

CENSORSHIP AND CANON: A NOTE ON SOME MEDIEVAL WORKS AND AUTHORS

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Until recently systematic research into Catholic censorship was blocked by the enduring closure of the archives of the Roman Index and Inquisition.¹ Only the opening in 1998 of the archives of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, which includes the historical records of the Holy Office (or Inquisition, founded in 1542) and the Index (founded in 1572),² removed the barrier to detailed study of censorship and made it possible to assess the structure and inner mechanics of Roman censorship in the early modern era. What was revealed by the first studies was an extremely complex picture of the activities of the two Congregations.³ In this paper I discuss some issues regarding early modern Catholic censorship of medieval works and authors, with particular attention to theological and philosophical works.⁴ Some preliminary remarks and caveats are due.

First, in view of the well-known thorny problems of periodization a neat distinction between medieval and early modern authors and works is problematic. As far as ecclesiastical censorship is concerned, however, the rise of the printing press and of the Protestant Reform seems a more sensible caesura than any watershed in epochs. Thus, for present purposes, I

1 Now held in the Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede (from now on: ACDF) in Rome.

2 It must be noted that, unlike the archives of the Holy Office, the records of the Index are relatively intact. The Inquisition holdings suffered many and serious losses. For example, the burning of the Inquisition palace in 1559 on the death of Paul IV; then the removal of the archival records by Napoleon after his occupation of Rome. For discussion of the latter, see R. Ritzler, "Die Verschleppung der päpstlichen Archive nach Paris unter Napoleon I. und deren Rückführung nach Rom in den Jahren 1815 bis 1817," *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 6-7 (1962-1964): 144-90.

3 C. Stango, ed., *Censura ecclesiastica e censura politica in Italia tra Cinquecento e Seicento*. VI giornata Luigi Firpo. Atti del Convegno 5 marzo 1999 (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2001); G. Fragnito, ed., *Church, Censorship, and Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); A. Borromeo, ed., *L'Inquisizione*. Atti del Simposio internazionale, Città del Vaticano, 29-31 ottobre 1998 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2003).

4 For medieval censorship, see P. Godman, *The Silent Masters. Latin Literature and its Censors in the High Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

intend by the term medieval authors those active, *grosso modo*, till the end of the fifteenth century.

Second, Roman censorship, as organized in the Congregations of the Holy Office and the Index, concentrated on living persons and recently published books. Thus, in addition to older prohibitions and condemnations of notorious heretical or suspect authors (among whom Abelard, Joachim of Fiore, Michael of Cesena, William Ockham, John Wycliffe, and Marsilius of Padua), most medieval authors were examined only when their works appeared in print.⁵ Now, several distinct cases can be distinguished. Often, works of orthodox Fathers and medieval doctors were examined and/or prohibited simply because they appeared in editions published by Protestants or suspect authors and printers, active for the most part in Swiss and Germany.⁶ By contrast, many suspect or heretical authors were never placed on the Index, because their works had already been condemned by ancient or medieval councils.⁷ Origen is a case in point. Many authors, among whom Ockham and Michael of Cesena, probably appeared for the same reason on early indexes, and were tacitly removed in the later sixteenth-century indexes. Other suspect medieval authors were examined in the sixteenth century by the Congregation for the Index when their works appeared in print. They were condemned on some local list or prohibited in one of the Roman Indexes, but they were tacitly removed at the end of the century. Cusanus is a case in point.⁸ Many works on astrology and divination by Arab authors (Avenaris, Albubather, Albumasar, Al-

5 For example, editions of Alain de Lille, Cyprianus, and Lactantius were examined and prohibited in the late seventeenth century. Cf. *Index des livres interdits* (from now on: ILI), eds. J.M. De Bujanda et al., 11 vols. (Sherbrooke-Genève: Éditions de l'Université de Sherbrooke-Droz, 1980-2002), 11: 55, 261-2, and 496.

6 Examples are Augustine, Epiphanius, Eusebius, Gaudentius, Irenaeus, John Chrysostom, Bede, Hilary. See ILI, 10, under the respective entries. The same holds for editions of Aristotle, Ovid, Stobaeus, Trentius, Apuleius, Lucian, Epictetus, Dioscorides, Hermes Trismegistus, Flavius Josephus, Macrobius, and Pliny.

7 For the general prohibition of works condemned before 1515, see Rule I of the Tridentine Index, also adopted in the Clementine Index; cf. ILI, 9: 920.

8 From 1574 it was not permitted to sell the works of Nicolaus Cusanus (Nikolaus von Kues, 1401-1464) in the Ecclesiastical State without explicit permission from the authorities; see the "Aviso alli librari" of the Master of the Sacred Palace (22 May 1574), published in ILI, 9: 746-7, 757. Since 1577, *De concordia catholica* (reprint: Basel 1565) was prohibited in Rome; ILI, 9: 750, 755, 766; cf. ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 1, f. 8r. Later, Cusanus' works were mentioned in a list of works "extra Indicem prohibiti" (ILI, 9: 770, 776), and were placed in the so-called Index of Parma (1580); ILI, 9: 159. They came again under examination of the Congregation for the Index from 26 November 1587; see ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 1, fols. 28v-29r. Cusanus was placed in the Sixtine Index (ILI, 9: 390, 835), but not in later Roman Indexes (1593, 1596). On 7 August 1594, the correction of his works was commissioned to the second class of Consultors, but ACDF does not hold these corrections; cf. *Diari*, 1, f. 80v.

chibitus), who formally could not be marked as heretical,⁹ were prohibited because they treated subject matters that attracted the attention of the bodies of ecclesiastical doctrinal control. For similar reasons, several indexes prohibited the works of Guido Bonatti, John Estwood, and Marsilio Ficino.

Third, although the two Roman Congregations were intended as universal bodies of doctrinal control, in actual fact their jurisdiction only extended to the Ecclesiastical state (including Avignon), to the majority of other Italian states and to Malta. The Index was only formally accepted within the borders of the Italian peninsula. Elsewhere, it was often seen as a list of fascinating works, and soon it became a reader's guide to the essential literature of protest.¹⁰ It provided Protestant printers with a list of profit making titles and free advertising while alerting potential Catholic purchasers to the existence of forbidden fruit.¹¹

In order to duly assess the issue under scrutiny, the distinction between heresy and other forms of heterodoxy (section 1) and the two types of ecclesiastical *censura* (section 2) are outlined. Then, in section 3, proceedings concerning Arnaldus of Villanova, Ramon Lull, and John the Scot Eriugena are discussed, as these individual cases of early modern censorship exemplify the inconsistency and fluctuation between overall prohibitions and a more relaxed interpretation of ecclesiastical restrictions concerning medieval authors. It has been stated recently that the early modern period is generally characterized by the dialectics of censorship and canon.¹² In the final sections, however, it will be shown that as a rule censorship only marginally affected the fortune of medieval authors and works.

