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## **Summary of the dissertation**

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*Alfonso de Valdés a univerzální říše Karla V.*

**Alfonso de Valdés and the universal empire of Charles V**

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## Summary of the dissertation

In general terms, the main goal of our dissertation entitled *Alfonso de Valdés and the universal empire of Charles V* is to advance the research of the topic of Spanish humanism in general and that of the imperial court of Charles V (r. 1516/1519-1556) in particular. We also aim to advance the knowledge of the person of Alfonso de Valdés himself, who despite being a member of the imperial court of Charles V and his own literary legacy had so far did not attract substantial attention of historians. That is not to say that the person of Alfonso de Valdés is completely unknown to historians; after all, several editions of his work have appeared throughout the time.<sup>1</sup> Alfonso de Valdés has also received attention from some biographers of Charles V, such as Manuel Fernández Álvarez or Geoffrey Parker, as well as from the historians who studied the person of the grand chancellor of Charles V, Mercurino di Gattinara (1465-1530), such as John M. Headley and Rebecca Ard Boone.

In more particular terms, one of the central aims of this work is to advance the research in the area of Spanish humanism and also to increase the awareness of the person of Alfonso de Valdés himself, who, despite being in his time rather important member of the imperial court of Charles V, remains relatively “unknown” even among historians, however difficult it may be to define his notoriety precisely. We may however note that while some biographers of Charles V or authors who dedicate their works to the person of Mercurino di Gattinara give some attention to Alfonso de Valdés,<sup>2</sup> or that they at least mention him, some other authors do not acknowledge his role at the imperial court or even his mere existence at all.<sup>3</sup> This insufficient attention which Alfonso de Valdés so far received is in itself sufficient reason to examine his work and his ideas more closely. The study of the work of Alfonso de Valdés will also help to create clearer and more nuanced picture of the imperial court of Charles V. After all, this court, which during the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century functioned as one of the most important power centres of the entire world, was not limited to the persons of Charles V or his grand chancellor Mercurino di Gattinara but hosted a great number of other significant men likes of Francisco de Cobos, Nicolas Perrenot de Granvelle, Antoine de Granvelle, Juan Garcia Loaysa y Mendoza, Alfonso de Valdés and many others.

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1 For the purposes of our work, we used the edition of Ángel Alcalá, published in 1996, and that of Fermín Caballero, published in 1876.

2This group of authors includes for example Geoffrey Parker, John M. Headley, Rebecca Ard Boone or Manuel Fernández Álvarez. We will discuss the work of these authors further throughout our work.

3As an example of this, we may mention otherwise contributive dissertation of Vladimir Schnurbein, entitled *Mercurino Gattinara, die Idee der Monarchia Universalis und ihre Wirkung auf die Politik Kaiser Karls V.*

In the course of our work, we attempted to answer our main research question, which is: What was the exact attitude of Alfonso de Valdés towards the project of universal empire of Charles V, or more precisely, what was the content of the “universalist ideology” of Alfonso de Valdés? This main research question was then supplemented by two subquestions: Did Alfonso de Valdés develop his ideas independently of other members of the imperial court, especially the grand chancellor Mercurino di Gattinara, or did he just disseminate the ideas whose content was outlined by someone else? What was the attitude of Alfonso de Valdés towards the Reformation, whose beginning coincided with the beginning of the reign of Charles V?

Our goal was thus not to determine whether Alfonso de Valdés supported the creation of “the universal empire” or not, because this particular question was already answered by several other historians, such as John M. Headley,<sup>4</sup> Rebecca Ard Boone,<sup>5</sup> Manuel Fernández Álvarez,<sup>6</sup> Hugh Thomas,<sup>7</sup> Krzysztof J. Odyniec<sup>8</sup> or Ramón Menéndez Pidal,<sup>9</sup> We aimed rather to try to discover the precise content of Valdés’s philosophy and his stance on the project of the universal empire. Our research is based mostly on qualitative analysis of the primary sources, using both inductive as well as comparative method. Our primary sources consist mostly of writings and correspondence of Alfonso de Valdés himself, but also some of his close collaborators, such as Mercurino di Gattinara. Most of the source material is written either in Spanish or in Latin, although we also used material translated either to English or German. As for the secondary literature, we used the works of several biographers of Charles V, such as Manuel Fernández Álvarez, Geoffrey Parker or Alfred Kohler, we have also relied on authors who dedicated their studies to the person of Mercurino di Gattinara, such as John M. Headley or Rebecca Ard Boone. Especially in those parts of our work, which deal with the problem of relationship of Alfonso de Valdés with the Reformation, we have also utilized works of authors who specialize in the studies of German Reformation or the person of Martin Luther himself, such as Heiko Oberman, Thomas Brady or Robert Scribner.

