Wim François / Violet Soen (eds.)

The Council of Trent: Reform and Controversy in Europe and Beyond (1545-1700)

Vol. 1: Between Trent, Rome and Wittenberg

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450 Years Later. Louvain's Contribution to the Ongoing Historiography on the Council of Trent

On 4 December, 1563, a solemn Mass at the Cathedral, and a subsequent jubilant procession, marked the closure of the Council of Trent. According to contemporary observers, attendees uttered cries of joy and shed tears of relief. Two days later, ambassadors signed all protocols and put an end to eighteen years of deliberations, spread over three separate assembly periods that began in 1545. This Council would prove to have an enormous impact on early modern developments in religion, politics and culture, both in Europe and beyond. The last major conference devoted to the Council dates back to its quadricentenary in 1963, when a symposium was organized in Trent and presided over by the distinguished Church historian Hubert Jedin (1900–80), who had made the study of this famous Church gathering his lifelong scholarly passion.¹ Since then, the Council of Trent has repeatedly appeared on the research agenda in a variety of academic disciplines that include history, Church history, theology, art history and musicology.² Thus, Trent's 450 year anniversary caused the Council to once again attract an impressive share of scholarly attention, as several academic conferences were organized, not only in Trent and Louvain (Leuven), but also in Freiburg im Breisgau, Lille and Braga.³

1 *Il Concilio di Trento e la riforma tridentina: Atti del Convegno storico internazionale, Trento, 2–6 Settembre 1963* (2 vol.; Rome: Herder, 1965), a volume to read combined with *La Sacra Congregazione del Concilio: Quarto Centenario dalla Fondazione (1564–1964)* (Vatican City: Ed. Vaticana, 1964).

2 H. Jedin/P. Prodi (ed.), *Il Concilio di Trento come crocevia della politica europea* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979); P. Prodi/W. Reinhard (ed.), *Il Concilio di Trento e il moderno* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996); C. Mozzarelli/D. Zardin (ed.), *I tempi del concilio. Religione, cultura e società nell'Europa tridentina* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1997); A. Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente (1518–1563)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1997); M. Viallon (ed.), *Autour du Concile de Trente: actes de la table ronde de Lyon, 28 février 2003* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2006).

3 M. Catto/A. Prosperi (ed.), *Trent and Beyond. The Council, Other Powers, Other Cultures* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018); P. Walter/G. Wassilowsky (ed.), *Das Konzil von Trient und die katholische Konfessionskultur (1563–2013)* (Reformationsgeschichtliche Studien und Texte 163; Münster: Aschendorff, 2016), see conference report by V. Soen, “Das Konzil von Trient

In Louvain, more than one hundred fifty scholars, from nearly twenty countries, convened from 4 to 6 December, 2013, exactly 450 years after its closing ceremonies, to study the Council of Trent from an interdisciplinary, interconfessional and multilingual perspective. Located at the crossroads of several European cultures and linguistic areas, as well as scholarly traditions, the University of Leuven provided an excellent forum in which researchers from Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Latin-Romanic, and East-European backgrounds joined together to concentrate on the Council's stimuli for reform, as well as the controversy it provoked within the early modern world on a local, regional, and global level. Certainly, the scholarly meeting was not meant as a (re-)affirmation of the rightness of confessional viewpoints, be it Catholic or Protestant, and did not constitute a moment for either the glorification of a particular faith or the settlement of old scores, positions to which references to the Council of Trent have been subject to in the past few decades. Rather, the conference aspired to boost a historical interpretation that held the Council as a sixteenth-century Catholic solution to the challenges raised by the necessities of its own time. Thus, both the conference and its subsequent volumes represent a scholarly attempt to offer a contemporary examination of the topic and to set a research agenda that might inspire new interpretations for the ongoing and future historiography on religion in the Early Modern Era.

For a long time, the historiography on the Council of Trent was limited by Pope Paul V's closure of the major repository of archives. The Council's documents remained sealed away in the Vatican for almost three centuries, until Leo XIII finally reopened the Council archives, which gave an important stimulus to the Görres-Gesellschaft to engage in the publication of the long-secret documents. Afterwards, the historiography became almost dependent on the work of one man, the aforementioned Hubert Jedin, who pointed to the aspects of *Selbstbesinnung* and *Selbstbehauptung* within the Council, better-known today as the intertwined developments of Catholic Reform and Counter-Reform[ation].⁴ Later on, in the 1970s and 1980s, as the theory of confessionalisation (*Konfessionalisierung*) forced scholars to reconsider and compare the Lutheran, Calvinist and Catholic Churches, the Council of Trent became

und die katholische Konfessionskultur (1563–2013)', Freiburg, 18–21 September 2013", *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 108 (2013) 1431–34. Symposium international, *La dramatique conciliaire, coups de théâtre, tactique et sincérité des convictions dans les débats conciliaires de l'Antiquité à Vatican II*, 15–17 May 2013 in Lille 3, to be published by Charles Mériaux et al. (ed.), *Dramatiques conciliaires* (Lille: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, forthcoming). Also: J.E. Franco et al. (ed.), *Concilio de Trento: Innovar en la tradición: Historia, teología y proyección* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2017).

⁴ H. Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient* (4 vol. in 5; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1949–75); H. Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, E. Graf (trans.) (2 vol.; London et al.: T. Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1961) 2.52–98.

the moment in which the Catholic Church tried to outline its *confession*, just as the Protestant churches had done before and would do afterwards.⁵ The late Paolo Prodi (1936–2016), *compagnon de route* de Jedin, repeatedly asked attention for the wide-reaching implications of the Council of Trent.⁶ At the turning of the millennium, John O'Malley attempted to put an end to the never-ending debate over whether mid-sixteenth century Catholicism leaned more towards 'Reform' or 'Counter-Reform[ation]'. His new idea was simple, but far-reaching, as he proposed to describe Catholicism in this era as 'Early Modern Catholicism' and to research it within its historical context.⁷

Building upon three generations of scholarship, the Louvain conference volumes have the ambition to be included amongst the reference works regarding the Council of Trent. They contextualize the Council within the political and social events of the time, and consider it as an open-ended and ambiguous process, even after the conciliar decrees were put into effect. Three lines of investigation structure the conference proceedings. The first volume situates the Council within the triangle *Between Trent, Rome and Wittenberg* and looks at how the decisions taken in Trent regarding biblical, theological, and pastoral care were further elaborated and implemented by the Pope and the Curia, while remaining liable to contestation by all strands of Protestantism and inner-Catholic struggles. The second volume, *Between Bishops and Princes*, analyzes the changes in local ecclesiastical and religious life, as initiated by bishops, orders and congregations, while also paying due attention to their inter-woven nature within politics and the confessionalisation that accompanied the reform process. The third and final volume, entitled *Between Artists and Adventurers*, deals with the cultural and missionary entrepreneurs who felt challenged to translate the conciliar decrees within the fascinating worlds of art and music, and in the Church's overseas missions to America, Asia and Africa. Each volume opens with widely framed contributions from the keynote speakers, while concrete case studies are subsequently offered. Most interestingly, the source material in-

5 H. Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung von Kirche, Staat und Gesellschaft – Profil, Leistung, Defizite und Perspektiven eines geschichtswissenschaftlichen Paradigmas", in W. Reinhard/H. Schilling (ed.), *Die katholische Konfessionalisierung. Wissenschaftliches Symposion der Gesellschaft zur Herausgabe des Corpus Catholicorum und des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte 1993* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1995) 1–49 and W. Reinhard, "Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?", in *Ibidem*, 419–52. Also: W. Reinhard, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters", *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 10 (1983) 257–77.

6 Alongside the earlier mentioned publications, we refer to P. Prodi, *Il paradigma tridentino: un'epoca della storia della chiesa* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2010).

7 J.W. O'Malley, *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), and now his *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013).

forming these chapters stems not only from the Vatican Archives, but also from collections preserved in archives that range from Japan and Ethiopia to Latin America and Europe.

I. Between Trent, Rome and Wittenberg

Setting the stage for a historical-theological analysis of the Council of Trent, the first volume begins by positioning it as a response to the profound societal and religious alterations that occurred during the Early Modern Era. Robert Bireley – who sadly passed away in the final stage of the completion of this volume – identifies these primary changes as a desire for a deeper religious life among the self-confident urban laity, the concomitant birth of individualism and the interest in education, new political developments, such as state building, the discovery of the ‘New World’, and the long-standing desire to rectify abuses within the Church.

Subsequently, John O’Malley gives a critical assessment about what did, and did not, happen at the Council of Trent, clarifying and correcting some misperceptions and misunderstandings that have since either become academic orthodoxy or have been retained in collective memories. O’Malley emphasizes that Trent succeeded in reforming the office of the bishop, bringing him back to his essential duties of preaching to and living amongst the flock. In addition, the establishment of seminaries helped to improve comparable educational and pastoral standards for the parish clergy. As regards the sacraments, O’Malley explains that the decree *Tametsi*, which required a marriage to be conducted before the parish priest and a number of witnesses in order to be declared valid, proved to be an especially successful instrument at a pastoral level. However, the Council failed in its attempts to reform the Roman Curia, paying no attention to the missions and new developments of the religious orders, and it put forward a statement on justification that proved to be a bone of contention in post-Tridentine Catholicism, despite the Council’s best efforts. O’Malley maintains a sharp distinction between the Council itself, and what happened in its wake: the now generally accepted distinction between ‘Trent’ and ‘Tridentinism’.

The complex relationship between the ‘openness’ of Trent and the attempts for centralization in post-Tridentine papal Rome is also one of the leading themes of Günther Wassilowsky’s contribution. Roman centralizing policies met with resistance from the peripheries, resulting in an internal plurality of Catholicisms. Thus, Wassilowsky proposes that future historiography must refer rather to a “Catholic confessional culture”, taking for granted that Trent was an important marker in the identity-formation of Catholics in the Early Modern Era, but that it enabled a variety of confessional ways of life.

The subsequent chapters deal with more concrete aspects regarding the Bible and liturgy. This begins by considering Bible reading in the vernacular. In the late medieval and early modern Church, there were only regionally diversified positions on the matter, as no uniform legislation regarding Bible reading in the vernacular yet existed. This variety of interpretations was reflected in the long and often hot-tempered debates that proponents (represented by Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo) and adversaries (such as Cardinal Pedro Pacheco) of vernacular Bible reading held in the build-up to Session 4. Since both factions held each other in balance, the Council was not able to arrive at a common conciliar standpoint, leaving any decision to the local (civil and religious) authorities. The implication is that Trent did not promulgate a prohibition on Bible reading in the vernacular, although this is one of the myths regarding the Council that still regularly emerges, even in scholarly milieus (Agten & François).

In a second contribution regarding Trent's Session 4, it is argued that the Council's Vulgate decree was largely a Louvain project. The work *De ecclesiasticis scripturis et dogmatibus*, by the Louvain theologian John Driedo, demonstrably (co-)inspired the discussion leading to the elaboration of the Vulgate decree. Moreover, Trent's request for the publication of an emended version of the Vulgate was immediately executed in Louvain, where John Henten (1547) and, later, Francis Lucas 'of Bruges' (1574) edited the *Vulgata Lovaniensis*, which was one of – if not the – most important Vulgate edition until the publication of the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate (1592) (François & Gerace).

Three additional contributions focus on the liturgical reforms in the wake of Trent. Joris Geldhof's work looks at the production of liturgical books after Trent, the most important of which were the *Breviarium Romanum* (1568), the *Missale Romanum* (1570), and the *Rituale Romanum* (1614). Studying the pre-faces of these liturgical books, Geldhof argues that, notwithstanding the manifold references to the Council, there is a difference between what Trent promulgated in regard to the sacraments and how future Popes conceived the liturgical books published in the last part of the sixteenth and the beginnings of the seventeenth century. Moreover, thanks to the printing press, the 'Roman' liturgy became widespread within the Catholic world. Geldhof also questions categorizations such as 'Tridentine liturgy' or 'Tridentine Mass'.

A second case study, by Vasył Popelyastyy, specifically considers the theology of the sacrament of penance as it is exposed within the *Rituale Romanum* of 1614. He identifies the main sources of the *Rituale*, viz. the *Sacerdotales* of Albert Castellano and Francesco Samarino, as well as the *Rituale* of Cardinal Julius Santori. More importantly, he highlights the doctrine of the sacrament of penance as contained in the *Rituale Romanum*, which represents the official doctrinal position of the Latin Church, as elaborated by the Fourth Lateran Council, the Councils of Florence and Trent, and which also includes post-Tridentine

developments as expressed in the *Catechismus Romanus* and the *réveil* of Thomist studies. Popelyastyy also argues that emphasis was placed on private sacramental confession, on the value of the absolution, as well as on the judicial function of the priest (at the expense of the therapeutic function).

Antoine Mazurek, for his part, reminds his readers that the liturgical books promulgated by the Holy See in the wake of Trent represented one example of Rome's centralization policy, but that the Roman 'center' also continued to recognize local liturgical traditions. Importantly for Spain, Pope Gregory XIII issued a privilege in 1573 that gave papal consecration to the "natural saints" of Spain and that also allowed for the establishment of a *proprium sanctorum* in these lands. The Spanish King, Philip II, although a defender of Rome's claim as the center of Catholic Europe, evidently promoted this 'national' cult, since the monarchy based its legitimacy and sacred mission upon these ancient Spanish patron saints. Mazurek's essay is a perfect illustration of these dynamics, further in our volumes described by Simon Ditchfield as a post-Tridentine Catholicism with universal or even global aspirations, whereas, at the same time, several local, regional and national 'Catholicisms' – in this case a Hispanic Catholicism – developed, collaborated, and interacted.

Just as important are a third cluster of contributions that discuss Trent in the context of Evangelism and Protestantism. Camilla Russell, in her essay, considers the epistolary exchange between several members of the *spirituali* movement in Italy, which strove for a reform of the Church based upon the Bible, a doctrine of justification emphasizing faith above works, and residency of all bishops, amongst others. Notwithstanding the imputations of error and heresy, sympathizers of the movement, such as Giulia Gonzaga and Girolamo Seripando, continued to exchange letters, especially during the Council of Trent, where Seripando was a papal legate since 1562. Russell's essay shows how, through this letter exchange, the convent-based Gonzaga was influential in keeping the aspirations of the *spirituali* movement on the agenda of the college of cardinals. Seripando consciously maintained the epistolary contacts with Gonzaga, not only to keep the *spirituali* within the fold of the Church, but also to use them as a leverage to facilitate reform.

