessary changes in the teaching of theology. His classes were prepared with great care; he was a great communicator and even entertaining. Thanks to his "dictation" system, his pupils were able to obtain excellent notes from his lectures. These notes served as textbooks (because books in the first years of the printing press were expensive and scarce).¹⁷

Francisco's legacy became his famous university "Relecciones," an annual academic event in which the university professor had to expound upon a given theological topic before the university council and students from all the faculties. This culmination of his theological teaching was achieved from what was a routine event. His speech was thoroughly prepared, making sure the themes were up-to-date. His lectures rapidly became very famous, creating expectation and excitement around the whole university. His best-known lectures were the two *Relecciones de Indis* about issues in the American colonies. The first one was about the legitimate charters of the American conquest; and the next one about just war and its conditions. These burning and controversial themes had great repercussion upon political decisions taken at the time. The first lecture laid out the foundations of international law, replacing the mediaeval conception of *orbis Christianus* with the *communitas totius orbis*.¹⁸ Francisco elaborated upon his *Relecciones* in writing, a polished text; but he did not wish them to be published while he was still alive. The high quality of the work and the interest people took in it meant that there were no lack of copyists who offered to reproduce the texts with great fidelity. The first edition was published in Lyon by Jacob Boyer in 1557. Everyone was taken by surprise; it upset the Dominicans of Salamanca who prepared a more accurate second edition, published in Salamanca in 1565.¹⁹

Vitoria's theology was neither apologetic nor polemical. Without doubt, it considered Luther's ideas as well as the theological and biblical expositions of Erasmus, although Vitoria distanced himself more and more from both men. Unlike the controversialist Catholic theologians who explicitly assumed the anti-Protestant apologetic task using a polemic style, Vitoria did not enter into controversy. His theological assignment was not conditioned to controversial questions; he would rather positively address important topical issues producing high quality theology. He seldom referred directly to Luther or Erasmus, always adopting a serene and cool scientific disposition, unencumbered by emotions.

Domingo de Soto (1495-1560)²⁰ was Vitoria's right hand and his perfect complement. Whereas Vitoria did not write, Soto was the great publicist of the School. He wrote several treatises of great scope and influence. He came from a humble family, studied in the modern University of Alcalá (1512-16) where he soon stood out for his great intellectual and moral qualities. He moved to Paris where he studied theology for only two years (1517-19); there he met the young Vitoria whom he heard as a new teacher in Convent College of St Jacques. Soto returned to Alcalá where he finished his theological studies. He was appointed teacher in the faculty of Arts where he taught philosophical matters, above all *Summulas*, for four years (1520-24).

¹⁷ Vicente Beltrán de Heredia, *Francisco de Vitoria* (Barcelona, 1939), 43-9

¹⁸ Ramón Hernández Martín, *Francisco de Vitoria. Vida y pensamiento internacionalista*, (Madrid, 1995), 113-115

¹⁹ Teófilo Urdánoz, ed., *Obras de Francisco de Vitoria. Relecciones teológicas*, (Madrid, 1960), 85-96

²⁰ Cf. Vicente Beltrán de Heredia, *Domingo de Soto. Estudio biográfico documentado*, (Salamanca, 1960)

After a spiritual crisis, he entered the Dominican Order already mature in 1524 when he was twenty-nine years old. He resided in the famous convent of San Esteban of Salamanca, where he widened his theological formation for six years (1526-32) under the auspices of Vitoria. After a public examination in 1532, Soto gained the second Chair “*Visperas*” of Theology at the University of Salamanca. He taught for thirteen consecutive years during his first period of theological teaching (until 1545). Although not as brilliant as Vitoria, he was perhaps wiser and more profound.

The following stage of Soto’s life is of utmost importance. He was designated by Charles V as imperial theologian to take part in the Council of Trent (1545-63). He stood out notably there as “*doctor salmantinus*”, especially regarding one of the core issues of controversy with the Protestants: the doctrine of justification. His presentations greatly influenced the documents later approved by the conciliar fathers. On returning from Trent in 1552, Soto was required to take the first chair “*Prima*” of theology at Salamanca, where he remained until his death in 1560. It was during this period of maturity that his main works he had been compiling over the years were published.

Apart from the *Relecciones* (eleven in all) that Soto delivered, his works include theological treatises of considerable scope. In 1547, *De natura et gratia*, about justification, was published in Venice. He dedicated it to the fathers of the Council of Trent. Later, in 1554, another great and influential work appeared: the ten books *De iustitia et iure*, on the virtue of justice and its derivatives. Finally, he published his *Commentarium in Quartum Sententiarum*, the first volume in 1558 and the second volume in 1560, at the end of his life. It was an original and extensive theological treatise about the sacraments. Twenty-six editions were published in the sixteenth century alone.

Soto was not a protagonist in particular theological controversies. In *De natura et gratia* he defended the Catholic doctrine against Protestant ideas. Additionally he brought up in his work on sacraments controversial matters regarding the sacrament of Holy Orders. However, just like Vitoria, Soto exulted in great serenity and scientific moderation, carrying out constructive theological work.