In order to achieve the purpose of our work, it is necessary to first define the term “universalism” itself, which we are going to use in connection with the project of universal empire of Charles V. In order to do that, we are going to rely on our own definition of this

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<sup>4</sup>Headley, *The Emperor and his Chancellor*, p. 81.

<sup>5</sup>Ard Boone, *Mercurino di Gattinara and the Creation of the Spanish Empire*, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup>Álvarez, *Carlos V, el Cesar y el Hombre*, p. 208-209.

<sup>7</sup>Thomas, *El Imperio Español de Carlos V*, p. 40.

<sup>8</sup>Odyniec, *Diplomacy and Empire in the Age of Charles V: Johannes Dantiscus in Spain, 1519-1532*, p. 161.

<sup>9</sup>Pidal, *Idea Imperial de Carlos V*, p. 9-35.

particular term. We suggest that the adjective “universalist” can be used in order to describe either a set of ideas, not necessarily of political nature, or a particular political program, which aims, at least on a theoretical level, to encompass the whole world. Broadly speaking, universalism can be further described as consisting of three different sub-variants, which can be classified as political, religious and spiritual, although all these three categories can and often indeed do overlap each other, as it was in the case of the project of the universal empire of Charles V, which effectively combined political as well as religious elements. The term “universalism” is closely related to the term “hegemony”, although the difference between the two lies in the fact that hegemony can be restricted just to a limited part of the world, or a continent and it is often void of universalist pretensions.

The principal aim of political universalism is to establish a certain type of political authority, which would encompass or would be recognized as supreme throughout the whole world. This does not however necessarily imply the creation of some kind a global superstate, nor does it rule out the existence of various lesser autonomous entities, subordinated to one supreme authority. The good example of this kind of authority, which theoretically acted as universal, is the institution of the Holy Roman Empire, whose emperor, at least on a theoretical level, acted as a supreme secular representative of the whole Christian world. In practical terms, most of Christian emperors however lacked necessary power and means to actually fully exercise its authority. Not only were they forced to contend with other secular princes, but they also often had to struggle with representatives of spiritual power, such as popes or bishops, as well as with the external forces operating outside the Christian world. Medieval western emperors also had to take into account the existence of the Eastern-Roman empire, which lasted until 1453 and which was making the same universalist claims.

For the purpose of this work, we are going to consider the idea of the universal monarchy as a manifestation of a specific kind of humanist philosophy, which partly thanks to the favourable geopolitical context and partly thanks to the skill and determination of some of its proponents turned into a political program, however vague and only broadly defined it was, pursued by the imperial court of Charles V. Proponents of the idea of the universal empire, including the imperial secretary Alfonso de Valdés, were concentrated mainly in a circle of intellectuals around the grand chancellor Mercurino di Gattinara, and were significantly influenced by the philosophy of Erasmus of Rotterdam, while Gattinara himself

even described these men as the “third force”, standing in opposition to both Protestants as well as the partisans of the pope.<sup>10</sup>

Our work is divided into three main sections, first of which is entitled “The world of Charles V and Alfonso de Valdés”, where we introduced the persons and work of both Alfonso de Valdés as well as the emperor Charles V and we also described general situation in Spain at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The second part is entitled “Establishing the universal monarchy – fight for supremacy against France and the papacy”, where we paid closer attention to the universalist ideology of Alfonso de Valdés, especially in the context of the struggle between the empire of Charles V and the papacy of Clement VII and Francis I, but also taking into account the threat to western Europe projected by the Ottoman Empire. The third part, entitled “Between the unity and the reform: Alfonso de Valdés, universalism and early Reformation” is then dedicated to the study of the work of Alfonso de Valdés in context of the Reformation, which was just beginning in the area of the Holy Roman Empire.

