

Educating and disciplining readers. Books, publishing and libraries in Italy at the time of the Enquiry of the Congregation of the Index

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The aim of this work is to trace an initial profile of the transformations that, between the XVI and XVII centuries, affected the processes of the formation and the disciplining of both the good Christian and the exemplary citizen through “good readings”, “good publishing” as well as “good libraries”.

In what a largely accredited historiography has by now recognised as the age of the Catholic Renewal or the Confessional Age, the censorial purpose – which emerged clear and strong, at least in the last decades of the XVI up until the first half of the XVII century – actually represented one of the multiple propulsive forces in the framework of a more general movement of renovation, from which originated a totally new attention toward the mechanisms and the channels of formation through books and reading. This implied a deeply renovated vision of the book, as well as the very function of typographical art and consequently that of printing houses and libraries, which – the last ones in particular – assumed a leading position as an extraordinarily important and strategic means, both in the religious and civilian sphere.

As a sign of the “new times”, books and reading fit into the events of the Council of Trent, as an element of suspicion and object of argument, when not openly clashing, and this happened *in primis* for the “book” par excellence, that is the Bible. The debate about the biblical text, even if arising from the necessity of having available a correct text of Jerome's Vulgate – in a historical phase where the very advent of the typographical means had multiplied the

printed editions, especially in XVI century¹ –, in the period following the Protestant Reform became more intense in its tones and aims. In this scenario, the necessity for a unique, amended text which was authorised by the Church, soon turned itself into a confrontation between two opposite views of the biblical text: on the one hand seen as a text freely accessible in its translations into national languages, and on the other, as a text rather mediated by the tradition and the teaching of the Roman Church, with the well known consequences in the field of censorship and control of the vernacular translations. But the same suspicion covered the very role and function of the book in general, as a means of knowledge and tool for literacy and disciplining² – in the meaning of the formation of both the *christianus* and the *civis* at the same time – for the populations of a Europe that appeared on the threshold of its first economic, political and military modernisation on the one hand; on the other hand, the book became an agent of formation also for the populations of the “new” continents where a large work of mass evangelisation took place for the very first time.

If the education of the lower classes realised itself through channels that only in part were based on books and reading, rather the education of clerks, higher classes and erudite people found in the printed book a great tool for growth: under this general perspective, the book became a crucial means of education and ideological control, and in order to better respond to the new confessionalisation strategies, in the Catholic world a sort of real “cultural infrastructures” for the controlled production and diffusion of knowledge begun to emerge. In these organisms the library, the printing house and the educational institution (such as the Seminary, the institution for clerks’ as well as laics’ education, but also the Academy, the centre for studies and theological research etc.) operated in synergy in view of a common objective, therefore becoming the pulsating heart of the culture transmitted by the new typographical means. Some of those structures maintained over the centuries a cultural function of relief in the Catholic world, as well as in Italian and European cultural life; other ones had a more limited importance; but with regard to all of them, their common and innovative character is clear, and surely paradigmatic of an epoch.

Under this perspective some significant cues for reflection have recently come from the international conference which was held in Macerata in 2006,

¹ From the Gutenberg Bible of 1455 – the very first book to be produced with the new hand-printing procedures – to the first “critical editions” of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible of 1514-1517, the Hittorpiian in 1530, to the various editions (1528, 1532, 1540 and 1555) by Robert Estienne, and so on. For a first overview see, for example, the catalogue of the exhibition held at the National Library of Florence: *Bibbia: edizioni del 16. secolo*, ed. by A. Lumini, Firenze, Olschki, 2000.

² On the historiographical categories of disciplining and Confessionalisation see *infra*, at the note n. 34.

where the results of the Italian research project Rici (*Ricerca sull'Inchiesta della Congregazione dell'Indice. Research on the inquiry by the Congregation of the Index*), which was coordinated by Prof. Roberto Rusconi³, were presented. Needless to say, the papers presented there by important historians and bibliographers, both Italian and foreign ones, offered useful stimuli and gave the occasion for examining in depth some peculiar features of the complex engine of books' production/fruition, which took shape in the postridentine Italian scenario following the heightening of the ecclesiastic book-control policies, especially after the promulgation of the last one of the sixteenth-century *Indices librorum prohibitorum*.

Starting from the great enquiry, which was promoted by the Congregation of the Index in the late XVI century, and from a bibliography based on censorship, as well as on the history of the book, and of printing and libraries, some reflections concerning the relationship between the Church and books as well as reading and education during the *Konfessionelles Zeitalter* and on the consequent changes which affected the channels of the production and diffusion of books are presented here.

1. *The research project Rici about the Enquiry of the Congregation of the Index*

During the days 30th-31st May and the 1st June 2006, the international conference took place in Macerata entitled *Libri, biblioteche e cultura nell'Italia Moderna attraverso la documentazione della Congregazione dell'Indice* (Books, libraries and culture in modern Italy through the documentation by the Congregation of the Index), where the results have been illustrated by the project Rici. This project is aimed at creating a data base which gathers the documentation produced in the late XVI century by the so-called *Enquiry of the Congregation of the Index* and which consists of bibliographic inventories from about 9,500 libraries of Regular Orders, lists which are now kept within 61 Latin Vatican Codes 11266-11326⁴. These lists were drawn up the day after

³ The Rici project started in 2001 with the funding of the Ministry of the University and Scientific Research (PRIN 2001/2003 and PRIN 2006/2008), and involved the universities of Macerata, Chieti, Florence, L'Aquila, Milan (Catholic), Rome "La Sapienza" and Roma Tre. The project, under the sponsorship of the Association Don Giuseppe De Luca, has been supported by some Regular Orders, such as the Ordine dei Servi di S. Maria Vergine, the Ordine dei Frati Minori Conventuali, the Ordine dei Frati Minori Cappuccini, the Fratelli della B.V. Maria del Monte Carmelo, and the Benedictine congregations of Monte Oliveto, Vallombrosa and Camaldoli.

⁴ The inventory was published in 1985, edited by M.M. Lebreton and L. Fiorani: *Codices Vaticani Latini. Codices 11266-11326: inventari di biblioteche religiose italiane alla fine del Cinquecento*, Città del Vaticano, 1985.

the publishing of the *Index librorum prohibitorum* in 1596, and updated the list with the authors considered forbidden in the previous indexes⁵. This Index – called “Clementine” since it was promulgated during the pontificate of Clemente VIII – saw the clash between two institutions: on the one hand, the “old” *Congregation of the Inquisition* (or *Holy Office*), which was established in 1542 by Paul III with the specific aim of contrasting heresy in Christianity and, consequently, of controlling books through the creation of the *Index librorum prohibitorum*⁶; and on the other hand, the “new” *Sacred Congregation of the Index*, established “only” in 1571 by pope Pius V – therefore only thirty years later – with the exclusive task of managing the lists of forbidden books⁷.

The conflict – which concerned the authority of the two rival bodies in the field of examining publishing, controlling the application of the censorial instructions (not always clear), and finally defining the territorial field of jurisdiction – ended with exasperating the already difficult climate of the anti-Protestant reaction. In this scenario, the difficulties of interpretation and application of censorial instructions, risked nullifying the censorial engine. Consequently, the Congregation of the Index commanded superiors of the Regular Orders all over Italy to rapidly draw up an inventory of the books kept, both at a communitarian and individual level.

These activities ended within few years in the turn of the century, with all the limits that we can imagine: limits which were caused both by the objective

⁵ See the edition of the entire *corpus* of the sixteenth-century indexes of forbidden books: J. Martinez de Bujanda (ed.), *Index des livres interdits*, Sherbrooke, Centre d'études de la Renaissance; Genève, Librairie Droz, 1984-1996, 10 vols. (in 2002 a new volume followed: *Index librorum prohibitorum: 1600-1966*, avec l'assistance de M. Richter).

⁶ With regard of this, Mario Infelise underlines how the «necessity of such repertories had spread before the famous Roman indexes of 1559 and 1564», both in Europe (as witnessed by the Parisian indexes drawn up by the Sorbona, or by the University of Leuven, etc.) and in Italy (in Venice, Florence, Milan: see M. Infelise, *I libri proibiti: da Gutenberg all'Encyclopédie*, Roma, GLF editori Laterza, 1999, now 2008⁸, pp. 31-33), something which created a strong expectation of a finally “central” index, i.e. directly managed by Rome.

⁷ As well known, the reactions following the Holy Office's publishing of the first Index in 1559 (the so-called *Pauline Index*), considered very repressive, had as consequence that this function of control was taken away from the Holy Office, in order to limit its powers. The second Index was then entrusted to a commission of bishops from the Council of Trent (*Tridentine Index* of 1564); not minor were the disagreements with the Holy Office, which systematically disowned the “Tridentine” instructions. Therefore a new *ad hoc* congregation was created in 1571 (made of four members, two of which coming from the Holy Office) that worked on the third Index (the *Clementine*) among hard difficulties, doubts about the direction and the responsibilities of the two “rival” congregations – not to mention the “third” authority, i.e. the *Master of the Sacred Palace*, counsellor of both congregations. For a general picture of the situation see again M. Infelise, *I libri proibiti*, cit., pp. 33-42. With regard to the large bibliography on the history of ecclesiastic censorship, on Indexes and the conflicts between the two congregations, see the recent: H. Wolf, *Storia dell'Indice. Il Vaticano e i libri proibiti*, Roma, Donzelli, 2006; V. Frajese, *Nascita dell'Indice: la censura ecclesiastica dal Rinascimento alla Controriforma*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 2006; E. Rebelato, *La fabbrica dei divieti. Gli indici dei libri proibiti da Clemente VIII a Benedetto XIV*, Milano, Sylvestre Bonnard, 2008. Further bibliography *infra*, see the note n. 36.

difficulty of realising such an operation, and by the understandable opposition made by the religious communities, from many of which actually no documentation ever arrived⁸. Even though incomplete and fruit of an only partial recognition, the numerous lists delivered undoubtedly represent with a source of great interest and value for the historians of the early modern age. The research activities of the team of Rici have focused on this huge mass of information, which faces the meticulous task of transcription and checking of data (concerning authors, works and editions) through a systematic verification on the repertoires and databases on line, which are available for the rare books⁹. The results of such a complex work have been entered into a database which will allow users – through different search criteria – to retrace the entire historical-bibliographic network which connects every single item, after extrapolating from the hand written sources, to all the information related to authors and their works, as well as printers, previous possessors and places and institutions of conservation, etc., up to the possibility – last but not least – to retrace some of the copies which were described in the lists, and finally to “complete” the historical-bibliographic information, from the *notitia librorum* to the real item¹⁰.

The database is now in the phase of a further verification of the previous unidentified editions – something that allows us to have a clearer picture of the situation regarding the real “new” editions discovered through Rici – and it now includes data from 6,113 lists, for a total of 247,250 titles, 65,175 editions, 9,647 authors (with accepted forms, and variants) 3,550 printers, 314 places of publication¹¹. It is easy to understand why the patient work of recording and checking this work will take many years. But it is giving shape to an extraordinary tool for scholars and researchers of the age of the Counter-Reformation – or, rather,

⁸ With regard to the topic see the contribution by Gigliola Fragnito *L'indice clementino e le biblioteche degli ordini religiosi*, presented at the Macerata conference (see *infra*).

⁹ Such as *Edit.16*, the database of the Italian sixteenth-century editions (<http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/web_iccu/ihome.htm>), about which Rosaria M. Servello has presented a paper at the Macerata conference, see *infra*; or the collective catalogue SBN-Libro Antico (<<http://opac.sbn.it/>>); or the ISTC-Incunabula Short Title Catalogue of the British Library (now freely accessible: <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc/>), and so on.

¹⁰ As in the case of the manuscripts examined by Monica Bocchetta, see *infra*. Other findings of original copies have been pointed out in the virtual exhibition organised by the Macerata research unit: «*Hic liber est mei... Spectat ad bibliothecam...*»: *storie di libri e di biblioteche. Piccola mostra documentaria e bibliografica* sul sito <<http://bibliothecaclaustrali.unimc.it/>> (last access: 1st February 2009). In particular see the book, now in the press, edited by Rosa Marisa Borraccini, *Codici Vaticani Latini 11266-11326: dalla “notitia librorum” degli inventari agli esemplari. Saggi di indagine su libri e biblioteche* (Macerata, eum), where are illustrated findings of the original copies described in the Vatican lists.

¹¹ The up-to-date information has been kindly given to me by Prof. Rosa Marisa Borraccini, who co-ordinates the research unit of Macerata. Naturally the archive is in progress, and to which only recently public access was given: see the web site *Le biblioteche degli ordini regolari in Italia alla fine del secolo XVI*, <<http://ebusiness.taiprora.it/bib/index.asp>> (last access: 15th May 2009).

Catholic Renewal¹² –, as well as for scholars of religious and ecclesiastic history, and historians of culture and ideas, of the XVI century publishing, and finally for the very historians of education. From the important documentation collected, the many features of the “disciplined readers”, men and women, lays and clerics, which the formidable spiritual, cultural and political ferment that took place in the very long XVI century produced, are slowly emerging.

2. *The international conference held in Macerata*

The mass of the data collected, from the beginning revealed the possibility of delineating the different and multidisciplinary approaches and historical-bibliographical objectives. In line with this direction the interventions which animated the days in Macerata, are now gathered in the prestigious book *Libri, biblioteche e cultura degli Ordini Regolari nell'Italia moderna attraverso la documentazione della Congregazione dell'Indice. Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Macerata, 30 maggio-1 giugno 2006*, edited by Rosa Marisa Borraccini and Roberto Rusconi, Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2006 (Studi e Testi; 434).

Roberto Rusconi opens the section “Index Clementino” with the paper *Frati e monaci, libri e biblioteche alla fine del '500* (pp. 13-35), where he illustrates the numerous opportunities of research offered by the Vatican lists. The compositions of religious libraries (of individuals or communities), and the same modalities in drawing up the lists of the *libri prohibiti et corrigendi*, not only make us understand how the censorial instructions were received, but that they also offer useful elements to comprehend the features of the moral and cultural education of clericals, friars and monks, documenting the «cultural and religious vivacity» of each single community. Gigliola Fragnito (*L'Indice Clementino e le biblioteche degli ordini religiosi*, pp. 37-59) has further enlightened the historical-religious climate which led to the promulgation of the Clementine Index. With the well known capability of investigation, which she derives from a deep knowledge of the Italian inquisitional documentation both from the Italian peripheral territories and from the central archives of the Congregation of the Holy Office in Rome (opened from 1998)¹³, the scholar examines in depth the features of the clash between the Congregation of the Index

¹² See in this regard *infra*, at the note n. 16.

¹³ At the beginning of 2008 at the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome the conference entitled: *A dieci anni dall'apertura dell'archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede: storia e archivi dell'Inquisizione* (Roma, 21-23 febbraio 2008) took place in collaboration with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Research centre on the Inquisition of the University of Trieste, and the Ministry for Culture-General Direction of Archives. In the conference – whose proceedings are expected to come out within the year 2009 – important Italian and foreign scholars took part, who enlightened the state of the art of the international historical research, ten years later after the opening of the Holy Office's Archives.

and the Holy Office – something which, at a local level, resulted in a clash between Bishops and Inquisitors concerning the responsibilities of the “reclamation” of monastic and convents’ libraries. The reasons are also analysed, of the partial gathering of the lists for the “enquiry”¹⁴.

In the section “Biblioteche e bibliografia”, Danilo Zardin (*Bibbia e apparati biblici nei conventi italiani del Cinque-Seicento. Primi appunti*, pp. 63-103) retraces in the writings of the Italian mystical woman Bernardina Floriani the «sources that fed the seventeenth-century religiosity», which, in postridentine Italy, was never supported by a direct and unitarian access to the biblical text (that remained defended by the castle of the ecclesiastical Latin), and which was offered in a rather fragmented and controlled manner – as is testified by the rich exegetic-dogmatical and pedagogical-devotional literature in vernacular language which flourished between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and largely reflected by the Vatican lists. From an alternative viewpoint, Angela Nuovo («*Et amicorum*»: *costruzione e circolazione del sapere nelle biblioteche private del Cinquecento*, pp. 105-127) analyses the results of the Enquiry of the Congregation of the Index in the light of the role which libraries played in the cultural scenario of the time, rather than comparing the expurgatory intent with the «Humanistic sharing of the book» supported by the representatives of the *Respublica litteraria*.