1. Heresy and heterodoxy

The Inquisition opposed heresy, which was generally defined as the voluntary adhesion of the intellect to a proposition that contradicted Catho-

⁹ See section 1.

¹⁰ See Thomas James, *A Treatise on the Corruption of Scripture, Councils, and Fathers by the Prelates, Pastors, and Pillars of the Church of Rome, for the Maintenance of Popery and Irreligion* (London: printed by H[umphrey] L[ownes] for Mathew Lownes, 1611); and for discussion, cf. L. Balsamo, "How to doctor a bibliography: Antonio Possevino's practice," in G. Fragnito, ed., *Church, Censorship, and Culture in Early Modern Italy*, 71, 77-78.

¹¹ E.L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change. Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 145.

¹² W. Schulze, "Kanon und Pluralisierung in der Frühen Neuzeit," in A. and J. Assmann, eds., *Kanon und Zensur: Beiträge zur Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation II* (München: Fink, 1987), 317-25, at 317-18.

lic doctrine.¹³ Thus, heresy had a substantial aspect, namely that of being a proposition—or a set of propositions—which somehow contradicted the dogmatic view as defined by the Church,¹⁴ and a psychological aspect, insofar as the person who maintained that proposition was fully aware of this contradiction. In addition to manifest heresy, schisms, and apostasy, the Inquisition was also supposed to prosecute magic, *sortilegia*, divination, abuse of sacraments and whatever else could be construed as heresy. As a matter of fact, later sixteenth-century trials show a tendency to extend the notion of heresy also to propositions that contradicted broader theological beliefs which had not (yet) been defined as dogmas.

A distinction should be drawn between openly professing a view, on the one hand, and simply entertaining an idea, on the other. In the latter case, heresy was considered a sin and had to be confessed in order to obtain absolution. By contrast, explicit adherence to heretical views was a serious crime and put on par with high treason (“*crimen laesae maiestatis*”),¹⁵ to be judged by the Tribunal of the Inquisition that could decree sanctions, penalties and abjurations.¹⁶

A charge of heresy presupposed that one had been educated in the true faith. It therefore followed that the ancient philosophers, children educated in Protestant countries, Muslims and Jews could not strictly be viewed as heretics,¹⁷ nor be brought to trial as such. Furthermore, heresy distin-

13 See, for example, Alfonso de Castro, *De iusta haereticorum punitione* (Venetiis: Ad signum spei, 1549; first edition: Salamanca 1547), f. 5r-v. Cf. Roberto Bellarmino in his 1587 pronouncement on Erasmus, in ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, B (II.a.2), f. 406r: “Nam, ut quis hereticus dici possit, requiruntur duo: error fidei contrarius, et pertinacia, ita ut ex electione oppugnet id quod scit ab Ecclesia definitum vel doceat quod scit ab Ecclesia condemnatum.” For discussion of the historical development of the concept of heresy, see N. Brox, “Häresie”, in *Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 13 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1986), 248-96; M.-D. Chenu, “Orthodoxie et hérésie. Le point de vue du théologien,” in *Hérésies et sociétés dans l’Europe pré-industrielle*, ed. J. Le Goff, (Paris-La Haye: Mouton, 1968), 9-17; O. Hageneder, “Das Häresiebegriff dei den Juristen des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts,” in W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst, eds., *The Concept of Heresy in the Middle Ages (11th-13th c.)*, (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1976), 42-103; J. Koch, “Philosophische und theologische Irrtumslisten von 1270-1329. Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklung der theologischen Zensuren,” in *Mélanges Mandonnet. Études d’histoire littéraire et doctrinale du Moyen Age*, vol. 2 (Paris: Vrin, 1930), 305-29.

14 Heresy did not consist in contradicting a generic religious belief, but one that was well-defined by the *magisterium* of the Church, because a proposition that disputed only traditional views was not a formal heresy.

15 Hageneder, “Das Häresiebegriff,” 88, 100-101.

16 F. Beretta, *Galilée devant le Tribunal de l’Inquisition. Une relecture des sources* (Fribourg: s.i., 1998), 140.

17 Alfonso de Castro, *Adversus omnes haereses libri quatuordecim. Opus nunc denuo ab auctore ipso recognitum est (...)* (Lugduni: apud J. Frellonius, typis Mich. Sylvii, 1555; first edition: Paris 1534), f. 42v.

guished itself clearly from other types of doctrinal deviation, namely, the endorsement of propositions which Catholic theology qualified as “erronea,” “sapiens haeresim,” “male sonans,” “temeraria,” or “scandalosa.”¹⁸

To establish the heretical nature of an opinion or a proposition required that one first had to discern a “propositio de fide definita.”¹⁹ The criteria developed by Alfonso de Castro in *De iusta haereticorum punitione* were certainly of some help: ²⁰ (1) the Holy Scripture as long as its sense was clear, that is “apertus et indubitatus,”²¹ (2) the conciliar decrees, given that the content of several articles of faith is not explicitly given in Scripture,²² (3) the “consensus universalis Ecclesiae,” and (4) the opinion of the Holy See and the views of the *doctores*.²³

18 See Castro, *De iusta haereticorum punitione*, fols. 12r-16v. An erroneous proposition was one that contradicted a “veritas aliqua ab Ecclesia non definita.” An example of a “sapiens haeresim” proposition is that ‘the Bible contains errors,’ because the Holy Writ is the supreme truth, but individual (printed) Bibles may contain misprints. An example of “propositio male sonans” was an orthodox doctrine that had been wrongly expressed. For example, “fides iustificat” was not a heretical view, but when proclaimed by a Protestant it did not ‘sound good.’ “Temeraria” was a proposition expressing an unjustified truth, such as “Dies iudicij erit infra annum.” Other kinds of propositions were qualified as “schismatica” (undermining the unity of the Church), “blasphema,” and “iniuriosa.”

19 The medieval background is discussed in A. Lang, *Die theologische Prinzipienlehre der mittelalterliche Scholastik* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964).

20 Castro, *De iusta haereticorum punitione*, fols. 17r-22v. For discussion of the views of Melchior Cano and Domingo Bañez, see A. Lang, “Die Gliederung und die Reichweite des Glaubens nach Thomas von Aquin und den Thomisten. Ein Beitrag zur Klärung der scholastische Begriffe: fides, haeresis, und conclusio theologica,” *Divus Thomas* 21 (1943) : 79-97. For medieval origins, see Ch.H. Lohr, “Modelle für die Überlieferung theologischer Doktrin: Von Thomas von Aquin bis Melchior Cano,” in W. Löser, K. Lehmann and M. Lutz-Bachmann, eds., *Dogmengeschichte und katholische Theologie* (Würzburg: Echter, 1988).