In general terms, the work of Alfonso de Valdés is centred around several key events, which defined the twelve years he spent in the service of Charles V. These events are the coronation of Charles in Aachen in 1520, the imperial diet in Worms in 1521, the first war with France, which ended with the imperial victory at Pavia in 1525, the failure of the treaty of Madrid and following establishment of the League of Cognac in 1526, the Sack of Rome in 1527, the imperial diet in Augsburg in 1530 and finally the defence of Vienna from Ottoman forces in 1532. Throughout our work, we pay the attention to all of these events.

In the course of our work, we have been concerned mostly with the period of 1520 and 1532, during which Alfonso de Valdés worked at the imperial court of Charles V, first as a regular scribe, then as a secretary of the grand chancellor Gattinara and finally, from 1526, as the secretary of the emperor himself, while being charged mostly with Latin correspondence. But we have also took into account the general development of the universalist ideology in the context of western Europe, since we do not interpret the project of the universal empire of Charles V to be an isolated phenomenon, but rather a culmination of centuries long European tradition and development, which started with the emperor Charlemagne, crowned as the head of the re-established Roman Empire in 800. We thus briefly overviewed the development of the imperial universalism during the Middle Ages, especially in the context of the struggle between the representatives of secular as well as

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<sup>10</sup> Nauert, Dalzell, *The Correspondence of Erasmus, Letters 1658 to 1801, January 1527-March 1527*, p. 375.

spiritual power, that is between the popes and the emperors, however problematic the division between “secular” and “spiritual” may be in the context of the Middle Ages.

We have also paid attention to the work of famous Italian author Dante Alighieri known as *Monarchia*, in which he explicitly formulated basic axioms of the imperial universalist ideology. This work was provably known to Mercurino di Gattinara, who in 1527 unsuccessfully attempted to publish its edition, and thus most likely also to Alfonso de Valdés, who belonged to Gattinara’s inner circle.

In the second part of our work, we have argued that the imperial universalist ideology of the court of Charles V was at first formulated by Mercurino di Gattinara in 1516, when he wrote a Latin tractate entitled *Oratio Supplicatoria somnium interserens de novissima orbis morachia, ac futuro Christianorum triumpho, late enunciatis, quibus mediis ad id perveniri possit*,<sup>11</sup> in which he, using biblical references and authority of various prophecies, formulated the vision of the world united under the rule of one monarch, also often described as “pastor”, who would ensure the end of wars between Christians, protected the Christendom from external threats and generally assured the advent of new age of justice and prosperity. All this was, according to Gattinara, happening according to God’s will. Gattinara further elaborated his vision through various memoranda addressed directly to Charles, who in the meantime not only became the king of Spain (in 1516), but also was elected as the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (1519). In those memoranda, Gattinara further urged Charles to make advantage of the historical opportunity granted by God himself, who allowed Charles to rule Spain and its territories in America, Naples, Sicily, the Netherlands<sup>12</sup> and the Holy Roman Empire. Gattinara urged Charles to at first secure the territory of Italy, which he regarded to be as the most important in Europe, but also to prepare a legal reform as well as to support the propagation of the Catholic faith.

Alfonso de Valdés, working under the supervision of Gattinara, started actively promoting the universalist ideology of Charles V in 1525, when he wrote an official document entitled *Relación de la batalla de Pavia*,<sup>13</sup> in which he described the victory of

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11 “Supplicatory Oration including a Dream of the Last World Monarchy and the Triumph of Christianity, Broadly Stated, with the Means of Accomplishing It”. See Ard Boone, *Mercurino di Gattinara and the Creation of Spanish Empire*, p. 25.

12 Northern part of the former duchy of Burgundy, whose southern part was annexed by France after the death of the last duke of Burgundy, Charles the Bold, in 1477.

13 Valdés, *Obra completa*, p. 37. „Relación de las nuevas de Italia, sacadas de las cartas que los capitanes y comisario del Emperador y Rey nuestro señor han escripto a su Magestad assí de la victoria contra el Rey de Francia como de otras cossas allá acaecidas, vista y corregida por el señor Gran Chanciller y consejo de su Magestad.”

