

## CURRENT THEOLOGY

### THE COUNCILS IN HISTORY: A SURVEY OF SELECTED LITERATURE

There has always been a steady trickle of articles and works dealing with the history and theology of the ecumenical councils. In recent years the trickle has swelled into a flood that shows no signs of reaching a crest. The most obvious reason for this rather sudden inundation has been the interest in conciliar theology generated by Vatican II. There are at least two other important reasons as well. One is found in the ecumenical movement: Christians who are concerned to emphasize their common heritage are led back to the Scriptures and the early councils, before schism became an accepted fact in the Church. Another reason for the swelling tide of conciliar literature is that in little more than a decade scholars have commemorated the centennial anniversaries of two councils among the most crucial in the history of Christendom, Chalcedon and Trent.

Chalcedon and Trent are convenient termini for this bibliographical survey. The fifteenth centenary of Chalcedon in 1951 is the *terminus a quo*; and Trent, which marked the fourth centenary of its closing in 1963, is the *terminus ad quem*. While mention is made of a few works on the councils which preceded Chalcedon, there is, by design, almost nothing on the Vatican Councils which have followed Trent.

Although this is a somewhat lengthy survey, it is not at all complete. The primary aim has been to name works which contain good references, so that they in turn can be consulted by scholars and students looking for exhaustive bibliographies. An effort has been made, moreover, to cite as much periodical literature as possible; for this literature can easily be overlooked in an age of specialization, when it is increasingly difficult to keep up with all the journals, *Festschriften*, and proceedings of professional societies.

#### COLLECTIONS AND GENERAL STUDIES

A much-needed critical edition of both the doctrinal and the disciplinary decrees of the ecumenical councils has been issued in one volume.<sup>1</sup> Except where the original decrees were in Greek, Armenian or Coptic, the text is entirely in Latin. The editors provide a very brief introduction to each council, notes on previous editions, and a select up-to-date bibliography.

<sup>1</sup> *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, edidit Centro di Documentazione curantibus J. Alberigo, P. Joannou, C. Leonardi, P. Prodi; consultante H. Jedin (Freiburg: Herder, 1962).

The decrees of some local councils of more than local significance have also appeared recently in new editions. J. Vives edited the decrees of thirty-seven councils from Elvira (A.D. 300/306) to the Seventeenth Council of Toledo (A.D. 694) in *Concilios Visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos*. The Latin text is accompanied by a Spanish translation, and it is thoroughly indexed.<sup>2</sup> Two volumes containing a critical edition of the councils held in Gaul between 314 and 695 were prepared for the *Corpus christianorum* by C. Munier and C. de Clercq.<sup>3</sup> Their usefulness has also been enhanced by extensive notes and fine indices.

The *Histoire des conciles oecuméniques* will, upon completion, be a twelve-volume series done by a team of international scholars under the direction of Gervais Dumeige of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. Though it is not intended as a critical work, the authors, all specialists, guarantee the quality of its contents. F. X. Murphy and Polycarp Sherwood of the U. S. are collaborating on the volume on Constantinople II and III. The five volumes which have appeared to date give the history of the first four councils, the councils from Vienne through Ferrara-Florence, and Vatican I.<sup>4</sup> French translations of the principal decrees and excerpts of other contemporaneous writings accompany the text.

The first volume of a four-volume reference work in Italian on the councils has been published, *Dizionario dei concili*.<sup>5</sup> Its special value is that it treats general councils, diocesan synods, episcopal conferences and councils held in the Eastern Churches; in short, it treats practically every assembly that dealt with ecclesiastical affairs. Mons. P. Palazzini, one of the editors, provides a lengthy introduction on the juridical character and historical importance of councils. The entries are listed alphabetically, those in the first volume running from Aachen to Czestochowa.

An uncounted number of general, one-volume histories have appeared, it seems, as background briefings for Vatican II. Two of the better ones in English are those by Philip Hughes and Francis Dvornik. Fr. Hughes' work

<sup>2</sup> *España cristiana* 1 (Madrid: Lib. Científica Medinaceli, 1963).

<sup>3</sup> *Corpus christianorum, Series latina* 148: *Concilia Galliae A. 314-A. 506*, cura et studio C. Munier; *Concilia Galliae A. 511-A. 695*, cura et studio C. de Clercq (Turnhout: Brepols, 1963). In this context it may be useful to note the reissuing of *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, edd. A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs (3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1869-78).

<sup>4</sup> I. Ortiz de Urbina, *Nicée et Constantinople* (Paris: Editions de l'Oriente, 1963); P-Th. Camelot, *Ephèse et Chalcédoine* (1962); J. Lecler, *Vienne* (1964); J. Gill, *Constance, Bâle-Ferrare-Florence* (1964); R. Aubert, *Vatican I* (1964).