21 Generally, the literal sense prevailed over the mystical sense.

22 The formulation of this criterion was inspired by the conviction that the works of ancient philosophers, in particular Plato and Aristotle, even though not being formally heretical, contained many doctrines that were extremely dangerous to the Catholic faith. However, the possibly heretical outcomes of the interpretation of ancient philosophy were controversial. Antonio Possevino, *Bibliotheca selecta qua agitur de ratione studiorum in Historia, in Disciplinis, in Salute omnium procuranda*, 2 vols. (Rome: Ex typographia Apostolica Vaticana, 1593), 42, argued that ancient philosophers cannot be viewed as heretics. A well known example was the dogma on the human soul which the Council of Vienna (1311-12) explicitly defined as “forma corporis.”

23 The latter was controversial. Peña made a clear distinction between the opinions of the Fathers and those of scholastic theologians in order to safeguard the distinction between heretical and erroneous propositions. For example, from a doctrinal point of view, to deny the Immaculate Conception of Mary was to be regarded as an error, but not a heresy. As to the former, it should be borne in mind that since the pontificate of Sixtus V the authority of the Holy See had been substantially strengthened, the pope becoming the supreme judge in doctrinal controversies. The origin of the pope’s primacy, as to doctrinal matters, is in the period preceding the Fifth Lateran Council; see Lohr, “Modelle für die Überlieferung theologischer Doktrin,” 163-65.

2. *Censura: assessment and expurgation*

The *censura* was a central element in the practice of the Roman Congregations, consisting in the valuation of the congruence of a view, doctrine or work with Catholic orthodoxy. *Censurae* were of two kinds: ²⁴ assessments containing a critical examination of a view or of the content of a work, ²⁵ on the one hand, and expurgations, that is, proposals for correction, on the other. ²⁶ Now, in the case of a prohibition by the Index, a work could be condemned *tout court* or else with the stipulation of “donec corrigatur” or “donec expurgetur.” Expurgation, as suggested in Michele Ghislieri’s 1559 *Instructio*, was a remarkable innovation of the Tridentine Index (1564) and regarded books “quorum principale argumentum bonum est, in quibus obiter aliqua inserta sunt, quae ad haeresim seu impietatem, divinationem aut superstitionem spectant.” ²⁷ Works prohibited with the proviso “donec corrigatur” could be reprinted in an emended edition, or else local bishops or inquisitors could grant reading permits on condition that the work was corrected according to the instructions of the Congregation for the Index. Italian libraries contain many works that bear the signs of several kinds of intervention: the cancellation of names and lines, the covering or physical elimination of individual passages or entire pages and sections. Forbidden books that were not corrected, neither officially nor privately, were destined to a clandestine circulation.

Expurgation could be asked for by the author, but most of the time it was required by the representatives of the legal and medical professions, printers and publishers, ²⁸ as well as by relatives and scientific or cultur-

24 For the broader cultural background to the phenomenon, see P. Godman, *The Saint as Censor. Robert Bellarmine Between Inquisition and Index* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 130: “Censorship was not only an expression of those strivings [i.e. to grapple with the issues of authority and control]; it was more. A method of discussion, a vehicle of debate, a form of thought: so commonly practised and so widely diffused was *censura* that any problem – theological, political, or moral – was able to be condensed into propositions and submitted to the judgement of peers, colleagues, or superiors.”

25 **As is well known, censorship could be exercised in two ways: before the printing or publishing of a work (*censura praevia*), and after the printing or publishing, by prohibiting it (*censura repressiva*).** The bull *Inter sollicitudines* (1515) and the Tridentine Index (1564) had established preventive censorship and approbation, which pertained to other Church officials (the local inquisitors and the Master of the Sacred Palace), while the Roman Congregations investigated works printed without an *imprimatur* or which circulated in manuscript form.

26 When the correction was carried out, the print and reading of the work could be permitted again.

27 *ILL*, 8: 817.

28 Jean Bodin’s Venetian printer Nicola Manassi is a case in point.

al academies.²⁹ As a rule, it regarded works prohibited with the proviso “donec corrigatur,” but frequently totally prohibited works were also corrected if they were regarded as useful. Even some books that had never been condemned or prohibited were corrected if they were considered in some way or another to be suspect. In general, expurgation was presumed to be carried out according to the Index Rules, or else it had to be based upon pre-existent *censores*, with a preference for those kept in the archive of the Congregation for the Index in Rome. However, expurgation was not centralized until 1587,³⁰ and before this date there was a proliferation of local correctors, partly experts (inquisitors and their assistants and consultants) and partly common readers requested to correct the books they were allowed to read.³¹ After the promulgation of the Clementine Index in 1596, the Congregation decided to set up local commissions for the correction of books prohibited in the second class,³² but this attempt did not furnish the desired results. After the publication of Guanzelli’s Expurgatory Index in 1607, the Congregation for the Index abandoned the large-scale project of composing corrections for the works listed in the second class.³³

The reasons motivating correction were multifarious: obscenity, mixing up profane and holy, derision of rites and devotion, irreverence to clergy, attribution of divine aspects to common people, etc. The fundamental problem in expurgation regarded the criteria underlying an adequate correction. Rule VIII of the Tridentine Index concerned those heretical or suspect statements in books which occurred occasionally (*obiter*), and this suggested that they could be easily isolated. And indeed, until only names or clearly distinct passages were to be eliminated things were rel-

29 The expurgation of Castiglione’s *Cortegiano* was supported by his son Camillo, that of Machiavelli by the Florentine academy and his relatives; similar cases are those of Boccaccio and Bernardino Telesio. The expurgation of the Talmud was requested by the Jewish community. See V. Frajese, *Nascita dell’Indice. La censura ecclesiastica dal Rinascimento alla Controriforma* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2006), 307-8.

30 ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 1, f. 17v. The very term is used for the first time on 12 November 1587; cf. ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 1, f. 28r.

31 The correction of prohibited or suspect works was initially seen as the aim of the grant of reading permits. Later, by contrast, it often became a condition of the latter.

32 The distinction in three classes was introduced in the Tridentine Index: one category contained all the works of heretical authors, a second category contained individual works by authors not included in the first category, and a third category contained works by authors *incerti nominis*.

33 A detailed reconstruction for the period 1559-1753 is in ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, II.a.84, fols. 368r, 369r-377v.

atively simple.³⁴ The situation got quite complicated when the book was placed on the Index because the author put forth views in open or veiled conflict with Catholic doctrine, and in particular when the censor had to tackle erroneous propositions that were intimately rooted in complex theoretical systems.³⁵

The censor was presumed to take into consideration any possible kind of peril, but first of all the title page, the name of the author or editor, and the place of edition.³⁶ Then, he should examine the text, and formulate his proposals for correction.³⁷ Often, however, the censor could also operate at a substantially different level: connect the mutilated parts and/or rewrite entire sections,³⁸ and thus insinuating orthodoxy. As a consequence, works could assume an outlook strongly deviating from the author's original intentions.³⁹ Thus, while some corrections were visible or traceable, others were completely invisible. As to the latter, they were probably more damaging than a downright prohibition.⁴⁰

3. Arnaldus of Villanova, Ramon Lull, and John the Scot Eriugena

Arnaldus of Villanova (1235–1311) was celebrated in his day as a physician, pharmacist, and alchemist. Although a layman he wrote much on theology, and his heterodox opinions concerning crucial dogmatic issues

³⁴ Around 1587, Vincenzo Bonardi composed a *Modus et ratio expurgandi vel corrigendi libros*; the text is in ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, M (II.a.10), fols. 124r-125r. See also ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 1, f. 20v. Comments by Ruggiero, Peña, Allen, Morin, and an anonymous author are in ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, B (II.a.2), fols. 528r-537v. On 8 October 1594, Marcantonio Colonna handed over to his censors a printed *Instructio pro expurgatione et impressione librorum*; cf. ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 1, f. 81r. This text was probably the basis for the *Instructio* printed in the Clementine Index; *ILI*, 9: 859-62.