Evidently, much attention was given to the reactions that the Council aroused among the Protestant Christians, who neither accepted its decrees and the theological choices they contained, nor recognized the authority of those who promulgated them. Emidio Campi highlights the position of the magisterial reformers, viz. the 'two Martins' of Lutheranism, Martin Luther and Martin Chemnitz, as well as the two Fathers of Reformed Protestantism, Heinrich Bullinger – Huldrych Zwingli's successor – and John Calvin. They had striven for a "free, general, and Christian Council" and, as most Protestant reformers, they remained absent from the meetings of the Church gathering in

Trent, which they viewed as being overly dominated by the Pope and the Emperor. Only representatives of some German Lutheran princes showed up at Trent for the last sessions of the second period (1551–52), but found that they were unable to exert any real influence on the Council's proceedings. The magisterial reformers disagreed with the doctrinal choices that the Council fathers had made, especially those that dealt with issues between Rome and the Reformation, viz. Scripture and tradition(s), Justification, and the sacraments.

This overview of the magisterial reformers' positions is supplemented with two shorter essays, both of which offer more detail on the position of two other reformers. First, Günter Frank addresses the position of Philipp Melanchthon, including his juridical and canonical reservations regarding the Church gathering in Trent, and his remarks concerning Trent's Justification decree, which was his most fundamental observation. Secondly, Gerald MacDonald offers a short analysis of Martin Chemnitz' *Examen Decretorum Concilii Tridentini* that focuses on its significance within the Protestant world, and the reactions it evoked among Catholics. His essay strongly recommends a thorough investigation of Chemnitz' very rich and important work.

Although the 'Roman' post-Tridentine perspective is included throughout all of the contributions, two additional essays address the papacy's specific attempts to get a grip on the implementation and interpretation of the Council of Trent. Paolo Sachet describes how the papacy attempted to control the printed legacy of the Council by granting the printing rights of the Tridentine decrees to its official printer, Paolo Manuzio, in 1564. This meant that all other editions had to offer a text that conformed to Manuzio's edition. Furthermore, the text had to be produced without interpolations or marginal (or other) commentaries. At the end of the day, this privilege quickly proved to be unworkable. The Pope and the Roman Curia took care to reserve the official interpretation to an organ specifically established for that aim, viz. the Congregation of the Council.

Federica Meloni's essay, which builds on her doctoral work on the topic, examines the role of this congregation in interpreting the Council's reformatory decrees. The congregation had to approve the decisions of the provincial councils and deal with the important question of residency of bishops – until Pope Urban VIII established a separate body to pronounce upon the latter question. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, it also took upon itself the controversies regarding the validity of marriages that laypeople submitted to its discretion (marriage also being one of the Council's important issues), and supplications to annul religious vows. Through this, the congregation ventured into canon law, even establishing an alternative circuit of norm-making. In short, it is well-known by all Church historians that the authority of the Pope and the Curia increased remarkably after the Council, especially through the rights they reserved for themselves to interpret Trent's events and decrees. John O'Malley, in

an essay that serves as the epilogue to this first volume and was pronounced as the concluding address of the conference, compares the Council of Trent and the most recent ecumenical council, Vatican II.

II. Between Bishops and Princes

The second volume analyzes the profound modifications in ecclesiastical and religious life after 1563, as well as the accompanying political strife that these changes caused. Moreover, this volume aims to contextualize the ‘Tridentine era’ from the actor-perspective of both bishops and princes. It is generally accepted that the Council of Trent, along with its disciplinary decrees, took great pains in bringing the bishops back to their pastoral role, especially in regard to the duties of preaching, teaching and administering the sacraments to their flock, as John O’Malley emphasizes in his essays. Yet, even if this Tridentine reconfiguration of episcopal and pastoral duties had been the main achievement of the Council, Nicole Lemaitre shows that these changes originated among reformed-minded prelates in the (late) Middle Ages, and were already being implemented by an array of bishops, some of whom also convoked local provincial councils and diocesan synods in regions throughout Europe. Despite the fact that not all attempts at reform were equally successful at this initial stage, Lemaitre’s long-term perspective on Catholic Reform helps to identify the Council as just another step in an already active process of reform instead of a (late) reaction to Protestantism: the vocation of the pastor as a *Good Shepherd* haunted Church debates since at least the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The discussions during the first and last period of the Council regarding the duties of prelates, as well as the decrees that issued from these fierce debates, took into account earlier experiences in Europe (without taking into consideration overseas missionary experiences). More importantly, a significant portion of post-Tridentine European bishops could build upon the work that some of their predecessors had already carried out.

The crucial debate on episcopal residency, prescribed since the fourth century, almost led to a deadlock at the Council, but was finally imposed upon both bishops and priests through decrees promulgated at Session 6 (1–2) and especially Session 23 (1). As Christian Wiesner and Federica Meloni both argue, residency remained prone to negotiation in the post-Tridentine Church through the mediation of the Sacred Congregation of the Council. In 1635, Pope Urban VIII even installed a kind of sub-congregation for settling the requests for the dispensation of a bishop’s residency, thus implementing stricter control of this rule and superimposing itself on the decision-making of local bishops and

metropolitans. In fact, bishops and priests often claimed study, illness and local disputes (*inimicitia*) as reasons for seeking dispensation.

Heinz Finger shows that within episcopal reform the establishment of the diocesan seminaries became a powerful instrument through the famous seminar decree promulgated at Session 23 (18) of 15 July, 1563. Rather than trying to keep clerics away from universities, this decree represented a pragmatic and practical solution for enabling a better education for future priests. In this sense, it was a Tridentine 'invention', though it relied upon earlier plans from the circles of Cardinal Reginald Pole and others. The implementation of this decree was likely most successful in Latin American territories, where old sensibilities were not able to delay the establishment of these seminaries in the spirit of Trent. In continental Europe, the spread and implementation of diocesan seminaries depended on either the financial means of the bishoprics concerned or on the availability of training alternatives. By the eighteenth century, however, Tridentine seminaries under strict episcopal control underwent an existential crisis due to the increasing impetus for *Staatskirchentum*.

Following this introductory overview, case studies from different regions of continental Europe – largely the result of recent research presented here for the first time – analyze the concrete shape that Tridentine diocesan reform took when implemented at the local level. These studies cover the diocese of Carthage in Spain (García Hourcade), Namur in the Habsburg Netherlands (Belin), Ragusa on the Dalmatian Coast in present-day Croatia (Trška), and Olomouc in Moravia in the Kingdom of Bohemia (Parma). Each of these case studies highlights the interaction of the conciliar decrees with given local circumstances, stressing Lemaitre's point that the pre-1563 period mattered, sometimes for the better, but, as is the case for most of the studies presented in this volume, often for the worst. Simon Ditchfield underlines in the third volume that also the experiences of bishops overseas, especially of those in Latin America, played a crucial role in appropriating Trent.

As José García Hourcade demonstrates, reform-minded bishops in the Spanish diocese of Carthage seemed eager to successfully implement Trent, at least before 1600, frequently convoking synods and prescribing that visitations be organized once every three years. Yet, it seems that the Carthaginian bishops often continued to delegate this intensive work to one or more of their representatives, only showing up in the parishes to administer the sacrament of confirmation. Bishops in the Spanish Habsburg Low Countries equally seized upon the Tridentine moment to implement reform. Morgane Belin documents their willingness to reform through the numerous diocesan synods, prescriptions, and episcopal visitations that occurred within the diocese of Namur, part of the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai, though the implementation of Trent ended up being a century-long project in this region.

The subsequent case studies reporting on Ragusa and Olomouc, however, shed a different light on the impact of Trent in local dioceses. Tanja Trška, for example, neatly illustrates how Lodovico Beccadelli, who arrived as appointed Archbishop in Ragusa (present-day Dubrovnik) in 1555, had to deal with the fact that his predecessors in the archiepiscopal see had been mostly absent. He tried to implement the decrees of the Council of Trent, in which he had been an important secretary in its preparatory phase, by reforming parish structures and instituting regular episcopal visitations; yet, his successors and the town authorities did not share his Tridentine élan and did not attempt to counter the obstructions posed by the local clergy. Furthermore, as Tomáš Parma argues, the Council of Trent came at the exact moment when religious co-existence seemed to have been generally accepted in the Margrave of Moravia, which formed a part of the Bohemian lands, and when the relation between Church and State was at its most troublesome. These conflicts lasted until 1621, when Franz von Dietrichstein, the Cardinal and Archbishop of Olomouc, took over as Governor-General of Moravian lands and promptly implemented the Tridentine decrees.

The next section deals with the interactions between the bishops and some of the religious congregations in regard to Catholic Reform before and after Trent, especially in the ever-fragmented early modern Italian Peninsula. The order of the Theatines, for example, is contextualized here, as it refashioned itself from an inquisitorial group to one that worked towards episcopal reform. This refashioning, as Andrea Vanni argues, seemed to represent a counter response to the ideological shifts in the career and thinking of its founder, Gian Pietro Carafa, who later became Paul IV. Of particular interest is the moment in which two subsequent bishops of Piacenza were recruited from the Theatine Order and came to slowly subscribe to the Tridentine Church model of their Milanese Archbishop, Carlo Borromeo.

Finally, Querciolo Mazzonis stresses that bishops also played a significant role in fostering and controlling active women's congregations. The Italian example presented here highlights the fact that the Church was not seeking to repress female devotion, but instead tried to channel it through active congregations, leading to a myriad of forms, rules, and prescriptions within even neighboring regions.

Importantly, this second volume considers the intense controversies between bishops and princes, and the heightened political strife that surrounded the legal reception and the implementation of these conciliar decrees. These decrees not only had to be proclaimed by the Pope, but they had to be endorsed by the various princes in Catholic territories, as well. Ignasi Fernández Terricabras demonstrates how the promulgation and implementation of Trent became a tug-of-war in the relationship between the Church and State. Monarchs who aimed at consolidating their rule in the first half of the sixteenth century

had managed to avoid the much-feared “reform of the princes” intended by the Council, while not achieving the “reform of the Curia” that they had actually wanted. Kings feared that the decrees’ implementation might establish the superiority of ecclesiastical jurisdiction over civil rule within their borders, or might permit the Holy See to interfere with internal political matters. Though many monarchs shared these anxieties, they still adopted various measures proposed by Trent in the decades after 1564, although these were often modelled along the specific legal traditions of each of their territories. Yet, there was a distinct difference between the regions where implementation might ignite controversies, such as in the Holy Roman Empire, the emerging Dutch Republic, France, Poland, Bohemia, and Moravia on the one hand, and countries with an exclusive Catholic regime on the other. Even in the latter regions, though, much juridical contention still occurred between ecclesiastical and royal institutions. Fernández Terricabras shows that the Tridentine bishops remained the weakest link within this triangle of power that existed between the Pope, princes, and bishops, despite the fact that the Council had significantly empowered them.

This volume also situates several aspects of the growing conflict between the ecclesiastical and political realm within their regional and local contexts. First, attention is directed to the Spanish Habsburg territories, where Tridentine reform did not occur as easily or as straightforward as scholars often depict. This was especially true in the Low Countries, where the Council of Trent sparked immediate contestation by local elites who feared the exclusive implementation of Catholicism in a moment when Protestantism was quickly spreading throughout their territories. For dissidents and insurgents striving for cohabitation between the confessions, the Council of Trent was easily discredited as just another form of inquisition. Thus, the promulgation of the Council’s decrees, stirring fear and unrest, quickly became one of the preconditions of the Dutch Revolt (Soen). Gustaaf Janssens further demonstrates that the Duke of Alba, as the new Governor-General of the Low Countries since 1567, implemented a variety of measures from and inspired by Trent – ranging from razzias in search of forbidden books to the resolute installation of new bishops in the wake of the reorganization of the dioceses in 1559 – that added additional support to the reasons for revolt.

D’Avenia’s work highlights the contemporary situation in the diocese of Palermo in Spanish Habsburg Sicily, where the Cardinal Archbishop Gianettino Doria, although the product of an outspoken and politically-inspired appointment, showed himself to be one of the most zealous propagators of the Tridentine decrees, while also attempting to increase his jurisdiction through a specially established *Tribunale della Visita*. These examples should guard us against over-simplified conclusions that assume that bishops who were either

appointed by the political authorities or taken from the highest ranks of the nobility would inevitably become bad pastors or obstructers of Tridentine reform. Rather, one should pay attention to the sensibilities of Church-State collaboration and confessionalisation in the Early Modern Era.

The second set of examples, which Fernández Terricabras labelled as the “extreme case”, stems from France, where the monarchy openly rejected the disciplinary conciliar decrees regarding Church reform, while some of its closely related prelates accepted the doctrinal decrees already during the Assembly of Melun in 1579, and the first Estate unilaterally did the same in its Assembly of the Clergy in 1615. Irène Plasman-Labrunne analyzes the long struggle for Trent’s acceptance in France and points out that the demand for excluding ‘foreign’ clerics from pastoral care in France became an important point of discussion, merging Gallican claims with Tridentine prescriptions of residence.

Moreover, the reception of the Council of Trent was multifaceted and ambiguous throughout the early seventeenth century. On the one hand, as Philippe Denis shows, Gallican authors, like Edmond Richer in 1605, vigilantly defended conciliarism – including its concomitant chauvinist reflexes – that were still vivid at the Faculty of Theology of Paris, in the spirit of its fifteenth-century foreman Jean Gerson. Remarkably, Richer remained silent about the Council of Trent, not wanting to offer reasons to refute the importance of the Council. On the other hand, Thomas Hamilton observes that two years later Jacques Gillot, a Gallican thinker, used the Council of Trent to combat ‘Tridentinism’ and its tendency towards papal centralization, which he considered to be harmful to the much-cherished liberties of the French Church. Gillot corresponded with Paolo Sarpi throughout the controversy of the Interdict and was skillfully able to circumvent censorship, despite the initiatives of the nuncio. Still, he saw the final unilateral acceptance of the Tridentine decrees by the Assembly of the Clergy as a defeat. This should remind us that the controversy sparked by Trent was not only a confessional one between the Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist (and other Protestant) churches, but also an intra-Catholic one, leading to politico-religious polarization throughout Europe in the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

III. Between Artists and Adventurers

The third volume, with the somewhat prickly title *Between Artists and Adventurers*, deals with the outcomes of the Council of Trent within the cultural spheres of both art and music, as well as in the missionary enterprises occurring throughout the New World. In this volume, the afterlife of Trent and the new sensibilities that it created are studied through an examination of Europe’s visual

and musical culture. Moreover, this volume focusses on the global impact of Trent through missions in the Americas, Africa, and Asia.

