6 Chronology
Ecclesiastical Chronotaxes

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6.1   Introduction

Since the dawn of the Protestant Reformation, rethinking the past has been one of the fundamental aspects of spiritual renovation; history has become a tool used not only to affirm the providential role of each confessional identity, but also to debate controversial doctrinal issues.[1] In their transmission of church history, Protestants and Catholics began to use sacred scriptures (or the *Divina historia*)[2] as the primary basis for their own legitimacy to exist and to defend the status quo: on the Catholic side, a church with a strong vertical structure headed by the Roman pope; on the Protestant side, removal of secular hierarchy and the return to an evangelical church. Here, ecclesiastical history was used not only to justify doctrinal positions and support spiritual inclinations, but also to sustain political beliefs, all for the purpose of consolidating temporal power within the folds of the pastoral mission.

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1   Backus 2015; see also Bauer 2013, 133; Krumenacker 2006, 263-4 and Backus 2003, in which it is demonstrated that the omnipresence of a historiographic layout in the theological reflections of the Renaissance allowed the affirmation of one's own confessional identity.

2   Historical analysis during the Reformation concerned especially the early Christian Church; see Jedin 1976, 661 ff.

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In 1593, Italian scholar and Jesuit Antonio Possevino (1533-1611) defined the concept of *theologia positiva*, in opposition to *theologia scholastica*, as a method by which sacred scripture may be interpreted through the use of empirical data, demonstrating how the antiquarian perspective had influenced ecclesiastical studies by the end of the sixteenth century.[3] In fact, the hermeneutical process developed by humanists throughout the decades was openly accepted as being essential for dealing with theological issues: this method of research, which had previously only been used to investigate classical antiquity, was applied with ease to church history.

During the sixteenth century, this approach spread among and came to be followed by the scholars who dealt with sacred scriptures – before developing into an instrument of debate and discussion in order to re-elaborate upon the traditional narratives for every confessional purpose, and introducing a new ecclesiastical history, based on empirical data, that would be difficult to contest.[4]

The genre of 'chronotaxes', in particular, represents one of the most interesting cases of the Christian past being used to construct and defend specific confessional positions.[5] This practice – an arrangement in chronological order (*chrono*, from the Greek χρόνος = time; and *taxis*, from the Greek τάσσειν = to arrange) – was a technique of time computation that linked cosmological movements with the actions of human beings in history and was used to calculate universal time and establish its relationship with events.[6] These works recon-

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[3] Possevino 1593, 151-2: "THEOLOGIA POSITIVA. In Divinis enim litteris materia et ratio est, qua theologi possimus effici. Theologia enim (si pressius atque ex veterum Graecorum usu accipiatur) is est, in quo divinatis cognitio sit, quemadmodum docet Gregorius Nazianzenus. Sin fusiore significatu, ac qualem nostrae usurpant scholae, is est Theologus, cui non solum possit cognosci, verum etiam qui ea cognoscit, quae de Divinitate sunt, vel ad Divinitatem spectant, quoniam a Deo revelata sunt, ac nobis absque illius revelatione nequent innotescere, ad Divinitatem autem, quatenus superni est ordinis, referuntur. Qua de re aliquid adhuc, ubi de Scholastica Theologia dicetur. POSITIVA quod legibus ratiocinationum, definitionum, ac divisionum haud coarctetur, nec in eam tradendam cadat omnino ea disceptandi ratio, quae Scholastica penitior adhibetur. Ac quidem, quae Graecis est thesis, haec Latinis positio est, quae cum sententiam ratam, stabilem, firmam designet, in Divina Scriptura praecipuum habet locum, quae est universae Theologiae Scholasticae basis et fundamentum".

[4] On the encounter of humanism and ecclesiastical studies during the sixteenth century, see Grafton 2012, in which is also stated the fundamental distinction between secular and religious antiquarian research: the former sought through different disciplines an unknown past, the latter instead wanted to prove preset statements (5). See also Dost 2001; Mouren 2004; Steinmetz 2017.

[5] Anthony Grafton documented five different genres of chronology, including the lists treated here; see Johnson 1962; Grafton 1993, 60-75.

[6] The famous Italian humanist Annius of Viterbo stated that chronology could benefit from the successions of public officers – such as kings and magistrates – because the generations marked their time through the preservation of their memory; see Annius 1498, 91: "Eam partem Graeci vocant Chronographiam id est temporum diges-

structed seriations of the names of public figures and their office in yearly progression, thereby determining their overall succession.[7]

Although unconventional lists can be found,[8] chronotaxes were usually prepared for political and ecclesiastical institutions as soon as they were established.[9] Political successions were devoted to kings, emperors, dukes, and other authorities, while their ecclesiastical counterparts focused on popes and bishops.

Ecclesiastical chronotaxes have been arranged since the origins of Christianity and are based on "pontifical books" (*Libri Pontificales*) and "acts of pontiffs" (*Gesta Pontificum*).[10] Initially, their structure was schematic in nature, with only names and corresponding dates provided; however, in the centuries that followed, the chronotaxes acquired more complexity as they started to include biographical information. However, the references for the data collected were often unreliable

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tionem, cuius probandi duo principia sunt. Primum ut ostendamus tempora, quae afferunt, non discrepare a publica et probata fide [...] Alterum ut reges et viri digerantur, qui his temporibus floruerunt, et quorum memoriam teneant authores vel loca, sive utrumque. Quod profecto nos facimus in hac secunda parte, quae est de temporibus, in qua primum extendimus viros et tempora ab Iano et origine Italia usque ad Othonem Caesarem. Inde retrocedendo, tempora et viros praescriptos per publicam fidem probamus". Decades later, in 1556, the French philologist Robert Estienne published in Paris the ancient work of Dionysus of Halicarnassus, *De praecipuis linguae Graecae auctoribus elogia*, translated from Greek to Latin by the Polish scholar Stanisław Iłowski (d. 1589). In one of the appendices – a commentary on the theory of history (*de historica facultate*), in the section *De distinctione historiae* – Iłowski affirmed that historical facts can be considered and described in relation to human time, becoming a fundamental parameter to calculate chronology. In this way, the successions of institutional figures became a trustworthy tool for computation; see Iłowski 1556, 36: "Historiam ratione temporum distinguendam esse, et civilis et naturalis ratio docet. [...] ut actiones hominum, quae motus expertes sunt, tempore notentur atque describantur".

7   Chronotaxes are basically lists. In this light, according to Eco 2009, they attempt to give a tangible form, and hence order, to innumerable objects that may disorient the reader or the observer (16-18). Furthermore, lists could be included in the rhetoric figure of accumulation, which helps to increase the emphasis through *enumeratio* (133). In this way, chronotaxes appear to be even more rooted in tradition, not only in the field of chronology, more precisely acquiring a specific hermeneutical function in giving a solid and impressive idea, of their object of interest.

8   An interesting case is represented by the work of the German scholar Wolfgang Jobst (1521-75) who arranged a list of doctors from the beginning of medical science to his own time; see Jobst 1556, *Dedic.*: "Quare cum summa veneratione digni sint medicae artis scriptores et professores, rem sane gratam, me facturum medicinae alumnis persuasus sum, si compendiose eorum Chronologiam, successionem, aetates et professiones atque vitae cursum in lucem emitterem, quod tandem post longam deliberationem, me hoc utcunque praestuturum aggressus sum".

9   A significant example can be found in the relation established between the Roman Empire and the empire of Charles V, which retraced the path of all the predecessors who held the imperial crown, and which involved also the entire debate on the *Fasti Consulares*.

10   On Renaissance use of the *Liber Pontificalis* see Bauer 2019, with an extensive bibliography.

and frequently appeared contradictory, undermining the fidelity of the seriation. This situation gave great freedom to the compilers (most of whom were anonymous), allowing entire episcopal lineages to be fabricated in order to increase the prestige of the diocese concerned.[11]

A change occurred with the cultural revolution of humanism, which, through the diffusion of the antiquarian method, brought about a revised approach towards sources and the information they transmitted. Since the mid-fifteenth century, scholars have attempted to base their ecclesiastical seriations on tangible evidence in order to improve reliability.

This article represents the first time that the Renaissance ecclesiastical chronotaxes disseminated to Christian scholarly environments throughout Europe have been collated and studied. Several works (all printed editions), handing down at least one list of prelates, have been identified. On the basis of the data gathered thus far, it is reasonable to conclude that several other unknown or unpublished ecclesiastical chronotaxes have been written, perhaps including lower-level hierarchical posts.[12] An overview of the practice is provided here.

In order to understand what reawakened the interest of Renaissance scholars in the genre of ecclesiastical chronotaxis, it is necessary to bear in mind the historical context and cultural framework within which these works were disseminated. Generally, ecclesiastical chronotaxes were carried out to retrace the lineage of a specified religious institution, reconstruct its succession in order to reinforce its existence in the present, and confer further authority and legitimacy to the existing power structure. This was especially the case during the cultural expansion of the Reformation, when the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchies became one of the most controversial issues discussed by theologians during confessional debates, especially the primacy of Peter, on which the election of the first bishops depended.[13]

This historical event was tied to the different interpretations of the Gospels (especially the Gospel of Matthew) and ancient patristic sources, not least the *Constitutiones Apostolicae* of Pope Clement I (d. 100 CE) and the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Eusebius (265-340). According to the Catholics, it was Peter himself who elected the first bishops after his appointment as head of the Apostles, subordinating this office directly to papal control; according to the Protestants, however, there was no evidence that Peter had received any

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11 Vasina 1990.

12 See Kehr 1961. This fundamental work reconstructs the history of the Italian dioceses by collecting primary sources; some chronotaxes are also mentioned.