³⁵ Examples are the works by Francesco Giorgio and Francesco Patrizi, which did not directly contradict Catholic doctrine, but which contained many views with pernicious potentialities.

³⁶ For general rules, see *ILI*, 9: 859-62.

³⁷ In general, the censors should prefer correction to cancellation. On 19 September 1592, the Congregation exhorted its consultors to follow the pope's intention in this sense: "Disputatum inter hos Consultores et de mente Sanctissimi conclusum quod expurgatio Librorum fiat non delendo sed solum notando errores" (ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 1, f. 52v).

³⁸ Ambrogio da Asola's corrections of Levinus Lemnius are an illustrative example; cf. ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, O (II.a.13), fols. 279r-296r.

³⁹ A clamorous case of the wrenching of a literary work was Girolamo Malipiero's transformation of Petrarca's *Canzoniere* (published in 1536); cf. A. Del Col, *L'inquisizione in Italia dal XII al XXI secolo* (Milan: Oscar Mondadori, 2006), 530-31.

⁴⁰ Paolo Sarpi considered altering the thought of an author to be a greater offence than its absolute prohibition. See Balsamo, "How to doctor a bibliography: Antonio Possevino's practice," 50.

(the Mass, the Antichrist, the end of the world, the person of Christ) repeatedly forced him to wander from place to place as Inquisitors in Spain and France had sentenced him to banishment.⁴¹ A large number of ACDF documents attests an almost unremitting attention by the Congregation for the Index to Arnaldus' works and his commentary on *Regimen sanitatis* or *Schola salernitana*. Furthermore, this documentation shows that it took a fairly long time for the Congregation to reach a definite view of the author and his works.

The condemnation of thirteen treatises in 1316 by the Archbishop of Tarragona (Catalonia) laid the groundwork for Arnaldus' first sixteenth-century prohibition: in 1554 the Venetian Index adopted the Bishop's decree.⁴² Arnaldus' works probably caught the attention of the Roman bodies of doctrinal control as early as the late 1550s, when an anonymous censor of the Holy Office recommended his condemnation as a heretic,⁴³ which eventually took place in 1559.⁴⁴ Two years later, he was included among the authors of the first class on the Index of Portugal.⁴⁵ Subsequently, Arnaldus was mentioned several times in Giovanni Dei's catalogue of heretical and suspect books (1576).⁴⁶ Then his works were prohibited by the Master of the Sacred Palace in 1576⁴⁷ and mentioned in local lists of forbidden books in Turin (ca. 1580)⁴⁸ and Rome (ca. 1583).⁴⁹ Contemporarily, Arnaldus was condemned in the so-called Index of Parma (1580), and in those of Portugal (1581) and Spain (1583).⁵⁰ In the Spanish Expurgatory Index of 1584 only seven treatises from the *Opera* were condemned.⁵¹

41 For a summary of the heresies that Arnaldus was usually accused of, see Matthias Flacius Illyricus et al., *Ecclesiastica historia, (...) perspicuo ordine complectens: singulari diligentia et fide ex vetustissimis et optimis historicis, patribus, et alijs scriptoribus congesta*, 13 parts in 8 vols. (Basileae: per Ioannem Oporinum [et Hervagium], 1560-1574), VIII, cols. 571-572. This list was probably based upon Nicolao Eymeric's *Directorium inquisitorum*.

42 On 8 November 1316 the Bishop of Tarragona prohibited the following works: *De humilitate et patientia Iesu Christo*, *De fine mundi*, *Informatio Beguinorum*, *Ad Priorissam vel de caritate*, *Apologia*, inc. "Domino carissimo", *Denunciatio facta coram Domino Episcopo Gerundensi*, *De elemosina et sacrificio*, inc. "Per ço molts desiguen saber", *Alia informatio Beguinorum*, inc. "Devant vos senyor", inc. "Cant fuy Avinió", and *Responsio contra Bernardum Ricardi*. It should be kept in mind that some of these works have been lost, while others survive only in Latin, Catalan, Italian or Greek translations; see ILL, 3: 222-25.

43 See Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana (from now on: BAV), *Vat. Lat.* 6207, f. 221r.

44 ILL, 8: 262.

45 ILL, 4: 352.

46 ACDF, Index, XIV.1, f. 9v.

47 ILL, 10: 829-30.

48 ILL, 9: 758.

49 ILL, 9: 770, 774, 775.

50 ILL, 9: 80; 4: 352; 6: 180.

51 See ILL, 6: 985.

The total prohibition of the author did not prevent the Congregation from pondering on the possibility of a conditional permission for (some of) his works.⁵² Thus, on 5 November and 3 December of 1587, Silvio Antoniano presented *censurae* of Arnaldus' works in the Congregation.⁵³ And by the end of the 1580s, Arnaldus and *Regimen sanitatis Salernitanum*, although inserted into lists of books that were retracted from sale, were frequently mentioned in general lists of books to be examined, and in lists of books already corrected. In the Roman Index of 1590, Arnaldus was again included among the authors of the first class.⁵⁴ However, between the end of the 1580s and the early 1590s the Congregation received urgent requests for expurgating his works. By March 1593, the Congregation commissioned an expurgatory *censura* to Salamanca. Arnaldus was again condemned for heresy in the later Indexes of Rome (1593, 1596).⁵⁵ Nonetheless, in ACDF documents his books were again listed as having been already corrected. In his 1607 Expurgatory Index, Guanzelli merely adopted the prohibition of the seven treatises by the 1584 Spanish Expurgatory Index.⁵⁶

Almost immediately after Ramon Lull's death, a long and intricate debate evolved concerning his doctrines.⁵⁷ As is well-known, these doctrines were greatly influenced by a then flourishing pseudepigraphal literature, or rather, the rapidly expanding corpus of mnemotechnic and theological works composed by Lull's disciples under his name shortly after his death. During the second half of the fourteenth century, the Faculty of Theology in Paris censured several propositions as well as the terminology of

52 Most probably, the Congregation was urged by librarians and physicians; see, for example, the request of twenty-one Bolognese librarians who in a letter dated 10 August 1577 asked Card. Sirleto for the correction of his works in order to make them available for sale. See BAV, *Vat. Lat.* 6417, fols. 365r-366v.