The Council of Trent had a clear, though concise, view about the use of the arts in Catholic religious life. Pierre-Antoine Fabre investigates Diego Lainez, the second Superior General of the Jesuits, and his series of preparatory notes written in Paris in 1561–62 for his appearance at the conference of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. There, he had to defend the veneration of the sacred image in the Catholic tradition, rebuke any abuses in this regard, and search for a common ground with Theodore Beza and the French Reformed party. Thus, Lainez's position, as described by his preparatory notes, should always be viewed within the religious-political context of sixteenth-century France, which was very different from the situation in Trent.

Soetkin Vanhauwaert examines the impact of Trent on the existing sculptural tradition of the so-called *Johannesschüssel* – a traditional sculpture that depicts the decapitated head of Saint John the Baptist on a platter – in the Low Countries. Although she does not find an immediate impact on the production of these sculpted Saint John's Heads – as has been suggested in earlier research –, she accepts that stricter supervision of the bishop and his staff members in local parishes, as imposed by the Council, indirectly led to restrictions on more questionable practices. In the case of the sculpted *Johannesschüssel*, it may have been required that a genuine relic be inserted into the head in order to more closely connect the sculpture with Saint John the Baptist, whereas before Trent the sculpted head was often considered a relic by itself – a practice that may have become increasingly problematic.

Ellénita de Mol investigates the degree to which the image of the Virgin Mary, as it appears in three Flemish triptychs of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, was in accordance with the spirit of Trent. The triptych in Saint-Martin's church in Wezemaal (by Frans I Pourbus), which at first sight appears to be fully concentrated upon Mary, actually points to the reaffirmed Eucharistic doctrines of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of Mass. The triptych in the Saint-Peter's church in Lo (by Jeremias Mittendorf), however, sees Mary as an 'cooperator' in Christ's redemptory work. Whereas both triptychs fit within Trent's Christocentrism, the triptych in the church of Our Lady in Aarschot (by Pieter van Avont) is old-fashioned in the sense that it strongly focuses on Mary, without paying much attention to the major work of redemption that Christ also did in her.

Walter S. Melion examines Jerónimo Nadal's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (1595). He specifically focuses upon key changes made by Antoon Wierix, Maarten de Vos, and Bernardino Passeri to three of the original *modelli*: images 3 (*Night Nativity of the Lord*), 4 (*Dawn of the Lord's Nativity, with Adoration of the Shepherds*) and 39 (*The Parable of the Tares*). Melion argues that

these emendations offer an insight into the mechanics of scriptural image-making as sponsored by the Jesuits and other proponents for the reform of sacred art in the wake of Trent. Sanja Cvetnić adds that at the time of Trent, as well as for a century and a half afterwards, the Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia was divided between the Habsburg Monarchy (as a part of its multinational mosaic), the Republic of Venice, and the Ottoman Empire (the Sanjak of Bosnia), with Catholic Croats living in both the Habsburg Kingdom and the Sanjak. Cvetnić further shows how this particular politico-ecclesiastical situation left an imprint on post-conciliar sacred imagery, which she illustrates with several examples, ranging from a triumphalist *Saint Michael the Archangel Intervening on the Side of the Imperial Troops for the Victory over the Ottomans in Osijek* (1770) and the Prophet Muhammed's contribution to the *Dispute on the Immaculate Conception* (Split, 1518, 1727) to several masterpieces from Franciscan monasteries in the Sanjak of Bosnia. All of these essays demonstrate how Catholicism became the most 'sensuous' religious culture of the time.

Two subsequent contributions deal with the musical prescriptions of the Council and the Post-Tridentine Church. Xavier Bisaro argues that Trent actually had not that much to say about music, as it resulted in no declaration concerning the (required) intelligibility of the texts in polyphonic music (let alone prohibiting polyphony in its entirety). The Council only forbade music in which anything "impure" or "lascivious" is mixed, while requiring that the holders of benefices sing their psalms with respect, clarity and devotion. Furthermore, Bisaro traces even these prescriptions back to earlier councils, especially the Council of Basel. Marianne C.E. Gillion argues that while polyphony has received the most attention in the scholarly debates on church music after Trent, plain chant also underwent transformations. She compares graduals that had been printed in Italy both before and after Trent, and specifically focuses on chants that had been added as a consequence of the liturgical reforms (such as two eighth-mode tracts, *Veni sponsa* and *Adoramus*). Gillion demonstrates how composers and editors of chant books were inspired by changes in the liturgy, but that they were also influenced by ongoing revision techniques, as well as the Post-Tridentine predilection for brevity and comprehensibility. Significantly, Gillion's contribution also relates to the articles from our first volume regarding the liturgy after Trent.

The third volume concludes by scrutinizing the impact of the Council of Trent on a global level, although – as has been stressed in much recent scholarship – the Council itself was remarkably silent on the missionary enterprise of the Church. Simon Ditchfield not only underlines how Tridentine reforms made their way from Trent, via Rome and Catholic Europe, to overseas territories, but also how reforms in these territories made 'their way back'. With overlapping centers of

power and influence, this process was never unidirectional and was always confusing, which makes it difficult to properly identify as Tridentine Catholicism or even Roman Catholicism. Whatever the ideal phrase might be, Ditchfield examines how Catholicism developed after Trent into the major global religion, where Lusitan, Hispanic and Borromean Catholicisms encountered local 'micro-Catholicisms' and flourished.

As such, the Council of Trent can no longer be identified as an authoritarian and monolithic Church Council that was able to impose uniform procedures upon local churches. Instead, as this volume's case studies demonstrate, the developments of post-Tridentine Catholicism, in varied countries that ranged from Japan (Vu Thanh, Nawata Ward) to Ethiopia (Cohen) and Peru (Penry), were quite different. Each of these cases supports the European examples from the second volume and suggests that the implementation and impact of Trent largely depended upon local circumstances, the broader context, and the specific and ever-contingent agency of bishops and religious orders. All contributions within this section highlight how the seven sacraments – especially the Eucharist, confession, and marriage – became pivotal in these reform schemes, as well as how missionaries engaged in prudent pragmatism and local accommodation in instituting Tridentine reform. The role of the Jesuits is predominant in all of these case studies, yet each also underlines the fact that great debates and conflicts occurred within the Order during the implementation of conciliar decrees in America, Asia and Africa.

There are some remarkable conclusions to be obtained from the case studies included at the end of this third volume. During the early modern Japanese mission, which was, in many ways, a *terre d'exception*, the Jesuits sincerely doubted whether a bishop was needed in the land of the Rising Sun; instead, they preferred to maintain their monopoly rather than introducing this key figure of Tridentine Catholicism. In this regard Hélène Vu Thanh introduces the mediating figure of Luís Cerqueira, who was a Jesuit as well as the first (and last) Bishop of Japan in the early seventeenth century. The author describes Cerqueira's enthusiastic program that proposed the appropriate observance of the sacraments of the Eucharist and confession. He was also challenged to refashion the sacrament of marriage among the small minority of Catholic converts along Tridentine lines. Yet, in accordance with the Jesuit acculturation politics in South-East Asia, especially those set by the founder of the Japanese mission, Alessandro Valignano, Cerqueira was willing to concede on some points in order to accommodate for local Buddhist practices. Regardless, neither his, nor Catholicism's, influence extended much beyond Nagasaki, which, as the only Catholic city, became the episcopal residence. Valignano died in 1613, shortly before the persecution of Christians began and the practice of Catholicism forbidden. Haruko Nawata Ward further shows that within this short period of the Japanese Catholic mission, the Jesuits displayed a remarkable will-

ingness to translate saint and martyr stories into Japanese and to adapt them to local narrative tastes. The hagiography of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, for example, was rewritten in Kirishitanban, influencing women's and lay apostolate in general, in a way that extended well-beyond the end of Japan's Christian century.

In opposition to Ignatius of Loyola's initial goals, the seventeenth-century Jesuit mission to Ethiopia failed. During the decade after Emperor Susānyos' conversion in 1622, Catholicism became Ethiopia's official religion, though it still competed against the previously established Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Three Jesuits amply commented on this troublesome ten-year period, which ended with the Emperor granting a return to a freedom of religion. Remarkably, the reports of the short-lived Jesuit mission, which Leonardo Cohen discusses in his contribution, placed most of the blame on the local population and their moral and sexual behavior, especially in their alleged tendency towards idolatry and polygamy. These reports consequently provide us with much information on Jesuit views of Ethiopian Africans, as well as of their own self-perception.

Finally, in those locations where Catholic missions had their greatest impact, the outcome could have unanticipated effects. S. Elizabeth Penry, for example, unravels how the inhabitants of the Andes in seventeenth-century Peru took an active role in appropriating the Tridentine prescriptions on the veneration of saints and images, especially within the context of local *confradías*. The example of two brothers using Tridentine discourse and vocabulary to pursue a local veneration of Saint Barbara against the will of their bishops and inquisitors – pointing at the need for sacramental practice in local communities, as prescribed by their locally adapted catechisms – shows that the inhabitants of the Andes and indigenous people in general were to some extent co-creators of Early Modern Catholicism. Moreover, it demonstrates the tangibility of a globalizing/localizing Early Modern Catholicism, and the multiplicity of Catholicisms as advanced by Simon Ditchfield.

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8 S. Ditchfield, "Trent Revisited", in G. Dall'Olio/A. Malena/P. Scaramella (ed.), *Per Adriano Prosperi*, vol. 1: *La fede degli Italiani* (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2011) 357–70.

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The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bible Reading: What Happened in the Build-Up to and during the Fourth Session (1546)?

The question of whether the faithful were allowed to read the Bible in the vernacular, arose in the late medieval and early modern Catholic Church regularly, often giving rise to fierce debates. At the Council of Trent, this question was discussed in the build-up to Session 4 in the spring of 1546. Given the fact that no uniform legislation or customs existed in the Catholic Church – only diverse local traditions existed – the Council fathers were not able to reach an agreement on the matter, so that any decision regarding vernacular Bibles continued to be in the hands of the local authorities.

Our essay consists of two parts. First, we will give an overview of the various positions regarding Bible reading in the vernacular that existed in diverse regions in late medieval Europe and that, inevitably, influenced the attitude the Catholic authorities adopted towards the ‘new’ – often Reformation-minded – translations that were edited on the eve of Trent. Secondly, we will show how these diverse positions resounded through the debates regarding vernacular Bible reading that took place in the build-up to Session 4 of the Council of Trent, and more particularly in the period between 1 March 1546 and 8 April 1546. In this regard, attention will be paid to the most important proponents and adversaries of this Bible reading as well as to the arguments they used in this debate.

I. Regional Traditions relating to Vernacular Bible Reading on the Eve of Trent

One of the most persistent myths about the late medieval and early modern Catholic Church is that it had straightforwardly prohibited the reading of the Bible in the vernacular¹ and that it was Luther who had made the Scriptures

1 It should, however, be observed that, in comparison with the contemporary conception of the Bible as a closed collection of canonical books, the Middle Ages leave us with a broader understanding about what the notion ‘Bible’ might include: in addition to pandects or complete Bibles, copies of the New Testament, as well as of separate books (the Gospels, the

accessible to the common people for the very first time. The statement, which can at least partially be traced back to the reformer of Wittenberg himself, has also ‘enjoyed’ a considerable reception among scholars for generations. It even belongs to the ‘myths of origin’ of European Protestantism; the kind of myths that were to be found on all sides of the confessional spectrum and contributed largely to the construction of distinctive identities in the confessional era, as Günther Wassilowsky has argued rightly elsewhere in this volume. Recent scholarship by Andrew C. Gow, Sabrina Corbellini (and her Groningen research group) has made considerable efforts to disprove the myth,² so that it now may be obvious that on the eve of the Council of Trent, there was no unequivocal policy in the Catholic Church regarding Bible reading in the vernacular – let alone an outright ban –, but that, instead, only local traditions existed which were often very diverse.³

The general picture is that in regions in which the Church was confronted with other sets of beliefs or had to challenge ‘heterodox’ movements, the authorities issued edicts with the general intention of stemming the tide of the production and reading of Bible translations in the vernacular. The reason was, after all, that an uncontrolled reading of the Bible may easily give rise to erroneous and even heretical interpretations. The censorship measures did have effects in some areas of late medieval Europe – as the history of censorship has particularly emphasized⁴ – but were not able to quell the people’s appetite for Bible reading in

Apocalypse etc.), also biblical material that was ordered according to the liturgical practice of the Church (Psalms, Epistle and Gospel readings from Mass, sometimes accompanied with short explanations) is meant. Apart from what we consider as Bibles in the strict sense of the word, also Bible-based material is often taken into consideration, such as Gospel harmonies, Lives of Jesus and *postils* in which the extensive explanations and glosses to the biblical text take the overhand.

- 2 A.C. Gow, “Challenging the Protestant Paradigm: Bible Reading in Lay and Urban Contexts of the Later Middle Ages”, in T.J. Heffernan/T. Burman (ed.), *Scripture and Pluralism. Reading the Bible in the Religiously Plural Worlds of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Studies in the History of Christian Traditions 123; Leiden: Brill, 2005) 161–91; A.C. Gow, “The Contested History of a Book: The German Bible of the Later Middle Ages and Reformation in Legend, Ideology, and Scholarship”, *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9 (2009) 2–37; S. Corbellini/M. van Duijn/S. Folkerts/M. Hoogvliet, “Challenging the Paradigms: Holy Writ and Lay Readers in Late Medieval Europe”, *Church History and Religious Culture* 93 (2013) 171–88.

- 3 A fuller account of the subsequent overview is published in W. François, “Vernacular Bible Reading in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe. The ‘Catholic’ Position Revisited”, *The Catholic Historical Review* 102/1 (2018) 23–56.