13 On the dispute about the Primacy of Peter see the fundamental works by Javerre 1958; Grasso 1960; Prodi 1982. To understand the nature of this debate during the Renaissance, see the opposite arguments of Flacius 1559, 2: 524-30 [*Argumenta contra Primatu Petri*] and Panvinio 1589; about the latter see also Bauer 2020, 181-7.

primacy from Christ over the other Apostles, dissolving the first ring of the episcopal genealogy and abolishing the vertical structure of the Church's hierarchies in favour of the theory of the 'universal priesthood'.[14] If the sacredness of the episcopal institution was indeed considered to have descended from the primacy of Peter and to have been tied to the sacredness of the holy city of Rome, the apostolic origin of the dioceses would have legitimised the dominant role of the pope, i.e., with the pope prevailing over the Apostles. While the Protestants cast doubts over the authority of popes to elect bishops, and hence the nature of the episcopacy itself, the Catholics attempted to bring the foundation of the dioceses back to the Apostles, thereby conferring on this institution a sacred connotation that had spread since the birth of Christianity. It is therefore clear that ecclesiastical chronotaxes were directly influenced by these debates and susceptible to the occurrence of these dynamics.

6.2 Lists of Popes and Bishops

In this context, the Renaissance ecclesiastical chronotaxes appear to follow specific evolutionary patterns; however, although their contents essentially match the biographical sequence of lives, their starting points appear to change in accordance with the period of their composition, thereby causing the Protestant Reformation (1517) to emerge as the fundamental breaking point for this entire historiographic and editorial tradition. The chronotaxes below, which are arranged in a single corpus for the first time, present the development of this tendency and offer a standard definition of the genre.

> **1479** The first chronotaxis that can be defined as belonging to the Renaissance, mainly due to the humanistic education of its Italian author, Bartolomeo Platina, is *Vitae Pontificum*.[15] It is a chronological sequence of the lives of popes since the origins of Christianity (from Christ to Pope Sixtus IV), the purpose of

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14 This specific knot of the Renaissance culture between the Reformation and Counter-Reformation fits in a broader discussion on the relationship between spiritual and temporal power during the Tridentine age; see Jedin, Prodi 1979, 65-75. For an overall vision on the episcopal issue during the Renaissance, see Prosperi 1986; Barrie-Curien, Vernard 2001. Specific tractates on the ideal type of bishop were carried out in the late sixteenth century: see Jedin 1950, and Broutin 1953. For the "universal priesthood" see Luther 1520, *De ordine*: "Sic enim i. Pet. ii, dicitur, Vos estis genus electum, regale sacerdotium, et sacerdotale regnum. Quare, omnes sumus sacerdotes, quotquot Christiani sumus, Sacerdotes vero vocamus, ministri sunt ex nobis electi, qui nostro nomine omnia faciant. Et sacerdotium aliud nihil est, quam ministerium".

15 See Platina 1479; for the controversial biographical relationship of Platina with the Papacy, see Bauer 2006.

which was to collect information on the history of the Church for the incumbent pontiff to follow as an example. In this work, Platina underlined the leading position taken by Peter over the other apostles in his description of the Pentecostal predications, where the Apostles travelled throughout the world to spread Christ's word. In terms of its structure and content, this work became an archetype of sorts, to be followed by future treatises on the same matter and was emulated and contrasted by Catholic and Protestant scholars alike owing to the sensitive information it contained (including the flaws and crimes of popes).

1508 The German humanist and theologian Jakob Wimfeling (1450-1528) was the author of a chronotaxes of the bishops of Strasbourg,[16] in which he retraced the episcopal lineage of the most important city of Alsatia. Even if his catalogue started with Bishop Amandus, in charge during between the third and the fourth century CE, in the prologue of his work Wimfeling attempted to relink the foundation of the diocese of Strasbourg with the early preaching of the Apostles in Gaul and Germany, directly ordered by Peter and Paul.[17]

1511 The episcopal chronotaxis entitled *Catalogus episcoporum Olomucensium* was published by the Moravian scholar Augustin Käsenbrot (1467-1513).[18] The author outlined the names, the time in office, and a summary of the activities of each bishop of the Archdiocese of Olomouc, including all relevant actions carried out during their posts. As declared in the dedicatory text to Stanislav Thurzó, the bishop of the archdiocese at the time, Käsenbrot arranged this chronotaxis not only to preserve the religious history of Olomouc but also to be used as a model for future bishops.[19] The two epitaphs on the frontispiece, written by the Swiss historian Joachim von Watt (1484-1551), confirm this intent, underlining that the seriation of the names and accomplishments of past bishops would have reinforced the vir-

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[16] Wimfeling 1508. For his life and works, see also Schmidt 1879, 1: 1-187; 2: 317-39; Geiger 1898; and Knepper 1902.

[17] Wimfeling 1508, *Prolog.*: "Petrus quoque Maternum cum Eucherio et Valerio in translapias Germaniae partes, praedicatoris gratia transmisit. Qui transmissis Albibus venerunt in hanc Alsatiam Germaniae provinciam, coeperuntque incolis praedicare verbum Dei. Qui videntes signa et virtutes quas faciebant conversi sunt ad Dominum".

[18] Käsenbrot 1511; Richter 1831.

[19] Käsenbrot 1511, 3ᵇ: "Dolebam enim eos per quos orthodoxae christianae religionis apud nos exordium coepit et tamquam per manus tradita ad haec usque tempora defluxit, aevi iniuria obsolescere nullisque annalibus seu litteraris monumentis commendatos caeca nocte ac oblivione involvi debere, quo nihil infoelicius in rebus humanis accidere reor".

tues of the bishop in office.[20] Käsenbrot set the origins of the Diocese of Olomouc at the election of its first bishop, Cyrillus, by Pope Nicholas I in the ninth century, giving official pontifical sanction to the institution.

1546 The ecclesiastical seriation, *Historia von der Bäpst und Keiser Leben*,[21] was arranged and published by Kaspar Hedio, the German historiographer and Protestant theologian. This work is a translation into German of Platina's *Lives*, to which Hedio added four chronotaxes, consisting of only names and dates: one for Roman pontiffs, one for emperors, one for popes who were the sons of priests or bishops, and one for councils and synods. Since Hedio's chronotaxes included a list of Catholic popes who were the sons of clergymen, thereby implying the intrinsic corruption of the Catholic Church and bringing its legitimacy into question, it appears that they were written with polemical intentions.

1549 In Northern Europe, another chronotaxis, *De omnibus Germaniae episcopatibus*, was published in 1549 by Kaspar Brusch (1518-59), a German humanist with an ambiguous confessional identity.[22] This monumental work, the initial scope of which was to collect the episcopal successions throughout Germany, was left unfinished at the first volume, and limited only to the districts of Mainz and Bamberg.[23] It is clear that there was a cultural and political will to underline Mainz's deeply rooted Catholic tradition, since during the period 1514-17 this city triggered the Lutheran *Ninety-Five Theses* by granting indulgences and selling the vacant episcopate.[24] This work may therefore have had an apologetic connotation that was tied to the original events of the Protestant Reformation. In fact, Brusch referred to the first bishop of Mainz, St. Crescentius, as a disciple of Paul the Apostle, recognising the sacredness of the ecclesiastical hierarchy directly tied to the heirs of Christ.[25]

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20 Käsenbrot 1511, 3ᵃ: "Nam dum clara legit praesul monumenta superstes | Nimirum virtus gratior inde sibi est".

21 Hedio 1546.

22 Brusch 1549. The German scholar worked also on ecclesiastical archaeology, studying monasteries and cloisters of Germany and publishing a tractate of antiquarian erudition on this matter; see Brusch 1551. On his life and work in general, see Ludwig 2002 and Kreuz 2008.

23 The archdiocese of Mainz was one of the Great Imperial Electors – as specified even in the title of the dedicatory to Bishop Sebastian von Heusenstein, *Archiepiscopo Moguntino, Sacr. Rom. imperij per Germanias Archicancellario et Electori*.

24 Campi 2008, 14.

25 Brusch 1549, 4: "Sanctus Crescens sive Crescentius, unus ex primis Germania Apostolis, divi Pauli auditor, comes, ac discipulus, Primus Moguntiam ad Christum convertit, et primus numeratur eius sedis antistes ac Episcopus".

1550 *La chronique des roys de France*, which is of French origin, is the work of the jurist and bishop Jean du Tillet (1521-70);[26] both an imperial (*Le catalogue des empereurs*) and a pontifical (*Le catalogue des papes*) chronotaxis are included in the end-notes. It emerges from the letter to the reader, which was composed by the editor Jean d'Ongoys, that the text was written in Latin and originally only comprised a chronology of the kings of France. Only subsequently was it translated into French, with the other two series then added (the emperors and the popes).

1551 Reference to ecclesiastical chronotaxes is also made in the *Commentarium Rei Publicae Romanae in exteris Provinciis* by the Austrian Catholic doctor Wolfgang Lazius,[27] in which various short lists of bishops in office during the reign of Onorius (393-423 CE) and Arcadius (395-408 CE) can be found. The chronotaxes taken into consideration concerned the Roman provinces of Africa, Illyria, the Middle East, Greece, Gaul, and Spain. The inclusion of ecclesiastical chronotaxes in a work that sought to describe the political structure of the Roman Empire outside of Italy is justified by the intention of the author to give institutional continuity to Christianity. In the section entitled *de Sacris sedibus*, which contains an analysis of the *praetorium*, Lazius was able to discover the source from which the dioceses originated and developed.[28]

1557 Among the extensive works of the Italian friar, Onofrio Panvinio (1530-68), many concerned ecclesiastical chronology,[29] including the *Romanorum Pontifices et Cardinales*.[30] This was a

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26 Tillet 1550, *Lect.*: "Soyez Lecteur adverty, que celuy qui a traduict ceste Chronique, ne scavoit point que l'Autheur mesme (qui vous est assez cognu encors qu'il n'ait iamais voulu y estre nomé et intitulé)".