Charles V over the king of France Francis I in the battle of Pavia. Here, Valdés interpreted this victory as a sign of divine grace, whose goal was to usher the unification of the whole Christendom under the rule of one supreme monarch, to end the “civil wars” between Christians and to unite them in common defence from their enemy, which at that time was the Ottoman Empire. Towards the end of the document, Valdés also employed a biblical reference, used by Gattinara as well, stating “*Fiet unum ovile et unus pastor* [So there shall be one flock and one pastor].”<sup>14</sup>

In the course of the following years, Valdés became more involved in the “imperial propaganda” of Charles V, especially as a co-author of Latin pamphlet known as *Pro divo Carolo*, published at the beginning of 1527 directed against both the pope Clement VII as well the king of France Francis I, in which the imperial court tried to defend its position in the conflict with the papacy, accusing Clement VII of violating the responsibilities of his office and of instigation the war. Charles V was instead portraying as a prince whose sole aspiration was the peace among Christians. In *Pro divo Carolo*, the emperor also demanded the convocation of the general council, which would serve as the staging ground for the reform of the entire church.

After the event known as the Sack of Rome, which took place in May 1527, and during which the imperial forces sacked the whole city, the position of the imperial court became precarious. Alfonso de Valdés reacted first by writing a polemical dialogue entitled *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma*, written in 1527 or beginning of 1528, in which he attempted to shift the blame from the whole incident from the emperor to pope himself, while fiercely criticising the state of the contemporary church and calling for the need of its reform. Valdés later continued by writing another dialogue, this time entitled *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*, written in 1528, in which his author this time attacked the French king Francis I for his refusal to honour the content of the Treaty of Madrid, which stipulated, among other things, the complete restitution of the territory of former duchy of Burgundy, annexed by France after 1477. Alfonso de Valdés also used the opportunity to again criticise the state of the contemporary church and to present his vision of virtues as well as vices and sins of Christian of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

In the chapter 2.4., we have paid closer attention to the problem of defining the precise nature of the imperial project of Charles V and the role of various personages at the imperial court. More precisely, we have analysed the thesis of Spanish historian Ramón

<sup>14</sup> Valdés, *Obra completa*, p. 46.

Menéndez Pidal, according to whom there actually existed not one, but two different concepts. Pidal ascribes the first of these concepts to Mercurino di Gattinara, who according to him based his ideas on Dante's *Monarchia* while encouraging the emperor to undertake a violent expansion of his empire. This concept is called by Pidal *monarquía universal* (universal monarchy). Against the notion of *monarquía universal* (Universal monarchy), Pidal puts the notion of *imperio Cristiano* (Christian empire), which according to him is a specifically Spanish phenomenon, promoted mostly by three men: the bishop of Badajoz Pedro Ruiz de la Mota, the bishop of Guadix and historian Antonio de Guevara and, what is most important in the context of our work, the Latin secretary of the emperor, Alfonso de Valdés.<sup>15</sup> The idea of *imperio cristiano* was according to Pidal based more on propagation of Christian mutuality and virtues, or by using today's terminology on "soft power", although Pidal naturally does not use this term.

We have nonetheless come to the conclusion that dichotomy supposed by Pidal did not exist at the imperial court. It is undeniable that both Gattinara and Alfonso de Valdés closely collaborated with each other, and that they shared their ideas, although naturally Valdés was subordinated to Gattinara. It is also baseless to suggest that the vision of Gattinara was not rooted in Christian religion, as is attested both by his *Oratio Supplicatoria* as well as by various memoranda, which we have quoted in our work. In his autobiography, Gattinara himself even recognized the need to base the imperial rule more on indirect than on raw power and thus advocated for the establishment of looser hegemony, instead of some kind of centralized empire. With that being said, we cannot also agree with opinion of Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, who in his article *Alfonso de Valdés y el Gran Canciller Mercurino Arborio di Gattinara: El erasmismo en la Cancillería imperial (1527-1530)*, he claims that the thoughts of Valdés expressed in his *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma* cannot be regarded as the "properly" thoughts of Valdés himself, because he lacked the necessary liberty to develop them, but instead are only "complementary to the thoughts of his patron", that is to the ideas Mercurino di Gattinara.<sup>16</sup> Although it is undeniable that Valdés was heavily influenced by Gattinara and that he frequently borrowed from him while writing

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<sup>15</sup>Álvarez, *Carlos V el César y el Hombre*, p. 208. "Frente a la tesis de Brandi, Menéndez Pidal sostiene que el concepto imperial no era algo inventado por el César ni por su canciller, sino noción viejísima que estaba en el ambiente de principios del siglo XVI. Para el historiador español, en lugar de la figura de Gattinara las que hay que destacar son las de Mota, Valdés y Guevara."