- 4 P. Hofmeister, “Bibellesen und Bibelverbot”, *Österreichisches Archiv für Kirchenrecht* 17 (1966) 298–355, on pp. 313–28; R.E. Lerner, “Les communautés hérétiques”, in P. Riché/G. Lobrichon (ed.), *Le Moyen Âge et la Bible* (Bible de tous les temps 4; Paris: Beauchesne, 1984) 597–614; K. Schreiner, “Volkstümliche Bibelmagie und volkssprachliche Bibellektüre. Theologische und soziale Probleme mittelalterlicher Laienfrömmigkeit”, in P. Dinzelsbacher/D.R. Bauer (ed.), *Volksreligion in hohen und späten Mittelalter* (Quellen und Forschungen aus dem Gebiet der Geschichte, N.F. 13; Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1990) 329–73, on pp. 360–4; P.-M.

other areas. The Iberian Peninsula was most probably among the regions in which prohibitory measures against vernacular Bible editions had been most successfully implemented. Being a multicultural area in the late Middle Ages, with vernacular Bibles being used by all Jewish and Christians groups present there, the Iberian Peninsula saw its re-catholicization and confessional unification accompanied by a harsh oppression and even destruction of copies of the Bible.⁵ This policy culminated in a strict prohibition of vernacular Bibles, probably issued by the Inquisition in 1492 with the consent of the so-called Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella. The prohibition was intended on preventing Jews and *conversos* from continuing their Jewish worship clandestinely, from interpreting the Scriptures according to their former Hebrew traditions and, thus, from secretly initiating their children in the Mosaic Law. The Emperor Charles V and his Spanish administration continued the same restrictive Bible policy in order to keep the upcoming Protestantism on a tight rein. Some editions containing the Epistle and Gospel readings from Mass were, however, allowed.

In England, vernacular translations of (parts of) the Bible freely circulated, until the authorities saw themselves confronted with the Bible-based ‘heresy’ of John Wycliffe and the Lollards, as well as the vernacular translations that found their origin in that group.⁶ Through the Oxford Constitutions, issued in the wake

Bogaert, “La Bible française au Moyen Âge. Des premières traductions aux débuts de l’imprimerie”, in Bogaert (ed.), *Histoire illustrée du Moyen Âge à nos jours* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991) 13–46, on pp. 41–3; M.-E. Henneau/J.-P. Massaut, “Lire la Bible: un privilège, un droit ou un devoir”, in *Homo religiosus. Autour de Jean Delumeau* (Paris: Fayard, 1997) 415–24.

5 For a general introduction to Spanish vernacular Bibles, see E.C. Francomano, “Castilian Vernacular Bibles in Iberia, ca. 1250–1500”, in S. Boynton/D.J. Reilly (ed.), *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, and Performance in Western Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011) 315–37; G. Avenzoa, “The Bible in Spanish and Catalan”, in R. Marsden/E.A. Matter (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 2: *From 600 to 1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) 288–306. See also: S. Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición de la Biblia en lengua vulgar: defensores y detractores* (León: Universidad, Secretariado de Publicaciones y Medios Audiovisuales, 2003); K. Reinhardt, *Die biblischen Autoren Spaniens bis zum Konzil von Trient* (Corpus scriptorum sacrorum Hispaniae, Subsidia 7; Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia, 1976).

6 For a general introduction to the vernacular Bible in English, see the overviews by R. Marsden, “The Bible in English”, in Marsden/Matter (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, 2.217–38, and “The Bible in English in the Middle Ages”, in Boynton/Reilly (ed.), *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 272–95. See also: D. Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven, CT/London: Yale University Press, 2003). For a discussion of the Oxford *censura* and further literature by Mary Dove, Anne Hudson, and others, see K. Gosh, *The Wycliffite Heresy: Authority and the Interpretation of Texts* (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 45; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 86–111 and E. Poleg, “Wycliffite Bibles as Orthodoxy”, in S. Corbellini (ed.), *Cultures of Religious Reading in the Late Middle Ages: Instructing the Soul, Feeding the Spirit and Awakening the Passion* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 25; Turnhout: Brepols, 2013) 71–91.

of the Oxford Synod of 1407–1409, the authorities forbade any (new) translation of the Bible into English or any other vernacular language without the prior approval of the local bishop or a provincial council. In this case, discussion still prevails as to the degree to which this ban was effectively enforced. There is not only the fact that a large number of manuscripts – over 250 – containing the Wycliffite and Lollard texts are known to have survived in libraries and archives up until today, but also that some of the manuscripts have even been adapted to an orthodox readership, through the removal of Wycliffite prologues and glosses, and the addition of Old Testament readings from Mass. Whatever the case may be, when William Tyndale published his New Testament translation, which was largely tributary to Erasmus' Latin-Greek New Testament and also based upon Luther's German translation, in 1526, with a first print in Worms, and subsequent editions in Antwerp, it was immediately affected by the English authorities' prohibitory measures.

In France, the situation is even more complicated.⁷ In the late Middle Ages, heterodox Bible-based movements, such as Waldensians and even Beguines and Beghards, were active in several parts of France. When Bishop Bertram of Metz complained to Pope Innocent III of the so-called heretical groups thought to be active in his diocese, and who convened, discussed as well as preached from French translations of the Bible – obviously the Waldensians are who were meant – the Pope replied with a renowned letter entitled *Cum ex iniuncto* (1199), amongst other documents. The Pope did not denounce vernacular Bible reading in itself, but instead opposed secret conventicles in which the Bible was freely discussed, as well the practice of the ministry of preaching without having received any prior ecclesiastical approval. Innocent III's *Cum ex iniuncto* has been included among the *Decretals* of Gregory IX in 1234 and, as such, has become part of the Western Church's canon law.⁸ Adversaries of Bible reading in the vernacular would, in the years and centuries which followed, invoke *Cum ex iniuncto* as an official papal ban on vernacular Bible reading with a general demeanor, although this was never the Pope's initial intent, nor had it significantly stemmed the tide of the production of vernacular Bibles in France. Large quantities of manuscripts containing (parts of) the Bible were produced,

7 For a general introduction to late medieval and early modern Bible translations in French, see C.R. Sneddon, "The Bible in French", in Marsden/Matter (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, 2.251–67; M. Hoogvliet, "Encouraging Lay People to Read the Bible in the French Vernaculars: New Groups of Readers and Textual Communities", *Church History and Religious Culture* 93 (2013) 237–72. Important remains also P.-M. Bogaert (ed.), *Histoire illustrée du Moyen Âge à nos jours* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991).

8 See in this regard: *Decretales Gregorii IX Lib. V Tit. VII De Haereticis c. XII*, in *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, vol. 2: *Decretalium Collectiones*, E. Friedberg (ed.) (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1881), cols. 784–7.

the *Bible Historiale complétée* (first decade of the fourteenth century) being the most important one among them and obviously one of the first to be printed.

Another Bible-based ‘heresy’, viz. that of John Hus in Bohemia, may have further increased the suspicion of the French clergy and the Paris theologians, towards Bible reading in the vernacular, especially since the historic leader of the Paris Faculty of Theology, Jean Gerson, had witnessed Hus’ ‘heterodox’ stand-points at the Council of Constance (1417) and had become convinced that it was partly due to the idiosyncratic reading of the Bible, which circulated in a manifold of vernacular copies in Bohemia. The Paris theologians eventually came into operation after the advent of biblical humanism and *évangélisme* in France. In 1527, they condemned Erasmus’ plea for a vernacular Bible – as held in his *Paraphrases* to the Gospel of Matthew (1522) –, a condemnation that was eventually published in 1531. This pronouncement by the influential theological Faculty of Paris should be considered a landmark in the controversy regarding vernacular Bible reading that raged in the Catholic Church, since it was repeatedly cited by opponents to such reading in the years that followed. In 1525–26, the theologians backed up by the *Parlement de Paris*, had also placed a ban on the “new” French vernacular Bibles issued by Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples (which however continued to be printed in Antwerp, with the support of the Louvain theologians).⁹ The question remains, however, as to how efficacious these prohibitory measures were, especially in those parts of France which fell beyond the Faculty and *Parlement’s* sphere of influence.

The situation in Germany, the Low Countries, and Italy was different since in these regions vernacular Bible translations circulated and were widely read in the late Middle Ages. The spread of vernacular editions, in the wake of the Reformation, was not met with a general prohibition on all vernacular Bibles, but by a selective prohibition of Reformation-minded editions, for which an alternative was often offered in the form of the production of ‘good’ Catholic Bible editions.

Building upon a centuries-old manuscript tradition, German Bible texts became available for printing, so that between 1466 and 1522, and thus before the Reformation, about seventy editions containing such books were printed.¹⁰

9 For the censorship measures, see W. François, “The Condemnation of Vernacular Bible Reading by the Parisian Theologians (1523–1531)”, in W. François/A. A. den Hollander (ed.), *Infant Milk or Hardy Nourishment? The Bible for Lay People and Theologians in the Early Modern Period* (BETL 221; Leuven: Peeters, 2009) 111–39.

10 For a general introduction to late medieval and early modern Bible translations in German, see A. C. Gow, “The Bible in Germanic”, in Marsden/Matter (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, 2.198–216, and the aforementioned essay of Gow, “The Contested History of a Book”; R. Bentzinger, “Zur spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Bibelübersetzung. Versuch eines Überblicks”, in I. Rösler (ed.), *‘Ik lerne kunst dor lust’. Ältere Sprache und Literatur in Forschung und Lehre* (FS Ch. Baufeld; Rostocker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft 7; Rostock: Univ., Philos. Fak., 1999) 29–42; also Th. Kaufmann, “Vorreformatatorische Laienbibel und

Eighteen of them were pandects or complete Bibles, the first being the *Mentellin Bible* of 1466. True, there were efforts to prevent the vernacular Bible from falling into the hands of the uneducated – let alone heretical – people, but none of them were able to effectively impede the interest in vernacular versions of the Scriptures in Germany among clerics, nobles, and literate burghers. When Martin Luther published the first vernacular version of his New Testament in 1522, and his complete Bible in 1534, he not only based himself upon the novel source texts published by Erasmus and other biblical humanists – as has long been emphasized in Protestant historiography –, but could also rely on this centuries-long interest in vernacular Bible reading in the late medieval Germany. The Catholic Church in the Holy Roman Empire did not react by imposing a strict ban on vernacular Bible editions, but by putting ‘good’ Bibles into the people’s hands, viz. Bibles in which confessionally sensitive passages from the Luther Bible had been corrected on the basis of the Vulgate. The best known of these Catholic *Korrekturbibeln* are the New Testament of Jerome Emser (1527), and the Bibles of John Dietenberger (1534) and John Eck (1537).

A similar picture is to be found in the Low Countries.¹¹ Several parts of the Bible, such as History Bibles, Psalters, translations of the New Testament, Gospel harmonies, as well as books containing the Epistles and Gospel readings from Mass, were widespread by the end of the Middle Ages (especially in Dutch, but also in French). Part of the material was printed, beginning with the *Delft Bible* (1477), which was in fact a Dutch Old Testament version without the Psalms, and which was largely based upon the text of the *Herne Bible* (made between 1359 and 1384 in the Carthusian monastery of Herne near Brussels). The edition was immediately followed by the supplementary printing of the Epistle and Gospel

reformatiorische Evangelium”, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 101 (2004) 138–74. Among the manifold of introductions to Luther’s Bible translations, see J.L. Flood, “Martin Luther’s Bible Translation in its German and European Context”, in R. Griffiths (ed.), *The Bible in the Renaissance: Essays on Biblical Commentary and Translation in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (St. Andrews studies in Reformation history; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001) 45–70; V. Leppin, “‘Biblia, das ist die ganze Heilige Schrift deutsch’: Luthers Bibelübersetzung zwischen Sakralität und Profanität”, in J. Rohls/G. Wenz (ed.), *Protestantismus und deutsche Literatur* (Münchener Theologische Forschungen 2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2004) 13–26 (see there for further literature).

- 11 For an introduction to the medieval Dutch Bible, see the first part (ed. Y. Desplenter) of P. Gillaerts et al. (ed.), *De Bijbel in de Lage Landen: Elf eeuwen van vertalen* (Heerenveen: Royal Jongbloed, 2015) 31–202; also S. Volkerts, “Reading the Bible Lessons at Home: Holy Writ and Lay Readers in the Low Countries”, *Church History and Religious Culture* 93 (2013) 217–37. For the early modern Bible production and censorship, see the second part (ed. W. François) in Gillaerts et al. (ed.), *De Bijbel in de Lage Landen*, 203–388; also W. François, “Die volkssprachliche Bibel in den Niederlanden des 16. Jahrhunderts. Zwischen Antwerpener Buchdruckern und Löwener Buchzensoren”, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 120 (2009) 187–214; A. A. den Hollander, *De Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen: Dutch Translations of the Bible 1522–1545* (Bibliotheca Bibliographica Neerlandica 33; Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1997).

readings from Mass, as well as by Psalters, which would go through several reprints in Gouda, Utrecht, Delft, and in other towns of the northern regions of the Low Countries. The availability of the texts in printing “and the advantages of high output and low price”¹² demonstrably contributed to the further opening up of vernacular biblical material to a lay urban audience. When the first Bible editions appeared in the early modern Low Countries, based upon the text of Erasmus and/or Luther, the authorities did not react with a general ban on vernacular Bibles. What was prohibited by means of edicts, were especially those Bible editions that contained prologues, marginal glosses, summaries above the chapters, and other ‘paratextual’ elements that might influence the interpretation of the reader in a heterodox direction. The discussion of the Bible’s interpretation, which often took place in semi-clandestine gatherings or conventicles, was also forbidden. Just as in Germany, the authorities were keen to provide the population with a trustworthy translation, based upon the Vulgate and devoid of all interpretative glosses. This was, for example, the aim of the Dutch Vorsterman Bible, named after the printer who published this Bible for the first time in 1528 in Antwerp, as well as the French Bible of the humanist Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples, which was printed by Martin Lempereur in 1530 in the same town because it was forbidden in Paris. Lefèvre’s New Testament had been published from 1525 onwards and his Old Testament was completed in 1528.

Regarding Italy, it may be concluded that biblical texts in the vernacular also played a fairly important role in the devotional life of late medieval burghers, as well as tertiaries of Saint Francis and other (semi-)religious women, especially in Tuscany and in the northern regions.¹³ In these cases, the Church authorities also had formulated no fundamental objections to the reading of the Bible in the vernacular by lay people. Building upon an important manuscript tradition, the

12 M. van Duijn, “Printing, Public, and Power: Shaping the First Printed Bible in Dutch (1477)”, *Church History and Religious Culture* 93 (2013) 275–99, on p. 289.