27 Lazius 1551, 133-57.

28 Lazius 1551, 142: "Nunc quomodo istud praetorium ecclesiasticam administrationem acceperit, simulatque ditiones illius salubri fuissent doctrina imbutae, docebo. Siquidem ut ab initio huius capitis de Sacris sedibus, sive primis a praetorio ad Ecclesiam Christi translatis dictum est, et quod Diocesis vocabulum Ciceroni etiam usurpatur, praefectorum iurisdictionem significarit; sic quoque praesulis vox, quae hodie episcopo tribuitur, olim praesidum erat propria".

29 Strada 1557b; Panvinio 1557; 1562; 1568a; 1568b.

30 This work had two simultaneous editions, both printed in Venice in 1557: the first was carried out by the printer Jacopo Strada, not licensed by the author. The second was carried out by Michele Tramezzino, with the supervision of the author himself, who tried to amend the preceding spurious version; see Panvinio, *Romanorum Pontifices et Cardinales*, ad lect. An opinion on this work is given in the epistolary exchange published by Soler i Nicolau 2000, 130: "Dicono che e' vostri Pontifici Romani co' Cardinali da Leon IX in poi son usciti, ne' quali tre cose mi son state improbate: l'una, che, poi haver ditta la creatione de' Cardinali, replicate anchor li superstiti a la morte di quel Papa, che longhezza e satietà; l'altra, che mutate e' numeri de' pontefici dal uso commune e de' scrittori e del populo; la terza, che vi fate arbitro de le attioni di essi pontefici con poco vantaggio loro. So così e non vi posso laudar in queste parti, benché io

chronotaxis that retraced the entire papal seriation from its origins up to the sixteenth century, including all the cardinals elected during each pontificate, and amended the errors made in previous series through the application of the antiquarian method.

1558   The English and Protestant theologian John Bale (1495-1563) published his catalogue of the lives of the popes, *Acta Romanorum pontificum*, referring openly to Platina's work.[31] Bale's chronotaxis included items that had already been added by Kaspar Hedio, including the list of popes fathered by married churchmen, once again for the purpose of discrediting Catholic institutions.

1558   Another interesting example of a chronotaxis is the *Elenchus theologorum in tota sacra Biblia*,[32] which was written by the German Catholic theologian Georg Witzel (1501-73). In this work, he put in chronological order all the prophets and theologians present in the Holy Writ, including the Old and New Testaments and all the authors of the Patrology, whether Jewish, Greek, or Latin. At the end of the book, another chronotaxis was included entitled *Series temporum quibus claruerunt Scriptores Ecclesiastici*, which comprised an alphabetical list of the interpreters of ecclesiastical texts with the dates of their works.

1562   The first chronotaxis of the French clergy[33] can be identified in the extensive treatise *Christianae religionis institutionisque historica propugnatio*, written by Antoine de Mouchy (1494-1574), a Catholic theologian and inquisitor who took part in the Council of Trent in 1563. His work, divided into four tomes,[34] the second of which is entirely devoted to reconstructing the ecclesiastical seriations of France, Germany, and Austria, was intended to oppose and discredit the Protestant doctrinal positions formulated by Jean Calvin. Of all the catalogues it contains, those of the archbishops and bishops of France are the most complete and detailed: the episcopal lists for the most important dioceses are traced back to the first preachings of the successors of the Apostles, the majority of whom were appointed by St. Peter. Among these, the worthiest of consideration is that of Reims: its episcopal lineage began

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sospenda il parere insin che oda voi. Siate accorto e diligente nel scrivere, *Nescit vox missa reverti* [Hor. *ars* 390]" (Ottavio Pantagato to Onofrio Panvinio, 28 August 1558). Bauer 2020, 46-8 considers Panvinio's *Romani pontifices* as a "byproduct or offshoot of his *Fasti*", rather than an independent genre of chronological writings establishes in the tradition of ecclesiastical history.

31   Bale 1558, 1558.

32   Witzel 1558. This theologian also worked on other lists related to the Holy Writ and to Patristic texts; see Witzel 1549.

33   See also the earlier works on the institutional division of the French territory where the dioceses of France are indicated: Signot 1515.

34   De Mouchy 1562.

in 316 CE, but De Mouchy set the effective origin of this office to the first century CE, which is when St. Sixtus, St. Sinisius, and St. Amasius were sent to Gaul by St. Peter to preach.

1569 The French scholar Pierre Pithou, a Catholic who abjured Protestantism in 1588, included the chronotaxes arranged by St. Nikephoros of Constantinople (eighth century) at the beginning of his edition of the *Historia miscella*.[35] These seriations featured in several ecclesiastical lists, in which the Patriarchs of Jerusalem were listed after Jesus Christ, and the names of the bishops of the city were listed under those of the Christian Roman emperors and the bishops of Rome, Byzantium, Alexandria, and Antioch. Pithou also arranged another chronotaxis for the diocese of Troyes in France, which was entitled *Bref recueil des evesques de Troyes* and published in 1600 in the appendix of his *Les costumes du baillage de Troyes en Champaigne*. This list begins with St. Amator, a bishop and martyr (fourth century CE), but he alludes to previous preachings in that territory by St. Savinianus, who was appointed directly by St Peter.[36]

1572 the first actual chronotaxis dealing with English prelates is found in *De antiquitate Britannicae Ecclesiae*.[37] This work, a major antiquarian dissertation on the church of England, was published by Matthew Parker (1504-75), the Archbishop of Canterbury, and included a list of the archbishops of Canterbury, from the origins of the diocese to that time, supporting the legitimacy of the local episcopal position. Parker dated the foundation of the Church of England back to the first apostolic preaching in ancient times, contesting the view held by the Church of Rome.[38] He stated that, on the basis of patristic sources, the first Christian to preach in Britain was St. Paul; however, he also proposed alternative figures, such as Joseph of Arimathea or St. Simon Apostle.[39]

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[35] Pithou 1569.

[36] Pithou 1600, 503-25; on the first bishop of Troyes, see Mathoud 1687, 32-3: "Nullus in Elencho Trevir. Antistitum occurrit Augustinus qui huic fabellae succurrere possit, quam aut nescivit Odorannus, aut sapienter suppressit. His pro tuenda Actorum fide nessario praemissis, ex illis contra doctissimum Dissertatorem Launoium arguimus certum esse quod sanctus Savinianus a B. Petro directus fuerit in Gallias fidei praedicator, quod iam sopitis ad tempus gentilium iris, nec saevientibus Caesarum edictis, Deo in eius et sociorum honorem constructae fuerint Ecclesiae".

[37] Parker 1572.

[38] Parker 1572, 1: "non a Romana sede, ut Pontificii contendunt".

[39] Parker 1572, 3-5: "Postquam ab ipsis Ecclesiae incunabulis hanc Insulam in fide Christiana fuisse instructam luculenter breviterque exposuimus, videamus a quo doctore primum instituta sit: tum quomodo una sempre crevit, nec avulsa penitus defecit unquam, etsi multis erroribus ab hostilibus incursionibus, Romanaque sede huc traductis, tardius saepe corrupta, sed divina veritate iterum recepta ocius recreata semper fuit. Ac primum Paulum ipsum gentium doctorem, cum aliis gentibus,

1576   The objectives of the ecclesiastical chronotaxis *SS. Episco-porum Veronensium monumenta*, which was written by the Italian priest Raffaello Bagatta (second half of sixteenth century), were to collect information about the lives of the bishops of Verona and to safeguard examples of the Christian virtue that they represented. However, since the seriation was not chronological but alphabetical in order and included only the bishops of the city for whom there was evidence of proven sanctity, it appears to be an exception among the ecclesiastical seriations of the Renaissance.[40] It is likely that this choice was linked to the idea that a chronological arrangement was not necessary because a confirmation of virtue went beyond time and other contingencies.

1582   Another chronotaxis from Italy is the *Catalogus episcoporum Brixinensium*, which was written by the Italian canon Donato Fezzi (1564-1597). Like the works of his predecessors, Fezzi reconstructed the chronotaxis of the Diocese of Brescia in order to encourage the incumbent bishop to follow the examples of those who had previously held his position.[41]

1584   *Hollandiae historia comitum*, written by the Flemish scholar Adrian Barland (ca. 1486-ca. 1540), carried an appendix *Item Vltraiectensium episcoporum catalogus et res gestae*, in which there was a chronotaxis detailing the lives and actions of the bishops of Utrecht.[42] *Historia veterum Episcoporum Ultraiectensium*, by Sjoerd Pieters (1527-1597), published posthumously in 1612, and which partially reformulated the seriation proposed by Barland, was also related to this diocese.[43]

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tum nominatim Britannis Evangelium nunciasset post priorem suam Romae incarcerationem [...] Philippus enim Apostolus, qui in Galliam venit, et Evangelii praedicatione plures ad fidem vertit abluitque baptismate, cum de Britannia modico freto separata insula accepisset, a qua Druidum superstitio manabat in Galliam, delegit ex suorum sociorum numero duodecim: quibus Josephum Arimathiensem, qui Dominum Christum sepulchro condidit, praefecit [...] Alii Simonem Zelotem in Britanniam venisse, et Evangelium primum nunciasse referunt, quorum utrumque verum esse potest. Nam Josephi socii non nominantur, inter quos fuisse Simonem est verisimile"; see also Grafton 2012, 16.

40   Bagatta 1576, *Lect.*: "Hinc est studium illud pium plurimorum Sanctorum hominum conscribendi proprium Martyrologium de omnibus, et solis Sanctis, qui in suis Episcopatibus quiescunt, aut conficiendi ex propriae Ecclesiae monumentis iustam aliquam historiam, per quam investigemur, et urgeamur ad ambulandam actam fidei, et bonorum operum viam quae ducit ad vitam".

