nubile, yet dowry-less daughter. Testimony presented before a magistrate will never have as many details and background information as a novella or play; yet we cannot deny that life is more complex, and more important, than literature. Kenneth Burke wrote decades ago that, "whereas it has become customary to speak of Shakespeare’s figures as of living people, the stupidest and crudest person who ever lived is richer in motivation than all of Shakespeare’s characters put together — and it would be either a stupidity or a sacrilege to say otherwise" ("Othello. An Essay to Illustrate a Method.” The Hudson Review 4.2: 187-88). Ottavia was not Juliet; her moment of sexual contact with Bernardino was rather pathetic: he had skin parasites and kept scratching himself. Ottavia’s life is not poetic; the brief words she gives us concerning it reveal conflict with her mother, past sexual abuse and an uncertain, probably impoverished future. Her life, along with that of the vast majority of past peoples, will remain unknown and unknowable; yet we do Ottavia and the rest a grave disservice if we reduce their “lives” to a brief appearance in court and their significance to a literary topos.

This brings me to another problem with the book, the commentaries: many of them are merely summaries of the trials, while several contain too much interpretation. Without the full-scale academic apparatus of detailed footnotes, citations in the original, and scholarly analysis, these comments seem facile, and, for students, they may make the past seem all too familiar. For example, in the commentary of Ottavia’s case discussed above, there is no indication of the juridical definition of rape nor an adequate explanation of the marriage system.

These criticisms do not, however, diminish my enthusiasm for the many fine qualities of this book. It will be an asset to any course on sixteenth-century Italy. Its problematic aspects should make it an essential text in courses on methodology, where students and professors can discuss the merits of different interpretations of each case, aided by the excellent scholarship that exists on early modern Italy (including articles by Thomas V. Cohen and Elizabeth S. Cohen). We can only hope that books of trials — whether simply transcribed or both transcribed and translated — will proliferate in a much-needed effort to preserve and disseminate these valuable materials. Such cases show us life “with its glorious disdain for realism,” as Pirandello would remind us (The Late Mattia Pascal 251).

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Volume 8 takes chronological precedence over volume 6, and indeed was published several years earlier, so it will be convenient to discuss them in that order. I have already reviewed volume 8, as well as previous volumes of the series, in Rivista storica italiana
(RSI) and Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa (RSLR), so in this review, I will concentrate on aspects of the Roman and Spanish indices of special interest to Italianists. May I however issue a plea to university librarians in Canada and everywhere else to purchase all the volumes of Index des livres interdits, of which seven are now in print? This distinguished Canadian series deserves wider recognition for the fundamental contribution it makes to the study of early modern European history and literature.

Many readers of this journal will already be familiar with the series: each volume consists essentially of a sequence of numbered entries giving the text of the original condemnations from each list of prohibited books, and providing the relevant bibliographical and authorial identifications. This central portion of each volume is backed up with photo-reproductions of the original lists as published in the sixteenth century, and all sorts of other scholarly apparatus.

In volume 8 we have the notorious 1559 index of Paul IV Caraffa, which proved unenforceable. De Bujanda settles a number of knotty philological and historical problems about this index with magisterial scholarship. The succeeding Tridentine Index of 1564 formed the nucleus of the index of forbidden books in Italy from that time forward. Italianists specializing in the sixteenth century ought certainly to acquaint themselves with it, not because the censors targeted Italian authors especially, but in order to help them evaluate the cultural impact of ecclesiastical censorship. Among the Italian authors included were Boccaccio (no. 91), whose Decamerone was banned until it could be expurgated, and of course it was; Dante’s Monarchia (205), which was first banned in 1554, when it was known only in MS; Lorenzo Valla (644-46) for De donatione Constantini, De libero arbitrio, and De vulturitate; Machiavelli (773), who was listed as a ‘first class author,’ meaning that everything he wrote was damned; Pietro Aretino (843); and Poggio Bracciolini (848) for his Facetiae.

Volume 6 is closely linked to volume 8, for the Spanish censors took over much of the contents of the Roman index, and also to vol. 5 (published in 1984), which is a study of the Spanish indices culminating in the Valdés index of 1559. However we still need vol. 4, a study of the indices of Portugal which is shortly to appear, in order to have the full background to vol. 6. The twin Spanish indices which it contains (1583 is prohibitive and 1584 expurgative) are independent of Rome despite their appropriation of much of the content of the Roman index; they reflect the constitutional independence of the Spanish Inquisition in the Iberian peninsula.

This is the second time that the editors of the series have faced the problem of publishing and studying an expurgative index. The first was in vol. 7 (1988), which includes the expurgative index published in Antwerp in 1571. That index was the result of dedicated effort on the part of Spanish and Netherlands compilers, and Spain 1584 is no less impressive as a piece of intellectual labor. The commitment displayed in Antwerp in 1571, and in Madrid in 1584, contrasts sharply with the offhand attitude of the Italian compilers, who produced notoriously slipshod indices. Still, from another perspective, it is perhaps to the credit of the Italians that they were never able to apply themselves with the same dogged determination to the task of censorship as the grim Spanish were.

Expurgative indices pose a problem for the editors of Index des livres interdits because there is not enough space, even in one of their bulky volumes, to provide a modern edition of the contents of these lengthy documents, much less study the expurgation in detail. Their solution is simply to reproduce the originals photostatically, and provide the same kind of identifications which they give for the prohibitive indices. It
is not a bad solution. When I was examining the expurgation of Erasmus in the Antwerp index a few years ago, I took the volume to a library which held copies of the Erasmus texts censured, and was able to locate the passages in question, which are precisely identified, and see what the exact import of the expurgation was (perhaps I might refer to my review in RSLR 26.2, 1990).