<sup>16</sup>Rodríguez, *Alfonso de Valdés y el Gran Canciller Mercurino Arborio di Gattinara: El erasmismo en la Cancillería imperial (1527-1530)*; 13. "[...] hemos de señalar que el pensamiento de Valdés, expresado en su *Diálogo de las cosas sucedidas en Roma*, no era propiamente suyo sino complementario del de su patrono. No disponía de la libertad individual que la crítica suele atribuir a literatos y artistas, pues por su oficio era ejecutor de la mente de otro."



official correspondence or other materials such as *Pro divo Carolo*, we have demonstrated, using as main evidence the correspondence of Valdés with papal nuncio Castiglione, one of his most significant rivals, that Valdés actually wrote his two main significant works, which are his dialogues, without direct interference of Gattinara's part, whom he has only approached for advise once the manuscript of his first work, that is *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma*, was written.

Alfonso de Valdés based his universalist ideology of several key points, which he mostly shared with Mercurino di Gattinara. First of these was perceived need to secure the peace within the Christendom itself, which should be the uttermost responsibility of the emperor, who should act as a supreme representative of the whole Christianity. The emperor should also be responsible for the defence of the Christian lands from any external threats, particularly from the Ottoman Empire and its vassals. As we have shown in our work, the conviction of the need to unite the forces of Christianity in order to secure the common defence against the Ottomans has intensified Europe especially after the Ottoman capture of Constantinople in 1453. In this sense, the universalist ideology of the imperial court thus merely incorporated one of its time most pressing needs. Alfonso de Valdés has also paid substantial attention to the problem of justice and enforcement of law, which he regarded as one of the principal responsibilities of the prince, and about which he wrote extensively in both of his dialogues. In this, Valdés probably followed the lead of Mercurino di Gattinara, who urged the emperor to undertake a legal reform as soon as in 1519, although it is also possible that in this case, his position could have been influenced by generally perceived insecurity and high levels of criminality, a problem which has been to some degree already tackled by Charles's grandparents, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabell of Castile, as we argue in the chapter 2.9.

One of the most defined features of the "radical" imperial universalism of Alfonso de Valdés is undoubtedly its hostility towards papacy, or more precisely to its secular power. In this regard, Alfonso de Valdés continued to develop the ideas of Dante, who attacked the secular power of the papacy in his *Monarchia*, although it is not possible to assess to which degree Valdés actually consciously followed Dante Alighieri. What is certain is that while Alfonso de Valdés criticised the pope Leo X for his inaction in the face of growing religious crisis in Germany in 1521, in his *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma*, he directly blamed his successor Clement VII for instigating war against the emperor, for allying himself with the king of France, for allowing the papal army to commit atrocities in the lands

emperor's allies and generally for presiding over the decadence of the church. What was even more, in his *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*, Alfonso de Valdés went as far as to cast doubt on legitimacy of Saint Peter's Patrimony, the lands located in central Italy, which constituted the hearth of the secular dominions of the papacy. This position represents what Franz Bosbach described as dualism between the power of emperor and pope, which constituted one of the possible solutions of the struggle between the emperors and popes, which in western Christendom appeared during the 11<sup>th</sup> century. This dualistic thinking, whose great example is also Dante Alighieri, meant that both emperor and pope should exercise their authority only in the areas which actually correspond them. In practise, this meant the papal authority would be restricted strictly to the spiritual sphere, while the emperor would act as a supreme secular head of the Christendom. Talking about the conflict between Charles V and Clement VII, John M. Headley described this attitude as the plan to "reduce the papacy to its pastoral function".

As we have demonstrated in the chapter 2.12., the year 1529 brought significant change when it came to the radical imperial universalism promoted by Mercurino di Gattinara or Alfonso de Valdés. The negotiation with the Roman curia, which in June of this year resulted in the signing of the treaty between the emperor and the pope meant the need to temper down radical rhetoric directed against the Roman curia as well as the person of Clement VII and to adopt more conciliatory approach. Although the treaty of 1529 is generally regarded as a success for Charles V, since it ended the costly war in Italy, secured the control over Naples and Sicily and also led to the imperial coronation of Charles in Bologna, which was celebrated in February 1530, it also meant the end of hopes for some deeper reshaping of the political map of the Italian peninsula as well as eliminating the secular power of the papacy. Together with the death of Mercurino di Gattinara in June 1530 and subsequent failure to resolve the religious conflict in Germany, the imperial universalism was thus greatly limited for the future.