41   Fezzi 1582, *Dedic.*: "Facile namque intelligebas, quid ponderis viva domesticaque maiorum nostrorum exempla, ad hominum animos commovendos, haberent, quantamque praeclara eorum facta, huic Ecclesiae dignitate afferent et gloriam".

42   Barland 1584, 1-31.

43   Pieters 1612.

1585 The Italian monk and scholar Vincenzo Borghini (1515-1580) worked on an ecclesiastical chronology when drafting *Discorsi*, his antiquarian treatise on the city of Florence. He attached a dissertation on the Florentine church and its bishops, *Trattato della Chiesa e Vescovi fiorentini*,[44] in which a seriation of the lives of the Florentine bishops was arranged.[45] The aim of this work was to reconstruct a new and faithful chronotaxis of the Florentine episcopate, from its origins to modern times, since a series of mistakes had been gradually accumulated throughout the years and retransmitted, confusing the lineage.[46] Despite declaring that he did not have primary sources to guarantee the veracity of his claim, Borghini attributed the origins of the Florentine episcopate to the most direct successors of the Apostles – in this case, Saint Frontin and Saint Paulin, who had been nominated directly by Peter.[47] In this way, Borghini sought to draw a direct connection between the origin of the Florentine diocese and the first pontiff, establishing an original link with the city of Rome.

1586 The Italian scholar Carlo Sigonio wrote *De episcopis Bononiensibus*, a chronotaxis of the bishops of Bologna. His seriation began with St. Zama, a bishop sent by Pope Dionysus in the second century CE. The objective of his chronotaxis was compatible with those composed by other Catholic authors: in fact, he affirmed that the first purpose of episcopal sequences was to fight the heretical positions of the Protestants.[48]

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44 Borghini 1585, 337-595. Another chronotaxis on the dioceses of Tuscany concerned the bishops of Arezzo: see Burali 1638.

45 To retrace Borghini's antiquarian studies see Belloni, Drusi 2002.

46 In working on his chronotaxis, Borghini exchanged views on this matter with fellow scholars, as proved by the following letters; see Dati 1743, 4.4: 59: "e particolarmente non vi potrei dire quanto mi sarebbe caro, se nel rivedere, come so che fate spesso, le cose di costì, massimamente ecclesiastiche, e dandovi fra mano qualcuno de' nostri vescovi di Fiorenza, vi degnaste notargli, e farmene parte, perché già n'ho ritrovati XII de' quali non era memoria alcuna, e vorrei, se possibil fosse, ritrovare il resto" (Vincezio Borghini to Onofrio Panvinio 1566), and 186-7: "e potrà essere che io di essi vescovi alcuna cosa più, e meglio; e s'io fussi stato indovino di questo desiderio di V.S. Reverendissima, sarei anche per addietro statone sollecito, che stieno appreso di lei, non intendo ne sia escluso il nostro messer Niccolò del Nero, anzi molto desidero che le vegga, che ne potranno in molte parti di venir migliori. Potrebbe V.S. Reverendissima aiutare non poco questa impresa dalle bande di costà, ed io n'avea già scritto al P. F. Onofrio Panvinio amico mio di molti anni, ma fu tardi, perché già aveva trascorso tutti i Registri Pontificali, quando ebbe la mia, e non avea notato i nostri vescovi, che gli eran dati fra le mani; ben mi promise di fare in quello, che gli darebbe nelle mani per innanzi, ma non credo seguisse altro, perché non vi corse molto tempo dalla sua morte" (Vincezio Borghini to Alessandro de' Medici, 8 January 1574).

47 Borghini 1585, 357-8: "Però piglisi per ora il principio da costui, pur con questa condizione; e quando se ne troverrà alcuna più salda certezza, si potrà come cosa chiara affermare".

48 Sigonio 1586, 1-2: "Itaque prisci illi sanctae Ecclesiae proceres, viri longe omnium prudentissimi non sine ratione sanxerunt, ut eis maxime civitatibus episcopi tra-

1594   The Italian clergyman Gaspare Mosca (sixteenth century) published a treatise entitled *De Salernitanae ecclesiae episcopis, et archiepiscopis catalogus*, in which he included a list of all the bishops of Salerno. Mosca turned the uncertainty over the origins of the Church of Salerno in favour of a direct apostolic derivation. He attempted to include the episcopate of Salerno among those founded by the disciples of St. Peter, despite no evidence of this having been found in the original source. However, Mosca convincingly stated that, if these consecrations had in fact taken place, the number of bishops elected would have been higher, hinting that the importance of Salerno in the ancient world meant it had to be among those missing.[49]

1596   The Dutch scholar Pieter van Opmeer published *Catalogus omnium totius prope orbis archiepiscoporum episcoporumque*. The initial aim of this work was to compile all of the archiepiscopal seriations of the Christian world in Germany, Italy, France, England, Scotland, Scandinavia, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Spain, Belgium, and the Middle East, but this was ultimately narrowed down to focus solely on Germany.[50]

1597   Antonio Maria Spelta, an Italian Catholic scholar, published a seriation of the bishops of the Diocese of Pavia, in northern Italy, entitled *Historia delle vite di tutti i vescovi di Pavia*. Spelta proved that the episcopate of the city was founded by St. Syrus, who had been consecrated directly by St. Peter with a mission to evangelise the territory.[51]

1605   The Spanish theologian Francisco Padilla published his monumental treatise *Historia Ecclesiastica de España*, drafting several seriations of popes, emperors, the Gothic and Swabian kings of Spain, Councils held in Spain, Spanish bishops without a specific office, and ancient bishops who had no succession.

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derentur, apud quas multitudo fidelium succrevisset, et quia continentem Catholicorum antistum seriem ad confutandos haereses in primis pertinere putarunt, non solum nomina singulorum in tabulas basilicarum referri, sed etiam imagines in suis effingi Episcopiis voluerunt".

49   Mosca 1594, 8: "Id, quod suadet mirum in modum, ut existimem a primis fere nascentis Ecclesiae saeculis, proprios illam habuisse Episcopos: Decreverat enim B. Petrus, quod testatur S. Clemens, ut in praecipuis quibusque Civitatibus Episcopi constituerentur. Quod si verum est, ut certe arbitramus veri simillimum: multo plures fuisse in illa Episcopos necesse est, ac multorum nomina, et res gestae ad nos non pervenisse".

50   Opmeer 1596.

51   Spelta 1597, 1: "Erano già scorsi anni quarantacinque che Giesu Christo nostro Signore per salvar l'humana prole vestitosi di questa nostra fragile spoglia venne ad habitar con gli huomini, et dodici, ch'egli havendo compitamente ispedita l'opera della redentione, era asceso al Cielo, e nell'eterno seggio alla destra dell'Onnipotente padre assiso, quando sotto il pontificato di san Pietro, e l'imperio di Claudio, entrò in questa alma città l'angelico pastore, tromba dello Spirito Santo, maestro della verità, il glorioso nostro padre San Siro".

After these catalogues, he commenced work on a chronotaxis for all of the Hispanic dioceses, ordered alphabetically.[52] Padilla took it for granted that the Church of Spain had been founded directly by St. James, the brother of St. Peter. In fact, all the episcopal lists included in Padilla's collection had their apostolic legitimacy assured by this provenance.[53]

1606 Another important chronotaxis from Spain, *Historia de las antiguedades de la cividad de Salamanca*,[54] was written by the scholar González de Ávila (1578-1658). This work is divided into three sections: the first describes the foundation of the city until the first evangelical preaching; the second lists the names and short lives of the first bishops until the foundation of the University of Salamanca (1218); and the third registers all the subsequent bishops. Just like Padilla, González de Ávila also started his episcopal succession from St. James and his nine disciples, reinforcing the direct ancient connotation between the Church of Spain and an apostolic mandate.

1612 *Novaria seu de Ecclesia Novariensi* was a treaty of ecclesiastical erudition carried out by the Italian scholar Carlo Bascapè (1550-1615). The work is divided into two sections: the first describes the territory of the Diocese of Novara and the second its bishops throughout history. Bascapè had no data at his disposal to prove that the diocese had existed since the origins of Christianity. In fact, the first bishop of the city was considered to be St. Gaudentius (fourth century CE); however, he took the view that the first evangelisation of the city, and therefore the first diocese, should have been traced back to the apostolic preachings in Milan,[55] not far from Novara.[56]

1621 The French jurist Jean Chenu (1559-1627) arranged all the chronotaxes of France into two volumes entitled *Archiepiscoporum et episcoporum Galliae chronologica historia*. This work was openly inspired by his compatriot De Mouchy, reaffirming the polemical nature of this genre for the purpose of contrasting the confessional positions of Protestants with the nature of ecclesiastical hierarchies by reconstructing the apostolic descent of the entire episcopal lineage.[57]

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52 Padilla 1605.

53 This represents one of the most important peeks of Hispanic historiography during the Renaissance, as pointed out by van Liere 2012.

54 González de Ávila 1606.

55 On the history of the diocese of Milan see Ripamonti 1617-25.

56 Bascapè 1612, 233-4: "Ita Mediolano Evangelicae veritatis nuncios cito Novariam advenisse credibile est, in urbem, neque longe positam [...] atque moribus non dissimilem".

