

of Byzantium and Maximus the Confessor. This fascinating attempt to shake up conventional narratives of these centuries through a focused reading and a new selection of authorities will give new life to many areas of contemporary scholarship beyond B.'s main theme. For instance, the concept of deification recurs throughout the book, from Athanasius's supposed "dehumanization" to Gregory of Nazianzus's gradual participation in the divine nature. How, one may ask, does the understanding of the unity of Christ affect the understanding of *theosis* during these centuries?

B. has written an important work that scholars and graduate students will be discussing for years to come. I highly recommend it.

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TRENT: WHAT HAPPENED AT THE COUNCIL. By John W. O'Malley. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2013. Pp. 335. \$27.95.

Readers of O'Malley's *What Happened at Vatican II* will find in his latest volume a work that is equally masterful. Until now there has been no accessible and critical history in English of the Council of Trent apart from the monumental four-volume history by Hubert Jedin, only two of which have been translated into English. O'M. acknowledges his debt to Jedin, but draws also on recent research that goes beyond the limitations of Jedin's work. While these secondary sources are cited throughout, it is above all O'M.'s close reading of the primary sources that makes his book a work of outstanding scholarship in its own right. Despite the complexity of the issues he is summarizing—"I gambol blithely through minefields" (11)—O'M. presents a compelling account of a council that came to shape Catholicism uniformly for 400 years, albeit through misunderstandings and myths that O'M. is intent on exposing.

The conciliar meetings took place over 18 years from 1545 to 1563 in three distinct periods, during the pontificates of three different popes. Participation by bishops was a shifting affair—out of a possible 700 bishops worldwide, attendance numbers ranged from 15 to 200. The council's decrees were promulgated in pairs, one on a doctrinal issue, another a reform decree on some disciplinary issue. The popes never attended, but controlled things from Rome via their legates, who alone could present agenda items. The Protestant Reformation of course set the immediate context, but O'M. places his narrative within a longer context, devoting the first two (of six) chapters to a discussion of the previous century, examining its set of "reform councils," with their desire for "reform of the head," the papacy, and raising the specter of conciliarism and ongoing papal suspicion of councils. Yet, mainly for political reasons, Paul III finally succeeds in getting the council started. Throughout his narrative of the

three periods, O'M. deftly lays before the reader a complex web of forces and protagonists—"The story of the Council of Trent is perforce as much a political as a theological and ecclesiastical story" (7). And the political intrigue is unending. A three-way tug of war ensues between monarchs, pope, and bishops, all with their own regional allegiances in German, French, Spanish, and Italian lands—most of whom want above all reform of the papacy and the Roman Curia. While O'M. does not spare the reader the exacting details, a coherent narrative is told, with the reader never losing sight of the overall picture. O'M.'s command of the material is magisterial, but at one point he concedes that the details of a particular event "are far too complicated and shifting to allow for even a summary retelling" (135).

The significant players in the drama are brought to the fore—for example, Pope Paul III and his persistence in calling the council in the first place (albeit for a complex mix of desire for ecclesial reform and political power); the papal legate Cardinal Giovanni Morone whose pragmatic leadership in the third period brought the council to completion against all odds; the French Cardinal Charles de Guise with his continuous calls for reform. The resistance of some popes to personal reform and to reform of the curia is a dark thread that perdures throughout the story. Many of the calls for reform had financial implications.

In O'M.'s telling, there are issues under the issues. With the common practice at the time of many bishops receiving benefices from several dioceses, the matter of a bishop's residence in these dioceses was "the lightning rod issue of the council and the defining element in its pastoral reform" (100). For the council, this was a serious pastoral issue since, as it would teach, preaching the gospel was a bishop's primary task. The council went a long way toward redressing this ecclesial anomaly. Then there was the deeper issue of the pope's relation to the council itself—"the forbidden topic" (220)—and the related issue of his relationship to the bishops as a whole. On this the council was less successful in resisting the quasi-monarchical authority of the popes. Likewise, on the related issue of reforming the Roman curia, the popes were successful in frustrating the council by always taking upon themselves any reform of their own curia.

O'M. succeeds in his primary aim: to highlight the misunderstanding and myths about what happened at the Council of Trent, and to make clear the distinction between "Trent" and the "Tridentinism" that came to shape Catholicism for 400 years, aspects of which had no grounding in the council itself. This is an important book; it will bring background lighting to many of the very same debates that continue to rage over the interpretation of Vatican II.