<sup>5</sup> *Dizionario dei concili*, diretto da Pietro Palazzini e Giuseppe Morelli (Rome: Istituto Giov. XXIII nella Pont. Univ. Lateranense, 1963).

tends to be verbose and ultramontane in the extreme,<sup>6</sup> while Fr. Dvornik, as we would expect, is more sensitive to the Orthodox point of view.<sup>7</sup> A French work by J. R. Palanque and J. Chelini has helpful maps and a fine glossary of technical terms.<sup>8</sup> An Italian work by Salvato Capelli is distinctive because it surveys regional councils and local synods as well as the ecumenical councils.<sup>9</sup> The author shows how they touched on almost every aspect of social and intellectual life. The best of the popular studies, however, is the short history by Hubert Jedin. It is well known to English readers through a translation that is also available in paperback.<sup>10</sup>

#### THE COUNCILS IN THE EAST: CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITY

Vatican II seems to have brought to the surface a latent ecumenical interest in conciliar history and theology. *Die ökumenischen Konzile der Christenheit*, published under Evangelical auspices, contains studies by Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Catholic scholars.<sup>11</sup> The first part treats the historical development of the councils; the second, the theological aspect. One of the three historical essays is by G. Kretschmar, who surveys the councils of the first seven centuries. He finds the precedent for the ecumenical councils in the anti-Montanist synods of the second century.

In one of the *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, F. Dvornik argues that the procedure followed at the early Church councils was modeled on that of the Roman senate.<sup>12</sup> The analogy between the councils and the senate, he says, explains why the emperors claimed the exclusive privilege of convoking councils.

Kretschmar's approach in the essay cited above is similar to that of Hilaire Marot in his essay "Conciles anténicéens et conciles oecuméniques." Marot's study appeared in *Le concile et les conciles*,<sup>13</sup> which has an essay, among others, by Y. Congar on the primacy accorded to the first four ecu-

<sup>6</sup> *The Church in Crisis: A History of the General Councils 325-1870* (New York: Hanover House, 1961).

<sup>7</sup> *The Ecumenical Councils* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1961).

<sup>8</sup> *Petite histoire des grands conciles* (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1961).

<sup>9</sup> *Cronica e storia dei concili* (Milan: Mondadori, 1963).

<sup>10</sup> *Kleine Konziliengeschichte* (Freiburg: Herder, 1959). The English translation (New York: Herder and Herder, 1959) is marred by inaccurate translations; e.g., *Konstantius* is twice rendered "Constantine" (pp. 22, 23), and Theodoret of Cyrus wrote against Ephesus, not Nicaea (p. 43). The same errors reappear in the paperback edition (Deus Books), pp. 25, 40.

<sup>11</sup> H. J. Margull (ed.), *Die ökumenischen Konzile der Christenheit* (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1961).

<sup>12</sup> "Emperors, Popes, and General Councils," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, no. 6 (1951) 1-23.

<sup>13</sup> B. Botte (ed.), *Le concile et les conciles* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1960).

menical councils. Though Congar's method is historical, his purpose is ecumenical. Sooner or later, he notes in conclusion, the question of the ecumenical councils will be a subject of ecumenical dialogue. Catholics, therefore, must work out some precise notions. Neither the popes nor the theologians nor the synods themselves have put all councils on the same level, not even those conventionally accepted as ecumenical today. Furthermore, there is no official list of ecumenical councils.

In the minds of its progenitors, the Council of Sardica was to be ecumenical in the sense that it would bring together bishops of the West, most Nicaean in sympathy, and bishops from the East, mostly Eusebian. The importance of Sardica in the development of canon law, especially as governing the position of bishops, is the subject of a careful study by Hamilton Hess.<sup>14</sup> He defends A.D. 343 as the date of the council.

Although the West seems to have been represented at the First Council of Constantinople by a lone Spanish bishop, it has come to be regarded as one of the "big four" of ecumenical councils. Charles Moeller, in a passing comment, says that the circumstances whereby Constantinople I acquired ecumenical status should be investigated. He suggests that it came to be regarded as ecumenical because it was considered an adjunct to the Council of Nicaea.<sup>15</sup> N. Q. King proposes, however, that Constantinople-Aquileia formed a "twin council" along the pattern of Rimini-Seleucia, and that this explains its ecumenical status.<sup>16</sup>

The Council of Chalcedon was the subject of a great variety of articles, monographs, and full-length studies on the occasion of its fifteenth centennial anniversary (451-1951). Without a doubt, the most massive and most important is the three-volume work edited by A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht.<sup>17</sup> *Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart* is a collection of studies by many of Europe's leading patristic scholars, historians, and theologians. The first volume, *Der Glaube von Chalkedon*, contains fifteen essays treating the council in its historical and intellectual milieu. Monald Goemans in "Chalkedon als allgemeines Konzil," for example, studies the concept of

<sup>14</sup> *The Canons of the Council of Sardica A.D. 343* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958).