57 Chenu 1621, I-II: "ad impugnandum illius temporis haereticos".

1626 Only five years later, the French presbyter and historian Claude Robert (1564-1637) published another vast chronotaxis of all the dioceses and monasteries of France entitled *Gallia Christiana*. With references included for the name of each bishop and the period of incumbency, this work was more schematic in nature than those of his predecessors. Robert sought to prove that the office of the episcopacy dated back to the origins of Christianity, and this was actually demonstrated by retracing the episcopal lineage to apostolic descent. Furthermore, in line with his predecessors, a declared objective of his chronotaxis was to hand down positive examples given by previous bishops in order to help the entire Catholic Church on its path of salvation by encouraging their emulation.[58]

1644-62 The ideal closing point of this overview is represented by *Italia Sacra sive de episcopis Italiae*,[59] the nine-volume work by the Cistercian monk Ferdinando Ughelli.[60] Ughelli arranged a series of chronotaxes that included all the bishops of Italy, ordered by geographical area (the twenty regions of Italy), publishing the largest and most documented work on the ecclesiastical historiography of his times. His aim was to present Italy as the cradle of Christianity through the exhibition of all its dioceses and the long-lasting episcopal lineage connected to the establishment of the Holy See in Rome.

6.3 Conclusions

In order to draw a clearer distinction between the cultural and editorial phenomena of the ecclesiastical chronotaxes written during the Renaissance, and to understand the authors' intentions, it is useful to observe the method applied. In fact, the methodological choices reflect the context in which they were prepared and the reasons for which they were used. What emerges is that the method applied by each author was described in detail only from the mid-sixteenth century onward. In his introductory poem, Kaspar Brusch was the first to outline the sources of his episcopal chronotaxis: ancient inscriptions, which implied that the author had epigraphic knowledge; ancient books, which demonstrated that the texts were understood in their original language; manuscripts, which attested to the philological and linguistic cognitions; the archaeological findings of monasteries, which were difficult to interpret, implying palaeographic

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58 Robert 1626, *Lect.*: "ad excitandam virtutum aemulationis".

59 Ughelli 1644-62; Ughelli 1717-22.

60 For a general bibliography on this important scholar see Malena 2013.

abilities; and sculptures of all kinds, which also required an understanding of art history.[61] These are all typical elements of antiquarian investigation and were developed through the experience of humanists throughout Europe, who drew on their knowledge of ancient history and classical sources in an attempt to link historical events to the tangible reality of the findings handed down.

The antiquarian method was used by many authors. In the work of Jean du Tillet, for example, the seriations were taken from a consistent number of textual extracts, papers, monuments, and various authentic antiquities.[62] Onofrio Panvinio attested to having found inspiration in the study of profane history when commencing his works on sacred history, which also appears to imply an assimilation of antiquarian techniques. Panvinio stated that he had utilised sepulchral eulogies, ancient inscriptions taken from the Roman basilicas, as well as chronicles and fragments of historiographic texts.[63] Raffaello Bagatta also utilised ancient codices of various origin as well

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[61]   Brusch 1549, *Epigr.*: "Plurima erunt veturum saxa et monumenta legenda, | Plura ex antiquis excipienda libris. | Nec tibi erunt paucae inquirendae Bybliothecae | Illic cum tineis bellum erit acre tibi. | Sic adeunda tibi sunt saepe Monastica templa | Multa legenda ubi erunt non satis apta legi. | [...] | Omnia templa pio affectu studioque pererrans, | omnigenas statuas, omnia saxa legens".

[62]   Du Tillet 1550, *Lect.*: "d'un bon nombre d'extraictz, chartres, monumens, et ancinnetez authentiques".

[63]   Panvinio 1557, *Lect.*: "Perduxi, quod illius saeculi gesta tum in toto orbe, tum in Romanorum Pontificum successionibus, sive temporum iniuria, sive hominum, qui aetate illa vixerunt, negligentia, obscurissima sint, tenebrisque vetustatis adeo obsita, ut non sine maxima difficultate veritas erui potuerit. In eis autem explicandis praecipue aliquot maximorum Pontificum, qui per ea tempora vixerunt, sepulchrorum elogiis, vetustisque inscriptionibus, quae adhuc per varias urbis basilicas extant, usus sum. Nonnihil et adiutus fui ex Liutprandi Ticinensis historia, Reginonis, Hermani Contracti, et Sigeberti Monachorum chronicis, et aliquot praeterea eius aetatis scriptorum concisis historiis. Quorum monumentorum uxilio, quod prima fronte fieri non posse ulla ratione videbatur, confeci. Hanc igitur ob caussam secundam illam partem esse volui, quae tempora, ob scriptorum inopiam obscurissima facta, contineret, a prima, quae clarior erat, et a tertia, de qua mox loquar, distincta". In addition to these sources, those used for the heraldic reconstruction were included in the seriation that was referenced by Jacopo Strada in the preface of his non-authorised edition, which included paintings in churches and palaces, sepulchral statues, decorative apparatus of altars, drapes and carpets, and ornaments of various kinds; see Strada 1557b, *Dedic.*: "In ipsorum insignium pictura fidelis ac poene religious fui, nihil detraxi, nihil adieci, nihil immutavi, qualia reperta sunt in Templis aut Palatiis picta, in sepulchris sculpta, in toto altarium apparatu, ac vestimentis, Aulaeis, ac tapetibus contexta, in argenteis ac aureis instrumentis, quae tum ad Templorum, tum etiam ad mensae usum adhiberi solent, caelata, reliquisque huiusmodi, talia a me fideliter sunt adnotata: nec ulla in re mihi adscribi potest aut temeritas, aut negligentia". To arrange his chronotaxis, Panvinio received the help of various scholars, such as the Italian humanist Ottavio Pantagato and the Spanish bishop Antonio Agustín. Agustìn, in particular, indicated many sources from which it was possible to obtain useful data to arrange the ecclesiastical catalogues; see Andrès 1804, 293-4, 294-7, 299-302, 305-6, 359-60; and Carbonell 1991, 195-200.

as local ecclesiastical writings and epigraphs.[64] Similarly, already in the title to his work, Fezzi specified he examined ancient texts which were difficult to read and had to be preserved in their original form since they resulted in more faithful and reliable interpretations.[65]

The particular attention devoted to ancient texts was also in line with Vincenzo Borghini's method. He indicated that the "origin of errors" derived from "retouching" sources. Usually, this practice was applied in order to render the texts more comprehensible to readers of different periods. However, the content was modified irreparably as a result: with the manipulation/simplification of texts, the original forms were contaminated and, consequently, the original thoughts were lost.[66] The instruments utilised to interpret these sources were various and depended on the quality of the finding under examination. It was only thanks to the crossing over of data of the original documents and other specific evidence – such as epigraphic, numismatic, and archaeological findings – that his chronotaxis acquired a certified reliability. In addition to reporting on the state of affairs, including documental vacuities, Borghini was also well aware that the

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64 Bagatta 1576, *Lect*.: "Quamobrem et nos huiusmodi sancto, ac pio studio adducti iam aliquot annos non absque magno labore, ac studio, cum ex tot incendiis, direptionibusque etiam domesticis, et populorum barbarorum devastationibus, plurima huius civitatis Veronensis iam deperierint, monumenta quaedam SS. Episcoporum Veronensium et aliorum SS. quorum corpora habentur Veronae, ac eriam nonnullorum, quorum Ecclesiae in eadem civitate habentur, quae quidem monumenta adhuc in urbe nostra reperiuntur, ex diversis locis, antiquis codicibus, scripturis nostrarum Ecclesiarum, et lapidibus collegimus, ne temporis iniuria, aut simili ratione haec etiam pauca deperirent. Collegimus etiam eorum fere omnium SS. historias ax antiquis propriis lectionibus, quae ad breviarium usque restitutum ducentos amplius annos diebus festis Sanctorum ipsorum Ecclesia Veronense perpetuo recitatae sunt, quarum aliquas etiam aximus nonnullarum rerum commemoratione, quae a bonis probatisque authoribus scriptae pietatem in Deum, et religionem maxime accendunt, et quae prolixiores videbantur, in compendium redegimus".

65 Fezzi 1582: *Catalogus episcoporum Brixinensium, usque ad haec nostra tempora omnium, prout ex vetustissimis scriptis colligere licuit: quae etsi rudi admodum stilo constent, nihil tamen immutandum duximus quia simplex huiusmodi ordo, nonnunquam fidelius incorruptae antiquitatis veritatem exprimere videatur.*

66 Borghini 1585, 340: "Ma tutto questo inganno, e questo errore, per mio avviso, nasce da una così fatta opinione, che già regnò un tempo, della quale io non so qual fusse più la sciocchezza, e il danno, che e' pareva loro una bella cosa come e' potevano ritoccare, e come e' si credevano, e liberamente e' dicevano, rimbellire, e migliorare gli scritti di alcuni Autori antichi (invero alcuna volta semplici, e puri, ma tuttavia gravi, e fedeli), ed in questo non è possibile dire quanto scioccamente si ingannassero, e come mentreché lisciandoli, ed azzimandoli [...] e' si credeano farle parere più vaghe a' poco intendenti: [...] se non ne fusse seguito talvolta un disordine, che questi così più presto contrafatti, che rifatti componimenti, hanno per la loro pensata spenti gli originali, de' quali si dovea tenere gran conto"; see also Belloni 1995.

lack of documentation, especially for the first few centuries, meant it would be impossible to make a list without omissions.[67]

Ughelli also devoted the same level of attention to the original language of ancient sources. In the preface to his work, he affirmed that the quotations from ancient tables, diaries, calendars, epigraphs, inscriptions, sepulchral eulogies, official documents, reports, etc., should always have been considered in their original form, drawing even greater attention to the importance of using the same words. This was for the same reasons as those explained extensively by Borghini, i.e., that the modification of any text leads automatically to its irreparable corruption.[68]

From these analyses on the genre of ecclesiastical chronotaxis, carried out during the Renaissance, and its method, it is possible to draw some general conclusions which may provide another perspective on the subject.