13 For vernacular Bible production and reading in medieval Italy, see L. Leonardi, “The Bible in Italian”, in Marsden/Matter (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, 2.268–87. Among the manifold of publications of S. Corbellini, see “Looking in the Mirror of the Scriptures: Reading the Bible in Medieval Italy”, in W. François/A. A. Den Hollander (ed.), “*Wading Lambs and Swimming Elephants*”: *The Bible for the Laity and Theologians in Late Medieval and Early Modern Era* (BETL 257; Leuven: Peeters, 2012) 21–40; “Reading, Writing and Collecting: Cultural Dynamics and Italian Vernacular Bible Translations”, *Church History and Religious Culture* 93 (2013) 189–216. For the Early Modern Era, see especially E. Barbieri, “Éditeurs et imprimeurs de la Bible en italien (1471–1600)”, in B.E. Schwarzbach (ed.), *La Bible imprimée dans l’Europe moderne* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1999) 246–59; G. Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo: La censura ecclesiastica e i volgarizzamenti della Scrittura (1471–1605)* (Saggi 460; Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997), 23–74; A. Del Col, “Appunti per una indagine sulle traduzioni in volgare della Bibbia nel Cinquecento italiano”, in A. Prosperi/A. Biondi (ed.), *Libri, idee e sentimenti religiosi nel Cinquecento italiano: 3–5 aprile 1986* (Modena: Panini, 1987) 165–88.

Italian Bible translated by the Camaldolese monk Nicolò Malerbi, first edition 1471, went through sixteen printed editions before the Reformation and another eleven would follow, up until 1567. The Reform-minded Florentine layman Antonio Brucioli was the first to publish a New Testament (in 1530) and a complete Bible (in 1532) that were said to be based upon the original Greek and Hebrew. But this did not cause the Catholic Church authorities to subsequently prohibit Bibles. On the contrary, the same mechanism that was observed to be at work in Germany and in the Low Countries also arose in Italy: two Dominicans from the Florentine San Marco monastery provided a Catholic translation, a correction of Brucioli's translation in fact, viz. Fra Zaccaria of Florence in 1536 (the New Testament only) and Sante Marmochino in 1538 (complete Bible).

The presence of Bibles, vernacular and otherwise, has also been attested to in medieval Sicily and other regions of Southern Italy.¹⁴ However, in the late Middle Ages Sicily, Sardinia, and the Kingdom of Naples were added to the Aragonese Crown. Ferdinand of Aragon managed to introduce the Spanish Inquisition to Sicily and Sardinia in 1487 and 1492 respectively, something that has never succeeded in the Kingdom of Naples. Bringing this part of Italy into the Spanish religious-cultural sphere may have negatively influenced the Church leaders' view upon vernacular Bible reading and may have effectively affected the diffusion and reading of vernacular Bibles in this part of Italy, although the question remains to be examined in greater depth.

Having sketched the multicolored map of vernacular Bible reading in late medieval and early modern Western Europe on the eve of the Council of Trent, the general picture takes shape that in regions in which the Church had to face other systems of belief, as was the case in Spain, or 'heresies', as in Wycliffite England, the ecclesiastical authorities managed to impose prohibitory measures. It is obvious, however, that large amounts of manuscripts containing biblical texts continued to circulate in England, but that the Bible was not printed prior to the Reformation. In France, the picture is even more ambiguous; although the country saw several Bible-based dissident movements or even 'heresies' being rampant on its soil (Cathars, Waldensians, heterodox Beguines) Bible translations continued to circulate and were even printed, although the printing press largely limited itself to History Bibles. The existence of these religious dissident movements had made the Paris theologians suspicious towards vernacular Bibles – in the wake of their historic leader Jean Gerson – and they eventually managed to prevent the printing of the 'new' vernacular translations made by Lefèvre d'Étaples c.s. in the atmosphere of the French *évangélisme*. The atmosphere was

14 H. Bresc, *Livre et société en Sicile (1299–1499)* (Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani. Bollettino. Supplementi 3; Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, 1971), s.v. *Biblica* and *Psalterium*.

very different in (the northern part of) Italy, Germany, the Low Countries, Bohemia – the presence of Bible-based Hussitism notwithstanding – to which Poland and Dalmatia-Croatia should be added.¹⁵ In these regions, a tradition of permitting vernacular Bibles or parts of it, to be read by people who did not understand Latin, had existed since the Middle Ages. Even the advent of the Reformation had not led to the prohibition of vernacular Bible translation, but to the production of Catholic translations as an alternative to Reformation-minded versions.

II. The debate about Vernacular Bible Reading at the Council of Trent (1546)

1 The Council of Trent and the Biblical Question

When the Council fathers gathered in Trent, from December 1545 onwards, they aimed to respond to the challenges that (German) Reformation involved, both by defining the genuine doctrine of the Church and by proclaiming measures for Church reform. Their responsibility for the *Catholica* as such did not prevent them from being conditioned by the traditions and customs which were peculiar to their local Church or by the politico-religious factions to which they belonged.

The Council fathers were convinced that they should first deal with the sources of the faith, upon which all doctrine and reform were to be founded. Since the reformers had proclaimed the Bible as the sole reliable source of theological truth and the faith of the believers, the Council fathers had to discuss issues such as the extent of the biblical canon, the authenticity of the Latin Vulgate and the (lasting) value of other Bible versions – whether in the original language or in the vernacular –, the relation between Scripture and (unwritten) traditions, the norms of interpreting the sacred text and its emendation, as well as the inevitable misinterpretations to which it was liable to give rise. In this context the Council fathers also engaged in ardent debates about Bible reading in the vernacular before Session 4 eventually took place on 8 April 1546.¹⁶

15 For the Central- and Eastern-European traditions, see J. Krašovec (ed.), *The Interpretation of the Bible: The International Symposium in Slovenia* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement series 289; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), especially the contributions by J. Pečirková, “Czech Translations of the Bible”, 1167–1200, esp. pp. 1169–79 and 1193–8, and B. Wodecki, “Polish Translations of the Bible”, 1201–33, esp. pp. 1201–8 and 1222–3.

16 For information on Session 4 of the Council: J.W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge, MA/London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 89–99; H. Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient* (4 vol. in 5; Freiburg i. B.: Herder, 1949–75),

The Fathers, prelates, and theologians in Trent tackled the issues at stake in three types of meetings: general congregations, smaller working groups, and solemn sessions.¹⁷ During its first period the work of the Council was overviewed by three Cardinal-legates, namely the canonist Giovanni Maria del Monte (1487–55), the first in rank and the later Pope Julius III, Marcello Cervini (1501–55), the later Pope Marcellus II, and Reginald Pole (1500–58), who played only a minor role. The general congregations were a venue for discussion and debate between the bishops and superiors of the main orders on the issues that the Council had to face. From January to May 1546, precisely the period when biblical matters were discussed, the general congregations were divided into three particular congregations or *classes*. Each of these smaller groups was composed of an evenly balanced number of adherents and opponents of the three legates and was chaired by one of them. One of the advantages of this split was that the opposing voices were divided and would not have the same impact as in a general congregation. However, as several Council fathers did not see any advantage to this system, it would eventually be abolished in May 1546.¹⁸

In addition to the general and particular congregations, smaller working groups gathered. Very important in this regard were the congregations of (so-called) minor theologians, where professional theologians thoroughly discussed the issues at stake, and in which the bishops were in attendance but, as a rule, remained silent. In addition, there were the deputations, viz. committees that prepared drafts of documents to be discussed in the general congregations, amongst other committees. Finally, the solemn sessions were one-day, formal, and principally ceremonial gatherings that were held in the Saint Vigilius cathedral of Trent. During the sessions, the decrees that had been debated and finalized in the general congregations were read out and received a final approving vote. The Council of Trent went through 25 sessions in total; the fourth took place on 8 April 1546.¹⁹

In this part we will show how the Council fathers, when they dealt with Bible reading in the vernacular especially, were largely tributary to the local tradition from which they emerged and the arguments that were brought up in the milieu stated. Considering that the Italians were in the majority and were followed at a considerable distance by the Spaniards, we may already guess what kind of polarization this debate might have caused. Frenchmen and Germans were, at

2.42–82; H. Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, E. Graf (trans.) (2 vol.; London et al.: T. Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1961), vol. 2: *The First Sessions at Trent 1545–47*, 52–98; P. Hughes, *The Church in Crisis: A History of the General Councils, 325–1870* (Garden City, KS: Hanover House, 1961), 301–32.

17 O'Malley, *Trent*, 77–8 and 84–6.

18 Jedin, *Council of Trent*, 2.32–3, 53–5, and 114; Jedin, *Konzil von Trient*, 2.42–3.

19 O'Malley, *Trent*, 77–8 and 84–6.

that stage of the conciliar deliberations, largely underrepresented. Showing how the protagonists in the debate were rooted in – often local – traditions and debates that can be traced back to the Middle Ages, but which had been challenged by the upcoming humanism and Reformation, is the aim of the section which follows.

2 The Council of Trent and Bible Reading in the Vernacular

The Council fathers had to tackle a first time the issue of Bible translations in the vernacular²⁰ on 1 March 1546, when they were gathered in their three different *classes*, and were asked to reflect on the abuses relating to the reading of the Scriptures and to propose possible remedies thereto. The records have been preserved of only one *classis*, viz. the group chaired by Cardinal Cervini; the records are written by the secretary of the Council Angelo Massarelli. In a preparatory memorandum, to the attention of his *classis*, Antoine Imbert Filhol (or Filheul), the Archbishop of Aix-en-Provence (r. 1541–50), presented both the favourable and the negative position someone could take toward Bible reading in the vernacular, but explicating his personal position, he proposed to the members of his *classis* that the Bible should not be printed in the vernacular language, since it was not to be given to all people to read and to interpret the Bible.²¹ He also immediately brought up the principal argument that was used in pleas against vernacular Bible reading by the laity, especially in the French theological milieu from which he came: when illiterate people, particularly women (“mulierculae”), read the Bible and interpret it according to their own insights they

20 For a general overview of the discussions about (vernacular) Bible translations at the Council of Trent, see amongst others, Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 161–78; R. McNally, “The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, *Theological Studies* 27 (1966) 204–27, on pp. 212–26; L. Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache: Geschichte einer Lebensfrage bis zum Ende des Konzils von Trient* (Wiener Beiträge zur Theologie 5; Vienna: Herder, 1964), 226–64; F. Cavallera, “La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente (IVe session)”, in *Mélanges Emmanuel Podechard. Études de sciences religieuses offertes pour son éméritat au doyen honoraire de la Faculté de Théologie de Lyon* (Lyon: Facultés catholiques, 1945) 37–56; also: W. François, “La Iglesia Católica”, 256–62; V. Coletti, *L'éloquence de la chaire. Victoires et défaites du latin entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance* (Cerf Histoire; Paris: Cerf, 1987), 199–224; H.A.P. Schmidt, *Liturgie et langue vulgaire. Le problème de la langue critique chez les premiers réformateurs et au Concile de Trente* (Analecta Gregoriana 53; Rome: Universitas gregoriana, 1950), 81–95; G. Duncker, “La Chiesa e la versione della S. Scrittura in lingua volgare”, *Angelicum* 24 (1947) 140–67, esp. pp. 147–57; V. Baroni, *La contre-Réforme devant la Bible. La question biblique* (Lausanne: La Concorde, 1943), 108–17.

21 For the texts of the council diaries, decrees, letters and treatises, see *Concilium Tridentinum: Diariorum, actorum, epistularum, tractatum nova collectio* (13 vol.; Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 1901–2001). This collection of documents will be hereafter referred to as CT with the pertinent editor, volume, page and, if required, lines cited.

risked falling into errors and even heresies. He argued that it would be better for them to rely on the preaching and the teaching of the clergy, while at the same time contending that the poor quality of the preaching by the clergy should be counted among the abuses that were related to the reading of the Scriptures, an abuse that also needed to be remedied.²²

Tommaso Campeggio, Bishop of Feltre, in North-Italian Veneto (r. 1520–64), stood up for a more nuanced standpoint. Although the illiterate and unstable people may distort the meaning of the Scriptures through a faulty interpretation – reference in this regard was made to the classical scriptural argument of 2 Pet 3:16 – the translation and reading of the Scriptures should not, therefore, be counted among the abuses. In order to support his proposition, he invoked the argument that Jerome himself had translated the Mass in the Illyric language with the approval of the Church.²³ He also referred to the case of Alexander Alesius (1500–65), a Scottish Lutheran-minded theologian who, actually, had gone against a decree issued by Scottish bishops in that period and had defended in 1533 and 1534 the right of all men to read the Bible. For this reason, he was condemned and banned from Scotland. Campeggio, for his part, seems to presume, mistakenly, that Alesius himself had produced vernacular biblical and/or liturgical texts. Campeggio reasoned that Alesius was not condemned because of his writings as such, but because they contained impious statements, errors, and mistaken interpretations. In order to avoid this, he pleaded for the bishop's vigilance in watching over the Bible translations' conformity to the content of the faith.²⁴ However, in addition to Archbishop Filhol, three other bishops counted vernacular translations among the abuses relating to the use of the Bible, viz. Bishop Coriolano Martirano of San Marco (Italy),²⁵ Bishop Giacomo Giacomelli

22 *Massarelli Diarium* III, S. Merkle (ed.), CT 1, 500 l.12–502 l.12, on pp. 500 l.40–501 l.5: “Nihilominus tamen et forsitan utilius esset quod non imprimeretur in vulgari, quia non omnibus datum est lectura et interpretatio sacri codicis, adeo quod nostra tempestate usque ad mulierculas tenebantur bibliae in vulgari, et forte incidebant in errors pessimos volentes interpretari secundum capita sua et apponere manum ad rem, ad quam docti, qui in eo studio aetatem consumpserunt, reputant se adhuc tenues esse. Sufficiet enim mulieres ipsas et indoctos laicos regi et gubernari secundum praedicationem eis fiendam per doctos in hac re, quibus concessum est praedicare”; *Acta. 10. Classes*, S. Ehses (ed.), CT 5, 22 l.7–24 l.2. See Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 162–3; McNally, “The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, 208–10; Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 237–8; Cavallera, “La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente”, 38.