<sup>15</sup> "Le V<sup>e</sup> concile oecuménique et le magistère ordinaire au VI<sup>e</sup> s.," *Rev. des sciences phil. et théol.* 35 (1951) 416, n. 8.

<sup>16</sup> "The 150 Holy Fathers of the Council of Constantinople 381 A.D.," in *Texte und Untersuchungen* 63: *Studia patristica* (edd. K. Aland and F. L. Cross) 1 (1957) 635-41. For a brief account of Aquileia and the part it played in East-West relations, cf. T. H. Green, "Ambrose, Aquileia and Antioch," *Eastern Churches Quarterly* 15 (1963) 65-80.

<sup>17</sup> *Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart* 1: *Der Glaube von Chalkedon* (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1952); 2: *Entscheidung um Chalkedon* (1953); 3: *Chalkedon heute* (1954).

ecumenicity in the letters which passed between Pope Leo and the East, in the acta of the council itself, and in the discussions which followed in the council's wake. The other two volumes deal primarily with the theological and ecclesiastical issues which Chalcedon bequeathed to history. Though Volume 3 has an English essay by Bernard Leeming ("Reflections on English Christology"), most of the studies are in French and German. Volume 3 also contains an invaluable, subject-indexed, sixty-page bibliography by A. Schönmetzer.

R. V. Sellers' work on Chalcedon<sup>18</sup> was already in the hands of the printer when *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* appeared. It is a measure of Sellers' breadth of learning that he was able to turn out a study which stands up well beside the collective scholarship of that work. In a single volume he has managed to chronicle in detail the events leading up to Chalcedon, to describe the three Christological traditions represented there, and finally to explain the development of Chalcedonian Christology at the council and afterwards.<sup>18</sup> Grillmeier, in a review of Sellers' work, said: "It must be accounted as among the most important of recent publications on the historical theology of the fourth general council."<sup>19</sup>

The fifth encumenical council, according to Charles Moeller, should not be considered in the same class with the councils of 431 and 451. Because his chief interest in Constantinople II is its doctrinal import, Moeller discusses its ecumenicity relative to that of the other councils of antiquity. He feels that the term is not used univocally when speaking of the councils of the fifth and sixth centuries.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, while P. O'Connell is primarily concerned with a source problem, he offers this interesting aside: "The general principle that Justinian. . . showed his views on the equality of the five patriarchs, or at least the essential fact of their presence to constitute a competent ecumenical council or a competent conference in a dogmatic matter, seems established."<sup>21</sup>

The disputes over the Three Chapters, monothelism, and iconoclasm,

<sup>18</sup> *The Council of Chalcedon* (London: SPCK, 1953).

<sup>19</sup> *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 6 (1955) 93. A notable shortcoming in both Sellers' work and the volumes edited by Grillmeier and Bacht, according to E. L. Fortin, is the slight attention they give to Neoplatonism. He says that, despite the presence of elements in the *Definitio fidei* "that unmistakably hark back to Stoic or Aristotelian sources, it is doubtful whether in the final analysis either one of these two schools provided the tools used by the fathers to express the mystery of the union of the two natures" ("The *Definitio fidei* of Chalcedon and Its Philosophical Sources," in *Texte und Untersuchungen* 80: *Studia patristica* [ed. F. L. Cross] 5 [1962] 490).

<sup>20</sup> *Art. cit.* (supra n. 15) p. 416.

<sup>21</sup> "Equal Representation from Each Patriarchate at Constantinople II?" *Orientalia christiana periodica* 29 (1963) 238-39.

in so far as they were doctrinal, were Christological questions. Constantinople II and III and Nicaea II, the three councils which took up these problems, moreover, had an importance all their own, independent of the Christological disputes. They are the last councils accepted by the Orthodox as ecumenical. Hamilcar Alivisatos of the University of Athens uses them to illustrate, from the Orthodox point of view, the contribution of caeseropapism to conciliar theology, and the role of the pope vis-à-vis council and emperor.<sup>22</sup> The Constantinopolitan council of 869–70, counted as one of the ecumenical councils by Catholics, is not so regarded by the Orthodox. Nor is the council convoked by Photius in 879 considered ecumenical because, says Alivisatos, it was not recognized as ecumenical in the West. A council which is not recognized unanimously, he adds, does not have the necessary quality of catholicity.