Stephen Parkin (*The presence of Italian books in the British Library in the light of the Ricerca sull’Inchiesta della Congregazione dell’Indice*, pp. 129-143) underlines the value of Rici as a «modern bibliographical resource of major importance for the study of fifteenth and sixteenth century Italian books», and he examines the catalogues of the British Library from the perspective of comparison and mutual integration of information. Giovanna Granata (*Le biblioteche dei Francescani Osservanti alla fine del ’500: un approccio bibliometrico*, pp. 145-178) offers a quantitative analysis of the authors’ occurrences that could configure a real “bibliographical canon” and which are distinctive of specific library collections, for example of the Friars Minor Observant. Monica Bocchetta («*A primo banco a man destra*». *La dispositio librorum della Libreria del Convento di Poggibonsi*, pp. 179-200) examines a rare case of a library’s topographical – instead of alphabetical – inventory¹⁵,

¹⁴ The lack, in the Vatican lists, of inventories from many institutes (especially convents), or even from some specific Orders, could be explained (besides an, ever possible, losing of documentation), in part only with the different modalities with which the lists were delivered, in diverse phases, and to diverse authorities (to inquisitors, or to bishops). With no doubt, the total absence stands out of the lists from Jesuits, from the Dominicans and Oratorians, which could be probably interpreted as a consequence of the particular position held by each of these religious institutes, respectively in front of the Pope, the Holy Office or the Congregation of the Index (see Fragnito, *L’Indice Clementino e le biblioteche degli ordini religiosi*, cit., see in particular the pp. 50-55).

¹⁵ Even though the Congregation of the Index had clearly been asked to draw up alphabetical lists of the Authors kept in the Regular Orders’ libraries, in a few cases (three in total) “topographical” lists were sent, i.e. which reflected the physical position of books inside the library’s shelves or, better still, as in this case, on the seats (the “banchi”), and in various rooms.

offering interesting an hypothesis for identifying the manuscripts, originally kept in the Convent of the Friars Minor Observant of S. Lucchese, and which until now had been believed lost.

Alfredo Serrai (*Bibliografia, selva oscura*, pp. 201-214) focuses on the necessity of connecting the «literary ontology» with that which he calls the «bibliographic ontology» and the related “literary mapping” (consisting of the reticulum of authorial, textual, editorial identifications) and “bibliographic architecture”, to which RICCI could now give a significant impulse, throwing light on the «obscure areas of the bibliographic forest» of the XVI-XVII centuries. In this direction also Ugo Rozzo (*Una fonte integrativa di Istc: l’Inchiesta della Congregazione dell’Indice del 1597-1603*, pp. 215-250), on the base of samplings made on some religious libraries’ inventories, outlines the methodologies which will make RICCI an interesting tool for identifying “new” editions never before described. Rosaria Maria Servello describes the technical functionality of *Edit.16*, and its role as a “source” for RICCI, a role that in some cases will even be inverted (*La base dati Edit.16*, pp. 251-283); as a counterpoint, Giovanna Granata illustrates the functionality of the RICCI database, together with the interesting opportunities that the complex relational structure will be able to offer to researchers, when the activities of entering and “cleaning” of the information from the Vatican lists, will be fulfilled (*Struttura e funzionalità della banca dati “Le biblioteche degli Ordini Regolari in Italia alla fine del secolo XVI”*, pp. 286-305).

From the contributions of the section “La normativa su libri e biblioteche negli ordini religiosi” (Silvia Alessandrini Calisti, *Norme e consuetudini degli Eremiti Camaldolesi di Montecorona su libri e biblioteche*, pp. 309-335; Roberto Biondi, *Libri, biblioteche e studia nella legislazione delle famiglie francescane: secc. XVI-XVII*, pp. 337-379; Giovanni Grosso, *I carmelitani e i libri: alcune note sulla legislazione*, pp. 381-394) clearly emerges how the knowledge of the history of each single Order and in particular of the internal legislation, can shed a clarifying light on the formation of the library collections following the Tridentine instructions, and on the relationship of the friars with reading and with forbidden books. Again, the Vatican lists allow us to estimate how the censorial rules against the books *prohibiti et suspecti* worked also in the Marca anconitana (Rosa Marisa Borraccini, *Un sequestro librario alla fiera di Recanati del 1600*, pp. 397-438). Maria Cristina Misiti (“*Torchi famiglie e libri*”: *nuove indagini sui librai romani di fine Cinquecento*, pp. 439-471) offers a critical reading of the booksellers’ inventories kept in the Vatican codes, retracing the outlines of some figures in the Roman book commerce. Again, Flavia Bruni (*Una inquisitio nel Convento Servita di Lucca: i libri nella cella di Fra Lorenzo*, pp. 474-523), Lorenzo Di Lenardo (*I libri proibiti de Francescani Conventuali del Triveneto*, pp. 525-554) and Adela Malena (*Libri “proibiti”, “sospesi”, “dubii d’esser cattivi”*: *in margine ad alcune liste de Canonici Regolari Lateranensi*, pp. 555-580) document the changing fortunes of censors and books’ owners, and the different modalities in which the enquiry was carried out in the libraries of Regular Orders. In the last section

“Libri di laici”, the authors lead us to discover book collections and book genres, and finally to discover the reading customs of both lay and religious women (Carmela Compare, *Libri di donne e libri di monache alla fine del XVI secolo*, pp. 583-622), and in general of the “subjects”, i.e. the vassals who lived in the feuds under the jurisdiction of monasteries, and among which there were jurists, physicians, surgeons (Sara Cosi, *I libri dei “sudditi”: Mercogliano, feudo di Montevergine*, pp. 623-657) and notaries (Andrea Ottone, *I libri dei notai nelle liste dei “sudditi”*, pp. 659-704). A rich and useful apparatus of indexes (of names, manuscripts and archival documents) closes the book, making an easy and targeted consultation of the volume possible.

3. *Practices of reading and control, in the years of the Catholic Renewal*

As just seen, the Vatican lists offer material for the most diverse historical approaches, for the study of the books and its circulation, as well as of the process of literacy on the one hand and of spiritual education on the other hand, during the years when three Indexes were published. Indexes that were so different in their aims and the approach, because they were an expression of a change underway in the pre- and posttridentine Church, which is confirmed moreover by the continuous translation of responsibilities from one authority to another in the course of the XVI century.

The cruel and complex doctrinal and jurisdictional conflict which arose during and especially after the Council of Trent, had important reflections also in the educational field, especially on the formation of the good Christian. These consequences are illustrated, in their different results, by the opposite historiographical lines which are represented, among the scholars gathered at the Macerata conference, by Gigliola Fragnito on the one hand, and by Danilo Zardin on the other. These different trends of research contribute in enlightening from different – at times opposite, but more often complementary – viewpoints, a history of the book that is strictly linked with the objectives of the new religious disciplining pursued by the seventeenth-century Church, both in the broader and more innovative meaning of the *Catholic Reformation* (or *Catholic Revival*), and in the direction of a “defensive” anti-Protestant reaction (in the narrower meaning of the *Counter-Reformation*)¹⁶.

¹⁶ As is well known, after an exclusively negative vision of the “Counter-Reformation” (*Rekatholisierung* or *katolische Restauration*), which was born among the XVIII-XIX centuries within the German and Protestant historiography, later a new conception was affirming itself – in particular thanks to the thought of the historian of the Council of Trent Hubert Jedin –, and more comprehensive, of the “Catholic reformation”, inside which are placed the two souls of the Catholic world, we could say one innovative, and one normative (see H. Jedin, *Riforma cattolica o controriforma?*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 1957; It. transl. of: *Katholische Reformation oder Gegenreformation*).

Gigliola Fragnito is well known for her in-depth researches on ecclesiastic censorship, which resulted in two important monographs: *La Bibbia al rogo. La censura ecclesiastica e i volgarizzamenti della Scrittura (1471-1605)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1997, and the recent *Proibito capire. La Chiesa e il volgare nella prima età moderna*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005. The last essay in particular (from now on cited as: Fragnito), analyses the controversial relationship between the Church and typographic art, examining the effects of the censorship on book circulation and consequently on the same literacy processes, in the light not only of the instructions of the *Indices librorum prohibitorum*, but especially of the documentation kept in the Archives of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (in particular the series «Archives of the Congregation of the Index» and «Archives of the Holy Office»). A documentation that not only preceded and accompanied the drawing up of the various Indexes, but which also followed the publishing of them.

The scholar examines the rich correspondence between the centre (Rome) and the territory (peripheral Inquisitorial organs and local churches, which sent to Rome their *dubia* and *difficultates* in interpreting and consequently applying the indexes), in addition to the minutes of the Congregations: she rebuilds the complex panorama which produced rules ambiguous and contradictory at the same

mation. Ein Versuch zur Klärung der Begriffe nebst einer Jubiläumsbetrachtung über das Trienter Konzil, 1946). Then, the works of Lucien Febvre and the school of Annales underlined how, through the hypothesis of a “Pre-reformation”, it was possible to retrace some elements of continuity, which were common of a religious feeling that, already in the fifteenth century, was shared by all of Europe (see in particular *Studi su Riforma e Rinascimento e altri scritti su problemi di metodo e di geografia storica*, Torino, Einaudi, 1966; It. transl. of: *Au coeur religieux du XVIe siècle*, 1957). This opened, de facto, the way to a historiographical reflection – primarily of Catholic matrices – which houses inside the concept of “Catholic reformation” both aspects of complementarity with the Counter-Reformation, and of contiguity with the Protestant Reform with regard to the tension toward the renewal, in the wake of what is nowadays called the *Catholic Renewal* (R.-P. Hsia, *La controriforma: il mondo del rinnovamento cattolico, 1540-1770*, Bologna, 2001; It. transl. of: *World of catholic renewal, 1540-1770*, 1998) or *Refashioning of catholicism* (R. Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700: A Reassessment of the counter Reformation*, London-Washington, 1999; see also J.W. O'Malley, *Trent and all that: renaming Catholicism in the early modern era*, Cambridge-London, Harvard University Press, 2000).

For an overview of the Italian historiography about the *Catholic Reformation*, from the post-war period onward, see P. Prodi, *Il binomio jediniario “Riforma cattolica e Controriforma” e la storiografia italiana*, «Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento», VI, 1980, pp. 85-98; and Id., *Controriforma e riforma cattolica: superamento di vecchi dilemmi in nuovi panorami storiografici*, «Römische Historische mitteilungen», XXXI, 1989, pp. 227-239 (also in: *Crisi e rinnovamenti nell'autunno del Rinascimento a Venezia*, ed. by V. Branca and C. Ossola, Firenze, Olschki, 1991); A. Prosperi, *Riforma cattolica, Controriforma, disciplinamento sociale*, in: *Storia dell'Italia religiosa. 2, L'età moderna*, Bari, Laterza 1994, pp. 3-48; E. Bonora, *La Controriforma*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2001; D. Zardin, *Controriforma, Riforma cattolica, cattolicesimo moderno: conflitti di interpretazione*, in C. Mozzarelli (ed.), *Identità italiana e cattolicesimo: una prospettiva storica*, Roma, Carocci, 2003, pp. 289-307; L. Mezzadri, P. Vismara, *La Chiesa tra Rinascimento e Illuminismo*, Roma, Città Nuova, 2006.

time, resulting from not only different doctrinal approaches – moderate and innovative, or blindly rigorist and repressive –, but fruit also of the power struggle among the Congregations. These fights emerged with the settlement in 1542 of the Holy Office, and highlighted the increasing detachment between a “bishops’ way” toward the renewal, expression of the Council of Trent and therefore moderate and mindful of the pastoral mission of the Church (a line of thought embodied by the pope Pius IV), and an “inquisitorial way” (intransigent, embodied by the severe popes – who had been inquisitors – Paul IV Carafa, Pius V Ghislieri and Sixtus V Peretti). But this conflict, still a long way from resulting in an effective fight against heresy and superstition or in a real funding of a new religiosity, according to Fragnito actually led to what she represents as a kind of involution of the relation between the Church and typographic art, which caused a Roman mistrust toward publishing in general, and in particular toward the religious one. This mistrust, which was shown in a clearly stronger and more evident hostility against the translation of Holy Scriptures, impacted negatively on the religious practices in general and on Italian religiosity, and it consequently caused an unexpected increment of the category of the so-called “biblical derivatives” – forbidden when they contained even short vernacular passages, parts¹⁷, of the Scriptures –, such as devotional booklets¹⁸ like the *Ufficioli della Madonna*¹⁹, but also lectionaries, legendaries or collections of saints’ lives, sermonaries and collections of *Epistole et evangelii*, or again religious versifications²⁰, sacred histories and controversial essays²¹.

The reaffirming of the Latin monopoly in the religious field, not only led to the creation of two different registers of communication with the believers (on the one hand the Latin of the clerks of a high rank, on the other hand the vernacular of lays and popular classes, but also of uneducated clerks, nuns and so on); but it also determined «deep modifications of the religious practices and of the primary teaching, and re-orientating entire sectors of the book production» (Fragnito, p. 9). This repression had the aim to avert people, i.e. women and simple people, away from getting in touch with the sacred mysteries (*ne fidei misteria mulieribus*

¹⁷ It is significant, with regard of this, the diatribe lasting many years about the definition of “part”, and the hair-splitting distinction among *pars* and *particula*, which in some cases could mark the difference between an authorised text and a forbidden one (see Fragnito, pp. 108-109).

¹⁸ Fragnito, pp. 133-148.

¹⁹ According to Fragnito the prohibition of possessing the *Officiolo della Madonna* (central nucleus of the “Books of Hours”, collections of prayers i.e. psalms, hymns, readings, verses to be recited during the eight hours of the day), which was one of the vernacular books more used for the private meditation by the illiterate people – not learned in Latin, people made of both clerics and lays, but especially of women –, would have hardly had impact on the rising process of popular literacy, and in particular female literacy.

²⁰ The scholar recalls how the decree of the 24th August 1596, with which the Congregation of the Index forbade the printing of the «Sacred Scripture in Latin or vernacular verses», was abolished only in 1758 (Fragnito, pp. 117-131; about the biblical versifications see *ibid.*, pp. 148-177).

²¹ About the banning of the controversial works in vernacular, as possible means of access to an “indirect” knowledge of the Protestant theology, see Fragnito, pp. 177-190.

*et simpliciorius [...] esponantur*²²), so that they, who were totally unable to comprehend, did not dwell on issues that would inevitably have led them toward a “heretical drift” during the attempt to read and erroneously interpret the sacred text, consequently twisting its meaning with superstitious assertions, i.e. «opposite to the God’s glory» or deriving from «false promises»²³. The struggle against a not very orthodox religiosity, i.e. unregulated and imbued with vulgar superstition and magic elements, became functional to a progressive increasing of the control of religious individual practices, through a “controlled” reading of the Scriptures – control that, the more it became severe, the more it self-legitimated the authority of the organs appointed to it.

Fagnito concludes that the interdiction of the translations of the biblical text (and, in the wake of this, the interdiction of a large book production, both of religious and laic nature), actually resulted in compromising forever the building of an aware individual religiosity, and not only. According to the scholar, it must be added the extreme result of: 1) eliminating the vernacular in the people’s religious practices²⁴ by averting who did not know Latin away from a concerning approach to the faith²⁵; 2) conditioning the religious and linguistic education, by removing the vernacular from children’s education and first literacy; 3) dissuading from the practice of reading, with the consequence of negatively affecting «the processes of literacy and linguistic unification of the [Italian] country, as well as of building of a national identity» (Fagnito, p. 22).

4. *Educating the good Christian: disciplining and the «circumcision of the intellect»*

This historical reconstruction depicts a Church that, oscillating between renovation and repression, ended with conceiving the ideal of a believer strongly disciplined in his private and public moral conduct, as well as in his rea-

²² Cited from an interdict from printing, toward a vernacular Comment of the Genesis (Archivio della Congregazione dell’Indice, I/2, f17r, cit. in Fagnito, p. 185, note n. 128).

²³ See the case of the pronouncements by the Congregation of the Index about the translation into the vernacular of Psalms (Fagnito, pp. 143-148), but also of sermons and “books of secrets” (*ibid.*, p. 146 and note n. 24).

²⁴ Indicative of the aberration reached by the inquisitorial repression, is the fact that they considered heretical even those, who simply declared to desire to comprehend the literal meaning of the daily prayers, and from here the prohibition came out of the vernacular books of hours (Fagnito, pp. 15, 142).

²⁵ Fagnito poses herself in the wake of Carlo Ginzburg (*L’alto e il basso. Il tema della conoscenza proibita nel Cinquecento e Seicento*, in Id., *Miti emblematici. Morfologia e storia*, Torino, Einaudi, 1986, pp. 107-28), Albano Biondi (*Aspetti della cultura cattolica post-tridentina. Religione e controllo sociale*, in *Storia d’Italia, Annali*. Vol. IX, *Intelletuali e potere*, ed. by C. Vivanti, Torino, Einaudi, 1981, pp. 277-86) and Adriano Prosperi (*Tribunali della coscienza. Inquisitori, confessori, missionari*, Torino, Einaudi 1996).

dings. A believer in which the comportamental-confessional model resulted from a religiosity not fed by a free individual reading – that could elude any doctrinal-theological control –, but was rather based on different elements. These elements consisted principally in: the practice of collective devotion (let us think about the emphasising of the public confession and penitence, or the devotional exercises of the “Forty hours”, pilgrimages, processions etc., which gave impulse to a typically “baroque” religiosity); a passive, and always indirect, knowledge of the sacred mysteries, mediated by the oral predication; the fruition of artistic works that vehiculated authorised and orthodox contents and styles²⁶. In conclusion, an elementary and dogmatic religiosity, the same which the cardinal Silvio Antoniano recommended to the family men to whom was destined his book, and that we could define as the first educational manual of the Catholic renewal. The recommendation was that:

[...] the good Christian does not have to curiously discover many things beyond his intellect, but he simply has to believe what our mother, the holy Church, proposes to us, and in this sacred simplicity he will be saved, because in order to get Paradise not so much doctrine is needed²⁷.