53 ACDF, *Index*, *Diari*, 1, fols. 27r, 28r, 29v.

54 *ILL*, 9: 802.

55 *ILL*, 9: 465-6, 864, 933.

56 See Giovanni Maria Guanzelli da Brisighella (Brasichellensis), *Indicis librorum expurgandorum in studiosorum gratiam confecti tomus primus* (Romae: ex Typographia R. Cam. Apost., 1607), 36. For specifications and extensive references, see U. Baldini and L. Spruit, eds., *Catholic Church and Modern Science. Documents from the Archives of the Roman Congregations of the Holy Office and the Index*, vol. I: *Sixteenth-Century Documents*, 4 vols. (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2010, forthcoming), chapter on Arnaldus of Villanova, introduction.

57 For a reconstruction, see *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 33 vols. (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ane, 1909-1960), 9: 1135-40; cf. L. Pérez Martínez, "Intervención de la Santa Sede en la causa luliana," *Estudios Lulianos* 6 (1962): 151-78, and A. Madre, *Die theologische Polemik gegen Raimundus Lullus. Eine Untersuchung zu den Elenchi auctororum de Raimundo male sententium* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973). ACDF preserves several eighteenth-century reconstructions, among which *Protocolli*, I (II.a.8), fols. 174r-179r, is worth mentioning.

Ars magna. In Spain, the controversy was fueled by the pursuits of the Dominican monk Nicolau Eymeric (ca. 1320-1399), inquisitor and subsequently procurator of the Order in Aragon, who from 1371 raised the Lullist issue in lasting controversies with King Pedro IV. As chaplain to Gregory XI, Eymeric probably urged the pope to issue the bull *Nuper dilecto* (5 June 1372), which ordered the Archbishop of Tarazona (Aragon) to examine Lull's works and to burn any part containing errors. Moreover, on 29 September 1374, the pontiff ordered the shipment to Avignon of a book written by Lull in Catalan (*Liber de philosophia amoris*). Irritated by these pontifical actions, Pedro IV expelled Eymeric on 11 March 1375 from all his dominions. After less than a year, the reputed bull *Conservationi puritatis* (dated 25 January 1376) was distributed, condemning twenty of Lull's books,⁵⁸ including apocryphal and now lost works. This bull also identified two hundred heretical propositions extracted from the latter and ordered a close examination of the rest of Lull's works. It is in this bull that the eternal Lull case originates. The authenticity of the bull, generally taken for granted by the Dominicans but challenged by the Franciscans, was never proved and its apocryphal character is now solidly established.⁵⁹

58 Nicolau Eymeric, *Directorium inquisitorum (...) cum commentariis Francisci Pegnae (...) in hac postrema editione iterum emendatum et auctum, et multis litteris Apostolicis locupletatum* (Romae: in Aedibus Populi Romani, 1585), 272-77, mentions the following works: *Liber de philosophia amoris*, *Liber de centum Dei nominibus*, *Liber contemplationum*, *Liber de septem arboribus*, *Liber de trecentis proverbiiis*, *Liber de confessione, contritione, satisfactione et oratione*, *Liber de orationibus*, *Liber amati et amici*, *Liber de Benedicta tu*, *Liber de articulis fidei*, *Liber de doctrina puerili*, *Liber de planctu Raymundi*, *Liber de intentionibus*, *Liber de arte amativa*, *Liber de temptatione*, *Liber de oratione et alius a praedicto*, *Liber de anima*, *Liber sententiarum*, and *Liber apostolicum*.

59 **The following points may be considered. First, more than a year after its 'promulgation,'** King Pedro IV, one of the major participants in the debate, was still not acquainted with the bull, as appears from his letter of 7 January 1377, in which he demanded that the pope should give permission for the examination of the aforementioned Catalan book (*Liber de philosophia amoris*) in Barcelona. Now, if this book had been condemned for more than a year, as for example was maintained by Eymeric in his *Directorium Inquisitorium*, when referring to the 1376 bull, such a request would not have made any sense. Second, the condemnation of twenty books and two hundred propositions without any indication either of the titles to the works or the nature of the propositions was in gross contrast to the style employed by the Roman Curia. Third, the bull was not recorded in Gregory XI's registers, as is revealed by some 1395 research carried out at the request of Antonio Riera. Fourth, due to his obvious bias, Eymeric's testimony turned out to be anything but trustworthy. As early as 1386 a Joint Commission of Dominicans and Franciscans established that three of the propositions extracted from the *Philosophia amoris* and condemned as heretical by Eymeric were not to be found in this work at all. Eventually, the Holy See itself challenged the authenticity of the 'bull.' After decades of continuing controversy, Martin V demanded a definite judgment from Card. Alamanno Adimari. The latter, legate in Aragon, appointed Bernardo Bartolomei, Bishop of Città di Castello, who on 24 March 1419 after due research declared the 'bull' to be apocryphal and without any value.

Under the pontificate of Sixtus IV (1471-1484), the issue was again raised when Pedro Dagui, first professor of the Lullist *Studium* in Palma de Maiorca, was accused by the Dominicans. When Degui successfully defended himself against these attacks, the Inquisitor of Majorca proceeded to print Eymeric's *Directorium*, including Gregory XI's 'Bull' and a hundred errors and heresies attributed to Lull.⁶⁰ This laid the groundwork for Lull's inclusion in the Roman Index of 1557,⁶¹ which was not promulgated, and in the 1559 Index, which condemned "Raimundi Lulli opera per Gregorium XI damnata."⁶² However, at the Council of Trent some of Lull's followers, among whom Juan Luis Vileta, Dimas de Miguel, and Juan Arce de Herrera, had the decision revoked. On 1 September 1563, the Council decreed that Lull's works were to be removed from the Index, and this decision was recorded in the 1564 Index.⁶³ Nonetheless, in 1576 the Master of the Sacred Palace prohibited his "opera alias damnata."⁶⁴ In 1578, Francisco Peña published a new edition of Eymeric's *Directorium*, being the likely cause of a new change in the history of the Church: by decree of 9 February 1583⁶⁵ the Congregation for the Index again prohibited Lull's works. This decision in turn prompted the reaction of the Lullist faction and in the long run the intervention by King Philip II of Spain, which inspired the Index decrees of 3 June 1593 and of 16 July 1594, ratifying in effect a return to the decision taken by the Council of Trent.⁶⁶

In the context of this long and peculiar succession of surprising changes, quite unique in the history of the Roman Index, prohibitions recorded in other sixteenth-century Indexes are to be considered. The condemnation of twenty treatises on account of Gregory XI's 'Bull' was accepted by the Indexes of Venice (1554), Rome (1559, 1593) and Parma (1580).⁶⁷ *Phi-*

60 For the text, see Madre, *Die theologische Polemik gegen Raimundus Lullus*, 147-57.

61 ILL, 8: 744 and 302-3.

62 See BAV, *Vat. Lat.* 6207, f. 236r: "Raimundi Luli opera. 20 opera sunt in quibus 500 [sic] errores offenduntur." The number of 100 errors goes back to Nicolau Eymeric's *Directorium Inquisitorium*; see Eymeric, *Directorium Inquisitorium*, 272-77; cf. 277-78, for the errors of his followers.