#### THE COUNCILS IN THE WEST: MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The general councils of the High Middle Ages, the four held at the Lateran, the two in Lyons, and the Council of Vienne, have been largely ignored by theologians and Church historians in recent years. It has been students of canon law for the most part who have shown interest in them.<sup>23</sup> The article of Mons. Maccarone on the Fourth Lateran Council indicates some of the neglected areas that might be profitably explored by theologians.<sup>24</sup> Lateran IV, he points out, was unique in many ways: the preconconciliar preparations surpassed those of Lyons II and Vatican I, and the letters announcing the council were sent to all the bishops of the East as well as the West.

In examining the ecclesiology of these councils, Gerard Fransen raises the question about their ecumenical standing.<sup>25</sup> Fransen does not solve the problem, but he does point out that other councils held in that period were also styled "general councils." This distinction seems to have been reserved for councils under papal auspices of more than regional jurisdiction.

<sup>22</sup> *Le concile et les conciles*, pp. 111–23.

<sup>23</sup> E.g., A. García García, "El concilio IV de Letrán (1215) y sus comentarios," *Traditio* 14 (1958) 484–502; C. Duggan, "English Canonists and the 'Appendix Concilii Lateranensis,' with an Analysis of St. John's College, Cambridge, Ms. 148," *ibid.* 18 (1962) 459–68. Essays dealing with historical aspects of these councils have been by way of exception: R. W. Emery, "The Second Council of Lyons and the Mendicant Orders," *Catholic Historical Review* 39 (1953) 257–71; D. J. Geanakoplos, "Michael VIII Palaeologus and the Union of Lyons," *Harvard Theological Review* 46 (1953) 79–89; P. J. Dunning, "Irish Representatives and Irish Ecclesiastical Affairs at the Fourth Lateran Council," in *Medieval Studies Presented to Aubrey Gwynn, S.J.*, edd. J. A. Watt, J. B. Morrall, and F. X. Martin (Dublin: Colm O Lochlainn, 1961) pp. 90–113.

<sup>24</sup> "II IV Concilio Lateranense," *Divinitas* 5 (1961) 270–98.

<sup>25</sup> *Le concile et les conciles*, pp. 125–41.

Unlike the councils of the High Middle Ages, the councils of Constance, Basel, and Ferrara–Florence have attracted the attention of a great variety of specialists. Brian Tierney's *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory* (Cambridge, 1955) is a study of a movement rather than a history of any specific council or councils; but its appearance was an important stimulant to the renewal of interest in the councils of the fifteenth century. In showing that the major premises of the conciliar theory are found in the writings of medieval canonists whose orthodoxy has never been impugned, Tierney has prodded theologians and historians to take a new look at the conciliarism of Constance and Basel.<sup>26</sup>

The decree *Haec sancta* promulgated at the fifth session of Constance has become the focal point of many studies. The issue is whether it ever received the necessary approbation from pope or Church-at-large to give it the full weight of an authoritative, conciliar statement. Though it is basically a historical problem, it has far-reaching implications in the fields of ecclesiology and ecumenical theology. The title of H. Jedin's recent study of the ecclesiology of Constance and Basel succinctly pinpoints the issue: *Bischöfliches Konzil oder Kirchenparlament* (Basel–Stuttgart, 1963). When a consensus is reached on the *Haec sancta*, theologians will have taken a long stride towards defining the nature of an ecumenical council.

Paul De Vooght set off the current debate with his essay "Le conciliarisme aux conciles de Constance et de Bâle."<sup>27</sup> After investigating the circumstances surrounding the promulgation of the decrees of Constance and their subsequent acceptance by the pope and theologians, he concludes that the *Haec sancta* has the authority of a conciliar declaration. K. A. Fink, who did the important article on Constance for the *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*,<sup>28</sup> seems to lend strong historical support to De Vooght.

Several of the papers read at the conference held in Freiburg im Breisgau to commemorate the 550th anniversary of the opening of Constance

<sup>26</sup> Cf. H. Küng, *Structures of the Church* (New York: Nelson, 1964) pp. 268–319.

<sup>27</sup> *Le concile et les conciles*, pp. 143–181. Cf. "Le conciliarisme aux conciles de Constance et de Bâle: Compléments et précisions," *Irenikon* 36 (1963) 61–75; "Le concile oecuménique de Constance et le conciliarisme," *Istina* 9 (1963) 57–86.

<sup>28</sup> "Konstanz, Konzil," *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 6 (2nd ed.; Freiburg, 1961) 501–3. Cf. K. A. Fink, "Zu den Quellen für die Geschichte des Konstanzer Konzils," in *Das Konzil von Konstanz* (infra n. 29) pp. 471–76. Three of the principal sources for the history of Constance have been translated into English by Louise R. Loomis: the *Diary of Card. G. Fillastre*, the *Chronicle of U. Richental*, and the *Journal of G. Cerretano*. See *The Council of Constance: The Unification of the Church*, edd. and ann. by J. H. Mundy and K. M. Woody (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1961). Mundy contributed an introductory essay on conciliarism; and Woody, an account of the organization and procedure of the council.

