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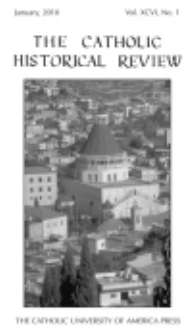
Transizione epocale: Studi sul Concilio Vaticano II (review)

John W. O'Malley S.J.

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Clearly, this well-told and clearly written work augments well the historiography of religion during World War II. It is a volume, however, that benefits being read alongside Snape's more revisionist and expansive *Royal Army Chaplains' Department*, which is less deferential of Alan Wilkinson's earlier work on the subject, *Dissent or Conform?* (London, 1986), or of some of the celebrated Christian "heroes," such as the Peace Pledge Union's Dick Sheppard.

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STEPHEN PARKER

Transizione epocale: Studi sul Concilio Vaticano II. By Giuseppe Alberigo.

[Istituto per le scienze religiose-Bologna, Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose, Nuova serie, 42.] (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino. 2009. Pp. 895. €55,00 paperback. ISBN 978-8-815-12769-3.)

This collection of Alberigo's writings on the council opens with a warm tribute to him by Cardinal Karl Lehmann, archbishop of Mainz. In it Lehmann affirms that Alberigo's name will be associated in future generations with the Second Vatican Council as firmly as his mentor's, Hubert Jedin, is associated with the Council of Trent. Lehmann's is a sage judgment. Even aside from Alberigo's masterminding the five-volume *History of Vatican II*, the scholarship displayed in *Transizione epocale* validates Lehmann's assessment. As the readers of this journal will understand, the assessment is an implicit rejoinder to Cardinal Camillo Ruini's comparison of Alberigo not with Jedin but with Paolo Sarpi, whose history of Trent, 1619, promptly ended up on the Index. The semi-official disparagement of Alberigo's work that Ruini articulated very much saddened Alberigo's last months.

The topics in the volume range from detailed examination of particulars to the general assessment of the council that Alberigo wrote for the final volume of the *History*. Alberigo's study of the *Regolamento*, the document setting the procedures for the Council, is a fine example of a master historian taking a neglected and, in this case, a somewhat disdained subject and showing its crucial importance. Alberigo establishes, for instance, how the *Regolamento* was designed precisely to ensure a certain outcome of the Council. He goes further to reveal the theological presuppositions governing the document as first devised. These were precisely the presuppositions the majority of prelates at the Council later tried to overturn.

The volume is rich in similar *studi*. Of special note is the longest, "Giuseppe Dossetti al concilio Vaticano II." Aside from its other merits, it displays the privileged place Alberigo had in studying the council. Trained by Jedin, he not only had easy access to him, an official *peritus* at the council, but almost from the moment the council was announced he, a young layman, became an important player on the "Bologna team" (*la squadra bolognese*)

led by Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro and much inspired by Dossetti. Even before the council opened this team, plus Jedin, produced the extremely valuable collection of decrees of previous councils, *Conciliarum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, presented to Pope John XXIII in 1962, on the eve of Vatican II.

Of all Alberigo's accomplishments, the *History* is the one for which he will be most remembered. He conceived, organized, and finally brought to completion this monument of collective scholarship on an international scale. The multilingual publication of the *History*, which deftly incorporates the massive archival scholarship of the previous twenty years, has brought the interpretation of Vatican II to a new stage. It puts all commentaries on the final sixteen documents into a new framework. In 1995 Alberigo brilliantly laid out the hermeneutical criteria on which the *History* was to be based. That *saggio* opens this volume and thus deservedly enjoys pride of place in it.

Alberigo's conclusion to the final volume addresses, as mentioned, the large and exquisitely difficult question of what happened at the Council. It is perhaps the most important piece in the volume. It reads so smoothly and presents its conclusions so persuasively that it almost conceals the profound knowledge of the sources and the grasp of the issues that alone could produce such a subtle and judicious assessment of that massively and stubbornly complex phenomenon known as the Second Vatican Council. When Alberigo describes what the Council hoped to accomplish in the deceptively simple words a "reversal of priorities," he captures the paradigm shift the Council hoped to induce. In this conclusion, Alberigo the historian shows himself to be also Alberigo the theologian.

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JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J.

Antonio Garrigues Embajador ante Pablo VI. Un hombre de concordia en la tormenta (1964-1972). By Fernando de Meer Lecha-Marzo. [The Global Law Collection, Biographical Series.] (Cizur Menor [Navarra]: Editorial Aranzadi. 2007. Pp. 389. €25,00. ISBN 978-8-483-55370-1.)

In the long history of relations between the Francisco Franco regime and the Holy See, no period was more conflictive than the decade preceding the general's death in 1975. The comfortable ties between the official church of the state and the dictatorship embodied in the Concordat of 1953 began to deteriorate during the 1960s. The Vatican Council's decrees on political and social questions undermined the foundations of the "National Catholicism" that had come into being as a result of the Civil War (1936-39). The resurgence of Basque and Catalan nationalism and growing social and economic unrest in which some members of the clergy participated created ongoing tensions between the Vatican and the regime as well as within the Spanish Church itself.