Dedication

Roger Wines

“An historian must be old,” Leopold von Ranke once remarked, not only because of the vast extent of the field of study, but also because historical scholarship is enriched by a lifetime of experience. Musicians and mathematicians bloom early, but historians get better with each passing decade. John C. Olin’s career in history, which has produced so many studies, so many students, and so many friends, is a classic example of this thesis. His major publications in the field of the Catholic Reformation came only after the age of forty; and despite forty years of teaching at Fordham University, his youthful enthusiasm and mature insight continue to produce solid works of scholarship in the twilight of retirement.

I first met John in 1954 as a college student in his course on the Reformation, and was struck by his special qualities as a teacher. Fordham had several dynamic professors in the history department in those days: the colorful Sam Telfair, the intense Robert Remini, the encyclopedic Paul Levack, and the magisterial Ross Hoffman. But John’s style of teaching seemed unique. While other professors taught the facts, he stood in respectful awe of the past, pointing out problems and mysteries and introducing his students to a sense of discovery. His mastery of the subject, founded in humility before the task, encouraged many of us to take up history as a career. Though my professional interests diverged from his, I have never lost my enthusiasm for the topics he had laid before us; and to this day, I am as eager to pick up a good book on Erasmus as one on Frederick the Great. Later on, I would study the Reformation in graduate school at Columbia University with the brilliant Garrett Mattingly, but what I had learned from John proved to be more enduring and far more inspirational.

As his reputation grew, John convinced colleagues in other institutions to devote their efforts to the Catholic Reformation and

attracted many talented students to the graduate program at Fordham. In 1967, I helped John and Wilhelm Pauck of Union Theological Seminary to organize a conference on the 450th anniversary of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses, which brought together for the first time many leading Catholic and Protestant scholars of the Reformation era. It became clear to this group that more research on the Catholic Reformation was essential if we were to understand fully the events that troubled the sixteenth century at the very time that the Catholic Church itself was undergoing a process of renewal and revision of its post-Tridentine traditions, which required an honest examination of its own past, and a reconsideration of the events and issues that had produced the fatal division of Christendom. As an early advocate and catalyst, John played a significant part in developing today's renewed interest in the Catholic Reformation. Comments by others in this volume may explore that theme more fully; let me turn to the man himself.

John C. Olin, who was born in Buffalo, New York, on October 7, 1915, was educated at Canisius High School and Canisius College, where he graduated with a B.A. in history in 1937. He moved on from the Jesuits of Buffalo to the Jesuits of New York City as a graduate student in Modern European History at Fordham University from 1940 to 1942, earning his M.A. in 1941. During the war years, he served as a U.S. Navy officer in China and married his wife, Marian, in 1943. After the war he returned to Fordham to help teach the great rush of veterans in 1946. John also commenced his studies for the Ph.D. at Columbia University, began a family (Mary Beth, John, Margaret, and Thomas), and built a house for them with his own hands in a forest in Rockland County. By 1960, when he completed his dissertation at Columbia under Shepard Clough on "Christian Democrats and Foreign Policy in France, 1919-1950," John had become an important part of the History Department at Fordham.

In those days, latter-day Thomism still held sway in Fordham's Philosophy Department, and the standard history course for the B.A. was Medieval History. With its required Latin, Gothic architecture, and Jesuit atmosphere, Fordham was a natural vantage point from which to approach the era of the Catholic Reformation. Even before he completed formal requirements for the doc-

torate, John's interests had begun to shift from twentieth-century French history to Erasmus and the sixteenth century.

During the tumultuous years of the 1960s, John steadfastly busied himself with the events of an earlier era. He produced a series of articles and critical editions of sixteenth-century texts: *Christian Humanism and the Reformation: Selected Writings of Erasmus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); *A Reformation Debate: Sadoletto's Letter to the Genevans and Calvin's Reply* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); and *The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius Loyola* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).

Equally significant for his development as a scholar were two major conferences which he helped to organize at Fordham University. In 1967, a joint meeting of Catholic and Protestant scholars produced a collection of essays, *Luther, Erasmus, and the Reformation: A Catholic-Protestant Reappraisal* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1969), and in 1985, John chaired a symposium on Thomas More's *Utopia*, whose proceedings he edited as *Interpreting Thomas More's Utopia* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989).

In order to complete his scholarship, John visited rare book collections in various European and American libraries. He also worked with Joseph F. O'Callaghan to edit a translation of *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola, with Related Documents* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974) and published various articles on Erasmus in *Six Essays on Erasmus and a Translation of Erasmus' Letter to Carondelet, 1523* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979). In 1990, he summed up much of his earlier efforts in *Catholic Reform from Cardinal Ximenes to the Council of Trent, 1495-1563*, which, like so many of his recent books, was published by Fordham University Press. Among John's briefer works are a study on "The Idea of Pilgrimage in the Experience of Ignatius Loyola," which first appeared in *Church History* and is reprinted in *Catholic Reform*, and an article on Erasmus and St. Jerome in the *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* for 1987.

Alongside the progress and publication of his own studies, John witnessed the steady development of the whole field of research in the Catholic Reformation. He was invited to speak to many groups and to teach courses at the University of San Francisco, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Notre Dame University. He also served on the editorial board of the *Erasmus of Rotterdam*

Society Yearbook (1981 to 1992), and gave the seventh annual Erasmus Society Birthday Lecture at the Folger Shakespeare Library in 1986. His retirement from active teaching and service on the Faculty Senate at Fordham University in 1986 gave him the opportunity to travel more widely and to pursue an impressive program of research.

Over the last decades, John has worked on many aspects of sixteenth-century reform but most frequently on the prince of humanists, who was so central to the movement itself. Of all of Erasmus' works, none has occupied him for so long as that scholar's great edition of the *opera* of St. Jerome. He and Professor James F. Brady of Fordham's Classics Department collaborated on a volume on that work which was published by the University of Toronto Press in 1992 in the Collected Works of Erasmus series. Though separated by centuries, Erasmus and Jerome were kindred spirits, and I think that John was attracted to them because he too shares their spirit. Moreover, I believe that Erasmus would have been pleased with the results of these years of labor because he could not have found a better critic nor a truer friend, and neither could we.