It would seem therefore that a kind of «circumcision of the intellect» emerges, as hoped for by the cardinal Federico Borromeo – who entitles in this way

²⁶ About the Italian religiosity among the XVI and XVII centuries, see O. Niccoli, *La vita religiosa nell'Italia moderna. Secoli XV-XVIII*, Roma, Carocci, 1998, and P. Vismara, *Il cattolicesimo dalla «riforma cattolica» all'assolutismo*, in G. Filoramo, D. Menozzi (eds.), *Storia del cristianesimo. L'età moderna*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1997 (2007²), pp. 153-290: 217-224; in particular about the value of the confession in the religious practices in the Milan of the Borromeos see W. De Boer, *La conquista dell'anima. Fede, disciplina e ordine pubblico nella Milano della Controriforma*, Torino, Einaudi, 2004 (It. transl. of: *Conquest of the Soul: Confession, Discipline, and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan*, 2001). About art and religiosity in the posttridentine confessional society see P. Prodi, *Ricerca sulla teorica delle arti figurative nella riforma cattolica*, Bologna, Nuova Alfa, 1984 and, recently, I. Bianchi, *La politica delle immagini nell'età della Controriforma. Il cardinale Gabriele Palotti teorico e committente*, Bologna, Editrice Compositori, 2008.

²⁷ «[...] il buon Cristiano non ha da cercare curiosamente molte cose sopra la sua intelligenza, ma ha da credere semplicemente quello che la santa Chiesa madre nostra ci propone et in questa santa semplicità sarà salvo, conciosia che per andare in paradiso non fa di bisogno di molta dottrina». This passage is significantly placed inside the paragraph entitled *Avviso di guardarsi da i falsi profeti et seduttori* (in: Silvio Antoniano, *Tre libri dell'educatione christiana dei figliuoli*, Verona, Appresso Sebastiano dalle Donne & Girolamo Stringari compagni, 1584, c. 39r-v; cit. in Fragnito, p. 258 and note n. 201). The full-text of Antoniano's work is accessible on line in the digital library “Biblioteca Telematica Italiana”, Università “La Sapienza” di Roma-Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, <<http://www.bibliotecaitaliana.it/>> (last access: 1st February 2009). On the figure of the cardinal see P. Prodi (entry ed. by), *Antoniano, Silvio*, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (from now on: DBI), Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia italiana, vols. 66, 1960-2006, vol. III, pp. 511-515; on the treaty see V. Frajese, *Il popolo fanciullo. Silvio Antoniano e il sistema disciplinare della controriforma*, Milano, F. Angeli, 1987; see recently E. Patrizi, *La genesi dei Tre libri dell'educatione christiana dei figliuoli di Silvio Antoniano nei carteggi del cardinale Carlo Borromeo*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», I, 2006, 2, pp. 313-349.

one of his homilies –, a circumcision which should have come true, according to the Fragnito interpretation²⁸, in the form of a real “self-mutilation” of the believers’ intellectual faculties, and consequent restriction of the limits of the knowledge which is permissible for a good Christian. A restriction where the awareness and interpretation of the Sacred Scripture do not have place, but rather are totally banned, upon pain of error and, finally, of the same eternal damnation.

In this meaning, in order to defeat the error they put into action a series of measures aimed at realising a real removal of theology from the daily devotional practice, especially by substituting confutation with indoctrination, controversial literature with catechisms, manuals about the confession with cases of conscience, and finally with a progressive affirming of the «moral, disciplinary and catechistical dimension, respect to the Scriptural one» in the predication itself (Fragnito, p. 268, n. 25). Besides, if the climate following the severe Sixtine-Clementine Index induced the authors to censor their own writings²⁹, it was unavoidable that readers too (especially the more devote and obedient such us women, in particular nuns) “self-censored” their readings, by incessantly appealing to inquisitors, bishops and confessors in order to obtain permission and reading licenses for texts that were, at the same time, their principal means for devotion as well as for first literacy. It clearly stands out the aim – particularly strong during the pontificate of Pope Ghislieri, and somewhat softer the subsequent years – of what Fragnito defines the «policy [...] to inculcate the practice of continuously turning to central offices, as well as of consolidating, through subtle methods of pressure and dissuasion, the influence on minds and consciences [...]» (*ibid.*, p. 229). Later on, the oscillating position of the censorial organs and the subsequent failure of the control on books (especially in some field of the devotional production, such as the «historiette», lectionaries, orations, etc.), and finally the «progressive relaxation of the censorial effort» (*ibid.*, p. 256), according to the scholar do

²⁸ Fragnito, p. 259, n. 202; also Ead., *Proibito capire*, cit., p. 12.

²⁹ In connection to this the Italian scholar, in addition to mentioning the well-known event regarding the self-censorship by Torquato Tasso and his “Gerusalemme Liberata” (see A. Quondam, “*Sta notte mi sono svegliato con questo verso in bocca*”. Tasso, *Controriforma e classicismo*, in G. Venturi (ed.), *Torquato Tasso e la cultura estense*, Firenze, Olschki, 1999, pp. 535-595; G. Fragnito, *Torquato Tasso, Paolo Costabili e la revisione della “Gerusalemme Liberata”*, «Schifanoia» 22/23, 2002, pp. 55-61), she cites the case of Girolamo Muzio who, in a letter of 1575 sent to card. Alessandro Farnese, confessed that he had abandoned the writing of his sacred poem *Il Redentore*, after knowing the Master of Sacred Palace Paolo Costabili’s prohibition about the Latin and vernacular poems dealing with theological issues (in *Lettere di Girolamo Muzio giustinopolitano conservate nell’Archivio governativo di Parma*, ed. by A. Ronchini, Parma, Real Deputazione di Storia Patria, 1864, p. 227; cit. by Fragnito, p. 149, n. 33). About a case – unsuccessful – of preventive self-censorship made by Giovan Battista Giraldi on his own work *Hecatommithi* (Mondovì, 1564), and about other cases of literary works punt on the Index see now U. Rozzo, *La letteratura italiana negli “Indici” del Cinquecento*, Udine, Forum, 2005.

everything but confirm how the principal objective of the posttridentine Church was not much, though declared, the struggle against a religiosity polluted by superstition and corrupted texts, but rather a different objective stands out: «a clear pedagogical plain, aimed at averting the faithful from old practices of reading, and at nourishing them with a few elementary notions» (*ibid.*, p. 310). A plan that was therefore functional to «the removal of the Catholics away from a more intimate and individual piety, based on the understanding of the read, recited or listened words» (*ibid.*, pp. 257-258).

The disciplined reader who emerges from the portrait depicted by Fragnito, is a Christian afraid of the severe inquisitorial policy, bewildered by the scenes of book burning, in which – in spite of the recommendations coming from Rome – the vernacular Bibles often risked to be thrown together with books by heretics and heresiarchs. A reader, finally, exhausted by the prohibitions of reading works that, after the advent of the *ars artificialiter scribendi* had become of daily use, such as vernacular Sacred Scriptures, *Epistole et evangelii*, compendiums of sacred history, the *Ufficioli della Madonna*, as well as works of the literature of entertaining which had the largest diffusion, i.e. the chivalric poems, from the *Amadigi* to *Orlando Furioso*³⁰.

This good, disciplined, Christian soon got used to putting into reality the dictates of the new *theologia practica* (i.e. the «juice, the substance of all the Theology concerning the good manners») spread by the posttridentine season, and to receive the «salt of the Christian knowledge»³¹, which is sufficiently diffused by the *Catechismo romano* and by the “convenient readings”. Again Silvio Antoniano in fact, in his *Educatione christiana* do point out to the family men, as well as to teachers, the canon of the good readings for the young: naturally, the «devout books», in particular the same «life and death of Jesus Christ our Saviour» (defined «the book of the Cross», II. 133); at school then, the reading of the Gentiles’ books, after choosing «with selection, and judgement»

³⁰ About the Church’s aversion to poems as able to open «the door to necromancy, & magic arts, & other drawback», as in the words by Antonio Possevino, see Fragnito, pp. 148-177. About prohibited literature see N. Longo, *La letteratura proibita*, in: *Letteratura italiana*, directed by A. Asor Rosa, vol. V: *Le Questioni*, Torino, Einaudi, 1986, pp. 965-999; U. Rozzo (ed.), *La censura libraria nell’Europa del secolo XVI*, Udine, Forum, 1997; G. Patrizi (selection and introduction by), *La letteratura proibita. Autori dall’indice: Girolamo Savonarola, Giovanni Boccaccio, Pietro Aretino, Pasquinate del 5 e 600, Antonio Vignali, Antonio Rocco, Ferrante Pallavicino, Giacomo Casanova, Tommaso Crudeli, Giorgio Baffo, Domenico Tempio, Niccolò*, apparatus by D. Carmosino, Roma, Ist. Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato-Archivi di Stato, 2003; U. Rozzo, *La letteratura italiana negli “Indici” del Cinquecento*, cit.

³¹ See the premise to Silvio Antoniano’s work written by the Dominican Felice Figliucci. This literary man, in the world Alessio Figliucci (Siena, 1518-1595), in 1556 took vows and abandoned the previous production (of political and philosophical nature) in order to devote himself to the translation from Latin into vernacular of the *Catechismo, cioè Istruzione secondo il decreto del Concilio di Trento a’ parochi, pubblicato per commandanto del santiss. s.n. papa Pio V. Et tradotto per ordine di sua santità in lingua volgare dal r.p.f. Alesso Figliucci, de l’ordine de’ predicatori*, In Roma, Paolo Manuzio, 1566.

(Virgil, Cicero «and a few other», III.38) – since even they can «bring much utility» (III.37) –, will be added to the reading of «some useful and praised Christian books, especially the Roman Catechism»; the «exposition of the Sunday oration», the «lives of Saints [...] and the Ecclesiastic history» follow; again proverbs (from the Book of Proverbs and *Ecclesiasticus*), but in this case the teacher should avail himself of «the help of some good expositor»; finally fairytales and apologues follow (III.41); it is hoped for that girls «are able to recite the Office of the Blessed Virgin, and to read the lives of Saints, and some spiritual books» (III.46). Therefore also a rigorous and predefined course of readings contributes to fulfilling the final objective, that is to educate sons able to live «not fruitlessly, but virtuously in the homeland, and among the people», in virtue of their being good Christians in the «cognition, and observation of the divine law»³².

Actually, in the shaping of the good *christianus* and consequently of the good *civis*, the expectations of pedagogical nature as well as of acculturation and civilisation ones, both by the modern State (Antoniano again talks about «conservation and safety of an entire republic», commended by men and rewarded by God)³³, and by the Tridentine Church, converged. The category, initially sociological and nowadays historiographical, of the *social disciplining*³⁴, is completely expressed through the Christian pedagogy of Antoniano, but also of other educators of the Catholic Renewal (such as Ansaldo Cebà, or Orlando Pescetti and before them, the French Jean Bodin and Giovanni Fungeri), who all engaged in carefully outlining the educational parameters for the formation of the *good son*, naturally perfect Christian, and *consequently* good citizen³⁵. The sixteenth-century Church, through reaffirming a renovated Chri-

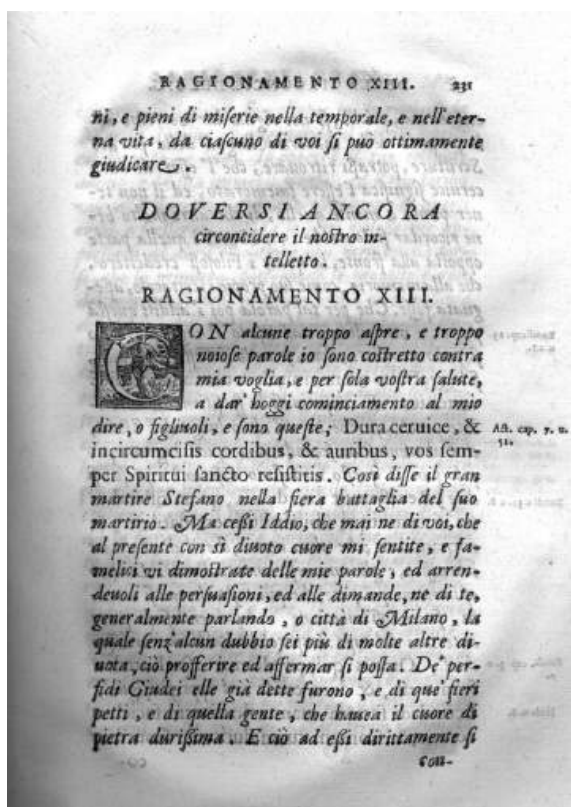
³² *Tre libri dell'educatione christiana dei figliuoli*, cit., see the: *Esortazione: Silvio Antoniano ai padri di famiglia salute nel signore*.

³³ *Ibid.*, see in particular the Chap. 5: *Quanto sia accetta à dio la buona educatione de i figliuoli*.

³⁴ As well-known, the category of the so-called “social disciplining” was elaborated around the early Seventies by the German historian Gehrard Oestreich, and almost contemporaneously to the concept, strictly related, of “confessionalisation” – i.e. the definition or consolidation of the doctrinal principles, during the crucial phase of the rising of Confessional Churches following the Protestant schism – in order to indicate that complex phenomenon of general transformation of the State, the society and the people, which took place in the early modern Europe – which is considered by Oestreich the necessary precondition for the democratisation of the centuries XIX-XX. For a review of the literature about this, see W. Reinhard, *Disciplinamento sociale, confessionalizzazione, modernizzazione. Un discorso storiografico*, in P. Prodi (ed.), *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1994, pp. 101-123; H. Shelling, *Chiese confessionali e disciplinamento sociale. Un bilancio provvisorio della ricerca storica*, *ibid.*, pp. 125-160.

³⁵ On the counter-reformist pedagogy see L. Secco, *Pedagogia della Controriforma*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1938 (in particular, the education of the good citizen: pp. 73-81) and L. Volpicelli (ed.), *Il pensiero pedagogico della controriforma*, Firenze, Coedizioni Giuntine-Sansoni, 1960. A review, with anthology, of the Authors is now in R. Sani, *Educazione e istituzioni scolastiche nell'Italia moderna (secoli XV-XIX)*, cit.

Federico Borromeo, *Doversi ancora circondare il nostro intelletto*, In: *I sacri ragionamenti fatti nelle maggiori solennità al popolo milanese*, Volume secondo, In Milano, [per Dionisio Gariboldo], 1633. (Reproduction courtesy of the Sperelliana Library in Gubbio).



stian moral (even though reshaped by the driving forces of the anti-Protestant reaction) takes a path that sometimes coincides with the one of the rising modern State. Needs, that even seem different and opposite (laic and religious, political and spiritual at the same time), however meet on the common ground of the tweaking of a “canon of virtues”, which contribute to mould the obedient individual and respectful of his own duties, lover of the order, prompt and ready to get into the circle of the social utility/solidarity, and finally an individual inclined to the standardisation of the models of behaviour, even of hygienic-sanitary nature, etc. And this coincidence of aims does not exclude the coincidence of means and tools, whereas we consider that the censorship itself – that from the XII to the XVI century had been a prerogative of the Roman Church, and especially aimed at containing the spreading of heretical ideas – from now on was adopted also by the modern State, with the aim to guarantee the self-conservation of the political power and consequently of the social order³⁶. Self-conservation and governableness gave impulse to a new

³⁶ For a general picture of the theories about censorship, see L. Bianchin, *Dove non arriva la legge. Dottrine della censura nella prima età moderna*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2005. For the history of book censorship in modern age see: A. Rotondò, *La censura ecclesiastica e la cultura*, in *Storia d'Italia*. V. 2, *I documenti*, Torino, Einaudi, 1973, pp. 1397-1492; U. Rozzo (ed.), *La censura libra-*

political practice, but it is the Christian tradition to “imbue” it with moral and spiritual values, thanks to what Dilwyn Knox defines the internalisation of a «rational morality», which is realised also through applying a *disciplina corporis* that is externalised with the *civilitas* – a propaedeutics that is necessary to prepare people «to receive the Christian faith»³⁷.