Melchor Cano (1509-60) is the third great master of the foundational period. He was the favourite disciple of Vitoria who praised him from the beginning for his giftedness. Cano succeeded Vitoria in the “*Prima*” Chair of the University of Salamanca. In his theological studies Cano was imbued with the whole theological legacy of his Master.²¹ On finishing his period of formation, Cano attained the professorship of St. Thomas in the Cisnerian University of Alcalá (1543). Of the three theological professorships, this was the most significant one. The humanist orientation of Alcalá was well known and its faculty of arts stood out for its prestige and influence. Biblical and philological studies were especially encouraged. Cano inhaled this intense atmosphere of Renaissance humanism, which added to the orientations he had received from Vitoria. Thus, throughout his scientific activity, he stood out as a humanist theologian.

Shortly after, Cano attained the “*Prima*” Chair at Salamanca, where he remained engaged in intense academic activity for some five years (1546-51). Whilst there he was appointed an imperial theologian by Charles V and participated in the second period of the Council of Trent (1551-52). He became known by the whole European theological world due to his outstanding interventions in the Tridentine sessions, which anointed him as a great Salamancan theologian.

²¹ Cf. Fermín Caballero, *Conquenses ilustres, Vida del Ilmo. Fray Melchor Cano*, (Madrid, 1871; facsimile, Tarancón, Olcades, 1980). See also Juan Belda Plans, “El Maestro Melchor Cano OP,” in: *La Escuela de Salamanca*, chap. 6, 503-618. Ample presentation of his life and works

Trent also gave him the opportunity to practice the new Salamanican theological method. The intrinsic value and efficaciousness of his interventions were clear.

On returning from Trent, Cano ceased being a university professor at Salamanca. From that time his main objective was to conclude the scientific work of his life: the methodological treatise *De locis theologicis*, that was already well advanced. Writing was made very difficult for him because of the frequent assignments he received from the Spanish court. He lacked the necessary quiet for his theological work. Melchor Cano passed into history as the main author of the new theological method that responded to the renewed expectations of the School of Salamanca. This was a major turning point in the evolution and renovation of the Scholastic theology of his time. Cano's major work, *De locis theologocis libri duodecim*, is an authentic methodological treatise, in which the foundations of the rules of theological argumentation were laid out. Due to diverse interruptions, Cano was not able to finish his great work, despite beginning it early in his career. It was published posthumously in Salamanca in 1563.²² It was an immediate success: in the following twenty years, six editions were published, five of which were outside of Spain: Louvain (2), Venice and Cologne (2); after those dates, it was published twenty-five times more until the early twentieth century.

The work consisted of a total of fourteen books grouped into three sections. Part one consisted in an introduction, notion, enumeration, and division of the theological themes or "commonplaces" (Book 1). Part two, the longest section, contained the theoretical material, detailed expositions of the nature of each of the ten theological "commonplaces" and their probative value in theological argumentation (Books 2-11). Part three was the practical part. It described the use of the theological "commonplaces" in Scholastic debate, in the exposition of the Sacred Scripture, and in the theological controversy with heretics and pagans (Books 12-14). Cano wrote only the first twelve books; it was an incomplete but almost finished work. The ten theological topics or "commonplaces" were: 1st Sacred Scripture; 2nd Traditions of Christ and the Apostles; 3rd the Catholic Church; 4th the Councils, especially the general ones; 5th the Roman Church; 6th the Church Fathers; 7th the Scholastic Theologians (and Canonists); 8th Natural Reason; 9th Philosophers and Jurists; 10th Human History.²³ However, not all "commonplaces" had the same value or argumentative power. Cano classified them thus: natural "commonplaces" are the first seven; foreign or alien "commonplaces" are the last three. Within the three natural ones, there is a distinction between the first two (Sacred Scripture and Divine Tradition), containing revelation and thus have maximum value and argumentative force. The five remaining ones (the Catholic Church, Councils, Roman Church, Holy Fathers, and Scholastic Theologians) are explanatory "commonplaces" of revelation that depend on unequal criteria and confer unequal argumentative value.²⁴

What were the underlying intentions of Cano when writing his treatise? The fundamental problem was the absence of understanding in the theological discussions between Catholics and Protestants. This was due, in Cano's opinion, to the different conceptions of the nature of theology and its very principles. With his work *De Locis Theologicis* he intended to establish a theological epistemology valid for all, which would make possible true dialogue on a common ground. True solutions could only be reached this way. The treatise *De Locis* responded to this dire need.

The confrontation between Cano and the Protestants was not limited to a particular topic, but rather confronted a vital underlying question that affected all the problems. This orientation

²² *Editio princeps: De locis theologicis libri duodecim* (Salmanticae, 1563). Spanish translation: Melchor Cano, *De locis theologicis*, Juan Belda Plans, ed., (Madrid, 2006)

²³ Cf. *De locis theologicis*, book I, chap. 1 and 3

²⁴ Cf. the classic study of Albert Lang, *Die loci theologici des Melchior Cano und die methode des dogmatischen beweises. Zur theologischen Methodologie und ihrer Geschichte* (Munich, 1925)

was certainly original in the context of the theological confrontations of his day. It could be said that Cano tried to resolve the controversy by elevation, by establishing a common theological epistemology. This was the great apologetic instrument that he contributed to his era, and the great merit of his work.