(1414–1964) touch on the issue raised by De Vooght. Remigius Bäumer analyzes the attitude of Martin V and Eugenius IV to the conciliarism of Constance. If H. Hürten judges the position of Nicholas of Cusa on the matter to have been somewhat vacillating,<sup>29</sup> Joseph Gill has no doubts about Eugenius IV. Writing in the *Heythrop Journal*, Gill, like Bäumer, finds little evidence in the utterances of Pope Eugenius or the actions of the conciliar fathers at Basel to support De Vooght's thesis.<sup>30</sup>

While many of the recent writings on Basel are concerned with the political and social rather than the religious aspects of the council,<sup>31</sup> more detailed studies on the participants and proceedings may provide new information germane to the conciliar issue. U. Fromherz, for example, has written a monograph on John of Segovia, an ardent conciliarist and historian of the council.<sup>32</sup> There is a new edition of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini's *De gestis Basiliensis concilii* being prepared by D. Hay and W. K. Smith and promised for the near future.

The volume treating Constance, Basel, and Ferrara–Florence which Joseph Gill contributed to the work edited by Dumeige has already been cited. Gill's name has become as closely linked with the Council of Florence as was that of the late Georg Hofmann, who initiated the series *Concilium Florentinum: Documenta et scriptores*. It was for this series that Gill edited the so-called acts of the council (Rome, 1953). He is known to a wider circle of readers through the book that is already accepted as the standard account of the council.<sup>33</sup> By way of introduction, Gill gives a brief survey of the source material available, summarizing some of the critical observations he made in greater detail in articles previously published. These latter are listed in the exhaustive bibliography. Gill has just brought out another collection of essays on the Florentine council; all but three appeared originally in *Unitas*

<sup>29</sup> A. Franzen and W. Müller (edd.), *Das Konzil von Konstanz* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964): R. Bäumer, "Die Stellungnahme Eugens IV. zum Konstanzer Superioritätsdekret in der Bulle *Etsi non dubitemus*," pp. 337–56; *id.*, "Das Verbot der Konzilappellation Martins V. in Konstanz," pp. 187–213; H. Hürten, "Die Konstanzer Dekrete *Haec sancta* und *Frequens* in ihrer Bedeutung für Ekklesiologie und Kirchenpolitik des Nikolaus von Kues," pp. 381–96.

<sup>30</sup> "The Fifth Session of the Council of Constance," *Heythrop Journal* 5 (1964) 131–43.

<sup>31</sup> J. H. Burns, *Scottish Churchmen and the Council of Basel* (Glasgow: Burns, 1962); P. Ourliac, "Sociologie du concile de Bâle," *Rev. d'hist. ecclés.* 56 (1961) 5–32; U. Redlich, "Die Basler Konzilsuniversität," in *Festgabe Joseph Lortz*, edd. E. Iserloh and P. Manns (Baden-Baden: Bruno Grimm, 1958) 2, 355–62.

<sup>32</sup> *Johannes von Segovia als Geschichtsschreiber des Konzils von Basel* (Basel: Helbing u. Lichtenhahn, 1960).

<sup>33</sup> *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge: University Press, 1959).

and other journals.<sup>34</sup> Like all of Gill's writings, these new essays are readable and scholarly.

Florence sounded the death knell for the conciliar movement. Both Gill and M. A. Schmidt have analyzed the circumstances leading up to the declaration on papal supremacy.<sup>35</sup> Schmidt seems to see greater significance than Gill in the fact that mention of the pope's authority to convene councils was deleted from the final draft. They both agree, moreover, that the Greek position was somewhere between that of John of Torquemada and the conciliarists at the Council of Basel, whose continuance gave an edge to the debates at Florence they might otherwise have lacked. While the Greeks were interested in defending the prerogatives of the Eastern patriarchs and the emperor, P. De Vooght sees evidence in Caesarini's opposition to Torquemada that he for one did not regard all conciliarism as antithetic to papal supremacy.<sup>36</sup>

The overriding issue at Florence was union, a problem that makes it relevant to the ecumenical dialogue of today.<sup>37</sup> In the preconconciliar discussions, papal primacy was considered less divisive than the differences over the Eucharist,<sup>38</sup> and hardly to be compared with the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit in importance. Yet, in the Decree of Union great emphasis was put on the crucial problem of papal supremacy; this is its most significant aspect, according to D. J. Geanakoplos.<sup>39</sup>

Florence is described by a recent author as the only council of the Middle

<sup>34</sup> *Personalities of the Council of Florence and Other Essays* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1964).