Actually, the aforementioned expression by cardinal Federico, the “circumcision of the intellect” does outline a panorama of religious disciplining which is very different from that one depicted by Gigliola Fragnito, as now clearly explained by Marzia Giuliani³⁸. The bishop philosopher and pastor, pious man and humanist, scholar and patron of arts at the same time, illustrates in his writings a conception of the spiritual search, in which the good Christian must apply his best intellectual faculties. According to Borromeo in fact, the «will of knowing», which is «typical of the human nature», and which «already gives principle to the noblest arts», well:

this incommutable law, even so deeply fixed inside our minds, then it does disappear when it is time not to look into the mundane things anymore, rather only into the celestial and divine ones [...]. Then you do completely not care of the source of the Grace, neither are you curious searcher of it, nor do you desire to wander the large fields of God’s Reign: and this pernicious quiet, this wicked rest, and this your tepid willing, make your soul not regret her blame.

The strongest fight made by Borromeo is that one against «this wicked rest», against «this ignorance, [that], my beloved ones, causes in ourselves so pernicious effects, to the point that she prepares the road to perdition: whereas the

ria nell’Europa del secolo XVI, cit.; M. Infelise, *I libri proibiti*, cit.; C. Stango (ed.), *Censura ecclesiastica e cultura politica in Italia tra Cinquecento e Seicento: 6. Giornata Luigi Firpo. Atti del Convegno, 5 marzo 1999*, Firenze, Olschki, 2001; F. Barbierato (ed.), *Libro e censure*, introduction by M. Infelise, Milano, Sylvestre Bonnard, 2002; M. Consiglia, *Letture proibite: la censura dei libri nel Regno di Napoli in età borbonica*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2002; M.I. Palazzolo, *I libri il trono l’altare: la censura nell’Italia della restaurazione*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2003; L. Febvre, H.-J. Martin, *Censura e libri proibiti*, in Id., *La nascita del libro*, ed. by A. Petrucci, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1988, pp. 309-313; P. Lopez, *Inquisizione stampa e censura nel Regno di Napoli tra ’500 e ’600*, Napoli, Edizioni del Delfino, 1974.

³⁷ D. Knox, *Disciplina: le origini monastiche e clericali del buon comportamento nell’Europa cattolica del Cinquecento e del primo Seicento*, in: P. Prodi (ed.), *Disciplina dell’anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1994, pp. 63-99. See also Id., *Le origini monastiche e clericali della civiltà delle buone maniere in Europa*, «Annali dell’Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento. Jahrbuch des italienisch-deutschen historischen Instituts in Trient», XVIII, 1992, pp. 335-370 (transl. from: «*Disciplina*»: *the monastic and clerical origins of European Civility*, in J. Monfasani, R.G. Musto, (eds.), *Renaissance society and culture. Essays in honor of Eugene F. Rice Jr.*, New York 1991, p. 107-135). About the *civilitas* as adaptation, monastic-clerical before, Catholic reformist after, of the classical ideal of the *modestia*, and finally as “universal language” and unifying element of the Christian West, in the same way as the Latin language, see again Knox, *Disciplina: le origini monastiche e clericali del buon comportamento*, cit., pp. 75-77.

³⁸ M. Giuliani, *Il vescovo filosofo. Federico Borromeo e I sacri ragionamenti*, Firenze, Olschki, 2007, particularly at the pp. 226-227, and note n. 56.

recognition of the sin greatly prevent us from badly operating, something that, if we are aware of it, is naturally despised and abhorred by everyone of us».

Therefore the ignorance, the dimming of the light of intellect, do lead us toward the real error, in which we fall «when someone, with a great presumption of his knowledge, convinces himself to comprehend things concerning his salvation, and therefore [he thinks] to be very wise and sharp in this matter: and this kind of people, being deceived by their own opinions, are sated and happy with what they do, and they do not search further, and with fearless audacity think about themselves in a presumptuous way»³⁹. Therefore, in order to stimulate the healthiest faculties of the intellect together with the search for the spiritual truth and the salvation, Federico Borromeo poses only the book at the centre of the formative path of the laic believers, together with the listening of the preaching and the attending of the schools of Christian doctrine. After this more attentive reading of the Borromaic text, we therefore should not marvel that the bishop strongly calls upon his believers to the individual reading:

Oh, now someone will say, I have not books, and I have no literacy and knowledge enough to read them even though I wanted to. In this moment I turn to those people who are able to read, what I hope for almost each of you; and even though there is somebody who does not, let him listen to those who delight in reading, and let him to derive from the other people's reading some fruits for himself. And if there is somebody who is not so fortunate to have any book, let him turn to me because I will be always glad to give whoever asks me for it; and I will be delighted of this request and I will celebrate it very much⁴⁰.

Indeed, it is around the book that the manifold strategies of empowering the confessionalisation revolve, strategies which were typical of the posttridentine pastoral irradiating from Rome toward the North – as well as South-Italy.

5. Libraries, printing houses and bibliographic canons: strategies for confessionalising and disciplining readers

In a Europe driven by reformist movements, the disciplining represents the answer to the increasingly manifest of demands of social control, a control to be perfected also through controlling the book production, but also the

³⁹ Quotations are from the homily: *Doversi ancora circoncidere il nostro intelletto*, in *I sacri ragionamenti di Federico Borromeo cardinale del titolo di Santa Maria degli Angeli ed arcivescovo di Milano distinti in 10 volumi*. Vol. 2: *I sacri ragionamenti fatti nelle maggiori solennità al popolo milanese*, In Milano, [per Dionisio Gariboldo], 1633, cit. at p. 237, ll. 11-15. The copy consulted is placed at the rare section of the Sperelliana Library in Gubbio. I would like to warmly thank the library's staff for the generous collaboration.

⁴⁰ The passage (quoted from the *Sacri Ragionamenti*, IX, ix, p. 446) is cited also in M. Giuliani, *Il vescovo filosofo: Federico Borromeo e I sacri ragionamenti*, cit., p. 348; here see again, with regard to the Humanistic ideal of the “friendship of books”, *ibid.*

book circulation and the access to books, something which corresponds to the circulation of ideas, religious and non religious ones. This control takes shape into different, and complementary, strategies.

5.1. *The canons of “good readings”*

The birth of the typographic book, which had been enthusiastically welcomed by Italian Humanists as a «miraculous process» and an «industrious invention» (Giuniano Maio), «heavenly grace come to us through the divine shepherd» (Giovanni Andrea Bussi), «extraordinary invention» (Gaspere da Verona)⁴¹, just one century later begins to be seen with suspicion and caution. And even the “father of bibliography” Conrad Gessner published in Zurich in 1545 the first universal bibliography (the *Bibliotheca universalis*) – exemplary fruit of the Humanistic season of Renaissance, with her aim to cover the sum of human knowledge through the census of all the printed and hand-written works⁴² –; on the other hand, soon after, in the Italian Catholic world Anton Francesco Doni, when publishing in 1550 the first Italian bibliography in vernacular (even though with all the limits which have been denounced)⁴³, somehow felt obliged to underline that he had mentioned the «vernacular Authors (those who are not prohibited, suspected or damned by the Church and by the world)»⁴⁴.

⁴¹ See citations in M. Santoro, *Storia del libro italiano. Libro e società in Italia dal Quattrocento al Novecento*, Milano, Bibliografica, c1994, pp. 38-39 (now see the second edition: *Storia del libro italiano. Libro e società in Italia dal Quattrocento al nuovo millennio*, Milano, Bibliografica, 2008).

⁴² *Bibliotheca universalis, sive Catalogus omnium scriptorum locupletissimus, in tribus linguis, Latina, Graeca et Hebraica*, Tiguri, Christophorum Froschouerum, 1545. About Gessner see A. Serrai, *Conrad Gesner*, ed. by M. Cochetti, Roma, Bulzoni, 1990; already L. Balsamo underlined how the work and the figure herself of Gessner had remained “isolated” in the same cultural environment of provenance, and the same happened to his idea of a critical and classified repertory (in fact the original edition did not succeed, but rather did its *Epitome*, after being deprived of the critical notes and of the classificatory scheme, the *Pandectae*). In the same way, the related Gessner’s project of a public library opened to *indocti* and *rudes* too remained unheard (L. Balsamo, *Il canone bibliografico di Konrad Gesner e il concetto di Biblioteca pubblica nel cinquecento* in *Studi di biblioteconomia e storia del libro in onore di Francesco Barberi*, Roma, AIB, 1976, pp. 77-95; see now Id., *La Bibliografia. Storia di una tradizione*, Milano, Sansoni, 1995, pp. 24-38).

⁴³ *La libreria del Doni fiorentino. Nella quale sono scritti tutti gl’ autori vulgari con cento discorsi sopra quelli. Tutte le tradutioni fatte all’ altre lingue, nella nostra & una tavola generalmente come si costuma fra librari*, In Vinegia, appresso Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, 1550 (reprinted in Venice by Giolito in 1557 and 1558, and by Altobello Salicato in 1580). About the innovativity of the Doni’s *libreria* see R. Chartier, *Libraries without walls*, «Representation», no. 42 (Spring, 1993), pp. 38-52. Correctly L. Balsamo punctuates the non-exhaustivity of the repertory, which with difficulty could be defined “national” (*La bibliografia. Storia di una tradizione*, Firenze, c1984, pp. 45-46). See also A. Quondam, *La letteratura in tipografia*, in *Letteratura italiana*. Vol. II, *Produzione e consumo*, Torino, Einaudi, pp. 620-636.

⁴⁴ From the letter «Ai lettori», c. A7r (the copy consulted belongs to the edition: Vinegia, appresso Gabriel Giolito de’ Ferrari, 1558, now at the Library Romolo Spezioli in Fermo).

But the strategies of “empowering” the process of confessionalising and disciplining come into reality also through the building of positive and constructive apparatus, i.e. not only based on prohibitions but based on offerings of alternative, safe and controlled routes for the education of good Christians. From this perspective the exact starting point of the disciplining of readings is represented by the *Bibliotheca selecta* that the Jesuit Antonio Possevino published in 1593⁴⁵ – a few years before the publishing of the Sixtine-Clementine Index. As a mirror image – and in an integrative way – with respect to the Index, the *bibliotheca selecta* offers a list of books “accepted”: a reasoned bibliography and aimed at shaping an exemplary library, which could meet the need to educate, through safe and already experimented paths of reading, the «élites of the Europe catholically reformed as well as the New World conquered by the Christian faith»⁴⁶.

Possevino then poses himself in clear opposition to Gessner – who, on the other hand, constituted for him a bibliographic source of excellence, as witnessed by the copy of the *Bibliotheca* (kept by the Archiginnasio in Bologna) which Possevino personally used while working on the second part of the bibliographic repertory of Possevino, the bio-bibliography of ecclesiastic authors, ancient and modern ones entitled *Apparatus Sacer* (Venetiis, apud Societatem Venetam, 1603-1606), which was written through adopting, sometimes expurgating (naturally with regard to the banned authors as well as printers), often enlarging the bibliographic items found in the Gessner repertory⁴⁷. Against the Gessner idea, Humanistic as aforesaid, of a universality of readings, the Possevino one represents the «almost official model of the Catholic culture»⁴⁸, standing out as the ideal of the new Catholic encyclopaedism based on the authoritarian idea of a selection of the counselled readings, which were necessary to re-establish a conformed Catholicism and “well armed” against heterodox deviations.

⁴⁵ *Bibliotheca selecta qua agitur de ratione studiorum in historia, in disciplinis, in salute omnium procuranda*, Romae, ex typographia Apostolica Vaticana, 1593 (Romae in Vaticano, excudebat Dominicus Basa typographus pontificius).

⁴⁶ A. Biondi, *La Bibliotheca selecta di Antonio Possevino. Un progetto di egemonia culturale*, in G.P. Brizzi (ed.), *La «Ratio Studiorum». Modelli culturali e pratiche educative dei Gesuiti in Italia tra Cinque e Seicento*, Roma, Bulzoni, pp. 43-75, cit. from p. 45.

⁴⁷ L. Balsamo, *Antonio Possevino S.I. bibliografo della Controriforma e diffusione della sua opera in area anglicana*, Firenze, Olschki, 2006 (already in Id., *How to doctor a Bibliography: Antonio Possevino's Practice*, in G. Fragnito, ed., *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 50-78). See also B. Mahlmann-Bauer, *Antonio Possevino's Bibliotheca selecta. Knowledge as a weapon*, in M. Hinz, D. Zardin (eds.), *I Gesuiti e la Ratio Studiorum*, Milano, 2004, pp. 315-355; C. Carella, *Antonio Possevino e la biblioteca «selecta» del principe cristiano*, in *Bibliothecae Selectae: da Cusano a Leopardi*, ed. by E. Canone, Firenze, Olschki, 1993, pp. 507-516.

⁴⁸ R. De Maio, *I modelli culturali della Controriforma. Le biblioteche dei conventi italiani alla fine del Cinquecento*, in *Riforme e miti nella Chiesa del Cinquecento*, Napoli, Guida, 1973, pp. 365-381, p. 360.

The Jesuit writer therefore pursues the goals of the Catholic Renewal, concretising them into a prescriptive bibliographic canon that truly represents the “pacific” postridentine counteroffensive expressed such emblematically in the educational model promoted by the Company of Jesus. Not without reason did the Possevino Catholic encyclopaedia pose itself in the wake of the *Ratio atque institutio studiorum*, the Jesuit educational programme (as clearly announced in the title itself: *Bibliotheca selecta qua agitur de ratione studiorum*), by offering “safe readings” and chosen according to specific pedagogical criteria, adequate to the *Coltura de gl’ingegni*⁴⁹ i.e. good for cultivating the many «gifts, which God put into the human geniuses», and for educating all the social categories, from the prince to the soldier⁵⁰, in Italy as well as in the entire Catholic world. Again Balsamo’s researches have underlined the strong publishing engagement of Possevino especially in Europe, where he did his best for to have published by the various printing houses of Jesuitical colleges in the northern countries many vernacular catechisms, grammar books, and separate parts of the *Bibliotheca Selecta*, which were suited for «the cultural and social condition of the potential readers», «aimed at the school use» as well as at «educating the young of the princely families»⁵¹.

Surely Possevino does not forget – echoing back to the words of the *Tre libri dell’educatione christiana* by Silvio Antoniano – to warn educators against the «much curious, or penetrating, intellects»:

Now, even though the genius of some Professors look for freedom (not to say licence) in searching, and having opinions, more than should be expected, however we know that the modest and pious intellects must not desire any freedom, but only that one that is joined with virtue and pioussness [...]. Let each doctrine then be far from any temerity. Namely with the premise that in teaching we must care principally of corroborating the faith and nourishing piety, nobody teaches anything that is not in agreement with the meaning and intelligence of the Roman Christian Church and with the received traditions, anything that is in no way contrary to the firmness of the faith and the firmness of the sole piety. At the same way, whereas no danger for the faith and piety is imminent, it must be avoided any suspect neither of putting up new things or of stirring up new doctrines [...]⁵².

⁴⁹ This is in fact the title of the section contained in the Book I of the *Bibliotheca selecta*, and which «had the largest number of separate re-editions, the first one of which was in Italian» (L. Balsamo, *Antonio Possevino S.I. bibliografo della Controriforma*, cit., p. 104), i.e. the edition: Vicenza, appresso Giorgio Greco, 1598 (transl. by Mariano Lauretti). Now the annotated edition is available, edited by C. Casalini, L. Salvarani, *Antonio Possevino S.J. Coltura degl’ingegni*, Roma, Anicia, 2008.

⁵⁰ Not without reason is Possevino author of the successful work *Soldato christiano, con l’istruzione dei capi dello esercito catolico* (Roma, 1569). About the education of the Christian soldier see L. Secco, *Pedagogia della Controriforma*, cit., pp. 81-85.

⁵¹ L. Balsamo, *Antonio Possevino S.I. Bibliografo della Controriforma*, cit., p. 134.

⁵² See the chapter n. 33 *Rimedi contro la libertà de gl’ingegni troppo o curiosi o penetranti*, in R. Sani, *Educazione e istituzioni scolastiche nell’Italia moderna*, Milano, ISU Università Cattolica, 1999, cit., p. 118.

The quoted passages reflect a direction that was common to the posttridentine theologians and educators, in which the strong action in favour of the confessionalisation – i.e. the adhesion, through the *confessio* or public declaration of faith, to one of the religious confessions which characterised the European panorama the day after the Lutheran fracture and consequently breaking the confessional unity – had the objective of a «more rigorous control of individuals and their observance of rules». In the various confessions, this control concretised itself through means that, even though different, all included the disciplining, both religious (with the adoption of rituals) and social (internalising of a new order) as well as cultural (transformation of the language), with the aim of a general «homogenisation of subject citizens»⁵³.