Influence on contemporary and subsequent theology

The importance of the theological renovation of Vitoria and his School resides not only in its intrinsic quality but above all in its expansive force and in the continuity of its achievements over the years. How did this theological movement influence later history?²⁵

The School of Salamanca influenced a wide range of other universities. Its success was absolute within Salamanca, the *Alma Mater*. A great number of disciples of the Salamancan masters were profoundly influenced by the new theological methods. They were people who were later held in great esteem. Outstanding religious like Alonso de Castro and Andres de Vega OFM, teachers within their own orders and important theologians of the Council of Trent, had been disciples of Vitoria. Many of the leading Spanish bishops who stood out at the Council of Trent, like Pedro Guerrero (Archbishop of Granada), Gaspar de Zuñiga (Archbishop of Santiago), or Francisco Blanco (Bishop of Orense), among others, were also outstanding pupils of Vitoria. In their contributions to the Council, they highlighted ideas and statements that Vitoria had already defended.

Outside of Spain, powerful influence could be attributed to Salamanca. The Jesuit Roman College was of special importance; principal teachers like Francisco de Toledo (later made cardinal) and Francisco Suarez had been disciples of the Salamancan masters. According to some authors, the Society of Jesus was the main proponent of the expansion of the Salamancan School. In and around the Sorbonne, Paris, the principal exponent was Juan de Maldonado, SJ, disciple of Domingo de Soto. His inclination towards theological methodology was well known and it was his influence on the Society's *Ratio studiorum* that presents interesting similarities with the Salamancan methods. Another famous Jesuit teacher, Gregorio de Valencia SJ, a brilliant disciple of the Salamancan Master Mancio de Corpus Christi, taught in the German universities of Dilingen and Ingolstadt. It was he who directed the beginnings of these two universities within the Catholic Restoration of Bavaria. The influence of Salamanca is similarly appreciated there.

On observing the Spanish American university environment (the two pioneer universities, San Marcos of Lima, Peru and the University of Mexico, both founded in 1551), we find distinguished teachers from the Salamancan lecture halls. Alonso de Veracruz, OSA, who formed part of the group of select disciples of Francisco de Vitoria, particularly stands out. Notably careful and well equipped with notes, "*relecciones*", and books of Salamancan origin, he transmitted in Mexico and in the general *studium* of his order the whole legacy of his teacher.

Finally, we cannot forget another channel of long-term influence. The enormous diffusion that the Salamancan teachers' main works: the "*Relecciones*" of Vitoria, the great treatises of Domingo de Soto, and above all, Melchor Cano's important scientific methodological treatise, *De locis theologicis*, were abundantly published across Europe until the twentieth century. Cano's influence as a disseminator of Salamancan methodology was of great importance. A relevant side note: in 1771 the Spanish curriculum established a special professorship called "*De locis*" or "*de Melchor Cano*" in the universities of Salamanca and Alcalá, in which Cano's work and methodology was studied; shortly after it was extended to all Spanish universities.

²⁵ A detailed study in Juan Belda Plans, "Proyección e influencia de la Escuela de Salamanca," in: *La Escuela de Salamanca*, chap. 9, 827-926

What impact did the School of Salamanca have on the humanist environment? The dialogue between the humanist world and the Salamanca masters was very fruitful, above all for theology. After Vitoria's and his followers' serious contributions, the accusing voices were almost completely silenced. The main claims had been accepted by the theologians, although with a critical evaluation of some demands incompatible with sound theology. It was necessary to defend philosophical or speculative reasoning in theological work, and not only historical or philological examination of texts as urged by the humanists.²⁶ A certain extremism in the importance of the Biblical languages (Hebrew and Greek) as well as an excessive literary aestheticism, especially in the Latin translations of the Bible, was also criticized.²⁷

Finally, what can be said of the relationship between the School of Salamanca and the theology of the Reformation? The essential proposal of the School, in establishing a theological method to be a foundation to elucidate the issues in dispute, scarcely had an effect upon the Protestants, whose methodology, based on "*sola Scriptura*" and "*free examination*", hardly changed. The lack of understanding and of constructive dialogue followed previous patterns. Lastly, it should be noted that one of the few direct confrontations on ecclesiological matter was between Melchor Cano and Jean Calvin.²⁸

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²⁶ Cf. Juan Belda,Plans "El humanismo evolucionado de Melchor Cano," in: *La Escuela de Salamanca*, chap. 3, 261-309

²⁷ Melchor Cano devotes 4 chapters of his work to the question: *De locis theologicis*, book II, chaps. 12-15; Spanish translation, Juan Belda Plans ed., 104-145. Cf. ample presentation of the topic in Juan Belda, *La Escuela de Salamanca*, 266-268, 695-719

²⁸ Cf. Melchor Cano, *De locis theologicis*, book IV, chap. 4, 2^a conclusion; Spanish translation Juan Belda Plans (ed.),244-249

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