

I have benefited enormously from reading this book, as I knew I would. Lawyers, particularly in the arena of human rights, love binary arguments and dichotomies, and it is in this setting which we often engage with the idea of the Enlightenment, if not in any meaningful sense with its reality. Yet, as a historian, I have long grappled with the perplexity and complexity of intellectual and social movements, and thus with the often deeply flawed ways in which lawyers engage with them. This book stands as both a powerful corrective to such failings, and as an immensely palliative and accessible means of coming to grips with the Enlightenment. Taking the form often, though not always, of lucid literature reviews and vignettes, together with Avis's own critical analysis of the works and ideas discussed, it amounts to an incredibly useful and thought-provoking whistlestop tour of the Enlightenment, its reception and legacies in England, Scotland, France, Germany and the Netherlands. I would strongly commend it to anyone who, like me, has ever uncritically or unthinkingly referred to the Enlightenment as a monolithic and secularising entity.

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The Cambridge Companion to the Council of Trent

Edited by Nelson H. Minnich
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2023, xv + 351 pp
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Cambridge University Press recently produced a new edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*. This beautifully produced little red hardback amusingly restored His Majesty's claim to the Kingdom of France through editorial error. No such claims are made in this first edition of the Companion to the Council of Trent. Unfortunately, no papal claims of jurisdiction are affirmed either. Nevertheless, before considering the content of this good introductory text, readers should be aware that there are a number of typographical errors throughout. Those likely to be distracted by even small oversights should be aware.

Responding to the crisis brought about by the Protestant Reformation, and the need for internal reform of the Church's discipline and governance, Pope Paul III decided to convene a council. It was to be held in the city of Trent, a compromise location which was acceptable both to the French King and the

Holy Roman Emperor. Earlier attempts to convene such a council, in Mantua and Vincenza, had previously failed, due to a lack of such co-operation. Despite this, renewed squabbles delayed the Council's opening until December 1545. Minnich's introduction takes the reader very clearly and succinctly through the turbulence of the three sets of twenty-five sessions from 1545 to 1563.

Consisting of sixteen chapters covering the wide array of issues considered by the Council, it is a broad introductory text. There are, however, a few topics to note, which may be of particular interest to readers of this journal.

John Baldovin provides an excellent treatment of the Council's teaching on the sacraments. He notes the continuity with previous teaching (notably that set out in the Council of Florence and its *Decree for the Armenians*) and the way in which it sought to provide clarity on those issues where clarity was deemed necessary, while still providing for legitimate disagreement among the various schools of Catholic theological thought. In this way, Baldovin provides a good example to support the argument made by Christian Washburn in the third chapter that the Council 'attempted to define the doctrines of the Church based on that which was held in common in the schools of theology, and the council avoided attempting to side with any particular school of theology ... because the council wanted both to define the faith of the Church in response to heresy and to bring doctrinal clarity to believers' (p 69).

The Council was also concerned with the discipline of the Church alongside the preservation of the integrity of the Deposit of Faith. Often these two things are connected. Wim François notes the importance of Scripture in the reforms regarding teaching and preaching (p 89), and cites it as one example among others which should serve to overturn the prevailing yet 'outdated' view that 'biblical studies were languishing in the post-Tridentine Catholic world' (p 95).

Gabriella Zarri explores the various reasons that the council fathers sought to regulate marriage more clearly. Previous attempts to make marriage a public declaration had largely failed, with informal arrangements remaining widespread and which led to illegitimate children and even bigamy (pp 244–245). Ecclesiastical legislation had little effect so long as it continued to presume validity, even as it strongly discouraged such clandestine marriages. Zarri neatly deals with this reform in the context of similar reforms taking place in regions dominated by the Protestant reformers, and in whose territories the state had sought to increase its involvement with the daily lives of those subject to it.

It is a shame that the way in which this regulation protected the rights of women was not more clearly explored. In that time period informal marriage arrangements had the potential to affect the rights and reputations of women far more profoundly than men, for whom they may have been fairly convenient. Unless the marriage is public, how is it possible to establish the certainty of manifested consent if one party denies that such consent was ever exchanged? The omission is unusual, as the rights of women is something which Zarri considers later on when outlining the punishments to be imposed upon those forcing their subjects to contract marriages against their will (p 258).

Her argument that the Tridentine reform 'prepared the basis for the subsequent process of secularisation of marriage' (p 259) is a curious one

which is not fully explored. Nor does her claim consider the impact of the Protestant reform on later secularisation, which is odd given she has already described what was happening in Protestant regions. Secularist movements actually drew heavily on English, Prussian, and even Russian models of the relationship between the Church and State, and pursued a vision in which the State had much greater control over the Church. This vision would have been *anathema* to the council fathers. Why, therefore, would it be more likely that the Tridentine reform, rather than the Protestant reform which itself gave a much greater role to the state in regulating marriage, should bear the greater responsibility for paving the way for later secularisation? She may be right but her argument lacks depth.

On the whole it is an interesting work, and extremely useful to anybody looking for an introduction to the Council of Trent, but it remains one among several others. As noted, there are some contentious claims made throughout which are neither properly explored nor fully substantiated. They can seem out of place and almost kittenish. This is inevitably the result of trying to bring together a work which offers new perspectives while remaining an introductory text. The Cambridge Companion does not pretend to be anything else and at the end of each chapter there is a helpful bibliography for the benefit of any reader wanting to explore a particular area in more depth.

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Political Theology and Law

Geminello Preterossi

Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2023, Law and Politics: Continental Perspectives, 202 pp (hardback £96), ISBN: 9781138549821

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This is not a book of Christian theology. Nor is it directly concerned with the workings of the law as such. Political Theology refers to a tradition of political analysis that began with the German jurist Carl Schmitt who has become, despite his culpable (although complex) association with Nazism, an influential figure for both the Right and the Left. His 'Political Theology' foregrounded the correspondence between an epoch's vision of what is ultimate and the structure of the worldly power of the age (e.g. between a voluntarist God and monarchical absolutism). There is thus a formal analogy between the theological-metaphysical and the political-legal. Schmitt was concerned with sovereignty, legitimacy and the restraining powers that held