In Italy the confessionalisation (defined, by Reinhard again, only the *first phase* of the social disciplining) certainly took shape with a capillary, and sometimes harsh, action of censorship and control, which was exerted with different modalities both by the Congregation of the Holy Office and by the Congregation of the Index – as demonstrated by the impressive work carried out within the project RICL. But not only. This action of censorial “containment” of printing and bad readings (principal means of deviation, for a religiosity which had demonstrated to be potentially corruptible), was counter-pointed by an equal and all the same strong action of “promotion” of a “conformed” religiousness. This positive action was increased by the production of other typologies of “pious” books in vernacular, which soon took the place of the forbidden ones: the old Latin *Ufficiola* were opposed by a great flourishing of *Vite della Vergine*⁵⁴, of *Rosari* and *Litanie*

⁵³ W. Reinhard, *Disciplinamento sociale, confessionalizzazione, modernizzazione*, cit., pp. 109 *passim*.

⁵⁴ It immediately hits you, also after a quick examination of the database *Edit.16*, that the presence of Latin *Ufficiola* is overwhelming (compared with the number of vernacular ones), as a demonstration of the capillary seeking out toward this typology of books in the XVI century. In comparison *Edit.16* offers us a very high number of other vernacular devotional books such as, for example, the *Rosario della Vergine Maria* (a dozen editions in Latin, compared with about 118 in Vernacular). In particular the *Vite della Vergine* (not rarely joined with the telling of Christ’s life and the Passion) kept on circulating with a good success, since until now about ten Latin editions have been available in Italian libraries, compared to more than 40 in Vernacular – among which the several editions of the *Vita di Maria Vergine* by the Franciscan Bartolomeo Meduna (in 1588 author of *Lo scolare*, about which see E. Patrizi, *La trattatistica educativa tra Rinascimento e Controriforma. L’idea dello scolaro di Cesare Crispolti*, Pisa-Roma, Istituti editoriali e poligrafici, 2005), by Pietro Aretino, and again various editions of the *Miracoli della Vergine* by the Camaldolese monk and Humanist Silvano Razzi.

The religious works by Aretino had a strong success, and during the 1600s they were all reprinted – although in the *Index* of 1596 we find mentioned, among the *Certorum Auctorum, Libri prohibiti*: «Petri Aretini, opera omnia» (c. K1v) –, under the pseudonym of Partenio Etiro, especially in Venice by the printer Marco Ginammi (see M.C. Napoli, *L’impresa del libro nell’Italia del Seicento: la bottega di Marco Ginammi*, Napoli, Guida Editori, 1990; but, in addition to the Venetian ones, also a Macerata’s edition should be mentioned: Appresso Filippo Camacci e Alessandro Sacchini, 1646. See in SBN, and in the English collective on line catalogue Copac: <<http://copac.ac.uk/>>). About the Aretino’s religious prose writings and his inclination toward the reformer movements see R.B. Waddington, *Pietro Aretino, religious writer*, «Renaissance Studies», 2006, 20, 3, pp. 277-292; E. Boillet, *L’Arétin et la Bible*, Genève, Droz, 2007.

mariane (especially the Loreto litanies); the *Epistole e Vangeli* were replaced with the *Vite di Cristo* and the *Meditationes*, but also by the *Vite dei santi* and the *Novo Leggendario*⁵⁵; and finally, the Bible – whose various Vernacularizations were in 1596 definitively prohibited⁵⁶ – gave place to the new Catechisms, particularly Jesuitical ones (from the “triplex” catechism by Pietro Canisio, 1555-1558; passing through the *Dottrina cristiana breve* and the *Dichiaratione più copiosa de la dottrina christiana* by Roberto Bellarmino, 1598; to the *Dottrina christiana* by Giovanni Battista Eliano, Rome 1586, even illustrated for illiterate people too⁵⁷). But the biblical text also gave place to a very rich production of what Danilo Zardin efficaciously defines «works biblical-derived», also in Vernacular: works which proliferated just thanks to the «structural fecundity of the biblical writing as “generative of other texts”», as already underlined by Edoardo Barbieri⁵⁸.

⁵⁵ The *Vite dei santi* (with *Martirologi* and *Leggendari*) occur in *Edit.16* with more than 130 items in Vernacular (from the widespread medieval compilation *Legenda aurea* by Jacopo da Varazze, to the *Nuovo Leggendario* translated from the *Flos sanctorum* by the Spanish Alfonso Villegas Selvago, and the continuation of this last one, the *Flos sanctorum* of the Jesuit Pedro da Ribadeneira), against “only” about 70 Latin occurrences (especially the various editions of the *Martyrologium*, destined *ad sacerdotum usum*). In SBN we find even more than 300 occurrences of vernacular “lives” (including the lives of “particular” saints, i.e. saints from particular towns, religious orders, protectors of families, or sacred representations, etc.), against ca. 60 *vitae* and ca. 50 *martyrologia* in Latin.

Also the *Vite dei santi* (without considering the large amount of “particular” *vitae*, of local saints, or *Leggendari delle vergini*, etc.) represented in 1500s, and even more in 1600s, a basic text for the devotion and especially for the religious “literacy”. Again, they represented a way of access, even “mediated”, to the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, since they narrated the lives of patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, the lives of Jesus and the Virgin Mary (as in Villegas’ work, see E. Barbieri, *Fra tradizione e cambiamento: note sul libro spirituale del XVI secolo*, in E. Barbieri, D. Zardin (eds.), *Libri, biblioteche e cultura nell’Italia del Cinque e Seicento*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, pp. 3-61). In this way, the spiritual formation took shape through the ancient educational and literary tradition of the *exempla* – now reinvigorated in this new religious appearance –, as can be seen for example from the explicit allusion in the title *Giardino d’esempi* (or *Prato spirituale* by the Dominican Serafino Razzi, brother of the mentioned Silvano). Finally, the *vitae* had offered an excellent means for learning to read all along, as witnessed by the list of textbooks used in Venetian «vernacular schools» in 1587 (P.F. Grendler, *What Zuanne read in school: vernacular texts in sixteenth century Venetian schools*, «The Sixteenth Century Journal», Vol. 13, no. 1, Spring 1982, pp. 41-54).

⁵⁶ The prohibition of the access to Biblical translations was counterpointed by a flourishing of biblical and theological studies, as well as of a series of texts, aimed at facilitating the consultation and the reading of the Bible, like concordances and repertories of conceptual and narrative references, or vocabularies for preachers, such as the *Vocabulista ecclesiastico* (Barbieri, *Fra tradizione e cambiamento: note sul libro spirituale del XVI secolo*, cit., pp. 35 and ff.).

⁵⁷ A. Prosperi, *Intorno ad un catechismo figurato del tardo ’500*, «Quaderni di Palazzo Te», 5, 1985, pp. 45-53; G. Palumbo, *Speculum Peccatorum. Frammenti di storia nello specchio delle immagini tra Cinque e Seicento*, Napoli, Liguori, 1990, pp. 69-105; about the use of images and symbols in the Jesuit production see now L. Salviucci Insolera, *L’Imago primi saeculi (1640) e il significato dell’immagine allegorica nella Compagnia di Gesù. Genesi e fortuna del libro*, Roma, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2004, and related bibliography.

⁵⁸ See D. Zardin, in the above mentioned paper presented at the Macerata conference: *Bibbia e apparati biblici nei conventi italiani del ’500 e ’600*, see p. 103 and note n. 72; Barbieri, *Fra tradizione e cambiamento: note sul libro spirituale del XVI secolo*, cit.

In this general panorama, the production of the Vernacular book stands out, which was clearly conditioned by the postridentine turning point and, subsequently, by the inquisitorial rigours, but which was undoubtedly very rich and continuously increasing, especially the production of the Vernacular religious books – above all in Rome, Naples and Milan, as highlighted by the studies on the history of Italian books and publishing⁵⁹, and in particular the researches on the religious book by Edoardo Barbieri, Ugo Rozzo and naturally Danilo Zardin⁶⁰.

However, in close conjunction with this new and copious book production, we should take into account also the birth of official printing houses directly or indirectly managed by ecclesiastic bodies. A manifestation themselves too of disciplining and control, these printing houses represent a crucial wedge of the general design put into action by the postridentine Church.

⁵⁹ See the effective synthesis outlined by L. Braidà in *Stampa e cultura in Europa tra XV e XVI secolo*, Roma-Bari, Laterza 2000 (reprint 2005). About the great importance of the religious production still in 1600s and 1700s, see M. Santoro, *Storia del libro italiano*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, c1994, pp. 167-174. Santoro cites statistical data from researches conducted on the base of publishers' annals (the Remondini in Bassano, or printers in Messina), of the permissions to print (granted by the Riformatori dello Studio di Padova), of the books' collections (the XVIIth century editions of Naples kept at the Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III di Napoli). The data inferred from the XVIIth century editions at the British Library witness some rather territorial differences in the Italian book production, with a prevailing literary production especially in Venice, Bologna and Florence (*ibid.*, pp. 174-186), but with a still prevailing religious publishing production in Naples, Rome and Milan of Borromeo. About the seventeenth-century publishing in Italy see F. Barberi, *Il libro italiano del Seicento*. Aggiornamento della bibliografia dei tipografi, editori e librai a Roma nel Seicento a cura di L. Baldacchini, Roma, Vecchiarelli, 1990; Id. *Introduzione alla tipografia italiana del Seicento*, «Accademie e biblioteche d'Italia», LII, n. 6 (1984), pp. 507-526.

⁶⁰ E. Barbieri, *Fra tradizione e cambiamento: note sul libro spirituale del XVI secolo*, cit.; U. Rozzo, *Il libro religioso*, a cura di U. Rozzo e R. Gorian, Milano, Bonnard, 2002; again D. Zardin, *Bibbia e apparati biblici nei conventi italiani del '500 e '600*, cit., and related bibliography; Id., *Mercato librario e letture devote nella svolta del Cinquecento tridentino. Note in margine ad un inventario milanese di libri di monache*, in N. Raponi, A. Turchini (eds.), *Stampa, libri e letture a Milano nell'età di Carlo Borromeo*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1992, pp. 135-246. Again, see the repertory of vernacular printed books for women came out from 1471 and the late 1600s, edited by Gabriella Zarri, *Donna, disciplina, creanza cristiana: un percorso di ricerca*, in Ead. (ed. by), *Donna, disciplina, creanza cristiana dal XVI al XVIII secolo. Studi e testi a stampa*, Roma, 1996, pp. 5-19 and P. Tantulli, *Nascita del Repertorio*, *ibid.*, pp. 397-405; the *Repertorio* is at the pp. 397-732). About the vernacular readings in the female convents see the interesting essay by Carmela Compare *Libri di donne e libri di monache alla fine del XVI secolo*, in the afore mentioned conference in Macerata (see *supra*) and the bibliography about female readings, which were not substantially different for the *sanctimoniales* and for women who lived in the world (cfr. p. 593), in particolare: C. Compare, *Vita religiosa e letture devote alla fine del XVI secolo. I libri delle monache e il Leggendaro delle santissime vergini*, «Rivista di storia del cristianesimo», 3, 2006, pp. 447-478; Ead., *Inventari di biblioteche negli ambienti monastiche femminili alla fine del XVI secolo*, «Genesis», 2, 2003, pp. 220-232; and D. Zardin, *Libri e biblioteche negli ambienti monastici dell'Italia del primo Seicento*, in *Donne, filosofia e cultura nel Seicento*, ed. by P. Totaro, Roma, 1999, pp. 347-383.

5.2. *The birth of ecclesiastic printing houses*

First of all the case of the Vatican printing house stands out, for importance and exemplarily, the *Stamperia Vaticana*⁶¹. The great project of Sixtus V at the beginning involved the setting up of the Congregation of the *Stamperia* in 1564, with the task of supervising the publishing of the official texts by the Fathers and the Doctors of the Church, and, in 1566, the publishing of the *Cathechismus Romanus seu Cathechismus ex decreto concilii Tridentini*; subsequently, the building of the new *Stamperia Vaticana*, in 1587, next to the rooms of the Vatican Library (object herself too of a *renovatio* in the years from 1587 and 1590⁶²). Actually an analogous project had previously been undertaken in 1561 by pope Pius IV, who founded the *Stamperia del Popolo Romano* under the supervision of Paolo Manuzio (son of the famous Aldo)⁶³, with the aim of publishing the texts of the Fathers of the Church; that project was given up (and the printing house donated to the City Council of Rome in 1563), but the “inquisitor” pope Sixtus V was the one who brought it to the fore, together with the project of the renovation of the Vatican Library.

No different is the case of the Congregation *De propaganda Fide*, set up in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV. The Congregation was soon provided with the *Stamperia di Propaganda Fide* (1626) and the *Collegio Urbano* (1627), this one devoted to the education of the missionary priests and moreover equipped with its own library (the *Biblioteca del Collegio di Propaganda*, established in the same year of 1627). The *Stamparia della Sacra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide*, also famous under the name of *Typographia polyglotta*, was founded just for the so-called “missionary apostolate” since it had the main aim to

⁶¹ This printing house, also known as *Tipografia Apostolica Vaticana* (1587-1610), was in 1609 unified with the official printing house of the Papal State, the *Stamperia Camerale* or *Tipografia della Camera Apostolica*. See F. Ascarelli, M. Menato, *La tipografia del '500 in Italia*, Firenze, Olshki, 1989, pp. 128-129; F. Barberi, *Paolo Manuzio e la stamperia romana, 1561-1570*, Roma, Gela, stampa 1986 (1 ediz. 1942); and V. Romani, *Per lo Stato e per la Chiesa: la Tipografia della Reverenda Camera Apostolica e le altre tipografie pontificie (secc. XVI-XVIII)*, «Il Bibliotecario», 1998, 2, pp. 175-192. In general on the Roman printing houses, in addition to the synthesis by Ascarelli, Menato, cit., see also F. Barberi, *Il libro italiano del Seicento*. Aggiornamento della bibliografia dei tipografi, editori e librai a Roma nel Seicento a cura di L. Baldacchini, Manziana (Roma), Vecchiarelli, 1990; also G.L. Masetti Zannini, *Stampatori e librai a Roma nella seconda metà del Cinquecento. Documenti inediti*, Roma, Palombi, 1980.

⁶² See *infra*. About the Sixtine *renovatio* of the Vatican Library see the work written in 1591 by the future founder of the *Biblioteca Angelica*, Angelo Rocca: *Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana a Sixto V pont. max. in splendidiorem, commodioremq. locum translata, et a fratre Angelo Roccha a Camerino... illustrata*, Romae, ex typographia Apostolica Vaticana, 1591. About the Vatican and other libraries in Rome see some sources of the time collected in V. Romani, *Biblioteche romane del Sei e Settecento*, Vecchiarelli Editore, Manziana, (Roma), 1996, and U. Rozzo, *Biblioteche italiane del Cinquecento tra Riforma e Controriforma*, Arti Grafiche Friulane, Udine, 1994.

⁶³ F. Barberi, *Paolo Manuzio e la stamperia del Popolo Romano (1561-1570), con documenti inediti*, Roma, Gela Reprint's, 1985; A.M. Giorgetti Vichi, *Annali della Stamperia del Popolo Romano (1570-1598)*, Roma, 1959.

provide missions with books, also in foreign languages and non-Latin typefaces, for their evangelisation mission toward the various people⁶⁴; her fame remained unchanged during the centuries, if we think that in 1700's the famous typographer Giambattista Bodoni carried out his juvenile apprenticeship there⁶⁵.

Also the Tipografia della Congregazione dell'Oratorio di Filippo Neri in Rome, even though it lasted only a few years (1593-1596) responded to an organic cultural project. Founded by the Oratorian cardinal Cesare Baronio with the aim of printing his *Annales ecclesiastici* – a work that was born in order to counterbalance the Protestant historiography and in particular the *Ecclesiastica historia* printed in Basilea in 1559⁶⁶ – the printing house was placed in the venue of the Congregation, the Chiesa Nova in Santa Maria della Vallicella. Moreover in the same place, already from 1581 the first nucleus had been established of the library Biblioteca Vallicelliana, i.e. the legacy of Achille Stazio (in 1603 followed by the one of the aforementioned Silvio Antoniano). And the Vallicelliana too was born as a “public library”, since the Stazio had expressly declared the aim to put his documentary collection at the disposal of anybody «ex estraneis probis viris ibi convenientibus»⁶⁷.

Again, see also the emblematic case of the organic system Seminary-printing house-library, which was successful especially among the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

In Padua from 1664 to 1697 the cardinal Gregorio Barbarigo was bishop – whose model moreover was, not without reason, the figure of the great Milanese archbishop Carlo Borromeo. In 1670 Barbarigo founded another Seminary (the first one had been founded in fact in 1566 after Trent, in order to

⁶⁴ Cit. da G. Pizzorusso, *La culture scientifique à Rome à l'époque moderne. I satelliti di Propaganda Fide: il Collegio Urbano e la Tipografia Poliglotta. Note di ricerca su due istituzioni culturali romane nel XVII secolo*, «Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome», 2004, 2, pp. 471-498. On the birth and history of this printing house, the difficult situation during the French domination and the following rebirth, see M. Galeotti, *Della Tipografia Poliglotta di Propaganda. Discorso per Melchiorre Galeotti*, Torino, P. di G. Marietti, 1866.