23 *Massarelli Diarium* III, CT 1, 502 l.38–504 l.12, on p. 503 l.13–14 “Nec etiam abusum habendum censeo, quod sacri libri vernacula lingua legantur ...”; *Acta. 10. Classes*, CT 5, 24 l.29–25 l.26.

24 Comp. Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 163; McNally, “The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, 210–11; Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 238–9; Cavallera, “La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente”, 38–9.

25 *Massarelli Diarium* III, CT 1, 504 l.25–8; *Acta. 10. Classes*, CT 5, 25 l.31–4.

of Belcastro (Italy),²⁶ as well as Bishop Diego de Alaba y Esquivel of Astorga (Spain).²⁷ It is striking that both Italian bishops were from Calabria, in the Kingdom of Naples, which was under Spanish rule.

As a result of the first discussions in the *classes*, as well as the subsequent difficulties of arriving at an unambiguous image of the abuses relating to the Bible, the general congregation of 5 March 1546 decided to establish an extraordinary committee, composed of Council fathers and theologians under the presidency of Archbishop Filhol.²⁸ The main tasks of this commission consisted not only of listing and studying the abuses of the Bible but also in coming up with possible remedies as a basis for discussion in the plenary meeting.²⁹ Since the theologians took the lead during this extraordinary committee's discussions, a wider group of theologians who were accredited to the Council, the so-called *theologi minores* (in contrast to the bishops or *theologi maiores*), were invited to develop their standpoint during two subsequent congregations, and held on 8 and 9 March 1546.³⁰ Among the debaters, we focus more in particular upon two skilled theologians, viz. the Spanish Alfonso de Castro and the French Gentian Hervetus, who eloquently defended two completely opposing views.

The Franciscan friar Alfonso de Castro (1495–1558), who was attached as a *peritus* or theologian to Cardinal Pedro Pacheco (1488–1560), the then Bishop of Jaén (Spain), presented his point of view extensively in the congregation of 8 or 9 March 1546. De Castro was a self-professed adversary of Bible translations in the vernacular. Although the text of his address has not been preserved, his negative judgment can be reconstructed on the basis of his famous book *Adversus omnes haereses* (*Against all Heresies*), published for the first time in 1534. Whilst residing in Trent, in early 1546, De Castro had re-edited this book in Venice and had the text preceded by a dedication to Cardinal Pacheco.³¹ It is evident from his

26 Massarelli *Diarium* III, CT 1, 504 l.37–42; *Acta. 10. Classes*, CT 5, 25 l.41–3.

27 Massarelli *Diarium* III, CT 1, 504 l.43–505 l.3; *Acta. 10. Classes*, CT 5, 25 l.44–26 l.2.

28 The committee consisted of eight Council fathers, namely Antoine Filhol (Aix-en-Provence), Diego de Alaba y Esquivel (Astorga), Juan Fonseca (Castellamare), Marco Vigerio della Rovere (Senigallia), Tommaso Sanfelice (Cava de' Tirreni), Pietro Bertano (Fano), Cornelio Musso (Bitonto), and Girolamo Seripando (Superior General of the Augustinians). In addition, three theologians were member, namely, Ambrosius Catharinus O.P., Richard of Le Mans O.Min.Conv., and Alfonso de Castro O.F.M.

29 Massarelli *Diarium* III, CT 1, 509 l.11–30; *Acta. 11. Congregatio generalis*, CT 5, 27 l.32–28 l.16. See S. Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 164; McNally, "The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles", 212; Cavallera, "La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente", 39; also Duncker, "La Chiesa", 149–50.

30 Massarelli *Diarium* III, CT 1, 510 l.10–511 l.8; *Acta. 12. Congregatio theologorum minorum* and 13. *Congregatio theologorum minorum*, CT 5, 28. Comp. Baroni, *La Contre-Réforme devant la Bible*, 108–9, with a reference to Sarpi.

31 References are to Alfonsus de Castro, *Adversus omnes haereses libri quatuordecim* (Venice: Ad signum spei, 1546). De Castro resumed the topic in another work from his hand, entitled

writing that, for De Castro, Bible reading in the vernacular was one of the sources of heresy. De Castro hastened to emphasize that it was not the Bible itself, but its mistaken interpretation, that should be blamed for the origin of heresies. He especially pointed the finger at those people who, without education or background, ventured to interpret the Bible and ran the risk of interpreting its words in an erroneous or even heretical way. For these reasons, and as the Church father Jerome had argued, the Jewish tradition forbade men below thirty years of age from reading the book of Genesis and the Song of Songs.³² A key passage in De Castro's argumentation was Matt 7:6 – a quotation already read in *Cum ex iniuncto* and constantly repeated by adversaries of vernacular Bible reading – “Give not that which is holy to dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest perhaps they trample them under their feet, and turning upon you, they tear you” (Douay-Rheims Version, henceforth abbreviated as DRV). The Spanish Franciscan felt no hesitance in denying access to the Bible to those people who were said to live as dogs (the unbelievers and pagan philosophers) or swine (the majority of the commoners). He further praised the initiative of the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, who were reputed to have forbidden the translation and reading of the Scriptures in the vernacular in Spain.³³ In addition to the Spanish prohibitory tradition, De Castro aligned himself with the Paris theologians, bringing vernacular versions also in relation with the rise of dissident groups as the Waldensians or Poor of Lyons, Begards, and ‘Turlupins’.³⁴

The reading and interpretation of the Bible should be reserved, De Castro continued, to those who, as well as their faith, commanded the knowledge nec-

De iusta haereticorum punitione, published in 1547 in Salamanca, but already approved during the Council in July 1546. It is therefore not inconceivable that he wrote this work during the discussions of Session 4. See especially Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 248–65; Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 242–4 and 256–7; Cavallera, “La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente”, 45–51 and 54–5. Further: E. García Centeno, “Alfonso de Castro y la lectura de la Biblia en lengua vulgar”, *Studium Legionense* 5 (1964) 161–96; C. Gutiérrez S.J., *Espanoles en Trento* (Corpus Tridentinum Hispanicum 1; Valladolid: CSIC, 1951), 36–51; F. Asensio, “Alfonso de Castro y los decretos tridentinos sobre Sagrada Escritura”, *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 20 (1946) 63–103.

32 Hieronymus, *Comm. in Hezechielem*, Prol., F. Glorie (ed.) (CCSL 75; Turnhout: Brepols, 1964), 3 l.24–4 l.30.

33 As mentioned above, the reality in Spain was more complex than this: it was probably the Inquisition, supported by the Catholic Kings, that had promulgated such prohibition, which especially targeted (converted) Jews who might have used vernacular Bibles to continue to clandestinely practice their cult and initiate their children in the Mosaic Law. See Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 102–4.

34 De Castro, *Adversus omnes haereses*, 142–5, on p. 143: “Si ergo ex perversa scripturae intelligentia haeresis oritur, quis facilius in haeresim incidet quam vulgus legens id quod minime intelligere potest?” ‘Turlupins’ and ‘Turlupines’ are a somewhat popular designation for Beguines and Begards, which we found especially in French sources in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, amongst others in works of Jean Gerson.

essary to gain insight into the Scriptures. He expressly objected to Luther and the Reformers who had argued that the Bible, the New Testament particularly, were clear and intelligible to everyone. As a response to their arguments, De Castro referred to the classical passage, 2 Pet 3:16, in which Peter had claimed that in Paul's Letters there "are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction" (DRV). De Castro added that even those skilled in the sacred and profane sciences experienced huge difficulties in the explanation of the Scriptures, regarding the parables and similitudes they contained, the figurative language, as well as the passages that seemingly contradict each other. How much more, then, would the reading and interpretation of the Scriptures be problematic for the simple man, De Castro continued, and in particular for women, whom he said "were so arrogant that it was easier to deter a hundred men from an error than one single woman"?³⁵

De Castro addressed himself to Erasmus in his book *Against all Heresies*, after having entered into a discussion with Luther and the (other) reformers. The humanist had expressed the desire that the Scriptures be translated into all languages so that they could be read by the farmer, the smith, the mason, and even by women – an allusion to the humanist's famous introduction to his *Paraphrases* to the Gospel of Matthew. De Castro did not refrain from stating that the Paris Faculty of Theology had (rightly) condemned this and other utterances of Erasmus' in favour of vernacular Bible reading, a censure with which De Castro displayed his familiarity. De Castro especially counter-argued against Erasmus that what used to be allowed in the past – as the Church fathers, especially John Chrysostom and Jerome testified – might be considered more harmful in more recent eras, given the advent of heresies.³⁶

On the other side of the spectrum, the French humanist and theologian Gentian Hervetus (1499–1584), who served as a secretary to Cardinal Cervini, held an ardent plea in favour of vernacular Bible reading.³⁷ He argued that God's

35 De Castro, *Adversus omnes haereses*, 145–8, on p. 148: "Praecipue cum vulgus non sola lectione sit contentum sed de earum intelligentia etiam disputet, adeo ut de earum intelligentia non vereantur nebulones doctissimos quosque viros ad certamen provocare, cum illisque contendere. Et quod omnibus peius est, non solum haec a viris fiunt, verum etiam a foeminis ... adeo proterve, ut facilius centum viros ab errore revoces, quam mulierem unam."

36 De Castro, *Adversus omnes haereses*, 148–52, on p. 148: "Is enim quum in pluribus ab eo aeditis libris dixisset se cupere sacras litteras in omnes verti linguas, ut possint legi ab agricola, a fabro, a latomo, a muliere ..." Allusion to Desiderius Erasmus, *Paraphrases in Matthaeum*, in *Pio Lectori*, J.-F. Cottier/A. Vanautgaerden (ed.) (Notulae Erasmianae 5; Turnhout: Brepols/Anderlecht: Erasmushuis, 2005), 66 l.133–5.

37 Gentian Hervetus, *Oratio, qua suadet, ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, V. Schweitzer (ed.), CT 12, 530–6. In the edition by Schweitzer, Hervetus' oration is indistinctively dated in March 1546, but it should have been pronounced in a congregation of minor theologians, either on 8 or 9 March 1546 (see also Duncker, "La Chiesa", 152–3). A discussion

revealed Law, the story of the exodus and entrance in the Beloved Land, as well as other sacred histories, were, thanks to Moses' efforts, communicated to the Hebrew people through a book in a language familiar to them.³⁸ Later, other books had been added to the Old Testament. Hervetus was nevertheless willing to admit that not all of these books could indiscriminately be read by everybody, referring in this regard to the Church fathers and the frequently invoked old Jewish tradition.

Since the Jewish people would eventually not recognize their Lord and Messiah – the best example that a book translated into the vernacular was therefore not easily understood – God, in his providence, ordained King Ptolemaeus to charge the Seventy with the Greek translation of the Old Testament, in order to make it accessible to the gentiles.³⁹ Jesus, while on earth, preached the message of the Gospels to everybody without any distinction and did so in a simple and understandable language.⁴⁰ The apostles too preached the Gospel in the common language and Paul wrote his letters in Greek, understandable to everyone. As a universal language in the Church, Greek had soon been succeeded by Latin, so that the Scriptures were also translated into that language.⁴¹ In this way, Hervetus argued, Scripture was spread in the three sacred languages that were also to be found at the top of Jesus' cross – the inscription at the top of Jesus' cross being in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin was often invoked in humanist circles as proof of the sanctity of the languages stated. Later, the translation movement continued to extend as Indians, Ethiopians, and Armenians received the Gospels in their own language. Hervetus also alluded to the argument that Jerome had translated the Old Testament into the Dalmatian language – an argument that was historically

of the content in: Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 177–8; Coletti, *L'éloquence de la chaire*, 211–14; Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 253–5; Schmidt, "Liturgie et langue vulgaire", 86–8; Cavallera, "La bible en langue vulgaire", 52–4.

38 Hervetus, *Ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, CT 12, 532 l.3–6: "Et sunt haec quidem omnia ea lingua scripta, quae unicuique e populo aperta et plana fuit. Quae quidem per manus tradita diligentissime in hodiernum usque diem ab Hebreis servatur et intelligitur."

39 Hervetus, *Ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, CT 12, 533 l.7–10: "... sacrorum librorum eloquia, quae, quid futurum et expectandum esse, significant, in eam linguam transferrentur, quae per universum fere terrarum orbem diffusa et propagata erat, nempe graecam. Divinitus itaque inspiratus Ptolemeus ille Philadelphus septuaginta illis evocatis interpretibus..."

40 Hervetus, *Ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, CT 12, 533 l.52–534 l.10: "Cum itaque cum vulgo Christus sibi et eloquendum et vivendum esse statuerit, an non eum illa usum esse lingua consentaneum est, quae populo erat frequentissima et familiarissima? ... Quae quidem, si a populo olim audiebantur, hoc etiam tempore a populo legenda sunt."

41 Hervetus, *Ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, CT 12, 534 l.24–6: "Postquam autem lingua graeca minus in usu esse cepisset, latina autem per Galliam et Ispaniam et totum denique occidentem propter Romanum, cui suberant, imperium popularis evasisset, in latinam quoque linguam biblia traducta sunt."

incorrect and had been launched by Erasmus. As a consequence of this argumentation, thus reasoned Hervetus, all people, including those in the West, should have their own vernacular translation of the Bible at their disposal, also because Latin had become the language of a learned minority.⁴²

Hervetus concluded his plea by responding in a direct and strongly Erasmian-tainted way to some of his opponents' arguments. The French theologian began by protesting against the identification of the illiterate faithful with the dogs and the swine of Matt 7:6 and wondered whether people, whom the Lord had redeemed with his blood, could actually be called swine. Another argument concerned the catechumens, whom he ranked among the *auditores* who were allowed to listen to the instructions but, not yet initiated, could not take part in the sacraments. Even the pagans could read the Bible and take advantage of it, like in the case of the eunuch who read the writings of Isaiah and was later baptised by Philip (Acts 8:26–40). Next, he replied to the most important argument, namely that heresies originated from the fact that the laity had read and interpreted the Scriptures without fully understanding them. In this regard, he retorted with the argument that most heresies in the Church were to be attributed not to “simple and innocent” people, but to learned bishops and priests who were replete with idle knowledge. In addition, Church leaders had an overwhelming responsibility as they had neglected to pasture the flock, abandoned preaching, and had not led exemplary lives.⁴³ According to Hervetus, the solution to this problem was obvious: the Bible should be translated by pious and learned men and be given to the people as a remedy.⁴⁴

The polarized discussion within the congregation of the minor theologians led the deputies to draft a text in which vernacular Bible reading was not included

42 Hervetus, *Ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, CT 12, 534 l.28–34: “Nihil tamen vetat, quominus scriptura in alias quoque linguas vulgares transferatur ... Quodsi unquam in suam cuiusque nationis linguam sacros libros traduci oportuit, id nunc certe in occidentis regionibus est prope necessarium.”