The first is that the number of publications of printed chronotaxes appears to have increased after the mid-sixteenth century, in conjunction with the consolidation of the Protestant Reformation. It is clear that the number of editions published after the 1540s is much higher than in the decades before. Of course, the catalogue presented above represents only a limited sample of the entire production of chronotaxes throughout Europe in the early modern period; however, it can be used to present a rough indication of some of the wider dynamics connected to the genre.

This leads to the second conclusion. Ecclesiastical chronotaxes appear to have a didactic function with a moral connotation. In most cases, the authors openly declare their intent to encourage the incumbent bishop or pope to follow the virtuous example of his predecessors. This inclination should be included among the reforming tendencies of the entire clergy that pervaded the Church after the

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[67] Borghini 1585, 342: "Io per me non mi recherò a vergogna, lasciandone indietro una buona parte; anzi crederrò, che sia bene, con l'esempio, e col fatto proprio, non solamente con le parole, cavare delle scritture, e dell'opinioni l'abuso di costoro, e che forse regna ancora in alcuni, di dirsi (come diciamo per via di motti) le bugie, e crederlesi […] e mi scuserà la poca notizia, che ci è in questa sorte di storia de' tempi antichi, perché generalmente di questi Vescovi, che hanno la cura sola della chiesa loro, e non alcuno imperio, o signoria nel temporale, o sopra alcun'altra Chiesa primato, non parlano ordinariamente gli Scrittori delle Cronache universali".

[68] Ughelli 1644, *Praef.*: "Nulli labori pepercimus, publicas Ecclesiarum Tabulas scrutati sumus, privatorum diaria adivimus, Ephemeridas factorum inspeximus, consuluimus marmora, legimus inscriptiones, Sepulchralia Elogia non despeximus, rerum scriptores habuimus in consilio, Imperatorum, Regum, Pontificumque diplomata, ubi commode occurrerunt, quasi duces narrationis secuti sumus, ut incerta certius eliminare, jugulare absurda, vera cum laude, atque ab omni affectu liberi enarrare possemus […] In recensendis autem instrumentis, privilegiis, donationibus, aliisque similibus antiquis monumentis, ipsissima verba, tametsi plerumque barbara, ac prope ridicula bona fide placuit referre, ne antiquitatis simplicissimum candorem elegantioribus verbis viderentur corrumpere".

beginning of the fifteenth century.[69] Thus, in an attempt to respond to the new spiritual demands emerging from the disputes with Protestants, the genre of chronotaxis also appears to have had an anti-corruption function regarding the clergy within the hierarchies.

The third conclusion is that ecclesiastical chronotaxes had the function of legitimising the institution to which they referred: reconstructing the episcopal lineage from its origins meant reinforcing the ideal structure of the diocese by demonstrating its real continuity in time. Here came the 'right to exist' of each episcopate, since its foundation was rooted in a divine manifestation.

Given the data collected, it is possible to hypothesise that the breakout of the Protestant Reformation encouraged scholars to direct their efforts even more rapidly towards linking the dioceses with an apostolic foundation, for the purpose of reinforcing the link with the origins of the Church. This was in fact the most crucial aspect of the entire issue: the apostolic genesis conferred upon the episcopal office a 'divine right' (*ius divinum*), with its authority derived directly from Christ without any mediation, thereby further supporting its legitimacy. Nevertheless, this right could have been quite ambiguous, especially if interpreted by those who sought to reduce or even abolish the 'pontifical right' on the episcopacy (*ius pontificium*), to which all the dioceses were subjected owing to the dogma of the primacy of Peter. It was not only that Protestant scholars, who repudiated the ecclesiastical hierarchies, attempted to undermine the power of the Roman pontiff; they were also joined by Catholics who sought greater independence for their national church.[70]

The argument could be made that this conflict is reflected in the works of the Spanish scholars Francisco Padilla and Gil González de Ávila, who traced back the foundation of the Church of Spain to St. James, and of the English scholar Matthew Parker, who believed either St. Paul or St. Simon to be the founder of the Church of England.

These secessionist ideas began to be voiced by the Spanish prelates at the Council of Trent during the discussions of the 'episcopal issue' in 1563, with greater sovereignty demanded from the Church of Rome, and a demand to exclude pontifical interference from the divine right of the episcopacy.[71]

On the other hand, the episcopal chronotaxis, even if spreading from a reformed environment, was arranged for the purpose of confirming the ecclesiastical hierarchies inherited by the Anglican Church. In this way, Parker sought to support the original independence of the Church of England, openly legitimising the schism that

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69   Hay 1971.

70   Alberigo 1964, 11-99.

71   See "Appendix".

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had occurred thirty years before. Therefore, even on this occasion, the apostolic descent ended up reinforcing the existence of the institution but severing bonds with the Roman Catholics.

However, what emerges from the Italian, French, and German publications appear to be quite different. In the Italian context, it is clear that the scholars attempted to connect the dioceses directly to St. Peter and hence to a pontifical foundation, as demonstrated by the cases of Vincenzio Borghini, Gaspare Mosca, and Carlo Bascapè. The reason for this tendency remains uncertain, but the local episcopates may have attempted to increase their influence on the territory by strengthening their ties with the Roman Curia. This could also be supported by the work of Ughelli, which portrayed Italy as the most virtuous herald of the Christian religion in Europe – perhaps in an attempt to reinforce its role in competition with the other national churches.

A similar attitude can be observed in France and Germany. In the cases of Caspar Brusch, Antoine De Mouchy, Jean Chenu, and Claude Robert, the intention was to trace back the birth of their dioceses to the disciples of St. Peter, probably for the purpose of reinforcing the bond with the Roman Catholic Church in the period of spiritual and political crisis that led to the religious wars.[72] In fact, the declaration of direct descent from Rome, for instance, by the dioceses of Mainz and Reims (which elected the emperor and consecrated the kings of France, respectively) was intended to reaffirm the Church's power over these secular and political institutions.

Furthermore, given the political situation in France between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the question arises as to the nature of the relationship between the chronotaxes promoted by these scholars (all Catholics) and the work carried out in 1594 by Pierre Pithou on the freedom of the French National Church, *Les libertez de l'eglise Gallicane*.[73] This intersection of contrasting cultural perspectives is likely to shed greater light on the complex weave of connections that various scholarly environments may have had with the political and ecclesiastical establishment.

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[72] Roelker 1996, 226-72.

[73] However, these actions must be considered in relation to the research conducted on the independence of the Church of France, which is well expressed by the treatise of Pierre Pithou on the original freedom of the Church of Gaul; see Pithou 1594.

The ecclesiastical chronotaxes were used mainly in a Catholic environment for the purpose of enhancing the institution under examination, either by consolidating or dissolving the bond with Rome. When used by the Protestants, however, chronotaxes always had a polemical implication and were constantly related to the work of Bartolomeo Platina, who was generally considered close to Protestant authors. As can be seen in the opening poem of Bale's treatise *Onus seu prophetia Romae,* written by the English Puritan Lawrence Humphrey (1526-89), Platina ranked just behind Luther among the most important authors to criticise the Roman Papacy ("Plurima Lutherus patefecit, Platina multa | Quaedam Vergerius, cuncta Baleus habet"). In fact, the objective of the two chronotaxes created by the Protestant scholars Kaspar Hedio and John Bale was to demonstrate that the Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy had incorporated evil manifestations over the centuries.

In response to these aggressions aimed at overthrowing the secular structure of the Catholic Church, Catholic scholars began to put the explanation of the method applied before their chronotaxes. By describing the sources taken into consideration and the antiquarian approach towards them, the data collected were deemed to be more reliable and trustworthy, providing actual, tangible evidence in support of the examples of virtue bequeathed by each episcopal lineage. In this way, material evidence of sanctity, the purpose of which was to confirm the full legitimacy and the full right of the episcopal institution to exist, became an instrument in confessional disputes. The words of Gaspare Mosca on the true nature of chronotaxes and how were they perceived by the Catholic world offer a clear reading of this tendency, displaying the constitution of the City of God in the eternal and holy succession of bishops:[74]

Sicut contra, Dei Civitatem perpetua, sanctissimaque Episcoporum successione constitutam, nos Catholici ubique ostendimus, et exhibemus.

[74] Mosca 1594, 7.

Appendix

Confessional Translations of ἐπίσκοπος

During the Renaissance, when Europe was undergoing a deep cultural and spiritual change owing to fragmentation in the unity of western Christianity, a complex process of 'self-definition' of 'confessional identity' took place. The history of the Church became the battleground for determining and shaping a reformed Christian religion, where Protestants and Catholics struggled to define their legitimacy. Antiquarian erudition played a key role in this process, acting according to diverse cultural systems. Consequently, the revision of ecclesiastical vocabulary became one of the primary methods to influence ideas, so that philology was one the most important tools to reach this objective. The understanding and interpretation of the words of sacred or venerable texts implied control over a traditional knowledge – a control which had tangible effects in the present. Translations of old church histories illustrate very well how literary outcomes were conditioned by the religious ideology of the editors and interpreters. One particular case regarded the Greek word ἐπίσκοπος, not frequently mentioned in the Sacred Scripture,[75] and which was translated in Latin with different terms, such as *episcopus*, *minister*, *sacerdos* or others.[76]

An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 19 (2017), 19-29.