⁶⁵ G.B. Bodoni e la Propaganda fide, Parma, Museo Bodoniano-Biblioteca Palatina, printing 1959.

⁶⁶ On the various hypotheses concerning the genesis of the *Annales Ecclesiastici* as a reaction against the Protestant historiography of the Centuriators of Magdeburg, on impulse by Filippo Neri or others, see: M.T. Bonadonna Russo, *Baronio oratoriano*, «Memorie Oratoriane», 14 (1984), 27 and L. Martínez-Ferrer, E.A. Cerrato, *San Filippo Neri, Cesare Baronio e l'insegnamento della storia ecclesiastica*, «Annales Oratorii», 7 (2008), pp. 95-103 (also on line: <www.ora-toriosanfilippo.org/ferrer-cerrato.pdf>, last access: 15th May 2009).

⁶⁷ On the library and the printing house see E. Pinto, *La Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Roma*, Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, 1932; M.T. Rosa Corsini (ed.), *I libri di Achille Stazio alle origini della Biblioteca Vallicelliana*, Roma, De Luca, 1995; G. Finocchiaro, *Cesare Baronio e la Tipografia dell'Oratorio. Impresa e ideologia*, Firenze, Olschki, 2005. About Silvio Antoniano and his library see E. Patrizi, *Silvio Antoniano. Un umanista ed educatore nell'età della Riforma Cattolica e della Controriforma (1540-1603)*, Doctoral Thesis (cycle XX), Supervisor: Prof. Roberto Sani, Università degli Studi di Macerata, a.a. 2006/07, especially see the Third part.

educate priests according to the new dictates of the Catholic renewal), and to that one he wanted to annex a library, and a printing house too, the Tipografia del Seminario that he founded in 1683 on his own. The printing house, which was destined to become a relevant publishing centre in the following centuries too, was born with the intentional aim to print both textbooks of very high level for the diocesan Seminary (*ad usum Seminarii Patavini*), and religious books destined to the Eastern people (since the beginning in fact, it not only acquired Eastern typefaces, but was even for a short time provided with its own type foundry)⁶⁸. This model was soon consolidated and replicated: let us think about the Seminario Maggiore in Verona, first established by the cardinal Agostino Valier nel 1567 but actually rebuilt and provided with a printing house by Barbarigo's nephew, the cardinal Gianfrancesco Barbarigo (1658-1730). Similar experiences took place at the Seminary of Montefiascone (the author was another Barbarigo, this time the cardinal Marco Antonio, bishop of Montefiascone, 1640-1706), and again in the late 1600s in Ceneda and Belluno, again in 1700s in Feltre, Imola, Frascati, Treviso⁶⁹.

It is not a remote hypothesis that the first “pacer” for all these initiatives could have been represented, already since 1556, by the Tipografia del Collegio

⁶⁸ M. Santoro, *Storia del libro italiano*, cit., pp. 158-187; in particular the pp. 164-165. About Padova see G. Bellini, *Storia della tipografia del Seminario di Padova. 1684-1938*, Padova, Libreria Gregoriana, 1938. On the figure of the bishop see L. Billanovich, P. Gios (eds.), *Gregorio Barbarigo patrizio veneto, vescovo e cardinale nella tarda controriforma (1625-1697)*, *Atti del Convegno di studi, Padova 7-10 novembre 1996*, Padova, Istituto per la Storia Ecclesiastica Padovana, 1999, 2 vols. (in particular see the contribution: M. Callegari, *La tipografia del Seminario di Padova fondata dal Barbarigo*, *ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 231-251); and C. Amedei, P. Randi, *Cinque secoli di libri. Tipografi, editori, librai a Padova dal Quattrocento al Novecento*, Padova, Libreria Draghi editrice, 2001. On the Seminary see *Il Seminario di Gregorio Barbarigo. Trecento anni di arte, cultura e fede*, ed. by P. Gios and A.M. Spiazzi, Padova 1997; about the library G. Valentinelli, *Della biblioteca del Seminario di Padova*, Venezia 1849.

⁶⁹ See G. Breccola, *La tipografia del seminario di Montefiascone*, Supplem. to nn. 1-2, year XVI, 30th June 1997, of «Biblioteca e Società» (Quaderni della rivista del consorzio per la gestione delle biblioteche comunale degli Ardenti e Provinciale Anselmo Anselmi di Viterbo; 25), pp. 1-16 (about Barbarigo see F. Fabene, *Una divina storia d'amore. Il cardinale Marco Antonio Barbarigo vescovo di Montefiascone e Corneto (Tarquinia)*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007 and M. Calpini, *Il cardinale Marco Antonio Barbarigo e la biblioteca del seminario di Montefiascone*, «Culture del testo», n. 8, May-Aug. 1997, pp. 87-94); V. Ruzza, *L'arte della stampa a Ceneda e Serravalle. II parte*, «Il Flaminio. Rivista quadrimestrale di studi vittoriesi», n. 3, Sept. 1984, pp. 58-65; R. Galli, *Giambattista Bodoni e la Tipografia del Seminario in Imola*, in Id., *Paolo Galeati e la tradizione bodoniana a Imola*, Imola, Galeati, 1940, pp. 49-59; *La Biblioteca del Cardinale. Enrico Benedetto Clemente Stuart Duca di York a Frascati 1761-1803. Catalogo della mostra*, ed. by M. Buonocore e G. Cappelli, Roma, Gangemi Editore, 2008; about the printing house of the Seminary in Treviso see S. Rossetto, *La stampa a Treviso. Annali di Giulio Trento (1760-1844)*, Firenze, Olschki, 1989; Id., *Due secoli di stampa a Belluno e Feltre (XVII-XVIII secolo)*, Firenze, Olschki, 1994.

The necessity of an exhaustive research on the multifaceted reality of the diocesan printing houses, which were supported by a number of “monastic” printing houses, has been highlighted by G. Montecchi, *Itinerari bibliografici. Storie di libri, di tipografi e di editori*, Milano, F. Angeli, 2001, pp. 51 and ff.

Romano (or *Societatis Jesu*, or Tipografia della Compagnia di Gesù). This one was the first Jesuit printing house, conceived by Ignatius of Loyola himself with the aim of building a «magnificent completion of a teaching institute» like the ancient school established in Rome in 1551 by the founder of the Company of Jesus. A teaching institute that was, needless to say, provided with its own Library. Perfectly in line with the educational and confessional programme of the Jesuits, the printing house of the Collegio had in fact the objective of publishing «many good books for students, as well as the teachers' writings [...] to promote cheap books for poor students, and to provide the studious youth with classic authors, expurgated and then deprived of the obscenity that could dim the candidness of innocent souls»⁷⁰. The printing house begun operating in 1556 and soon became famous also because, among the other things, it was the first Roman printing house to use Arab and Jewish typefaces, which served the purpose of the printing works to be diffused in the Eastern missions⁷¹.

5.3. New “global” cultural structures in the service of the Catholic Renewal: the case of Milan

Within this trend should be placed, for its exemplarity, the case of the cultural project by the card. Federico Borromeo (1564-1631) and archbishop in Milan since 1595⁷². Cousin of the famous Carlo – one of the leading figures of Trent and promoter of the Catholic renewal, especially in Milan where he was archbishop from 1564 to 1584⁷³ – Federico is the author of a cultural structure that, being a long way from «falling within the simple Maecenatism», actually reflected a well defined cultural policy⁷⁴. The structure was organised into several autonomous realities and at the same time completing each other: the library Biblioteca Ambrosiana (1607), the Collegio Ambrosiano (annexed to the library, and then developed into the further derivations: the Collegio degli Alunni and

⁷⁰ R.G. Villoslada S.I., *Storia del Collegio Romano dal suo inizio (1551) alla soppressione della Compagnia di Gesù (1773)*, Roma, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1954, pp. 44-46.

⁷¹ The printing house of the Collegio Romano worked from 1556 to 1616, year of the first suppression of the Jesus' Company. See Ascarelli-Menato, *La tipografia del '500 in Italia*, cit., p. 114 and G. Castellani, *La tipografia del Collegio Romano*, «Archivum Historicum S.I.», 2, 1933, pp. 11-16.

⁷² On the figure of Federico see in particular D. Zardin (ed.), *Federico Borromeo vescovo*, «Studia Borromaica» XVII, 2003; C. Mozzarelli (ed.), *Federico Borromeo principe e mecenate*, «Studia Borromaica» XVIII, 2004; F. Buzzi, R. Ferro (eds.), *Federico Borromeo fondatore della Biblioteca Ambrosiana*, «Studia Borromaica» XIX, 2005.

⁷³ For a first picture of the figure and work of Carlo Borromeo see now E. Patrizi, *Carlo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, in the Midst of Religious Disciplining, Pastoral Renewal and Christian Education (1564-1584)*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», III, 1 (2008), pp. 33-60, and the rich related bibliography.

⁷⁴ P. Prodi (entry ed. by), *Borromeo, Federico*, in DBI, Roma, 1971, vol. 13, pp. 31-42.

the Collegio Trilingue in 1625), and the printing house Stamperia del Collegio Ambrosiano (1616) – a project this last one, that took shape after an initial contact with the “Catholic” printer Christophe Plantin from Antwerp.

Once again we find the element of the public library, or better still *the* public library par excellence – famous at the time, for being the first in Italy to be opened to the general public, together with the Angelica Library⁷⁵ –; next to the library, a research centre in defence of the Catholic religion, the Collegio dei Dottori (a group of erudite ecclesiastics, each one specialised in one branch of knowledge, with the task of developing researches, promoting the library’s collection and helping readers); and finally, as a natural complement, the printing house, which was famous too for its Eastern typefaces. It cannot be forgotten that this extraordinary project, cultural and spiritual at the time, included the Accademia di Pittura, Scultura e Architettura (1620), which was destined to the *artifices* in order to teach them to «realise artworks for the divine worship, better than the actual ones», as Borromeo wrote in the *Leges observandae in Academia* (printed by the Stamperia Ambrosiana, Milan, 1620)⁷⁶; finally, the Galleria dell’Ambrosiana (1618), which was opened to the people itself (at least as originally intended, even though it was actually attended by a privileged *élite*). After all, the great attention paid by the Council of Trent to the sacred images as a means for contemplation and religious teaching («teach people the truths of Faith and of sacred history, not only through words but also through painting»), clearly emerged in the work *De Pictura Sacra*, published in 1624 by the Borromeo with “his” Stamperia Ambrosiana⁷⁷.

⁷⁵ On the Ambrosiana see G. Ravasi *et al.*, *Storia dell’Ambrosiana. Il Seicento*, Milano, Cassa di Risparmio delle Province lombarde, 1992; on the Collegio, C. Castiglioni, *Dottori dell’Ambrosiana*, «Memorie storiche della Diocesi di Milano», II, 1955, pp. 9-71; C. Marcora, *Il Collegio dei Dottori e la Congregazione dei Conservatori*, in *Storia dell’Ambrosiana*, cit., pp. 185-217. On the printing house of the library see C. Marcora, *Appunti per la storia della tipografia della Biblioteca Ambrosiana*, «Memorie storiche della Diocesi di Milano», XIII, 1966, pp. 321-364.

With regard to the primacy of the Ambrosiana see the classic by now passage written by the French erudite Gabriel Naudé; actually the Italian primacy would belong to the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome, which would have been working since 1595, becoming then, *de facto*, the first public library in Europe – anticipating the Ambrosiana that opened in 1604, and the same Bodleian Library of Oxford, which opened in 1602 (A. Serrai, “*Angelica vindicata*”, in Id., *Biblioteche e cataloghi*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1983, pp. 32-44). But in connection to this, see also *infra*.

⁷⁶ The Galleria, or Museo Ambrosiano, was the first museum of art in Milan, and was born from the donation, in 1618, of the private art gallery of the card. Federico to the Ambrosiana. The Accademia del Disegno (conceived in 1613 and activated in 1620) was founded by the cardinal in order to attract artists inside the reformer movement following the Council of Trent dictates. See P.M. Jones, *Federico Borromeo e l’Ambrosiana: arte e Riforma cattolica nel XVII secolo a Milano*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1997, pp. 35-50 (It. transl. from the orig.: *Federico Borromeo and the Ambrosiana: Art Patronage and Reform in Seventeenth-Century Milan*, 1993).

⁷⁷ The Federico’s artistic theory was deeply influenced by the posttridentine treaty of aesthetics *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane* (1582) by Gabriele Paleotti, bishop of Bologna at the time when the young Borromeo attended the Studium in Bologna. Jones, *Federico Borromeo e l’Ambrosiana*, cit., pp. 17, 27.

But the Ambrosian Church's interest toward the potential of the new typographic tool, in the conviction that a direct control and a strong impulse to the "good publishing" would have effectively contrasted the flooding of "bad books", had already emerged in the work of Carlo Borromeo, who was the first to launch an ecclesiastic printing house at the Seminary of Milan.

The steps of this route are precise. During his Roman stay (1560-1565), Carlo Borromeo had closely followed – pushed in this direction by his uncle Pope Pious IV – the process that led Paolo Manuzio to become the papal printer in Rome, something that obviously persuaded him that such an enterprise was good for the cause of the Catholic renewal. Then, soon after installing himself in Milan, he immediately got in touch with the ancient family of Milanese printers Da Ponte⁷⁸, in order to start a collaboration. This co-operation concretised itself in 1566, with the publishing of the *Constitutiones et Decreta* of the provincial Synod of that year, and revealed to be long and fruitful, moreover giving a boost to the Milanese publishing and developing a book production that, far from being frustrated by the new censorial restraints, rather modified and adapted itself, becoming a «ductile instrument of government [...] in the hands of a man of the church, who was well determined to employ all his engagement and authority in reforming the diocese entrusted to him»⁷⁹. Then the agreement with the Da Ponte family – which around 1570 ended up by explicitly adorning itself, in the figure of Pacifico da Ponte, with the title of *impressor curiae archiepiscopalis* – was, once more, a mirror action and complementary to the censorial and repressive action, which Carlo Borromeo, since the beginning of his mandate, had rigourously started toward printers and booksellers themselves, in order to rescue *urbs et diocesis* from the *nefariorum pestis librorum*⁸⁰.

Nevertheless, starting from 1576, the cardinal promoted in Milan also a second, archbishopric, printing house, this time directly controlled by the Seminary⁸¹, and entrusted to Michele Tini, who exerted the role of Printer of the Seminary in the years 1576-84⁸². This decision had two reasons: on the

⁷⁸ C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Libri e letture nella Milano di San Carlo Borromeo*, in N. Raponi, A. Turchini (eds.), *Stampa, libri e letture a Milano nell'età di Carlo Borromeo*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1992, pp. 39-96; about the Da Ponte, see E. Sandal, *Editori e tipografi a Milano nel Cinquecento*, Baden-Baden, V. Koerner, 1977-1981, 3 vols.

⁷⁹ C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Libri e letture nella Milano di San Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 59.

⁸⁰ AEM, II, p. 834 (cited in C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Libri e letture nella Milano di San Carlo Borromeo*, cit., p. 43).

⁸¹ In 1579 a loan was taken out, in order to buy a house for the printing house; the house was acquired by Mons. Gio. Batta Osio. These information, as well as about the books printed by the Seminary's printing house, are obtained by the Takings' register of the Seminary, the "Libro Mastro 1579-1584", nowadays kept at the Archivio Storico del Seminario Arcivescovile Pio XI di Milano at Venegono Inf. (Va), cited by K.M. Stevens, *Printing and Politics...*, cit., pp. 114-115.

⁸² About the printing house of the Seminary, in addition to A. Bernareggi, *La tipografia del seminario di Milano*, «Humilitas. Miscellanea storica dei seminari milanesi», 1, II, 1928, pp. 49-57; 2, III, 1929, pp. 75-79, see now the recent studies by C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Libri e letture nella Milano di San Carlo Borromeo*, cit., in particular pp. 58-59, and n. 44, and in particular K.M. Ste-

one hand, it met the demands of the increasing request of a book production of devotional, liturgical and educational nature (it published in fact catechisms, Ambrosian calendars, a book of litanies, an Office of the Virgin, decrees of the provincial Synods, as well as the *Istruzioni ai sacerdoti per celebrare la santa Messa secondo il rito Ambrosiano*, 1580 and the *Memoriale [...] al suo diletto popolo della Città et Diocesi di Milano*, 1579, written after the plague of 1576-77), in addition to various material so-called ephemeral, i.e. edicts, pastoral letters, indulgences, injunctions. On the other hand, this turning point had to be attributed for sure to the fact that the Da Ponte in 1571 had become the official printers of the government too (*stampatori camerale*), and consequently it was necessary to remove such a crucial activity like the publishing away from any interference of political power, with which Borromeo was notoriously in harsh conflict. Even though for a short time, this model of printing house showed both its weak points (mainly the difficulties in managing an enterprise, like the publishing one, which was potentially profitless) and its strong points too, such as the political-cultural independence and the direct control of the contents, something functional to the programme of religious renewal.