43 Hervetus, *Ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, CT 12, 535 l.30–47: “Sin autem et Arriani ab Arrio et Eunomiani ab Eunomio, Montani a Montano, Nestoriani a Nestorio et omnes denique, qui in aliqua heresi fuerunt, ab heresiarchis et denominati et impulsus sunt, ne velimus in simplicem et innocentem plebeculam magna aliorum peccata transferre ... pauci admodum episcopi suo officio fungerentur et partim gregem suum non solum non pascere, sed etiam deglubarent, partim modo populum suis predicationibus et exhortationibus in officio non continerent ... ipsi denique nostrae religionis coryphei, qui virtutis exempla vulgo esse debebant, avaritia, ambitio, libidine, teterrimis humani generis pestibus referti et propemodum obruti essent...”

44 Hervetus, *Ut libri sacri in linguam vulgarem transferantur*, CT 12, 536 l.2–6: “Quod quidem meo certe iudicio tum demum pulchre procedet, si ii sint qui debent antistites, et christianus populus ex ipsis sacris litteris Christum hauriat. Nec est quod quis timeat, ne ulla rerum confusio sequatur et ab apostolo tradita pulcherrima apostolorum prophetarumque ac doctorum distinctio auferatur, si sacrae litterae vulgari lingua tradantur.”

among the four abuses relating to the use of the Scriptures. In other words, it became clear that the proponents and adversaries of vernacular Bible reading kept each other in equilibrium, so that any hope of reaching an agreement on the matter gradually decreased. The draft text served as the basis for the discussion in the general congregation, of 17 March 1546, in which Archbishop Filhol presented the list of four abuses and their corresponding remedies. The aforementioned Cardinal Pedro Pacheco, a vehement adversary of vernacular Bible reading, immediately expressed his amazement that this practice had not been included in the list of abuses relating to the use of the Scriptures, where it rightly belonged... He found a harsh opponent in the Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo, Prince-Bishop of Trent and host of the Council (1512–78) who, at the general congregation of 17 March, held his first plea in favour of vernacular Bible reading.⁴⁵ This clash of the Titans was simultaneously a clash between two traditions regarding Bible reading in the vernacular, viz. the Spanish rejection and the (Northern-)Italian-German acceptance thereof. During his plea, Madruzzo used as a leitmotif the Apostle Paul's wish that the Scriptures would never be removed from the people's mouth (Rom 10:8), to which he added the German custom, which he had become familiar with through his German mother and according to which parents used to teach their children vernacular religious texts such as the Our Father and the Creed, without a scandal ever issuing from that practice. The problems in the Church (of Germany) were, according to Madruzzo not caused by simple people, but by scholars skilled in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.⁴⁶ Madruzzo, therefore, implored the Council fathers not to include Bible translations in the vernacular as being among the abuses.

At that moment the Cardinal Pacheco gave the impression of easing off: he replied that he had himself made no pronouncement as to whether the translation of the Bible into the vernacular was actually to be included among the abuses or not, but that he had only requested that the question be examined, in the light of the Spanish laws that forbade such translation. He even claimed that

45 References to the discussion between Pacheco and Madruzzo on 17 March can be found in *Severolus*, CT 1, 36–8; *Massarelli Diarium* II, CT 1, 436; *Acta 14. Congregatio generalis*, CT 5, 29–31; comp. *Pratani Epilogus*, S. Merkle (ed), CT 2, 381 l.15–28; Marcello Cervini to Allesandro Farnese, 17 March 1546, G. Buschbell (ed.), CT 10, nr. 337, 421 l.12–25. See Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 165–7; McNally, “The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, 213–14; Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 241–2 and 257–8; Duncker, “La Chiesa”, 153–4; Cavallera, “La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente”, 41; Baroni, *La contre-réforme devant la Bible*, 109–10.

46 See *Severolus*, CT 1, 37 l.45–52; *Acta 14. Congregatio generalis*, CT 5, 30 l.36–31 l.5: “Scio ego Germana nostra lingua mihi per manus traditam esse orationem Dominicam itemque symbolum fidei et pleraque alia, quae omnes patres familias in tota Germania suis filiis adhuc infantibus docere solent, ex qua institutione nullum unquam scandalum memoria hominum advenit ... Non enim haereses et mala semina ab idiotis et maternam tantum linguam scientibus unquam ortae sunt, sed ab iis, qui se eruditos esse professi sunt.”

Pope Paul II had approved these measures, an allegation that is very difficultly to prove.⁴⁷ In his turn Madruzzo bluntly replied that Pope Paul and the other Popes might have been mistaken in that regard – by which statement he did not want to express that they had actually been mistaken – but that the Apostle Paul’s instruction that the Gospel would never be removed from our mouth was in, any case, free from error.⁴⁸

The clash between Pacheco and Madruzzo thoroughly impressed the members of the Council, not least the legates, who must have noticed that a polarization regarding the matter had taken place. Although Del Monte, Pole, and Cervini were initially inclined to meet the question of Pacheco and to include the issue of vernacular Bible translations to be discussed by the *classes* on 23 March 1546, they finally decided not to do so. On 22 March 1546, the day before the meeting, they sent Massarelli, the Council’s secretary, to Cardinal Pacheco in order to explain why they had decided to drop the case, invoking three arguments in this regard.⁴⁹ First, some newly arrived prelates, unaware of the intimate friendship between Pacheco and Madruzzo, were said to be scandalised by their short-tempered dispute. The legates feared that, if the debate was reopened, the deep antagonism would inevitably manifest itself again. Second, the polarization may sweep through the ranks of the other Council fathers, given that most of them had well pronounced standpoints in one or another direction and would not be prepared to make concessions. Eventually, a schism might even occur (“forsan schisma oriatur”). Third, Massarelli argued that the Council should be wary of only promulgating those measures that met with the general approval of the Christian faithful. In other words, it was most unlikely that an explicit prohibition or permission of vernacular Bible reading would receive the consent of all ‘provinces’ of Christianity:

And, would the realms of the Spanish lands and France ever receive the Sacred Books translated in the vernacular? Surely not, since this translation has been prohibited by royal edicts under the threat of severe punishments, so that these people would have led themselves more by the secular power than by any conciliar permission. Moreover, the people in this area have long since learned through experience what kind of scandal, damage, impiousness, and evil such translation has brought in their realms. And would the Germans, Italians, Polish, and other nations be prepared to accept a negative de-

47 *Severolus*, CT 1, 38 l.1–3; *Acta 14. Congregatio generalis*, CT 5, 31 l.9–11. Comp. Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 102–4.

48 *Severolus*, CT 1, 38 l.4–7; *Acta 14. Congregatio generalis*, CT 5, 31 l.12–15.

49 *Massarelli Diarium* III, CT 1, 518 l.36–519 l.20. See Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 168–9; McNally, “The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, 216; Schmidt, *Liturgie et langue vulgaire*, 90–1; Cavallera, “La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente”, 41–2; also Jedin, *Konzil von Trient*, 2.58.

cision? Surely not, since, by contrast, they have seen in several parts of their reign what kind of edification and instruction may result from such a version.⁵⁰

Therefore, the legates judged it preferable that every individual nation could continue to observe its own local customs regarding vernacular Bible reading. It could be permitted where positive effects were to be expected and it could be prohibited where it might inflict damage.

However, Pacheco was not willing to drop the issue of vernacular Bible reading and reacted to the threefold consideration of the legates, as worded by Massarelli.⁵¹ First, newly arrived prelates would soon become aware of the real friendship between him and Madruzzo. Moreover, this friendship did not prevent the two bishops from defending their own opinion. Second, Pacheco was convinced that the so-called disagreement regarding vernacular Bible reading between the various regions and countries was not so marked as generally accepted, insinuating that the majority were in favour of a prohibition. In this regard he emphasized that prelates coming from Spain and France opposed the practice, as did a majority of the Italians – we may remember that the Kingdom of Naples, Sardinia, and Sicily were under Spanish rule, and that the Spanish Inquisition was active in Sardinia and Sicily. Therefore, he considered it incomprehensible that the issue was to be removed from the agenda altogether. To the opposition of Spaniards and Frenchmen against vernacular Bible reading, Pacheco added the condemnation that the Faculty of Theology of Paris had issued which, given the institution's authority, could leave nobody indifferent. If the Council had difficulties pronouncing itself upon the issue, it should leave the question to the Pope, and this is how Pacheco concluded. Third, concerning the lack of general support of conciliar decisions, as was feared, Pacheco guaranteed that Spain would respectfully accept these decisions and that he had no reasons to assume that this would not be the case elsewhere. He nevertheless proposed a compromise by allowing the diverse nations the opportunity to act according to the local circumstances and to determine which books were eligible for translations and which were not. He remained convinced that even adherents of vernacular Bible

50 "Hispaniarum enim Galliaeque regna anne recipient unquam sacros libros verti in linguam vernaculam? Certe non, tum quia regis edictis adeo id prohibitum sub gravissimis poenis est, quod magis saecularem potentiam, quam permissionem concilii pertimescent, tum etiam, quod iam diu experientia didicerunt, quantum scandali, damni, impietatis et mali versio huiusmodi in illis regnis attulit. Anne vero Germani, Itali, Poloni et reliquae nationes negativam suscipient? Certe etiam non, cum e converso in plurimis locis harum nationum aedificationem instructionemque dictam versionem afferre perspexerunt" (*Massarelli Diarium* III, CT 1, 519 l.10–17).

51 *Massarelli Diarium* III, CT 1, 519 l.21–520 l.43. See Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 169–71; McNally, "The Council of Trent", 216–18; Jedin, *Konzil von Trient*, 2.58–9; Schmidt, *Liturgie et langue vulgaire*, 91–2; Duncker, "La Chiesa", 154–5; Cavallera, "La Bible en langue vulgaire", 42–3; Baroni, *La contre-réforme devant la Bible*, 111–12.

reading would never allow rude commoners and simple women to have access to those Bible books which even scholars and experienced theologians found difficult to understand, like the Apocalypse, the Letters of Paul (especially that to the Romans) or Ezekiel for instance. Inversely, those who were generally suspicious of vernacular Bible reading would, however, never oppose the translation of Proverbs, Psalms, and Acts of the Apostles, which were among the books that were more easily understood.

Pacheco's discontentment notwithstanding, on the morning of 23 March 1546 the legates renounced definitively the idea of including the question of vernacular Bible reading into the discussion of the *classes* that very day.⁵² The debates mainly dealt with the relation between Scripture and tradition(s). When the abuses regarding the Scriptures were brought up, Cardinal Cervini held the reins tightly so that elaborations on not-programmed questions were reduced to a minimum, the attempts of the Spaniards notwithstanding, and especially of Bishop Diego de Alaba y Esquivel of Astorga to include the issue of vernacular Bible translations in the text about the abuses.⁵³ It was eventually concluded that the extraordinary committee, which had been composed on 5 March, would prepare a draft decree about the abuses of the Bible and would submit it to the subsequent general congregation.⁵⁴

This general congregation convened on 1 April 1546 under the presidency of Cardinal Del Monte.⁵⁵ Apart from some issues regarding Scriptures and tradition(s), it dealt with the abuses relating to the Scriptures on the basis of the scheme that had been prepared by the extraordinary committee. In contrast to Madruzzo, Pacheco was not satisfied with the work of the committee and continued to speak out on the issue that vernacular Bible reading had not been included in the document on the abuses. His proposal was that, after having approved the Vulgate, the Council fathers would reject all other Bible versions (including the Septuagint) and would explicitly condemn all translations that had been made by heretics.⁵⁶ Bishop Pietro Bertano of Fano (Marche, Italy; 1501–58), one of the referees of the Council fathers regarding biblical matters, reacted on

52 *Massarelli Diarium* III, CT 1, 521–8, on 528 l.7–10; comp. *Acta. 16. Classis cardinalis S. Crucis*, CT 5–III, 32–8. See McNally, “The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, 218–19; Cavallera, “La bible en langue vulgaire au Concile de Trente”, 43.

53 Hercules Severolus to Bernardino Maffei, 24 March 1546, CT 10, nr. 346, 429 l.31–7. Hercules Severoli astonishingly notices that only the Spaniards opposed Bible reading in the vernacular, but that the Italians and Frenchmen disagreed with that blunt rejection. Severolus' letter does not correspond with the other conciliar documents.

54 *Massarelli Diarium* III, CT 1–II, 528 l.1–2.

55 *Severolus*, CT 1–II, 40–2; comp. *Acta. 20. Congregatio generalis de libris canonicis*, CT 5–III, 42–51, on pp. 50 l.22–51 l. 28. See McNally, “The Council of Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, 219–20.

56 *Severolus*, CT 1–II, 41 l.48–42 l.2 and 42 l.17–18.

behalf of the extraordinary committee and affirmed that he did not consider it to be an abuse that several versions of the Bible circulated, since the practice was tolerated since the most ancient times of the Church. He deemed it, however, to be an abuse that several translations may be regarded as authentic and be used in public disputations, explications, and preaching. Therefore, he agreed to proclaim the Vulgate as the only authentic version of the Church. At that moment, Bertano made his famous statement that Bible versions made by the heretics should not automatically be rejected, especially since the practice of the ancient Church imposed this attitude. In this regard he referred to Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, who were 'heretics', but whose Greek Bible translations were not rejected by the Church (viz. included in Origen's Hexapla).⁵⁷

It was most probably during this general congregation, on 1 April 1546, that Cardinal Madruzzo held an even fiercer plea in favour of vernacular Bible reading than he had done two weeks previously.⁵⁸ In the first part of his plea he cited several scriptural proof texts, such as 2 Tim 3:16–17, in which it was written that the entire Scripture was given to man for his instruction, guidance, correction, and education in justice. In the light of this and other texts, he asked why the vernacular translations of the Bible should be kept out of the hands of simple people, thus giving food to the Protestants who would not hesitate to blame the Council for such a prohibition insinuating that this was done out of fear that knowledge of the Gospels would unveil (so-called) Roman falsity and fraud.⁵⁹ Building on another, widespread, biblical motif, Madruzzo also inquired why simple people should not have any access to the milk, viz. the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, by which they might be fed and grow in Christ (1 Cor 3:2 and Heb 5:12–14).⁶⁰ Another pressing question the Cardinal brought to the fore was whether the Council fathers would go so far as to identify the laity with the dogs to

57 *Severolus*, CT 1–II, 42 l.3–16.