63 Notice, however, that the first Rule of this Index prohibited all books "quos ante annum MDXV aut summi Pontifices, aut Concilia oecumenica damnarunt."

64 ILL, 10: 837.

65 ACDF, *Index, Diari*, 1, f. 11v.

66 In ACDF, *Index, Protocolli*, S (II.a.17), f. 521v, Lull's cause is summarized in the following way: "Raimundi Lulli doctrina instante Procuratore Regni Aragoniae, examinanda per deputatos consultores 6. Aug. 1589. et Cardinales 16 Iunij 1590. et expeditae literae compulsoriales instante Oratore Regis Catholici 4 Martij 1595., et iam sublatus fuerat ex Indice 3 Iunij 1593."

67 ILL, 3: 349-51; 8: 302-3; 9: 423, 168. There are slight differences with Eymeric's list (see *supra*): *Liber de Benedicta tu* is lacking, while *Liber de contemplatione* substituted *Liber de temptatione*.

losophia amoris, already prohibited in the Indexes of Venice (1554), Portugal (1581) and Spain (1583), was also prohibited in the later Roman Indexes (1590, 1593, 1596).⁶⁸

Undoubtedly, the inclusion and removal of the same author on more than one occasion from the Index of Forbidden Books flew in the face of the *stylus* of the Roman Congregation which had great difficulty in explaining the exact reasons for its continuous changes.⁶⁹ Some documents testify to the Congregation's fundamentally uncertain attitude and the perplexity of its collaborators with respect to the person and the works of Ramon Lull. In 1576, Giovanni Dei put Lull in the category of suspect authors, having been condemned previously and included in other Indexes.⁷⁰ A similar motivation probably inspired the authors of local lists (issued in the 1570s and 1580s)⁷¹ and consultors of the Index.⁷² However, the legitimacy of this motivation was generally challenged, and doubted even by the Dominican Bartolomé de Miranda, Master of the Sacred Palace.⁷³ Some consultors advised that the works be expurgated as they considered them useful to scholars in natural science and medicine,⁷⁴ while others,

68 ILLI, 3: 349; 4: 458-59; 6: 508; 9: 696, 838, 898.

69 See ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, R (II.a.16), f. 15v: "Ad quintum caput. Non est novum Pontifices successores Predecessorum constitutiones, decreta, et prohibitiones in melius commutare et ob causas non minus graves, quod per posteriores constitutiones antiquatum fuerat renovare prout in novo Indice de Raymundo Lullo factum est, presertim cum Pij Quarti Index Pio Quinto successoribus non plane satisfecerit ob hanc potissimam causam quod nonnullos auctores et libros in Indice Pauli IV. vetitos, iterum legendos concesserit, praeterea censores in hoc eodem Censurae capite modo pugnant pro Indice, et regulis Pij IV, modò tacitè reprehendunt, et nuncupatim exprimendum ducunt in novo Indice quod in ipso priore generatim de libris Geomantiae tradebatur."

70 See ACDF, Index, XIV.1, f. 44r.

71 Lists composed in Vercelli (1574), Turin (ca. 1580), and Rome (ca. 1583) refer to Eymeric and Gregory XI's bull; see ILLI, 9: 757, 767, 777. See also the lists issued in Alessandria (ca. 1575) and Asti (1576); cf. *Scriniolum Sanctae Inquisitionis Astensis: In quo quaecunque ad id muneris obeundum spectare visa sunt, (...), quaeve hucusque in partes veluti frustratim concisa, atque distracta sparsim ibant, nunc in unum collecta, (...) repositaque sunt* (Astae: apud Virgilium de Zangrandis, 1610 [but: at least 1612]), 88-89.

72 See Giambattista Lanci's list (17 November 1580), in ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, A (II.a.1), fasc. 87, 11v.

73 See ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, P (II.a.14), f. 22r: "Posset aliquis dubitare non omnes libros in Indicem coniectos iure esse damnatos, cum in eorum censuris nihil certe, quod sit magni momenti deprehendatur. Hi vero sunt qui sequuntur"; cf. on f. 23r: "Raymundi Lulli opera per Gregorium IX. [sic] Damnata [in the margin: deletur ab Indice]."

74 See ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, B (II.a.2), f. 232v. In a letter dated 10 August 1577 a group of twenty-one Bolognese librarians asked Card. Sirolo for the correction of Lull's works in order to make them available for sale, stating explicitly: "volessimo sapere quali opere siano cative." See BAV, *Vat. Lat.* 6417, fols. 365r-366v.

such as Vincenzo Bonardi, regarded this expurgation as rather complex.⁷⁵ This set the frame for intricate discussion in the 1590s concerning Lull's possible inclusion in the Index.⁷⁶ The decision to place the books condemned by Gregory XI on the 1593 Index was taken in mutual consent with the Holy Office, but later challenged by Clement VIII and subsequently revoked in the 1596 Index.⁷⁷ The case of Lull continued to drag on in the centuries to come.⁷⁸

Although John Scottus Eriugena's doctrines of predestination and of the Eucharist were condemned at the Councils of Valencia (855), Langres (859), and Vercelli (1050), it was not until the beginning of the thirteenth century that the pantheism of *De divisione naturae* was formally condemned. The Council of Paris (1225) coupled the condemnation of Eriugena's work with the previous condemnations (1210) of the doctrines of Amalric of Bene and David of Dinant. Yet, the major scholastic doctors apparently were unacquainted with Eriugena's work. After Scottus had been almost forgotten for many centuries, he was again discovered in 1681, when Thomas Gale issued *De divisione naturae* in Oxford.⁷⁹ The Roman Church was informed, and on 11 July 1684 the Congregation for the Index commissioned friar Giovanni Antonio of Palermo to examine the book. On the basis of his *censura* the Congregation decided on 5 September of that year to prohibit the book, "sine alia," that is without any

75 See ACDF, *Index, Protocolli*, B (II.a.2), f. 502v: "Per la terza parte dell'espurgazione, sono moltissimi, i libri da espurgarsi, et darà non poco fastidio il negotio di Raimondo Lullo, che da Paolo quarto fu proibito, et da Pio quarto nell'Indice del Concilio fu lasciato, à, dietro."