It could be said therefore that Federico's cultural programme also in this case continued along the lines of his cousin Carlo, somehow accepting and "refining" his heredity and taking to an even higher cultural level the demands of renewal coming from the posttridentine Catholicism, as confirmation of how the book and the written word – together with the image and artistic expression – were considered a new and extremely effective means of communication and tools for the education of the good Christian⁸³.

In all these complex operations, which make the so-called "apostolate of publishing" become a pivotal point of this epoch, we retrace very clear and recurring coordinates: on the one hand, we find the confessional and educational engagement, from the basic literacy to the higher studies, which concretised in centres of education such as, naturally, the Jesuit Collegio Romano (for the education of noviciates and laics as well), but also the Collegio Urbano (for the future missionaries' education) and, in the same wake, the Seminary of Padua (for the clergy's education, the school education and the education of good Christians in general). On the other hand, we find structures that only apparently are of secondary importance, but actually represent an extraordinary strengthening of the same mission, which are: 1) the printing house, whose aim is to directly produce "con-

vens, *Printing and Politics: Carlo Borromeo and the Seminary Press of Milan*, in N. Raponi, A. Turchini (eds.), *Stampa, libri e letture a Milano nell'età di Carlo Borromeo*, cit., pp. 97-134. About Michele Tini see also E. Sandal, *Cronache di un mestiere*, in E. Sandal (ed.), *Il Mestiere de le stamperie de i libri. Le vicende e i percorsi dei tipografi di Sabbio Chiese tra Cinque e Seicento e l'opera dei Nicolini*, Sabbio Chiese-Brescia, Comune di Sabbio Chiese-Grafo, 2002, pp. 9-82.

⁸³ E. Cattaneo, *La cultura di San Carlo. San Carlo e la cultura*, in Raponi, Turchini (eds.), *Stampa, libri e letture a Milano nell'età di Carlo Borromeo*, cit., pp. 5-38.

trolled” texts and adherent to the dictates of orthodoxy; 2) the “new” model of the library emerging in the course of the 1600’s, in its various forms: from the library destined to an “internal” use (of the school, the Seminary, the congregation, the research centre), to the one opened also to people in the world, Italian as well as foreign ones, and anyhow devoted to gathering and preserving any kind of book, also the prohibited ones, and even offering a “conditional” access to those ones. The access in fact and the diffusion of the book could not be anything but controlled and “disciplined”, as Adriano Prosperi underlines by recalling that in the new (i.e. moved in 1590 in the Salone Sistino) Vatican Library,

[...] the system of the chained books with the indexing tablets was replaced with closed cabinets. The Catholic world gave birth and diffusion to a model of public library where the books, hidden beyond metallic gratings, were accessible exclusively to custodians, and conceded to readers only through accurate censorial filters. This is a model typical of the Counter-Reformation, which should characterise the Catholic world across the centuries.

Still, Prosperi continues recalling that:

But in the Protestant Europe too, the Gessner’s opening toward the «rudes» was subjected to a standstill, and the libraries too were conceived like «instruments to be used for the defence of religion»⁸⁴.

As you can see, once again the concern comes back about the defence of religion and the need to disarm the enemies of the faith, and to avoid that they obtain from pernicious books arguments against orthodoxy⁸⁵. A concern that, it must be said, was shared by both the Catholic countries and the reformed ones⁸⁶, in the mirror action of defending the religion and confirming their own confession, as well as of social controlling, in a word *disciplining*⁸⁷, in a

⁸⁴ A. Prosperi, *L’Inquisizione Romana. Letture e ricerche*, Roma, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2003, cit. from pp. 406-407.

⁸⁵ This concern only drove the regents Biblioteca Vaticana to adopt such a management of the book collection that the users were prevented from a direct and not “overseen” access to the volumes, especially to the potentially “pernicious” ones, as we read in the following passage: «the librarians have expressly ordered in each congregation custodians to take away the public tablets and the public titles of books, and to make a careful list of them; so that, when people from beyond the mountains come and study some books, the custodians are able to control if those books can be given or not». From G. Mercati, *Per la storia della Biblioteca Apostolica, bibliotecario Cesare Baronio*, Perugia, Bartelli, 1910, pp. 14-15 (passage cited by Prosperi, *L’Inquisizione Romana...*, cit., p. 406). The Mercati’s booklet is contained also in *Per Cesare Baronio. Scritti vari nel terzo centenario della sua morte*, Roma, Athenaeum, 1911, pp. 85-178; and C. Baronio, *Opere minori*, III. Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1937, pp. 201-275.

⁸⁶ See also L. Balsamo, *La bibliografia. Storia di una tradizione*, cit., p. 36.

⁸⁷ After the initial enthusiasm for the printing, the Reformers show, between 1520 and 1530, a clear turnaround and the new Reformed Churches begins to manifest – in Germany with Luther and Melancthon, in Zurich with Zwingli, in Geneva with Calvin and then the successor Theodore Beza – exactly the same worries and the same measures of “containment” put into action by the Roman church, that is: 1) fostering the reading, not of the Bible, but rather of the catechism – defi-

time that Wolfgang Reinhard called the «confessional age» (*konfessionelles Zeitalter*)⁸⁸.

And the libraries, together with the printing houses, within this general mobilisation become a formidable tool for building and empowering the rich educational, confessional and bibliographic apparatus that mainly characterised the Catholic renewal in Italy. Besides an evidently aggressive (at least until the early XVII century) *pars destruens* of the Catholic offensive, based on the inquisitorial and censorial equipment – of which the *Enquiry of the Index* represents maybe the peak for the monumentality, the range of action and the energies employed in the project –, here appears the true and complex profile of an impressive positive and constructive apparatus. This one was the true *pars costruens*, the “positive” action of the Italian Catholic renewal, and based on: the Seminaries for the clergy’s education⁸⁹, the schools with their confessional and educational engagement⁹⁰, the printing houses, the libraries and –

ned the true «Bible of the laics»; 2) promoting the sacred knowledge through the oral means, i.e. the preaching (Luther defines the preachers «living books»); 3) restriction of the Bible’s interpretation to a limited clerical *intelligentsia*; 4) tighter control on the following theological elaboration. The same prohibition of vernacular Bible or New Testament was imposed to *women, craftsmen, apprentices, journeyman, serving men, farmers, labourers* by Henry VIII in 1543, prohibition from which were excluded nobles and gentlemen, and finally the bourgeois (also women), and this clearly in order to avoid repercussions and possible subversion of political and social nature (see G.-F. Gilmont, *Riforma protestante e lettura*, in G. Cavallo, R. Chartier, (eds.), *Storia della lettura*, Roma-Bari Laterza, c1995, It. transl. of: *History of reading in the West. Studies in print culture and the history of the book*, University of Mass. Press, 1999, pp. 243-275, in particular at pp. 257, 253 and note n. 28).

⁸⁸ W. Reinhard, “Gegenreformation als Modernisierung?”. *Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters*, «Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte», 68, 1977, pp. 226-252.

⁸⁹ About Seminaries, and the several paths of the clergy’s education, a crucial issue in the posttridentine season and especially in the work of bishops like Borromeo and Barbarigo, see M. Guasco, *La formazione del clero: i seminari*, in G. Chittolini (ed.), *Storia d’Italia, Annali. 9: La chiesa e il potere politico dal Medioevo all’età contemporanea*, Torino, Einaudi, 1986, pp. 631-715; and now M. Sangalli, *La formación del clero católico en la Edad Moderna. De Roma, a Italia, a Europa*, «Manuscripts», 25, 2007, pp. 101-128, and large bibliography (accessible on line too: <<http://www.raco.cat/index.php/Manuscripts/article/view/87057/112087>>, last access: 2nd February 2009).

⁹⁰ The school initiatives put into action by the Catholic church, starting from the mid 1500’s, range from the Jesuit schools (even in their quick transformation from schools “for everybody” to schools for the élites), which were “armed” as seen with their own books and printing houses for producing them (as in the aims of the same founder, see *supra*), to the schools of Christian Doctrine, that revolved around the parish and were provided themselves with *ad hoc* books (let us think about the Bellarmino’s catechism, the only authorised text in the State of the Church, and of which the schools had the exclusive permission of printing, in both versions, the short one, «*breve*», and the major one, «*più copiosa*»).

About the educational mission of the Jesus’ Company see P. Brizzi (ed. by), *La «Ratio studiorum»*. *Modelli culturali e pratiche educative dei Gesuiti in Italia tra Cinque e Seicento*, Roma, Bulzoni, 1981; M. Hinz, R. Righi, D. Zardin (eds.), *I gesuiti e la Ratio studiorum*, Roma, Bulzoni, 2004; R. Sani, *Educazione e istituzioni scolastiche nell’Italia moderna*, cit., pp. 511-584. On the figure of Bellarmino as catechist see now M. Catto, *Un panopticon catechistico: l’arciconfraternita della dottrina cristiana a Roma in età moderna*, Roma, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2003, in

last but not less important – the drawing up of bibliographic canons, such as the aforementioned Possevino's one (published in fact by the *Typographia Apostolica Vaticana*), which was perfectly in line with «the great indicatory syntheses [which were prepared] in each field (it can be mentioned the example of the Bellarmino's *Controversiae*, the Baronio's *Annales*, the *Disquisitiones magicæ* by Martino Del Rio...)»⁹¹.

All these elements can be placed inside a comprehensive strategy, aimed at offering a total and indicatory apparatus, in each field of the human knowledge, and useful to orientate a perfectly Christian education.

6. *The apostolate of publishing: books and libraries as means of cura animarum*

The reality of the universe of the book, even in the tormented years that witnessed the “clampdown” of the repressive policy of the Holy Office and the realisation of the *Enquiry of the Congregation of the Index*, shows all the complexity that characterised an epoch of transition such as the passage from the XVI to the XVII centuries was: complex epoch and then difficult to interpret in an unambiguous meaning.

The years when the first, contrasting, *Indices librorum prohibitorum* came out one after the other, are the years when bibliographies “conformed” to the dictates by the central Church were published, and the years when the *Enquiry* was carried out on the book collections of the Regular Orders. But they were the same years in which, on the one hand, proliferated educational initiatives by religious institutes such as Jesuits, Piarists, Barnabites, Somaschi, Oratorians, etc., all of which were particularly devoted to the education of young people, and deeply modified the schools' panorama in the Italian peninsula, at the same time offering the Catholic Renewal the tools for controlling the religious education in particular, and instruction in general, in Italy and Europe. On the other hand, in those times we witness the “gestation period” of the great library institutions that, for the very first time, were born with the clear

particular the chapter II: *La Dichiarazione più copiosa della dottrina cristiana di Roberto Bellarmino. Un catechismo «universale» a servizio della fede*, pp. 60 and ff. About the schools of Christian doctrine see the bibliography and a general orientation in P.F. Grendler, *La scuola nel Rinascimento italiano*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1991, pp. 361-383; also R. Sani, *Il catechismo e l'alfabeto: le «Scuole della dottrina cristiana»*, in Id., *Educazione e istituzioni scolastiche nell'Italia moderna*, cit., 1999, pp. 415-455; A. Bianchi, *Le scuole della dottrina cristiana, linguaggio e strumenti per una azione educativa “di massa”*, in F. Buzzi, D. Zardin (eds.), *Carlo Borromeo e l'opera della “grande riforma”. Cultura, religione e arti del governo nella Milano del pieno Cinquecento*, Ciniello Balsamo, Amilcare Pizzi, 1997, pp. 145-158.

⁹¹ A. Biondi, *La Bibliotheca selecta di Antonio Possevino. Un progetto di egemonia culturale*, cit., p. 46.

aim of a public use, like the Ambrosiana, the Angelica, and again the Vallicelliana, among others. Once more, these organisms were born in the bosom of the Catholic church (let us think about the Vatican library), or inside orders and religious congregations (like Augustinians, Oratorians and Jesuits again), or in the wake of ecclesiastic leading figures (like the two Borromeos, Rocca, Baronio, Valier, Possevino, Bellarmino) who were particularly active in the framework of the Catholic Renewal.

The innovative and pioneer nature of such structures was acknowledged by contemporaries at the point that in 1627 the erudite and librarian Gabriel Naudé – charged with the arrangement of the *Bibliothèque Mazarine* in Paris, which in 1643 became the first French library opened to the public – in his *Advis pour dresser une Bibliothèque* cited for their “exemplarily” the three libraries that in Europe were at the time «accessible, and opened to everybody, and with free admission»⁹², i.e. the Ambrosiana, the Angelica (two Catholic libraries) and the Bodleian Library in Oxford (a Protestant library then, but of which «the public nature can be considered however more limited»⁹³ just because the more restricted and *élite* typology of users, represented by the scholars of the Oxford university).

As Ugo Rozzo underlines⁹⁴, the first great public libraries then were born from a «strong confessional push, in defence respectively of the Catholic and the Anglican orthodoxy». But it is undeniable that the nature itself of the library would avert her from becoming a means of censorship in an absolute manner: both in Angelica and in Ambrosiana, as well as in Bodleian, there were prohibited books, even though accessible only with a special permission. The “non orthodox” texts were kept inside a special underground room at the Ambrosiana, but also the Angelica, like all the cardinals’ libraries, was allowed to keep prohibited editions – and for sure the role of Rocca in quality of Secretary of the Congregation of the Index granted a large range of action in this meaning⁹⁵. But the same happened to the Jesuit libraries, which grew rapidly

⁹² G. Naudé, *Avvertenze per la costituzione di una biblioteca*. Introduzione, traduzione e note di V. Lacchini, 2 ed., Bologna, Clueb, 1994, cap. IX, p. 104. Naudé, as well known, had rearranged, on behalf of the card. Mazzarino, the *Bibliothèque Mazarine*. Also in this case, once more, to the library a Collegio is annexed, founded in 1661 with a donation by the same cardinal (M. Piquard, *La bibliothèque de Mazarin et la bibliothèque Mazarine, 1643-1804*, «Comptes-rendus des séances de l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres», vol. 119, 1975, n. 1, pp. 125-136). About Naudé, see also A. Serrai, *Storia della bibliografia*. V, *Trattatistica biblioteconomica*, ed. by M. Palumbo, Roma, Bulzoni, 1993, pp. 295-331; U. Rozzo, *L’Advis di Gabriel Naudé e la nascita della biblioteconomia*, «La bibliofilia», 97, 1995, pp. 59-74.

⁹³ G. Traniello, *La biblioteca pubblica. Storia di un istituto nell’Europa contemporanea*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1997, p. 77.

⁹⁴ U. Rozzo, *Biblioteche e censura: da Conrad Gesner a Gabriel Naudé*, «Bibliotheca», n. 2, 2003, pp. 33-71.

⁹⁵ A. Serrai, *Una scoperta sensazionale all’Angelica: da Gesner a Passionei e Scheuchzer*, «Il Bibliotecario», n. 7-8, 1986, p. 101; see P.F. Munafò, N. Muratore, *Bibliotheca Angelica publice commoditati dicata*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2004, p. 31 and note n. 22.

in the various Seminaries of the Company of Jesus, and had the same “privilege” of keeping prohibited books. Therefore, a good number of the libraries in the Catholic world of the late-1500s (and even more in 1600s), escapes from the net of the *Index*, and rather fall within the precise strategy of a controlled and “disciplined” management of the object-book.

Always keeping in the backdrop the two Italian libraries, the leading roles of both Federico Borromeo and Angelo Rocca within the Catholic Renewal now stand out in a precise light. In 1585 Sixtus V appointed Angelo Rocca responsible for the above mentioned Stamperia Apostolica Vaticana (and under the control of the XIV Congregation, presided over by the card. Carafa), as well as Secretary and Consultor of the Cardinals’ Commission for the defining and the publishing of the Vulgata’s text (commission led by Carafa again), and even with the special charge of responsibility for the edition, by an apposite papal mandate; again, he was appointed Consultor of the Congregation of the Index⁹⁶; and finally, collaborator of Sixtus V in the arrangement of the new Salone Sistino.