58 C. Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 528–30. Schweitzer approximately dates Madruzzo's oration "March 1546", possibly confusing with Madruzzo's earlier intervention of 17 March. A translation of the intervention of Madruzzo can be found in Coletti, *L'éloquence de la chaire*, 206–10. Also A. Tallon, *Le concile de Trente* (Paris: Cerf, 2000), 105–9: "cette traduction [de Coletti], visiblement faite à partir d'une traduction précédente en italien, présente de nombreuses erreurs que j'ai corrigées à partir du texte original." Also: Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 172–4; McNally, "Trent and Vernacular Bibles", 220–1; Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 248–52; Schmidt, *Liturgie et langue vulgaire*, 88–9; Cavallera, "La Bible en langue vulgaire", 51–2.

59 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 528 l.30–8: "Cur, obsecro, populo plebique christianae volumus eripere hanc vulgarium scripturarum paene de manibus et extorquere? Numquid, ut demus ansam adversariis nostris Protestantibus dicendi, sanctam et venerabilem synodum hanc temere et crudeliter abstulisse simplicis christianis sitientibus ... nempe evangelium ... ne scilicet ex cognitione divinarum scripturarum patefaciant nostrae (ut ipsi vocant) imposturae et fraudes..."

60 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 529 l.2–3.

which what is Holy should not be given or with the swine before which pearls should not be cast (Matt 7:6). In his view, they should instead be considered as God's adoptive children, whom Christ had also redeemed by the precious gift of his blood.⁶¹

After considering a few biblical passages that could sustain his argument, the Cardinal further dealt with some current motives that were invoked to deny the laity the benefits of the Scriptures. In this regard, he referred to the ancient heresy of the "Poor of Lyons" that was said to have been rooted in the popular Bible. But, so Madruzzo replied, Arius, Novatus, Sabellius, Cerinthus, Novatian, Paul of Samosate, Photinus, Eunomius, and the complete phalanx of ancient heretics were scholars and were skilled in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Also in their own time, Luther, Zwingli, Oecolampadius, Melanchthon, Bucer, and others were remarkably competent in the three languages. Madruzzo, therefore, asked the rhetorical question of whether Hebrew, Greek, and Latin Bibles should also be abolished in order to root out heresies ... and: should the reading of Paul's Letters be prohibited, since Peter had predicted that from its reading heresies may originate (an allusion to 2 Pet 3:16)? Comparably, should all vernacular Bible versions be abolished because at times scandals had arisen from these versions?⁶² Madruzzo further stated that Paul had already resolved the question of vernacular Bible translations in 1 Cor 14:8–9, in which he had affirmed that the Gospels needed to be heard and understood, which immediately implied that it should be communicated in a comprehensible language. Moreover, for these reasons, the former generations had allowed the Dalmatians to celebrate their ceremonies and rites in the Illyrian language, their mother tongue. Consequently, the Cardinal returned to his point of departure, which was the very classical argument that erudition and knowledge of the doctrine of faith had produced more heresies than simplicity and ignorance.⁶³

Madruzzo let himself go by giving, in a lyrical way, a speech about the benefits of vernacular Bible reading, which McNally had called "a high-water mark in the history of the Bible in the Catholic Church".⁶⁴ Madruzzo also deemed it to be

61 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 529 l.6–10: "Absit, ut ... adoptati in eius filios, ... ut illi, inquam, quos Christus ... pretio magno sui sanguinis redemit, canes nobis sint aut dicantur et sues..."

62 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 529 l.21–4: "Num, quia quandoque ex vulgaribus Bibliis, quemadmodum frequenter ex graecis etiam ac latinis, scandala orta sunt, conserpunda aut comburenda sunt verba vitae aeternae, quae nobis spiritum et vitam loquuntur?"

63 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 529 l.35–8: "Prefecto, amplissimi Patres, plures haereses (ut ex historiis et conciliis compertum habemus et ipsa etiam tempora nostra loquuntur) peperit nobis eruditio et doctrina quam simplicitas et ignorantia idiotarum; nunquam tamen aut interdicta est eruditio, aut damnata doctrina..."

64 McNally, "Trent and Vernacular Bibles", 221. See e.g. Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in*

very beneficial that the old catechisms be re-edited, so that Christian children would not be fed by obscene tales of poets, or silly stories of old women, but, according to 2 Tim 3:15, by the basic tenets of the Gospel message itself (“evangelicis rudimentis”), as though it were easily digestible milk.⁶⁵ Here we are presented with several passages that sound very Erasmian and seem to be inspired by the humanist’s introduction to the Paraphrases of Matthew, e.g. the humanist’s plea to have vernacular Bible reading prepared by a thorough catechisation of the faithful. Regarding vernacular editions of the Bible, Madruzzo further proposed the inclusion of explicatory notes for ambiguous and difficult passages, which could be composed by learned and pious men, to whom the Council would give a mandate to that end.⁶⁶

Madruzzo even proposed the wording of a decree, for adoption by the Council, which was to read:

We condemn all corrupt Bible translations. That these [Bible translations] not be printed without the approval of the ordinary, on punishment of ecclesiastical sanctions to be defined, and that these printings would not be sold, without the same approval, on punishment of censures to be defined.⁶⁷

Madruzzo’s proposition, although negatively formulated, took for granted that certain Bible translations in the vernacular should be permitted, be it with the explicit approbation of the bishop.

Despite Madruzzo’s plea in favour of vernacular Bible reading, Cardinal Pacheco once more complained that Bible translations had not been included among the scriptural abuses. When Bishop Bertano wanted to retort, he was silenced by the chair, Cardinal Del Monte, and the session was subsequently adjourned under great turmoil.⁶⁸

During the general congregation of 3 April, the Council fathers dealt with the four abuses of Scripture and had to decide whether, apart from the evident promulgation of the Latin Vulgate as the authentic version of the Church, a version in each of the languages (“in uno quoque idiomate”) should even be declared authentic, or whether these words should be limited to the three biblical

linguam vulgarem, CT 12, 529 l.39–42: “Legamus igitur pro Christi gloria, et passim ac promiscue, non tamen illotis manibus, sed religiose, caste, et iuxta uniuscuiusque captum relegamus non hebraice tantum aut graece aut latine, sed vulgariter quoque Iesum Christum, in quo ‘non est Iudaeus neque Graecus’ nec Latinus neque vulgaris...”

65 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 530 l.3–6.

66 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 530 l.7–9.

67 Madrutius, *De vertendis libris sacris in linguam vulgarem*, CT 12, 530 l.12–14: “Interdicimus omnes vitiatas scripturas vulgares, neque deinceps imprimantur sine licentia ordinarii sub poenis” etc; “neque impressa vendantur sine eiusdem licentia sub censuris”.

68 Severolus, CT 1–II, 42 l.27–32; *Acta. 20. Congregatio generalis de libris canonicis*, CT 5–III, 51 l.25–8. See also Fernández López, *Lectura y prohibición*, 174; McNally, “The Council of Trent”, 222.

languages Latin, Greek, and Hebrew only.⁶⁹ The majority of those participating in the vote, viz. 22 Council fathers, established themselves as being in favour of the mere promulgation of the Latin Vulgate as the authentic version of the Church, without explicitly adding a clause in favour of, or opposed to, this authentic version in other languages. Fourteen prelates, with Pacheco as their spokesman, explicitly opposed promulgation of such an authentic version in each of the other languages (and obviously wanted to have this prohibition included in the final decree). Ten or eleven prelates – depending on whether “Cum Tridentino” viz. Madruzzo was counted among this amount or not – pronounced themselves to be in favour of the most inclusive formulation, thus fully accepting translations in each of the languages.⁷⁰ Given the regionally diversified traditions regarding Bible reading in the vernacular, it is interesting to consider to which “nations” belonged the prelates voting explicitly in favour and those voting against vernacular Bible editions. In the outspoken “yes”-camp, Madruzzo was accompanied by seven or eight other Italians (four from the South,⁷¹ three or four from the North⁷²), one Dalmatian and even one Spaniard. In the “no”-camp, Pacheco, was joined by six Italians (five from the South,⁷³ one from the North⁷⁴), three Spaniards, three Frenchmen, and one Swedish.⁷⁵

Accordingly, the Council fathers declared during the fourth, solemn session of the Council on 8 April 1546 that the Vulgate should be considered as the “authentic” version of the Scriptures for the Catholic Church and that it was the only version to be used in public lessons, disputes, preaching, and exposition. The Council fathers also expressed the wish that an emended version of the Vulgate be published as quickly as possible.⁷⁶ This implied, however, that the use of Hebrew

69 See *Herculis Severoli ... commentaries*, CT 1–II, 43 l.17–24 and 44 l.13–22; *Acta. 28. Congregatio generalis de 4 abusibus*, CT 5–III, 58–67, on pp. 66–7. Summary in Massarelli *Diarium* II, CT 1–II, 437 l.10–12. Comp. McNally, “Trent and Vernacular Bibles”, 222–4; Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 258–63; Jedin, *Konzil von Trient*, 2.68–70.

70 One of them, Tommaso Sanfelice, the Bishop of Cava de’ Tirreni, explicated that his vote should be considered in favour of both the vernacular and the three biblical languages, whereas the Superior General of the Augustinian Hermits, Girolamo Seripando, only wished an authentic version in the three biblical languages (obviously without including a reference to a vernacular language).

71 Capaccio, Cava de’ Tirreni, Castellamare di Stabia (*Juan Fonseca, the Bishop, was from Spanish descent*), and Bitonto.

72 Chioggia, Senigallia, Fano (and Pienza).

73 Porto Torres in Sardinia (*Salvador Alepuz, a Spaniard*), Palermo, San Marco, Sora, and Lanciano (*Juan Salazar Fernández, a Spaniard*).

74 Acqui (“Vorstius”, to distinguish from Acqui as Aix-en-Provence).

75 Comp. Lentner, *Volkssprache und Sakralsprache*, 260, with a reference to Schmidt, *Liturgie et langue vulgaire*, 93–4.

76 The text of the *Decree on the Vulgate and the Interpretation of Scripture* in: *Sessio quarta. Decretum secundum: Recipitur vulgata editio*, CT 5–III, 91–2. The text is also to be found in *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Generaliumque Decreta. Editio critica: The Oecumenical*

and Greek (and even other Latin versions) in the scholarly study of the Bible was not explicitly forbidden and that vernacular versions may be continuously tolerated c.q. forbidden in regions in which this had been the case before. Since the Vulgate had been proclaimed the authentic version of the Bible, vernacular editions were to be based upon this Latin version more than they ever had been previously.

Conclusion

Concluding this essay, it should be re-emphasized that the Council fathers, who brought their own diverging traditions regarding vernacular Bible reading, were not able to reach an agreement on the legitimacy of vernacular Bible translations during the Session 4 of the Council of Trent (April 8, 1546). More specifically, a clash manifested between the Spanish prohibitory tradition (Pacheco) and the (Northern-)Italian-German 'liberal' tradition (Madruzzo), with the controversy between the influential Paris Faculty of Theology and the humanist movement resounding in the background. Since the Council was not able to arrive at an agreement, any decision regarding vernacular Bibles remained, for the time being, in the hands of the local authorities who continued to decide according to their own local traditions.

The conciliar silence was eventually broken in 1564 when Pope Pius IV published the Tridentine *Index of Forbidden Books*, which was prepared by a committee of prelates at the Council. This catalogue of forbidden books contained rules that defined the contours of book censorship. The famous *Regula Quarta* or fourth rule, while opposing the free reading and interpretation of the Bible, allowed the laity to read vernacular Bibles if they were deemed capable and if they had obtained written permission from the local bishop or inquisitor. The translation itself had to be made by a Catholic author. The view, however, that "the Council forbade the printing, selling and reading of the Bible in the vernacular" figures on John O'Malley's "list of myths that no amount of scholarship has up to this point been able fully to dispel".⁷⁷ It was a further variant of the aforementioned paradigm – evident in Protestant circles, both popular and scholarly, for centuries – that the Catholic Church maintained a general ban on the reading of the vernacular Bible by the illiterate laity.

Councils of the Roman Catholic Church, K. Ganzer/G. Alberigo/A. Melloni (ed.) (3 vol. in 4 published; Corpus Christianorum; Turnhout: Brepols, 2006–2013), 3.16–17. For a recent English translation, see *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, N.P. Tanner/G. Alberigo (ed.) (2 vol.; London: Sheed & Ward/Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 2.664–5.

77 J.W. O'Malley, "What Happened and Did Not Happen at the Council of Trent", in this volume.

It was, however, in the last decades of the sixteenth century that the Inquisition took stricter measures against vernacular Bible reading by the illiterate laity in Italy, Spain and Portugal, whereas in the countries of Northern and Central Europe, where Catholics had to share the space with Bible-centered Protestants, such reading continued to be tolerated, be it that it was in principle subject to the stipulations of Trent's fourth rule. As a result of these post-Tridentine evolutions, a new 'geography' of Bible reading in the vernacular became apparent in Europe.⁷⁸

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78 See G. Fragnito, "Per una geografia delle traduzioni bibliche nell'Europa cattolica (sedicesimo e diciassettesimo secolo)", in J.-L. Quantin/J.-C. Waquet (ed.), *Papes, princes et savants dans l'Europe moderne: Mélanges à la mémoire de Bruno Neveu* (École pratique des hautes études. 4e section: Sciences historiques et philologiques 5; Hautes études médiévales et modernes 90; Geneva: Droz, 2007) 51–77. On the Tridentine *Index*, and especially the *Regula Quarta*, see, amongst others, Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo*, 95–106; J. Martínez De Bujanda/R. Davignon/E. Stanek, *Index de Rome 1557, 1559, 1564: Les premiers index romains et l'index du Concile de Trente* (Index des livres interdits 8; Sherbrooke: Éditions de l'Université de Sherbrooke/Geneva: Droz, 1990), 91–9, 143–53, and 814–15. Also O'Malley, *Trent*, 160, 163, 177–8, 245, and 266–7.

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