76 See *infra*. Discussing the Index Rules in his 1588 *Enchiridion*, Gregorio di Napoli argued that Lull's removal from the Tridentine Index did not entail that he was to be regarded as an author "approbatus," because Rule I of this Index banned all works prohibited before 1515, and thus also Lull's works condemned by Gregory XI. Gregorio also recalled Eymeric's list of 100 errors and the 200 errors that contemporary theologians identified in Lull's works. Furthermore, arch-heretics, among whom Agrippa, wrote commentaries to his works. See Gregorio di Napoli, *Enchiridion ecclesiasticum, Sive praeparatio pertinens ad sacramentum Poenitentiae et sacri Ordinis (...), nunc denuo auctum, et amplificatum ab eodem Auctore, et tandem typis chalcographis traditum* (Venetiis: sumptibus Iaco. Anelli de Maria Bibliopolae Neapolitani, Hieronymo Polo Typographo Veneto imprimente, 1588), fols. 215v-219v.

77 ACDF, *Index, Protocolli*, M (II.a.11), f. 245r: "De Raymundo quidem non erat idem omnium sensus, sed tandem sequuta est Congregatio voluntatem Sancti officij."

78 For example, in the seventeenth century (probably during the 1620s) the Congregation for the Index informed the Inquisitor of Bologna in an extended file of eighteen pages (kept in the Biblioteca dell'Arciginnasio di Bologna) about the several phases of the case, summarizing and mentioning decrees and *censurae* concerning his works.

79 Johannes Scotus Eriugena, *De divisione naturae libri quinque, diu desiderati. Accedit appendix ex Ambiguis S. Maximi Graece et Latine* (Oxonii: E Theatro Sheldoniano, 1681; reprint: Frankfurt am Main, 1964).

possibility of correction. The decree of prohibition was promulgated on 3 April 1685.⁸⁰

In his *censura*,⁸¹ Giovanni Antonio of Palermo first recalls the condemnations of Scottus' doctrines of the Eucharist and of predestination, as well as those of his *De divisione naturae*. Then, he challenges some specific, related issues: sexual distinction as an effect of original sin (which by consequence will disappear after the resurrection); the view that man preserves the divine image also after the fall; that Christ's body when he appeared to the disciples cannot be referred to any time or place; that the universal judgment will not take place in any material location; that no time elapsed between Christ's resurrection and his ascension to heaven; that Paradise and Hell are not to be identified as material places; that the eternal punishment is similar to some sort of sadness, as human soul cannot undergo 'real' pains; the universal election of man; beatitude as theophany rather than as vision of God; and the 'ubiquity' of Christ's body.

4. *Censorship and canon*

One part of the fascination that censorship exercises is that it does not readily lend itself to definition. Yet, or probably for this very reason, any discussion on censorship easily generates well-known commonplaces. For example, the Roman Congregations of the Holy Office and the Index are usually seen as obscurantist, repressive bodies, hostile to any expression of rationalism, science and cultural innovation. Now, it cannot be denied that the effect early modern censorship produced on the ecclesiastical attitude towards new intellectual or scientific ideas not in themselves directly concerned with or resulting from religious heresy, could not but be constrictive, and the quasi-tolerance of philosophical and other novelties which marked the Church of the Italian Renaissance came necessarily to be heavily modified in the course of the second half of the sixteenth century. Not only were the obvious texts of religious heterodoxy prohibited entirely, the Indexes also prohibited or expurgated literary works of major Italian authors, including Boccaccio, Franco, Sansovino, Bandello, Gelli and others. Moreover, also books with no religious content written by known Protestants (including legal, scientific and medical texts) were banned and made unavailable to Italian readers. Yet, the cases discussed

⁸⁰ See ACDF, Index, *Diari*, 8, fols. 10r, 17r, and 18v (modern numeration).

⁸¹ ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, TT (II.a.43), fols. 138r-142r.

in the previous section show the wavering of Catholic censorship between rigor and relaxation. And moreover, in attempting to enforce its authority, the Index helped consolidate forces in opposition.⁸² As a result, book censorship was attenuated in several ways.

Many works were prohibited with the so-called “donec corrigatur” stipulation, and thus were available on condition that they were corrected, that is, readers were supposed to skip or cover some passages, or else to replace them by alternative readings. Sometimes the prescribed corrections were minimal, while other times the censors attempted to rewrite the incriminated books in part or almost entirely.⁸³

The conditioned availability of many works was intimately linked to the system of licences to read forbidden books, granted in Italy by the Inquisition, the Index, and the Master of the Sacred Palace. The grant of reading licences, which makes it possible to assess the difference between the hypothetical and the real efficacy of ecclesiastical censorship, also reveals the interaction of essentially religious and cultural criteria with the practical requirements of contemporary society which the Church could not completely ignore or suppress.

Finally, censorship had a repressive, but also an emancipatory element, that is, as a rule-embedded phenomenon, it was constituent and regulative.⁸⁴ The assessment of Hebrew literature is an example of the constitutive role of censorship. Recent studies have indeed demonstrated that Romans censors of Hebrew works (for the most part converts) participated, unintentionally, in the extensive redefinition of the boundaries of reading, in partial accord with contemporary Jewish trends. The explicit intention of the censors was to prevent forbidden contents; the practice of censorship, however, resulted in the authorization of what the Church considered to be permissible knowledge. Thus, the control of Hebrew print led to the Church’s official recognition of Hebrew literature, and consequently of Jewish practice.⁸⁵

Now, considering that the availability of medieval works was only marginally conditioned by prohibitions, what can be said about the effects of censorship on the fortune of medieval books and authors? More specifi-

82 S.C. Jansen, *Censorship. The Knot that Binds Power and Knowledge* (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 64.

83 See above section 2.

84 For discussion, see Schulze, “Kanon und Pluralisierung in der Frühen Neuzeit”

85 See, for example, A. Raz-Krakotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text. The Catholic Church and the Shaping of the Jewish Canon in the Sixteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). See also St. Wendehorst, *The Roman Inquisition, the Index and the Jews. Contexts, Sources and Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

cally, did Roman censorship influence in any sense the canon of medieval doctrinal works? Before tackling this question, still another issue should be raised: did there exist any canon of medieval authors and books in early modern times?

Canon, like censorship as was seen above, is a plurisignificant and multifunctional phenomenon. 'Canon' can become a focus for debate in any period in which artists, critics, philosophers and theologians try to match an inherited body of texts, practices or ideas to their perceived present and future cultural needs. Canons of medieval books and authors developed in different circles and at different levels. Thus, one should consider the circulation and function of actual historical canons in specific communities, institutions, and individual careers in order to arrive at a realistic appraisal of both the imaginative possibilities and the cultural limitations presented by past canons.⁸⁶ For the issue under scrutiny a glance at sixteenth-century bibliographies that certainly played a role in the rise of early modern canons may be of some help.