Therefore Rocca did not only apply to the revision of the official editions of the conciliar decrees and of the texts of the Fathers of the Church, but also to the editing of the *Bibbia Sistina*⁹⁷ – Federico Borromeo and Roberto Bellarmino also took part in the same commission. The first edition (though not official) was printed in 1590 by the same Stamperia Vaticana, which then performed the principal task for which it was established by the inquisitor pope, that is to diffuse the correct biblical text. Subsequently, after the revision commanded by the successors of Sixtus V, a new edition was published again by pope Clement VIII in 1592, purified from the noticed mistakes, and it took the name of *Bibbia Sisto-clementina*, a text which was in force until the so-called *neo-Vulgata* of 1979⁹⁸.

It is clear that the object-book in general – and naturally *the* book par excellence – was the focus of attention by the postridentine Church, in all the phases of

⁹⁶ About the Rocca’s biography see A. Serrai, *Angelo Rocca, fondatore della prima biblioteca pubblica europea*, Milano, S. Bonnard, 2004; and Munafò, Muratore, *Bibliotheca Angelica publice commoditati dicata*, cit. In particular on the relationship between Sixtus V and Angelo Rocca see, by the same authors Paola Munafò and Nicoletta Muratore, *Sisto V e Angelo Rocca*, in M.L. Madonna (ed.), *Roma di Sisto V. Le arti e la cultura*, Roma, 1993, parte V: *La Biblioteca Vaticana di Sisto V*, pp. 474-484.

⁹⁷ As well-known, the revision of the Vulgata was started by Paul V the day after the Council of Trent (where the Fathers asked for working on a *quam emendatissime* edition of the Bible), and it continued by impulse of Sixtus V, with the aim of rebuild the archetype of Saint Jerome, after amending errors of several transcriptions. For this purpose, in 1561 Pious IV established an apposite commission of experts in Sacred Scriptures (commission which was renovated in 1569 by Pious VI, by Sixtus V in 1586, and by Gregory XIV in 1591), who, on the base of codes and critical editions – especially those printed by the publisher philologist Robert Estienne –, restored one, and authorised, Latin text of the Bible.

⁹⁸ About the role played by Rocca within the Congregation for the edition of the Bible, see again Munafò, Muratore, *Sisto V e Angelo Rocca*, cit., pp. 475-476; see also *La Bibbia “Vulgata” dalle origini ai nostri giorni. Atti del simposio internazionale in onore di Sisto V*, Grottammare 29-31 agosto, ed. by J. Gribomont, T. Stramare, Roma, Abbazia San Girolamo; Città del Vaticano, Libreria Vaticana, 1987.

its “life-cycle”: from the conception, to the production, to the diffusion to the public. But it is more evident that this attention did not concretise only in the activities of the Congregation of the Index or of the Congregation of the Holy Office; rather, the foundations were laid of a cultural apparatus which was larger and more complex, and focused on the universe of the book and on its new and manifold manifestations (of typographical and bibliographical nature, as well as from the perspectives of libraries and librarianship), a universe which was animated by the same leading figures who had been the main promoters of the Catholic renewal, and consequently were well-aware of the importance of *emendatissimi* texts, of “good” books and publishing, as well as of “good” libraries.

On the one hand, Sixtus V set up the Tipografia Apostolica Vaticana, and renovated the Biblioteca Vaticana, in order to manage, control and diffuse the Christian truth⁹⁹, offering the Catholic world an example of the equipment to be used in the struggle against the enemies of the faith; on the other hand, the cardinal Angelo Rocca ended with elaborating – in contact with those formidable institutions of the Catholic culture with which he had fallen «in love» – his own ideal of the public library «full and adorned of the good and principal Authors»¹⁰⁰, and first of all open to public, as we read in the *Istrumentum* of donation: «Par. 3. [...] It cannot be prohibited the access to anybody, priest, lay or religious of any order, who desires to study in the assigned hours. [...] Par. 4. The librarian, or custodian, must open the library twice in the day [...] and this is under obligation, but let him have the courtesy to open it to whoever and whenever he will be requested»¹⁰¹.

And in fact the Biblioteca Angelica was generous and hospitable towards whoever asked to be received, poor or foreign, without books and without money, as Rocca recalls in his autobiography:

Multa item alia inter studendum conscribuntur, quae, deo annuente, divulgabuntur: interim in eius asseruantur Bibliotheca, quam ipsemet quadraginta ferè annorum spatio Augustiniana in primis Familiae, deinde publicae commoditati, praesertim verò pauperum, & aduenarum, qui sine libris, & pecunijs, ignoti ad Vrbe, veniunt, collegit. Haec enim Bibliotheca omni artium ac scientiarum, vel facultatum genere extat refertissima, quaecunque illa sit facultas litteris mandata¹⁰².

⁹⁹ About the role – still to be evaluated and appreciated – that Sixtus V played in the framework of that kind of «dynamism that, burst out in the Catholic world, gave a decisive impulse to the establishing and empowering of the libraries for public use» see again Serrai, *Angelo Rocca fondatore...*, cit., p. 56; and Id., *Storia della Bibliografia*, cit., vol. V, 1993, pp. 121-186.

¹⁰⁰ From the dedication to Angelo Rocca by Michelangelo Riccio (prior of the convent of S. Stefano in Venice), in 1595 (cit. in A. Serrai, *Angelo Rocca, fondatore...*, cit., pp. 48-49).

¹⁰¹ The *Istrumentum* is integrally published in P.F. Munafò, N. Muratore, *Bibliotheca Angelica publicae commoditati dicata*, cit., Appendice, pp. 123-128, quotation from the pp. 124-125.

¹⁰² From the autobiography contained in the *Chronhistoria de Apostolico Sacratio*, Romae, apud Guillelmum Facciottum, 1605, pp. 113-114 (cited by A. Serrai, *Angelo Rocca, fondatore...*, cit., p. 9; on the Rocca's biography see now also P.F. Munafò, N. Muratore, *Bibliotheca Angelica publicae commoditati dicata*, cit., pp. 15-31).

But also the Biblioteca Ambrosiana will be munificent toward the readers, as testified again by Naudé:

Car pour ne parler que de l'Ambrosienne de Milan, & monstrier par mesme moyen comme elle surpasse tant en grandeur & magnificence que en obligeant le public beaucoup de celles d'entre les Romains, n'est-ce pas une chose du tout extraordinaire qu'un chacun y puisse entrer à toute heure presque que bon luy semble, y demeurer tant qu'il luy plaist, voir, lire, extraire tel Auteur qu'il aura agreable, avoir tous les moyens & commoditez de ce faire, soit en public ou en particulier, & ce sans autre peine que de s'y transporter és jours & heures ordinaires, se placer dans des chaires destinées pour cét effet, & demander les livres qu'il voudra feuilleter au Bibliothecaire ou à trois de ses serviteurs, qui sont fort bien stipendiez & entretenus, tant pour servir à la Bibliotheque qu'à tous ceux qui viennent tous le jours estudier en icelle¹⁰³.

One century later, the Prefetto of the Ambrosiana Giuseppe Antonio Sassi gave precise instructions in order to bring physical ease to the readers (with a detailed attention toward the use of lecterns, or the arrangement of braziers during the winter season), and especially to assist readers in their study activities: «Three Men continuously assist the Public during the opening hours of the Library, bringing and carrying back the books. Whoever comes and studies, is provided for free with Paper, Pens, Sand and Ink by the Library»¹⁰⁴.

The historian of books and libraries Marco Santoro, has naturally highlighted the many innovations introduced by the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, from the technical and librarianship viewpoint: from the autonomy of the library institution, to the architectonic structure, to the internal solutions of the arrangement of wall-mounted shelves, finally to the «criteria of gathering and making available the book collection, since they were aimed at emphasising the library as a public place for the study and the cultural information, rather than for mere conservation». But again, Santoro does not forget to underline that:

new also is the spirit with which the most orthodox and intransigent counter-reformist ideology was encouraged since, with an operation which is analogous under many viewpoints to that one promoted in bibliographic field by Possevino and Bellarmino, the defence of the Catholic doctrine was fostered not with simplistic prohibitions or with drastic as much as counterproductive dissuasions from reading, but on the contrary, by taking possession of the tools for the lay intellectual work, and by promoting an increasingly larger, even though mediated, fruition of the written documentation, in order to support and reaffirm in a militant and proposing way the ineluctable function of the Roman Church. New methods therefore, for traditional aims¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰³ Gabriel Naudé, *Advis pour dresser une bibliotheque. Presenté à Monseigneur le President de mesme*, par G. Naudé P., A paris, chez François Targa, 1627, pp. 155-156 (cited by G. Serrai, *Angelo Rocca...*, cit., p. 8, note n. 2). G. Naudé, *Avvertenze per la costituzione di una biblioteca*, cit., cap. IX, p. 106.

¹⁰⁴ G. Ravasi, *La Biblioteca, psychès iatreion*, in *Federico Borromeo fondatore della Biblioteca Ambrosiana*, cit., pp. 27-31, p. 29 and note n. 1.

¹⁰⁵ M. Santoro, *Storia del libro italiano*, cit., p. 152.

This, completely sharable, viewpoint, reflects moreover the opinion of Giorgio Montecchi, who in 2001 underlined the importance and

the weight that the printing had during the life of the Church after the Council of Trent – both in the struggle against the reformed doctrines through the inquisitorial apparatus and that ponderous bibliographic repertory which the *Index librorum prohibitorum* was, and mainly in the commitment, surely less known and less spectacular, which was dedicated to the increase and the empowering of the typographical production in the service of the Roman Church¹⁰⁶.

He continues affirming how it is «less studied but no less important for this reason [...], what institutions and men of the Church have made in the typographical and publishing field already in the second half of 1500's, in Rome as well as in a myriad of bishopric venues, in monasteries and convents scattered across the entire Christianity, as far as the distant Japan»¹⁰⁷.

It is clear the need, Montecchi noted, to write a history of the ecclesiastic publishing that allows us to appreciate and know in depth not only the censorship, but also the other one of the «two sides of the church's intervention in the field of the book circulation», that is the very strong impulse to the typographical production that the Church gave in the epoch of the Confessionalisation.

Conclusions

As seen above, the historiographical themes that can be touched when examining the Roman Church's relationship with the object-book, and consequently with the related processes of reading and literacy in general (and religious literacy in particular), are numerous. The typographical book, in the crucial passage from the XVI to the XVII century, creates around itself a new and composite universe, where totally new dynamics and issues emerge, linked with the censorship and the *Indices* on the one hand, but also with the new systems of book production and circulation on the other, and consequently with the printing houses, with the “new” seventeenth-century libraries, the bibliographic canons and so on. Everything highlights how this relationship was particularly complex, and maybe it would probably seem reductive to narrow it to an exclusively censorial and inquisitorial point of view.

For sure, the policies of control which originated in Italy following the Council of Trent, strongly affected the production and the diffusion of printed

¹⁰⁶ G. Montecchi, *Itinerari bibliografici. Storie di libri, di tipografi e di editori*, cit.; the quot. from pp. 43-44 and note n. 61.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

books, and consequently resulted in a re-orientation of the religious piety and moral disciplining, but this process had more general features and more far-reaching consequences, and not only in Italy. Already Jean-François Gilmont, even putting into perspective the literacy impact «of this invention in a society which was still largely illiterate» and in which the information transmission was prevailing in oral form, he efficaciously underlined that the typographical book, «observed by one as well as the other confessional barrier, [...] appears to be an effective agent of the Reform», inevitably impacting on the publishing policies of the Protestant countries¹⁰⁸. In the light of what we have examined, it could be rightly affirmed, paraphrasing the Belgian scholar, that really the printed book, together with its related structures and institutions, was an *effective agent of the Catholic Renewal* too, naturally in the forms and modalities which were peculiar to that one.

Actually, in consideration of the historiographical categories of disciplining and Confessionalisation, numerous points of contact seem to emerge in the control policies of the religious book both in the Catholic and the Protestant world. Also in the reformed churches in fact, over the years the suspect grew toward a direct access to the biblical text by the *rudes* (as it was manifested by Luther in the time following the Peasants' War, and then by Melanchthon and Zwingli too, until the restrictions imposed by the Anglican Church of Henry VIII); again, in all confessions the preaching increasingly affirmed itself as the first means of Confessionalisation of masses, together with the promotion of the role of the priests as *living books* (Luther) and *guardians* of the true dogmas (Melanchthon); in the same way schools and libraries were considered by Luther not as a means of promotion of popular reading, but rather a tool for forming – and conforming – the ruling classes, religious and civilian, of the time¹⁰⁹. Again, also in the reformed territories, the Bible did not actually affirm itself as the main text for promoting the Confessionalisation or first literacy, especially of children, but on the contrary this role was played by catechisms – i.e. texts that had an impressive diffusion not only in the Catholic and post- Tridentine Italy¹¹⁰, but also in Protestant areas too, if Luther himself defined them

¹⁰⁸ G.-F. Gilmont, *Riforma protestante e lettura*, cit. (in particular the pp. 244-257).

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* By Gilmont see also, *La réforme et le livre: L'Europe de l'imprime (1517-v.1570)*, Paris, Les Editions du Cerf, 1990, and now the recent *Le livre réformé au 16. Siècle*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2005.

¹¹⁰ We have previously considered the large diffusion of the jesuitical catechisms by Roberto Bellarmino (the *Dottrina cristiana breve*, 1597, for lay pupils; and the *Dichiaratione più copiosa della Dottrina cristiana breve*, 1598, destined to seminarists, clerks and catechists). Authorised by pope Clemens VIII, they were printed several times, at the point that the Italian collective catalogue SBN testifies, in the Seventeenth century, even 36 Italian editions. A peculiar thing – and which witnesses the enormous popular penetration of those texts – even two editions exist, in Sardinian dialect: the *Declarassione pius abundante dessa dottrina christiana composta per ordine de n. s. paba Clemente 8. dae su... card. Bellarminu... voltada in linba sarda dae sa italiana pro vile dessu Regnu de Sardigna dae su dottore Austinu Capitzudo* (In Roma, per Luysu, 1601) and the *Decla-*

the true “Bible of the lay” – as well as other religious books, such as collections of psalms and citations, Stories of the Bible derived from the canonical text: from this viewpoint, the researches of social history seem to demonstrate lesser and lesser differences in the reading customs between Catholic and Protestant families, for example in early modern Germany¹¹¹.

Then, *disciplining readers* by promoting “good readings”, together with good religious practices, became a concern which was shared by the entire Christian Europe, in reason of the social consequences that reading in general, and in particular the reading of the Bible and theological texts, could potentially imply. A process that, in the Catholic world – as already seen –, resulted in even more complex effects than in a simple censorial control.

When the work of transcription and the revision of bibliographical information will be achieved, the great archive of RICCI will surely allow us to evaluate, from a more comprehensive viewpoint, the effective consequences of this general process of the disciplining of reading, especially in Catholic Italy. For scholars, the possibility to directly access the *notitia librorum* of the Vatican lists, will throw a new light on the history of the numerous book collections and of those (single persons or institutions) who created, managed and preserved them; finally, the archive will enlighten the dark zones (as Serrai says) of the history of European publishing and of the real circulation and fruition of books in the centuries XVI and XVII – opening the way to an attentive examination of publishing, especially religious, of that time.

RICCI will offer a new testing ground for studying the religious, cultural and social effects that a controlled circulation of the book had on the re-shaping of the individual paths of spiritual formation, even in the differences between clerks and laics, between female and male spirituality and so on. Devotional together with popular literature, but also manuals and grammar books, as well as reading books, catechisms and a large range of “religious” books: those ones, were the main tools through which women and men who lived the deep laceration of sixteenth-century Christian Europe moulded their own spirituality. Because we must still evaluate that kind of empowering of the teaching of Christian doctrine that took place in the space of half a century, realising into the codification and consequently the diffusion of a new genre of “hybrid” lite-

rassione christiana breue composta per ordine de n. s. paba Clemente 8. dae su... card. Bellarminu... voltada in linba sarda dae sa italiana pro vtile dessu Regnu de Sardigna dae su dottore Austinu Capitzudo... (In Roma, per Luysu, 1601). Both are preserved at the University Library in Cagliari (see the bibliographic records in Sbn: IT\CCU\CAGE\019512 and IT\CCU\CAGE\019515).

¹¹¹ Gilmont recalls the well known researches by R. Gawthrop and G. Strauss, *Protestantism and Literacy in Early Modern Germany*, «Past and Present», no. 104, Aug. 1984, pp. 31-55. See also R.B. Bottigheimer, *Bible reading, “Bibles” and the Bible for children in early modern Germany*, «Past and Present», May 1993» (on line version: <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2279/is_n139/ai_13951123>, last access 1st May 2009); Id., *The Bible for children: from the age of Gutenberg to the present*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1996.

rature, that built a bridge – as Danilo Zardin says – between the Latin biblical knowledge and the vernacular literature of mass consumption. Then, not simply removing the biblical text in vernacular, but rather offering multiple accesses to the Word together with its comment, paraphrase, meditation, versification and so on, which were strictly controlled in their adherence to the dogma, and responding perfectly to the objectives of control, both religious and social at the same time.

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