One of the characteristic features of the writings of Alfonso de Valdés is their almost uncritical perception of the person of Charles V. This is understandable, if we consider the fact of Valdés's employment at the imperial court as well as his personal relationship with the emperor himself, it is nonetheless a feature that cannot be ignored in historical research. Alfonso de Valdés ignored the fact that Charles V committed some of the vices, such as for example promiscuity, which he reprehended among others. What is probably most significant, Valdés did not comment on the situation in Spanish kingdom in the first years of

the reign of Charles V, which created discontent strong enough to generate an uprising, known the rebellion of the comuneros, which lasted from 1520 to 1521, and which was caused, among other factors, by the fact that Charles appointed several unqualified foreign candidates to important posts in his new kingdom, as was the case of Guillermo de Croÿ, the nephew of William II de Croÿ, Lord of Chièvres and Charles's first chamberlain, who was appointed the new archbishop of Toledo, one of the most significant archbishoprics in the whole Spain.

In the Part III of our work, we have concentrated on the topic the Reformation and its relevance in the work of Alfonso de Valdés. We judge the topic of the Reformation to be extremely important when studying the rule of Charles V in general and especially the project of the universal empire, because it was precisely the movement of the Reformation which directly threatened to destroy the unity of the Christendom and thus also the unity of the empire.

Alfonso de Valdés was interested in the development in Germany at least as soon as in 1520, when he accompanied Charles V on his way to England, the Netherlands and then to the territory of the Holy Roman Empire. From this stay, Valdés addressed three letters to his friend and possible teacher Pedro Mártir, whom he informed about the beginnings of the Protestant movement, the coronation of Charles V in Aachen as well as the imperial diet in Worms in 1521, where Charles V personally confronted Martin Luther. We have found that the attitude of Valdés towards Martin Luther and the Protestant movement was somewhat ambivalent. While Valdés as a Catholic did not share Luther's radicalism nor did he completely endorsed some of his theological postulate, he did nonetheless recognize the fact that the Catholic church was at least partly responsible for the crisis in Germany by its heavy financial demands, the behaviour of its bishops and priests as well as by other "oppression". Valdés criticised the person of the pope Leo X (1513-1521) in particular for his failure to address the crisis as well as his failure to convoke the general council, which would reform the church, and which was also demanded by many Germans. Valdés also recognized the limited effect of the imperial legislation and ban on Luther, formulated by the Edict of Worms and he expressed his anxiety over the future development of the conflict.

Throughout the ensuing decade, the attitude of Alfonso de Valdés underwent a certain "radicalisation", especially in the context of the conflict between Charles V and Clement VII. In his two polemical dialogues, Valdés heavily criticised the ecclesiastical hierarchy and

decried its supposed vices and sins. Some of the opinions presented by Alfonso de Valdés at least superficially resembled those voiced by early Protestants; Valdés for example criticised the veneration of holy relics, which in his mind became possibly misleading to the general population, the veneration of saints, pilgrimages or indulgences, although in the case of the latter, he did so only sparingly. Furthermore, Valdés also voiced his support for clerical marriage, which he regarded as a better alternative than the state when great number of priests, at least in his own opinion, lived immorally in concubinate. But unlike the Protestants, Alfonso de Valdés never went as far as to deny the existence of saints or holy relics, although he regarded great of number of them to be fake. Instead, the principal opinion of Alfonso de Valdés was that the true piety is not connected to external aspects of the cult such as relics, pilgrimages or temples, but that it lies instead in inner identification with the “doctrine of Jesus Christ” and which the living of life according to Christs mandates. The failure to live a life devoid of true piety could not be compensated by “good deeds” such as pilgrimages, fasting or funding of temples and monasteries, which Valdés several times criticized and denying as a possible way to attain the salvation. Alfonso de Valdés also several times mentioned the need to “put faith solely in Jesus Christ”, a statement which on a first glance clearly resembles Lutheran doctrine of *solus Christus*, according to which Jesus Christ acted as the sole mediator of salvation. Unlike Martin Luther, Alfonso de Valdés did not share the opinion that it is possible to attain the salvation by relying solely on the faith itself (*sola fide*). On the contrary, Valdés believed that in order to secure the salvation, it is necessary to actively act in accordance with Christ’s doctrine, but unlike prevailing opinion within the church, Valdés was convinced that it is necessary to walk on the “real path” and not to sought “shortcuts” such as veneration of relics or buying indulgences. In *his Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*, Valdés thus presented a number a of souls of the dead, some of whom were heading to heaven, while others to hell. While those who were on their way to heaven described how they secure their salvation by living a godly life, those who were destined for hell did so either by living openly immoral life, or by relying on false piety.