<sup>35</sup> J. Gill, "The Definition of the Primacy of the Pope in the Council of Florence," *Heythrop Journal* 2 (1961) 14-29; M. A. Schmidt, "The Problem of Papal Primacy at the Council of Florence," *Church History* 30 (1961) 35-49.

<sup>36</sup> "Le Cardinal Cesarini et le concile de Constance," in *Das Konzil von Konstanz*, pp. 357-80.

<sup>37</sup> In *The Council of Florence*, Gill treats the efforts to unite Greeks and Latins in great detail. Walter J. Burghardt treats the doctrinal questions briefly but expertly in "The Return of Orthodox Christians: The Council of Florence," in *The General Council*, ed. William J. McDonald (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America, 1962) pp. 69-87. D. J. Geanakoplos deals with the union from an Orthodox point of view (cf. *infra* n. 39). O. Halecki has produced an exhaustive study showing how Florence laid the foundation for the eventual, and more enduring, union of the Ruthenians with the Latins: *From Florence to Brest (1439-1596)* (Rome: Sacrum Poloniae Millennium; New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 1959).

<sup>38</sup> E. Boularand, "L'Épîclèse au concile de Florence," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 60 (1959) 241-73.

<sup>39</sup> "The Council of Florence (1438-1439) and the Problem of Union between the Greek and Latin Churches," *Church History* 24 (1955) 334.

Ages and the modern epoch which was properly ecumenical.<sup>40</sup> The Russian Orthodox, who opposed it from its inception, referred to it as the eighth ecumenical council.<sup>41</sup> And F. Dvornik has published a fifteenth-century manuscript, which he judges to be the work of a Greek "Uniat," listing Florence as the tenth ecumenical council.<sup>42</sup>

#### THE COUNCILS IN THE AGE OF REFORM

While the immediate objective of the councils in the fifteenth century was to restore unity to the Church by healing schism, the chief purpose of the sixteenth-century councils was to promote reform *in capite et in membris*. The noted Lutheran scholar Peter Meinhold, who has written extensively on conciliar history and theology, contributed an essay to *Die ökumenischen Konzile der Christenheit* on the councils and reform. He focuses on the failure of Lateran IV, and shows how Luther's appeal for and to a council was belatedly answered by Trent.<sup>43</sup>

The ecumenical interest in Trent can be felt in both the volume and tone of studies which have appeared in recent years. The occasion for many of the studies has been the protracted centennial commemorations corresponding to the three stages of the council. Much of the recent literature concerning the first stage of Trent (1545-47), however, falls outside the self-imposed limits of this survey. The contributions to Tridentine history, moreover, which appeared in connection with the fourth centenary of the opening of Trent, have already been evaluated by Hubert Jedin.

Jedin's bibliographical article appears among the thirty-eight scholarly essays in *Das Weltkonzil von Trient* (Freiburg, 1951), edited by G. Schreiber. As a whole, the writers in the first volume treat of the doctrinal, canonical, and cultural aspects of the council, and its influence in these areas. Martin Grabmann did a study that was published posthumously on the Council of Trent as a principle of development in Catholic dogma. One of Eduard Stakemeier's two contributions is *Trienter Lehrentscheidungen und reformatorische Anliegen*, in which he sustains a thesis, now widely accepted, that Trent's decrees on grace and justification are not entirely incompatible with

<sup>40</sup> E. Delaruelle, E-R. Labande, and P. Ourliac, *L'Eglise au temps du Grand Schisme et de la crise conciliaire (1378-1449)* (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1962) p. ix.

<sup>41</sup> M. Cherniavsky, "The Reception of the Council of Florence in Moscow," *Church History* 24 (1955) 347-59.

<sup>42</sup> "Greek Uniates and the Number of Oecumenical Councils," *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant* 2 (Città del Vaticano, 1964) 93-101.

<sup>43</sup> Meinhold has written an objective one-volume study of the councils along the lines of Jedin's, but from an Evangelical point of view: *Konzile der Kirche in evangelischer Sicht* (Stuttgart: Kreuz-Verlag, 1962).

the Lutheran position. Josef Jungmann writes on Trent's role in the restoration of the liturgy; and K. G. Fellerer, on Church music. The last essay in Volume 1 is by the late E. C. Messenger, on Trent and English Catholicism (in German). The studies in the second volume fall generally into one of two categories: either they (1) treat the council as it related to the main German bishoprics, cities, and territories; or (2) they deal with the council in its relationship with various religious orders, the contribution made by members of the orders to the council, and how in turn the orders were influenced by the council.<sup>44</sup>