75   The word ἐπίσκοπος does not occur very often in the Sacred Scripture, and not always with a same meaning. It appears five times in the New Testament, once in the Acts of the Apostles (*Act.* 20:28 προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους, ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν περιεποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου), three times in Paul's letters (*Philipp.* 1:1 Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος δοῦλοι Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις; 1 *Timoth.* 3:2 δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίλημπτον εἶναι, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, νηφάλιον, σώφρονα, κόσμιον, φιλόξενον, διδακτικόν; and *Tit.* 1:7 δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμον, μὴ αὐθάδη, μὴ ὀργίλον, μὴ πάροινον, μὴ πλήκτην, μὴ αἰσχροκερδῆ), and once in Peter's letter (1 *Petr.* 2:25 ἦτε γὰρ ὡς πρόβατα πλανώμενοι, ἀλλὰ ἐπεστράφητε νῦν ἐπὶ τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν). It occurs also several times in the Old Testament, in the Septuagint (*Num.* 4:16 ἐπίσκοπος Ελεαζαρ υἱὸς Ααρων τοῦ ἱερέως; *Num.* 31:14 ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐπισκόποις τῆς δυνάμεως; *Judic.* 9:28 καὶ Ζεβουλ ἐπίσκοπος; 4 *Reg.* 11:15 τοῖς ἐπισκόποις τῆς δυνάμεως; 4 *Reg.* 11:18 καὶ ἔθηκεν ὁ ἱερεὺς ἐπισκόπους εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου; 4 *Reg.* 12:12 τὰ ἔργα τῶν ἐπισκόπων οἴκου κυρίου; 2 *Paralip.* 34:12 καὶ ἐπ᾽ αὐτῶν ἐπίσκοποι; 2 *Esdr.* 21:14 καὶ Ιωηλ υἱὸς Ζεχρι ἐπίσκοπος; 2 *Esdr.* 21:22 καὶ ἐπίσκοπος Λευιτῶν; 1 *Machab.* 1:51 ἐποίησεν ἐπισκόπους; *Job* 20:29 παρὰ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου; *Sap.* 1:6 καὶ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ ἐπίσκοπος ἀληθὴς; *Is.* 60:17 καὶ δώσω τοὺς ἄρχοντάς σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ τοὺς ἐπισκόπους σου ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ).

76   In the corresponding passages of the Old Testament, Jerome's Vulgata opts for *sacerdos* (*Num.* 4:16; *Num.* 31:4; 4 *Reg.* 11:15; 4 *Reg.* 11:18), *servus* (*Judic.* 9:28), *praepositus* (2 *Paralip.* 34:12; *Is.* 60:17), *scrutator* (*Sap.* 1:6). In the New Testament, Jerome always choses *episcopus* (*Act.* 20:28; *Philipp.* 1:1; 1 *Timoth.* 3:2; *Tit.* 1:7; 1 *Petr.* 2:25).

This particular aspect, however, turned out to be problematic in how Renaissance scholars made use of it, especially when evoked in polemical contexts. In fact, the discourse around ἐπίσκοπος and its renditions in other languages, in a broader scale, also involved the issue of episcopacy that revolved around election and the role of the bishops in ecclesiastical hierarchies.[77]

Largely speaking, many Protestants wanted to abolish the office, while Catholics attempted to reinforce its authority. The controversy originates in 1520 with the publication of Luther's *De captivitate babylonica*. In the section *De ordine*, he denied the divine origin of the church hierarchy. Luther listed the different components of the ecclesiastical structure, priests, bishops, cardinals, popes etc. – the clerical or spiritual estate – identifying all the offices created by the Catholic Church, intending to downgrade their status and even abolish them in light of Scripture; from this it can be alleged that all Christians are priests in view of the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers.[78] This first formulation was followed by the more complex reflection of Jean Calvin (1509-1564). In 1543, he published a new edition of his *Institutio Christianae religionis*, where he includ-

Considering this comparison, it appears that when he translated directly from the Hebrew Old Testament, Jerome never used the Latin *episcopus*; while translating from the Greek New Testament, he always adopted the transliteration of the Greek form ἐπίσκοπος. This may have confirmed to readers the actual establishment of a specific category of prelates, i.e., the bishops (*episcopus*/ἐπίσκοπος) during the Christian era, which ended up supporting or at least shaping the idea of a hierarchy within the Church. However, if one considers the several translations of polyglot Bibles carried out during the Renaissance, it is possible to notice a different situation. For example, in *Num*. 4:16 the Antwerp Polyglot Bible reports Jerome's version *sacerdos*, uses *episcopus* to render the Greek translation of the Septuaginta, and adopts again *sacerdos* (in line with Jerome) to translate the so-called Chaldean Paraphrase (see *Polyg.* 1569-73, 1: 456-7). While for the Old Testament the situation appears rather fixed, the Latin translations of the New Testament become more problematic. For example, Immanuel Tremellius, even when accepting the Latin transliteration *episcopus* in the five occurrences in which the Greek text of the New Testament reads ἐπίσκοπος, according to Jerome's Vulgata, when it came to the corresponding passages of the Latin translation carried out on the Chaldaic paraphrase (the Peshitta), he used *episcopus* only once (Tremellius 1569, 397ᵇ-398ᵃ [*Act*. 20:28]), opting in most of the cases for alternative forms: *senior* (Tremellius 1569, 560ᵇ-561ᵃ [*Phil*. 1:1]; 610ᵇ-611ᵃ [*Tit*. 1:7]), *presbyter* (Tremellius 1569, 594ᵇ-595ᵃ [1 *Timoth*. 3:2]), and *curator* (Tremellius 1569, 662ᵇ-663ᵃ [1 *Petr*. 2:25]).

77   This specific feature of Renaissance humanism in the Reformation and Counter-Reformation fits into a broader discussion on the relationship between spiritual and temporal power; see Jedin, Prodi 1979, 65-75; for discussions of the episcopacy topic in this era see, for example, Barrie-Curien, Vernard 2001, and Prosperi 1986. For early-modern Catholic writings on the ideal bishop, see Jedin 1950, and Broutin 1953.

78   Luther 1520, 74-82 [*De ordine*], especially 78: "Sic enim i. Pet. ii [9], dicitur, 'Vos estis genus electum, regale sacerdotium', et sacerdotale regnum. Quare, omnes sumus sacerdotes, quotquot Christiani sumus, Sacerdotes vero vocamus, ministri sunt ex nobis electi, qui nostro nomine omnia faciant. Et sacerdotium aliud nihil est, quam ministerium".

ed a long excursus on the nature of ecclesiastical order. The elimination of the traditional offices of the church hierarchy also followed from a philological analysis of the biblical text that reinforced Protestant thought with a deep consciousness of the original source. In this light, Calvin affirmed that the existence of the hierarchical ministry derived from a linguistic misunderstanding.[79] He stated that all the words (bishop, priest, presbyter, pastor) identifying the different ecclesiastical offices in the Holy Writ were confusing and ambiguous, inferring that they were interchangeably used. From such a viewpoint, a quasi-equivalence in the role of bishops, presbyters and pastors resulted, thereby undermining the legitimacy of hierarchies and the effective power of bishops over the other ministers and priests.

To confirm the existence of the apostolic institution of the episcopacy in the beginning of the Church, Catholics generally referred to the *Constitutiones apostolicae*, a Greek patristic work of Clement I (100 CE) as a witness to the apostolic and papal ordination of bishops. It was held that the Clementine Constitutions represented an ancient text on how the bishop's mandate was included in the evangelical mission governed by the Holy Spirit. This work was published for the first time in 1563, edited by the Spanish scholar, Francisco Torres (1509-1586), even though it was previously known through a manuscript circulation.[80] The first Latin version, titled *De constitutionibus apostolicis*, was issued in the same year, by Giovanni C. Bovio

[79] Calvin 1543, 168-9 and 467-72, especially 170: "Caeterum quod Episcopos et presbyteros et pastores et ministros promiscue vocavi, qui Ecclesias regunt, id feci ex scripturae usu, quae vocabula ista confundit". It may be that Calvin was influenced also by the first meditations on the text carried out by Erasmus, who did not consider the acknowledged meaning of the word *episcopus* (bishop) as perfectly adherent with the meaning of the Greek text, in *Philip.* 1:1; see Erasmus 1516, 535: "*Cum episcopis*] Graecis unica dictio est coepiscopis συνεπισκόποις, quasi communicet suum officium, cum illorum presbyteris. Quanque hic graeca variant exemplaria, et in nonnullis scriptum erat σὺν ἐπισκόποις, idest una cum episcopis". It is very likely instead that Theodore Beza kept in mind both Erasmus and Calvin while writing his gloss at *Philip.* 1:1; see Beza 1559, 654-5: "Una cum episcopis, σὺν ἐπισκόποις. Qui uni vocabulo coniunctim legunt συνεπισκόποις, tollunt pulcherrimam Ecclesiae partium distributionem quae hic statuitur a Paulo. Primum enim nominat omnes sanctos, idest vel ipsum Ecclesiae corpus, ex quo postea sigillatim quosdam eximit, vel grege, universum seorsim ab iis quo praeerant. Deinde eos qui Ecclesiam regebant, duorum generumfacit, episcopos ac dioconos. Episcopos igitur intelligit quicunque verbo et gubernationi praeerant, puta pastores, doctores et presbyteros, παρὰ τῶν ἐπισκόπων, quod illos oporteat, quasi speculatores, in doctrinam et mores comissi gregis inquirere".