5. Bibliotheca universalis–Bibliotheca selecta

The abbot Johann Trithem (1462-1516) was the first to devote himself professionally to the compilation of bio-bibliographic repertoria, but it was Conrad Gessner who published the first modern universal bibliography.⁸⁷ His extensive *Bibliotheca universalis* (Zurich 1545) listed more than 3000 authors and over 15,000 works (including the 1555 *Appendix*), based on libraries in Rome (among which the Vatican Library), Florence, Bologna and Venice, on inventories of libraries in German countries, private collections (Erasmus and Peutingger), on *catalogi typographorum*, and on citations and lists in ancient works.⁸⁸ In 1548 he published a second part, entitled *Pandectae*, presenting a systematic classification of the works listed in the first part and inspired by the view of philosophy as the mother of all sciences. The third section, which was to contain the *loci communes* from the works given in the *Bibliotheca*, was replaced by a comprehensive alphabetical index at the close of the *Pandectae*.

⁸⁶ J. Gorak, *The Making of the Modern Canon. Genesis and Crisis of a Literary Idea* (London: Athlone, 1991), introduction.

⁸⁷ For earlier bibliographies on specific disciplinary fields, see L. Balsamo, *La bibliografia: storia di una tradizione*, (Firenze: Sansoni, 1984; English trans. Berkeley, 1990), 24-28.

⁸⁸ For discussion, see H. Fisher, "Comrad Gesner (1516-1565) as bibliographer and encyclopedist," *The Library*, fifth series, 21 (1966): 269-81.

Gessner's work had an extraordinary success, thus triggering the attention of Catholic censors.⁸⁹ It gave a detailed picture of the works published in Germany, and thus was seen as a dangerous instrument for the spread of Protestant views. ACDF documents testify that his *Bibliotheca* was frequently used for the composition of new indexes.⁹⁰ Moreover, several *censurae* were composed of this work.⁹¹ Gessner was condemned as a heretic in early Roman indexes (1559 and 1564). However, he is not even mentioned in many lists composed by Roman censors during the 1570s and 1580s, including Giovanni Dei's detailed catalogue of heretical and suspect books.⁹² Remarkably, the total prohibition was revoked in later sixteenth-century indexes (1593, 1596).⁹³

Gessner's work also triggered another kind of Catholic reaction, Antonio Possevino's *Bibliotheca selecta* (first edition 1593), composed as an encyclopedic dictionary and meant to contrast the *Pandectae*. Now, while Gessner catalogued all the works he was able to find and furnished ample information to assist the reader in making a reasoned choice in his personal quest for knowledge, Possevino, by contrast, relieved readers of this responsibility and protected them against possible dangers, taking pains to list only 'good' books which complied with the principles of Catholic morality.⁹⁴ The second part, entitled *Apparatus sacer* (published in 1603), was intended to countervail the first part of Gessner's *Bibliotheca*. Again, the authors were 'selected' by virtue of their accordance with Catholic doctrine. In effect, it was a complement to the Index of forbidden books, as it set out a list of indubitably orthodox authors and works that could be read on the Church's advice. Finally, Possevino gave practical instructions

⁸⁹ It was prohibited in indexes issued in Portugal, Paris, Louvain, and Venice. See *ILL*, 10: 199.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Alfonso Chacón's pronouncement for the new index in ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, B (II.a.2), f. 246r-v (autumn 1587). For the use of Gessner's *Bibliotheca* as a catalogue of works written by a garden variety of Protestant authors, ever since the preparation of the 1559 Index, see *ILL*, 8: 36, 119-20.

⁹¹ See, for example, ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, F (II.a.5), fols. 45v-47v; *Protocolli*, X (II.a.20) fols. 145r-156r, 162r-163r.

⁹² See ACDF, Index, XIV.1. The only significant exception is a rather permissive ex-purgatory *censura*, published in the proceedings of the Inquisition in Asti, in the appendix of a 1576 list of authors prohibited in the diocesis; see *Scriniolum*, 104.

⁹³ *ILL*, 10: 199.

⁹⁴ Possevino also published numerous offprints of parts of the book. In particular those relating to history and philosophy were printed as independent texts, so that they could be used as school texts by preachers, confessors, catechists, and teachers.

for “correcting, emending, expurgating books.”⁹⁵ Thus, Possevino’s work, which was meant to circulate internationally in place of Gessner’s bibliography, was not a merely bibliographical work, it was a vademecum that faithfully mirrored the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

* * *

In the process of ‘canonization’ of medieval works and authors the role of Index and Inquisition was quite marginal. At least till the early seventeenth century, other factors had a greater impact, among which surely the influence of Gessner’s and Possevino’s bibliographies has to be mentioned. In addition, it goes without saying that also the numerous contemporary scholastic manuals and commentaries played a crucial role in shaping a canon of authoritative medieval authors and views. These works influenced both Catholic and Protestant scholars and in general they substituted the texts they were based on, that is, Aristotle, his commentators, and the major schoolmen, including suspect (or heretical) authors, such as Peter John Olivi and William of Ockham.

As a matter of fact, medieval works did not present the principal threat to Roman Church. Therefore, most medieval canons arose independently of prohibition and expurgation, while the only significant exception is the canon related to Jewish literature. Let us now return to the three authors discussed in section 3.

The anonymous *censores* on Arnaldus’ works held in ACDF call attention to the pernicious implications of his astrology.⁹⁶ The *censores* presented to the Roman Congregation by Girolamo Pallantieri on behalf of the Paduan commission for the correction of philosophical and medical works stressed that all astrology without any clear link with medicine was illegitimate and therefore simply to be condemned.⁹⁷ Thus, the Paduan censors recommended the unconditional prohibition of four of Arnaldus’ astrological and divinatory treatises because they lacked any medical purpose, and merely aimed at predicting the future. Arnaldus was not removed from the Index’s first class which listed heretical authors. Yet, the Congregation labored to make at least some of his works available for

95 Here it is worth mentioning that, in the 1590s, Possevino presented a note on books that require correction to the Congregation for the Index. ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, O (II.a.13), fols. 509r-510v.

96 ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, H (II.a.7), fols. 428r, 429v, 430r-v.

97 ACDF, Index, *Protocolli*, N (II.a.12), fols. 75r-78r.

Catholic readers. Like many other authors on magic, secrets and the like, his fame rapidly declined after the rise of modern science.

Ramon Lull, definitively removed from the Index in 1593, is a particular case. He became object of a local cult in Catalonia and in the Kingdom of Majorca. Chairs for the propagation of the theories of Lull were set up at the University of Barcelona and the University of Valencia. Therefore, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Congregations of the Inquisition and the Index continued to examine his case.⁹⁸ Later, the Catholic Church beatified Lull, when Pius IX confirmed his cult in 1858. He is called Doctor Illuminatus, but he has not been canonized.

Scottus's case represents the most rigorous intervention. At the end of the eighteenth century, he was rediscovered by German idealism, like his 'fellow pantheists' Giordano Bruno and Spinoza, and this probably explains the fact that he remained on the Index until the latter was abolished in 1966.

⁹⁸ See, for example, ACDF, SO, *St. st.*, UV 46, fasc. 32 (after 1627), on the question whether Ramon Lull was a heresiarch and for his defence.