But you do have to have access to a copy of whatever original edition of each author the censors had before them in order to be able to study their expurgations, and if you wanted to study the whole index, you would have to go to endless trouble to find them all. So there might be a thesis project here for one or several Ph.D students: they could edit in full the relevant portions of text from Erasmus, Du Moulin, and all the other authors censured in Antwerp 1571 and Spain 1584, highlighting the portions the censors wanted removed, and adding their own commentary, and they could publish on CD-ROM, in order to escape the space restrictions that have hindered the editors of Index des livres interdits. The fact is that the hindrance has become a real liability in the case of vol. 6: the index of Spain 1584 was too bulky to be included in toto, even as a photo-reproduction, so we are left only with photostats of selected pages, and a summary analysis of the contents which identifies authors and editions, gives a selection of library locations, and describes very briefly the content of each expurgation. In other words, the volume provides exactly what our hypothetical Ph.D. students would need in order to get started.

I will conclude by mentioning some of the entries in these Spanish indices that caught my attention. To begin with a couple of famous authors who had not been condemned previously in the Roman indices: Bodin’s Methodus is named in the 1583 index (920); and Thomas More’s Utopia is mentioned twice in 1583, “nisi repurgetur” (1609, 1697). The required purgation is then spelled out in detail in 1584 (78; and photo-reproduction 1035). Most of the Italian authors included in the Tridentine index also appear in the Spanish indices. However the following, which are original condemnations and do not originate on the Roman list, may be noted:

1) Agostino Steuco, Cosmopoeia (1583: 115, 427 and 1584: 8, with photo-reproduction 986). The expurgation is slight, since only one passage on the creation of the Earth is ordered deleted.

2) Jacopo Sannazzaro, Epigrammata (1583: 860, 1529 and 1584: 47, with photo-reproduction 1013). The expurgation is more extensive, demanding the removal of a number of passages critical of the Renaissance popes.


5) Gaudenzio Merula, Memorabilium opus (1583: 645 and 1584: 32, with photo-reproduction 1001-02). A number of passages, including one entire chapter, are suppressed because they describe superstitious beliefs and practices, and criticize the wealth and power of ecclesiastics.

6) Anon., Commentarii in Epistolae Pauli ad Romanos et ad Galatas (Venice: Apud Aldi filios, 1542). Though the book in question is Italian, the condemnation originates in the Spanish index of 1559 (vol. 5; no. 164) and is repeated here (1583: 575). There are several scholarly problems: one is the reason for the condemnation, which is never specified by the Spanish censors, since they did not see fit to include the work in the
expurgative index of 1584; another is the question of whether the censors knew privately, or thought they knew, who the author of the work, seen by them in anonymous form, was. Most piquant however is the problem of actual authorship. I raised it at length in RSI 99 (1987): 824-26, and I wish to return to it now, since De Bujanda apparently remains unconvinced by the reasons I adduced there for accepting the common attribution of authorship to Cardinal Marino Grimani (c. 1488-1546). Perhaps he will find the following evidence sufficient.

I have been able to verify physically the existence, reported by A. A. Renouard, of printed copies bearing an alternative title page. The copy seen by me in July 1990 is in the Biblioteca Alessandrina, Rome, shelfmark W. F. 22. f. 2. It is entitled Marini Grimani Veneti, Episcopi Cardinalis, et Patriarchae Aquileiae, in Epistolas Pauli, ad Romanos, et ad Galatas Commentarii. Grimani is also identified as the author in the dedication to Paul III, and in the separate subheads for the commentaries on Romans and Galatians. In all other respects, both of text and material bibliography, this copy is identical to the many anonymous copies that can be found in libraries in Italy and elsewhere. (There may be another copy bearing the name of Grimani in the Rylands Library, Manchester.)

The work exists in a manuscript illuminated by Giulio Clovio and now held in the Soane Museum, London (MS. 11). I have not inspected this manuscript personally, but it is described and illustrated in Maria Cionini Visani, Giorgio Clovio, Miniaturist of the Renaissance (New York: Alpine, 1980) in a catalogue entry at p. 88; and in photographic reproductions on pp. 34-35. Her description and illustrations should be compared with information given in John W. Bradley, The Life and Works of Giorgio Giulio Clovio, Miniaturist, 1495-1578. (Amsterdam: G. W. Hissink, 1971; reproduction of ed. pr., London, 1891): 244-253. Like many art historians, these two are simply inept in matters of textual and historical scholarship (they are unaware that there is a printed edition of the text), and comparison of their published descriptions leaves me with a number of questions about aspects of the manuscript and the text it contains which it will only be possible to answer through direct examination of it. But they leave no doubt about the authorship, which is explicitly attributed to Cardinal Marino Grimani. That the text is the same as the one printed in 1542 results from the comparison of an incipit reproduced in Cionini Visani with an incipit at fol. A3r in the printed text.

For this and for many other reasons, I await with interest the publication of volume 10 of Index des livres interdits, a "thesaurus" of the prohibited literature of the sixteenth century in which De Bujanda will summarize the results of all the research on identifications carried out for the various individual volumes of the series.

Finally (and here readers will pardon my own personal enthusiasm) I was gratified to find that, contrary to what I had believed, Carlo Sigonio did after all have the honor of being included in an index of prohibited books. He was named in the Spanish index of 1583 (885) for the Index to his De Regno Italiae, which he published in 1576. Though the censors in Italy subjected him to a fierce attack in secret in the early 1580s, they at least had enough sense not to put him on the index publicly. Not so the Spanish. This welcome tidbit of course enhanced the value (already great) of Index des livres interdits in my eyes, and scholars with an interest in the sixteenth century will, I imagine, wish to search all the volumes for similar tidings concerning their own favorite authors.

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