Though several articles and books by Hubert Jedin have already been cited, they form but a small fraction of his scholarly output. The bulk of his writing is concerned with the Council of Trent, and it is for this that he is best known. His *History of the Council of Trent* is conceived on a monumental scale; when complete, it will contain eight books spread through four volumes. To date, two complete volumes have appeared in German and in English translation.<sup>45</sup> The two books of Volume 1 narrate the prehistory, the struggles leading up to Trent. They give an ample account of the conciliar and reform movements in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Book 3, the whole of Volume 2, describes the sessions at Trent (1545-47) up to the transferal of the council to Bologna. In each volume Jedin presents an exhaustive discussion of the sources and earlier literature; the success of his work is in large part due to the publications issued over the past seventy years by the Görres Society in its *Concilium Tridentinum* series. Jedin's work is conceived on such a scale and executed with such thorough scholarship as to supersede all but the best of the specialized studies.

Jedin delivered the first paper of the congress held at Trent in September, 1963, to commemorate the anniversary of the council's adjournment. He analyzed the issues and the background of the debate over episcopal residence in the last sessions (1562-63).<sup>46</sup> Episcopal residence was a crucial

<sup>44</sup> Cf. A. Walz, *I Domenicani al Concilio di Trento* (Rome: Herder, 1961).

<sup>45</sup> *A History of the Council of Trent* 1 and 2, tr. E. Graf (St. Louis: Herder, 1957, 1961). Among Jedin's more recent studies are three appraisals of Trent and the issues it has bequeathed to us: "Historische Randbemerkungen zum Thema Tridentinum und Wiedervereinigung," in *Begegnung der Christen: Festschrift Otto Karrer*, edd. M. Roesle and O. Cullmann (Stuttgart-Frankfurt, 1959) pp. 450-61 [an English adaptation appeared in *Heythrop Journal* 3 (1962) 3-14]; "Ist das Konzil von Trient ein Hindernis der Wiedervereinigung?" *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses* 38 (1962) 841-55 [in English in *Eastern Churches Quarterly* 15 (1963) 209-24]; *Krisis und Abschluss des Trienter Konzils, 1562-1563* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964).

<sup>46</sup> I am indebted to Mother Mary Peter Carthy, O.S.U., for allowing me to use the mimeographed résumés which were handed out to those attending the congress; these résumés, together with the abstracts which appeared in *Estudios eclesíasticos* 39 (1964) 133-41, are

problem, because on it depended the outcome of Catholic reform. Several other papers of the conference also touched on aspects of the question: Riccardo G. Villoslada sketched the Spanish position as it was represented at the council by Pedro Guerrero, Archbishop of Granada;<sup>47</sup> Antonio Dusini analysed the concept of the episcopacy as it appeared in the decree promulgated in the twenty-third session; and G. Alberigo discussed episcopal powers as they were defined in the Tridentine debates and in the literature of the time.

The over-all theme of the congress, which brought scholars together from all over the world, was "The Council of Trent and Tridentine Reform." Although some of the papers were peripheral to this central theme, James A. O'Donohoe, the only American on the program, touched on a pivotal issue in his paper on the Tridentine decree on seminaries.<sup>48</sup> Thomas M. Parker of Oxford offered a comparative study on Tridentine and Anglican reform. M. François presented a historical essay on France's acceptance of the reform decrees. Peter Meinhold focused his attention on the second stage of the council in discussing its relations with the Protestant world.<sup>49</sup> Other papers discussed topics more specifically theological (e.g., E. Iserloh's, on the Sacrifice of the Mass), cultural (e.g., L. Hauteceur's, on Trent's influence on art), or limited in appeal because highly specialized (e.g., R. Creyten's study of the enforcement of the cloister in monasteries of women).

In the perceptive analysis of Trent which he contributed to *Le concile et les conciles*,<sup>49a</sup> Alphonse Dupont points out that the council described itself as "sacrosancta oecumenica et generalis Tridentina synodus." But, he adds, "Concile oecuménique, de convocation, de volonté continue, de proclamation, non de fait." Dupont asks rhetorically whether there is a criterion for *de facto* ecumenicity. The papal legates at Trent were also preoccupied with this question, as Igino Rogger has shown.<sup>50</sup> Canonists generally held that

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the sources of my information. The papers were to have been published last year, but I have not been able to obtain a copy: *Convegno storico internazionale per la celebrazione del IV centenario della chiusura del Concilio di Trento (Trento 2-6 settembre 1963)* (Trent, 1964).

<sup>47</sup> Villoslada continues the theme in "La riforma española en Trento," *Estudios eclesiásticos* 39 (1964) 69-92, 147-73, 319-40. In the same volume, which is almost entirely devoted to Tridentine studies, cf. B. Llorca, "Aceptación en España de los decretos del Concilio de Trento," pp. 341-60, 459-82.