The position of Alfonso de Valdés on contemporary religious problems was influenced on one side by his humanism, which may have been the result of his contacts with notable humanists such as Pedro Mártir or Erasmus of Rotterdam, with whom Valdés corresponded, although they never met in person, but also by his adherence to the movement of so-called alumbrados, which was prevalent in Spain in the first decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This movement represented a mystical form of Christianity, which centred on inner

identification with God, refused external aspects of the cult. This thesis is held for example by Rebecca Ard-Boone.

In his dialogues, Valdés also directly commented on the significance of Martin Luther himself. And although he did not deny “the fact” that Luther was a heretic, he on the other hand defended the opinion that radicalism of Luther was to a great degree caused by the obstinacy of the Catholic church to undergo a reform. In this context, Valdés literally mentioned that God “allowed” Martin Luther to rise up as a last warning to the Catholic church, but since the ecclesiastical hierarchy did not heed this warning, he decided to implement an even stronger measure, which according to Valdés was the Sack of Rome.

Alfonso de Valdés believed that it is the task of the emperor to ensure the reform not only of the church, but also of the whole Christianity. On the other hand, he could not endorse the radicalism of Martin Luther and other Protestants, because their movement threatened to destroy the unity of the church, which according to Valdés was absolutely indispensable.

The stance of Alfonso de Valdés on the Protestantism became clear during the imperial diet in Augsburg in 1530, where Valdés took part in the negotiation as a member of the imperial delegation. The significance of Valdés is attested by the mere fact that he personally negotiated with Philip Melanchthon, a close friend of Luther and one of the most significant of early Protestant theologians. During his negotiations, Valdés applied conciliatory approach and he expressed his beliefs that the Lutheran faction should be granted at least some concessions. In particular, Valdés mentioned clerical marriage, abolition of private masses and communion under both kinds for the Protestant laity, which were demands presented to him personally by Melanchthon. During the imperial diet, however, the obstinacy of other members of the Catholic party, especially those who belonged to the papal delegation, prevailed and the compromise, about which Valdés at point said that was allegedly almost reached, was rejected. Both sides thus essentially remained entrenched in their initial position and the imperial diet of Augsburg did not bring the solution to the religious crisis in Germany. Alfonso de Valdés personally expressed his fears of the future violent conflict between the Catholic and the Protestant, which later indeed materialized in a form of the Schmalkaldic War, which started in 1546.

In a short term, the intensity of the conflict was however somewhat reduced by the Ottoman threat. In 1529 and then again in 1532, the Ottoman army started to threaten the

Austrian lands, which at that time were ruled by Charles's brother Ferdinand, who in 1526 gained Bohemian and Hungarian crown, although the latter was still contested. This development forced Charles to accept a truce with the Lutherans, although this truce only postponed the future confrontation, and to concentrate on the defense of Austria. Alfonso de Valdés accompanied the emperor on his travels in the Netherlands and through Germany in 1531 and 1532, which eventually led the imperial army to Vienna, which was during the summer besieged by the Ottoman forces, who however retreated without offering a fight. Throughout this time, Valdés held correspondence with Johannes Dantiscus, his friend and the ambassador of the Polish king Sigismund, with whom Charles V cultivated good relationship in order to strengthen the geopolitical position of his dynasty in the central European region.

The military campaign in Austria also proved to be the last journey of Alfonso de Valdés, who died in Vienna at the beginning of October 1532, probably as a result of a plague. In the last two years of Valdés's life, his polemical dialogues meanwhile became the object of interest of the Spanish Inquisition, who investigated them because of the suspicion that they might contain "Lutheran errors". But according to assessments of both documents, written by Pedro Oliver, who assessed *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma*, while *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón* has been assessed by a man identified as doctor Vélez, the dialogues of Valdés did not contain any material, which could have been described as "Lutheran". This did not mean, however, that both documents were found to be flawless. On the contrary, Valdés was reprehended for example for his stance on holy images, which according to Oliver could instigate population to iconoclasm, or for his criticism of the pope Clement VII. Doctor Vélez, besides also reprehending Valdés for his criticism of the papacy, has also reprehended him for his veiled criticism of the Spanish inquisition and accused him of belonging to the movement of alumbrados. It is uncertain whether Alfonso de Valdés, had he not died in Vienna in October 1532, would face any serious repercussions from the Spanish inquisition, given his direct relationship with the emperor himself, besides having his writings banned.

The philosophy of Alfonso de Valdés is distinctive for its relative tolerance, which clearly contrasts with the attitude, which soon prevailed on both sides of the European religious conflict. This tolerance however cannot be viewed in modern sense of the word. Valdés clearly wasn't tolerant to Protestant sects such as the Anabaptists or the Sacramentalists, who negated some of the most central Catholic dogmas.

In conclusion, we may state that during his twelve years long career at the imperial court of Charles V, Alfonso de Valdés remained loyal adherent of the universalist ideology, which he shared with Mercurino di Gattinara and other men from his circle. Alfonso de Valdés viewed – and presented - Charles V as an “archetypal Christian prince”, as we have argued in the chapter 2.8., who was endowed by special virtues, which made him the ideal candidate to act as the supreme secular lord of the whole Christendom. As a supreme authority, it was the emperor’s responsibility to ensure the peace and justice, as well as to eventually act against those princes, who acted inappropriately. In practical terms, the universalism of Valdés manifested by his hostility to the papacy of Clement VII as well as France of Francis I and to certain degree against England of Henry VIII as well, that is against the powers who in a geopolitical sense presented the biggest obstacles for the establishment of Habsburg hegemony. Alfonso de Valdés was also in favour of reconciliation with the Protestants, which greatly differentiated his attitude from that eventually prevailed in Spain after the year 1530. Valdés personally attempted to mediate some kind of compromise during the imperial diet of Augsburg 1530, when he personally negotiated with Philip Melancthon, but his attempts were marred by the activity of the members of the papal delegation as well as general unwillingness of both sides to make substantial concessions. Alfonso de Valdés thus can be viewed as an interesting example of a Spanish humanist, who tried to reconcile his spirituality, influenced by the teachings of Erasmus of Rotterdam as well as by alumbrado doctrine, with his support to the universal empire of Charles V, in which he put his hopes for the reform of the church and the entire Christendom.

It is difficult to judge the precise motivation of Valdés, that is whether he supported the emperor and spread the imperial propaganda just because of his employment at the imperial court, or whether he did become an important personage precisely because the fact that he internally aligned with the goals of Habsburg universalism. Judging by his literary activity and his correspondence with other humanists, we tend to favour the second option, despite the fact that it is impossible to present some sort of a definitive evidence. His personal commitment to the reform of the Christian society and the renewal of Christian piety and morality, which he hoped to achieve through the establishment of the universal empire led by Charles V, however, suggest that Alfonso de Valdés was sincere in his efforts to help to achieve the universal empire of Charles V, and that he truly saw this as a possible solution of all variety of problems, which were at that time affecting the Christendom.

The material based on the present work was used for publication of the article entitled *Alfonso de Valdés: španělský humanista ve službách císaře Karla V.*<sup>17</sup> in a peer reviewed journal *Historie – Otázky – Problémy* 14/2022, n. 2, published by the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University in Prague, which is about to be published during the second half of 2022.<sup>18</sup> This article, written in Czech, summarizes the basic information regarding the life and work of Alfonso de Valdés, including his attitude towards the Protestantism and his role in the negotiations during the imperial diet of Augsburg in 1530, his relationship with the grand chancellor Mercurino di Gattinara, his support for the idea of the universal empire of Charles V as well as his attitude towards the contemporary problems of the Catholic church.

It is also planned to use the result of this research to publish at least one English written article, whose topic should be the work of Alfonso de Valdés in the context of the beginnings of the Reformation, which roughly corresponds to the Part III of our dissertation.

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SUCHARDA, Jiří. *Alfonso de Valdés: španělský humanista ve službách císaře Karla V.* *Historie-Otázky-Problémy*, 1/2022 (ročník 14), p. 72-89. Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy v Praze, 2022.

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<sup>17</sup> In English: “Alfonso de Valdés: a Spanish humanist in the service of the emperor Charles V”.

<sup>18</sup> For more information regarding this journal, see <https://historieotazkyproblemy.ff.cuni.cz/en/>



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