<sup>48</sup> O'Donohoe has dealt with this subject previously in *Tridentine Seminary Legislation: Its Sources and Its Formation* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1957).

<sup>49</sup> R. E. McNally discusses the question in a broader chronological framework in "The Council of Trent and the German Protestants," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 25 (1964) 1-22.

<sup>49a</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 207-15.

<sup>50</sup> *Le nazioni al Concilio di Trento durante la sua epoca imperiale 1545-1552* (Rome: Orbis Catholicus, 1952) esp. pp. 191-205.

*de jure* universality was safeguarded (1) when the convocation of a council was announced in the whole Catholic world, and (2) in that it carried on its proceedings in communion with the pope. Episcopal representation was not important; a very small number of bishops, even all of the same nation, sufficed. When the crisis came with the transferal of the Tridentine council to Bologna, the *de jure* argument was not persuasive. For a council to be universal *de facto*, a minimum number of nations had to be represented, i.e., at least Italy, Germany, France, and Spain.

Though Italians formed an overwhelming majority of the conciliar fathers, they neither thought nor voted as a block. G. Alberigo has made a "sociological" analysis of the Italian bishops at Trent in 1545-47.<sup>51</sup> His findings present an excellent sampling of the men who made up the early-sixteenth-century hierarchy in Italy. Alberigo describes in detail their social, educational, and theological background, as well as their voting record on key doctrinal issues.

In the last session of Trent the question of conciliar jurisdiction vis-à-vis papal authority came up again. The dispute, which centered on the question whether or not the decrees passed at the council needed papal confirmation, is discussed in an essay by J. Olaechea.<sup>52</sup> Olaechea cites the fact that the decrees of ancient councils did not receive explicit papal approbation in order to have force of law. He uses an argument *ex silentio* to show that it was not thought necessary for the Tridentine decrees either. According to Olaechea, Pius IV in confirming the decrees in fact never said anything about the need for him to do so.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Bibliographical surveys of this kind generally do not lend themselves to any conclusions. In this case, however, some conclusions are inescapable: present-day authors are neither sure of (1) the number nor (2) the nature of ecumenical councils.

The list of twenty councils, exclusive of Vatican II, which Catholics have come to regard as ecumenical, seems to be traceable to Caesar Baronius at the end of the sixteenth century. The editors of the *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, cited above, have serious reservations about the ecumenicity

<sup>51</sup> *I vescovi Italiani al Concilio di Trento (1545-1547)* (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1959).

<sup>52</sup> "La infalibilidad conciliar," *Scriptorium Victoriense* 9 (1962) 276-311. S. Kuttner also notes the rather singular way in which Pius approved the decrees: "The Reform of the Church and the Council of Trent," *Jurist* 22 (1962) 124-26. At the congress held in Trent (cf. supra n. 46) Mons. M. Roca's paper was titled "Diego Laynez en la última etapa del Concilio de Trento." In it he discussed Laynez' stand on conciliar power in relation to the curia and pope.

of some of the councils included in the list, specifically about Constantinople IV and three of the Lateran Councils (I, II, and V).<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, they have not included in their critical edition the Eleventh Council of Toledo or the Council "in Trullo," which are much more important. As editors and historians, they feel it is not their function to pass judgment on the ecumenicity of these councils, for this is essentially a theological issue.

C. Vagaggini, however, has shown that there is no consensus among the post-Tridentine theologians as to the essential nature of an ecumenical council.<sup>54</sup> Canon 222 of the present Code lays down clear and explicit requirements for *de jure* ecumenicity, but they do not solve the historical or theological issues. While the canonical requirements are normative for present and future councils, they cannot serve, as Congar notes in the conclusion to *Le concile et les conciles*, as criteria for judging the ecumenical status of ancient and medieval councils. After summarizing and showing the inadequacy of the various rules of thumb used in gauging the ecumenical standing of councils, Congar says that he hopes someone will re-examine the thesis of R. Sohm, who suggested that every council is capable of attracting the Holy Spirit and of being representative of the Church.<sup>55</sup>

This brings us to a final observation, a third conclusion. It is obvious that any answer to the question of conciliar ecumenicity must take into account the positions of canonists, historians, and theologians alike. While it is perhaps less obvious, it is equally important in this era of ecumenicism that the positions of Orthodox and Protestants be taken into consideration. If the history of the councils teaches anything, it is that *de jure* ecumenicity has never been, of itself, a guarantee of universal acceptance.

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<sup>53</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. xvi-xvii.

<sup>54</sup> "Osservazioni intorno al concetto di concilio ecumenico," *Divinitas* 5 (1961) 411-30.

<sup>55</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 314-19; R. Sohm, *Kirchenrecht* 1 (Leipzig, 1892).