[80] Torres 1563; the understanding of these texts occurred previously in two letters from the Spanish bishop, Antonio Agustín, in the attempt to help Onofrio Panvinio prepare his papal chronotaxes; see Carbonell 1991, 195-200: "Quanto alli Patriarchi mostrerò a M. Agnolo vostra lettera, ed esso vi risponderà: Io desidero che vedesti bene delli decretali, nel decreto, nel sesto, nelle clementine, et extravaganti, et nelli concilii la memoria di tutti questi cardinali, et vescovi, che cercate. Son certo che troverete più d'uno et vi confermarete in molti" (27 November 1557), and 373-5: "Dalle costituzioni apostoliche di Clemente si desumono le ordinazioni vescovili fatte dagli apostoli" (6 April 1559). See also Strada 1557b and Panvinio 1557, which acknwoledge a

(1522-1570), bishop of Ostuni. The words of Clement I, a witness of episcopal elections, seemed to confirm the existence of episcopacy since the origins of Christianity.[81] It was held that the Apostles appointed a number of bishops, and the use of a canonical handbook on the appointment of bishops underlined its institutional significance. Connecting the ordination of bishops directly to the Apostles meant affirming that the entire episcopal succession which followed had divine authority; this ended up reinforcing the legitimacy of the traditional church hierarchy and monarchical episcopacy, corroborated by textual evidence.

In direct opposition to the contents of the *Constitutiones* were some passages of the Magdeburg Centuries (1559-1574), written by a pool of Protestant historians led by the Croatian theologian, Matija Vlačić, also known as Mathias Flacius. In the section *De propagatione*, on the origin and diffusion of the primitive Church, the authors stated that the spread of the divine Word was accomplished by the Apostles and by some unspecified subordinate figures, omitting reference to the official investiture of bishops.[82] The general vagueness of these words was explained by the Centuriators as being due to the general scarcity of primary sources for the period. As a result of this documentary deficit and vacuum,[83] it was possible for Protestant writers to advance their own points of view.

The Centuriators did not cite the *Constitutiones*. Instead, they used a passage of the *Historia ecclesiastica* written by the Greek Church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 260-340). Eusebius referred to a passage in Clement of Alexandria (ca. 145-220), in which the Apostle

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list of sources useful in the study of ecclesiastical chronology, including also Clement of Rome's *Constitutiones apostolicae*.

81   Bovio 1564, 152ᵇ-153ᵃ: "*Qui missi ordinati sint ab Apostolis*. Haec de Catechumenis praecipienda duximus. De ordinatis autem a nobis Episcopis in vita nostra, significamus vobis quod ii sunt. [...] Ii sunt, quibus nos in Domino commissimus. Quorum doctrinae memores, ex omni parte obtemperate nostris sermonibus"; 159ᵇ-160ᵃ: "*Invocatio ordinationis Episcoporum*. [...] Da in nomine tuo scrutator cordium Deus huic servo tuo, quem eligisti Episcoporum, pascere sanctum gregem tuum, et fungi Pontificatu tibi"; 177ᵃ: "De ordinatione Presbyterorum ego dilectus a Domino dispono vobis Episcopis. Cum ordinas Presbyterum, o Episcope, manum super caput Presbyteri ipse impone assistentibus tibi Diaconis, et orando dic".

82   Flacius 1559, 1: 2.2: "Postquam vero a mortuis resurrexit, delectis quibusdam personis, videlicet Apostolis, quibus tamen etiam alii nonnulli sunt adiuncti, verum inferiori gradu, expresse et publice demandavit, ut deinceps non tantum in finibus Iudaeae seu Palestine docerent, sed in totum mundum excurrerent, adnunciantes Evangelium, et imprimentes Sacramenta gratiae ab ipso Christo insistuta".

83   Flacius 1559, 2: 2.6: "Iam et hoc adiiciendum erat, quomodo ecclesia Christi in alia atque alia loca in hoc seculo propagata fuerit, sed tam pauca de ea re ad nostram usque memoriam pervenerunt, ut dolendum sit, tam praeclara beneficia Dei tanto silentio sepulta".

John among others appointed ministers (*ministros*).[84] The word *ministros* was a translation of the Greek ἐπισκόπους;[85] it recalls the synonymic dittology, *sacerdotibus ac ministris*, found in the ancient Latin translation of Eusebius's work created by the monk, Rufinus of Aquileia (ca. 345-410), published in the *Autores historiae ecclesiasticae*, and edited by Beatus Rhenanus and others.[86] The version of the same passage of Eusebius presented in the *Annales ecclesiastici* (1583-1607) of Cesare Baronio (1538-1607) is radically different: the word ἐπισκόπους was transliterated with the Latin *episcopos*.[87] The contrast between the translations of the Magdeburg Centuries and the *Annales*, determined by confessional positions, demonstrated the will to confer a new meaning (and function) to the figure of the ἐπίσκοπος in early Christianity: in the case of the Catholics, a high office in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, while an officiating minister for most Protestant Reformers.

Such a range in meaning is even more evident if one considers that this same Eusebius's passage was translated in the same way in the Latin of the Magdeburg Centuries, but with a different sense. This was in its section, *De gubernatione Ecclesiae*, paragraph: *Argumenta contra primatum Petri*, where the word ἐπισκόπους was rendered as *episcopos*, as was indeed the case in Baronio, but with a substantially opposite intent.[88] In this case, the Centuriators seemed to have transformed the semantics of the word. That is to say: if John the Evangelist had gone to Asia to consecrate bishops (whose ordi-

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84   Flacius 1559, 2: 2.7: "Ac de Iohanne evangelista Clemens scriptum reliquit, (ut habet Eusebius libro 3 capite 22) eum post restitutionem suam sub Traiano factam, ad vicina quoque gentium loca exivisse, uti ibi Ecclesias et ministros constituerent".

85   Euseb. *Chron. Eccl.* 3.23.5-7 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τοῦ τυράννου τελευτήσαντος ἀπὸ τῆς Πάτμου τῆς νήσου μετῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἔφεσον, ἀπῄει παρακαλούμενος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ πλησιόχωρα τῶν ἐθνῶν, ὅπου μὲν ἐπισκόπους καταστήσων, ὅπου δὲ ὅλας ἐκκλησίας ἁρμόσων, ὅπου δὲ κλῆρον ἕνα γέ τινα κληρώσων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος σημαινομένων"; Clem. Alex. *Div. Salv.* 42.2 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τοῦ τυράννου τελευτήσαντος ἀπὸ τῆς Πάτμου τῆς νήσου μετῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἔφεσον, ἀπῄει παρακαλούμενος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ πλησιόχωρα τῶν ἐθνῶν, ὅπου μὲν ἐπισκόπους καταστήσων, ὅπου δὲ ὅλας ἐκκλησίας ἁρμόσων, ὅπου δὲ κλῆρον ἕνα γέ τινα κληρώσων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος σημαινομένων.

86   *Rufin. Aquil. Hist. Eccl.* 3.23 (Rhenanus 1535, 81): "Cum post tyranni obitum de Pathmos insula Ephesum rediret. Rogabatur etiam vicinas lustrare provincias, quo vel ecclesias fundaret, in quibus non erant locis: vel in quibus erant, sacerdotibus ac ministris instrueret, secundum quod ei de uno quoque Spiritus Sanctus indicasset".

87   Baronio 1588, 700: "Ubi vero tyranno mortuo, ex insula Patmo erat Ephesum reversus, quorundam rogatu ad finitimas gentes proficiscitur, hic Episcopos constiturus, illic integras Ecclesias rite dispensaturus, alibi certos homines, sibi Spiritus Sancti instinctu demonstratos, in clerum delecturus".

88   Flacius 1559, 1: 2.528: "Refert Eusebius ex Clemente libro 3 cap. 23 Ioannem ab exilio revocatum, moderatum esse ecclesias Asiana, et constituisse, et ordinasse episcopos. Id vero omnino fuisset crimen laesae maiestatis, et in alienam messem mittere falcem, si Romanos episcopos solis ordinandi episcopos potestatem habuisset in Asia, in toto orbe terrarum".

nations should only have been performed by the 'popes' or Roman bishops), then he would have committed the offence of lese-majesty. Nonetheless, considering that he had ordained some ἐπισκόπους, as written in the patristic text, the meaning of the word had to be different from the one generally acknowledged – and so *ministros* instead of *episcopos*, as in the other translation of the same passage.

This re-semanticization is pushed even further in the Magdeburg Centuries, where ἐπίσκοπος/*episcopus* substantially corresponded to πρεσβύτερος/*presbyter*, thereby downgrading the level of the figure of the bishop to an ordinary priest (*presbyter* or *minister*), close to the Reformed notion of ministerial parity. Among the many examples that can be found in this work,[89] it is interesting to underline a passage of the section *De politia seu gubernatione Ecclesiae*, paragraph *Discrimina personarum*, in which these two words are frankly defined as equivalent.[90] Accordingly, the renderings from Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History display a consistent philological awareness in the authors. The generic ministros appeared in the historical narratives, while *episcopos* was used in a polemical key in controversies, where the same meaning defended by the Catholics could be employed as antiphrasis.

In light of the above and to understand better the cultural dynamics set in motion, it is informative to see the definition of the word ἐπίσκοπος in other translations of Eusebius (both Latin and vernacular) made during the sixteenth century. If the translations into Italian, French and Spanish are considered – thus remaining in a Catholic context – an indifferent usage of the term emerges:[91]

1532 (Fr.)   pour instruire les prebstres et les ministres
1541 (Sp.)   para informar alos sacerdotes
1547 (It.)   ordinarle di sacerdoti e di ministri

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89   Flacius 1559, 1: 2, 400-13: *De ministerio Evangelico docendi et administrandi sacramenta*.

90   Flacius 1559, 1: 2, 508: "Nam episcopi et presbyteri pro issdem accipiuntur" and 403: "Episcopus, Actor. 20, Phil. 1.1, Tim 3, Tit. 2, ubi episcopus et presbyter pro eodem accipiuntur".

91   Seyssel 1532, 36ᵃ: "Apres la mort du Tyrant Romain, revenant icelluy Sainct Iehan de l'isle de Pathmos a Ephese estoit requis et presse d'aller visiter et illustrer les autres provinces voisines pour fonder des Eglises lo ou il nen y avoit point, et la ou il en y avoit pour instruire les prebstres et les ministres de toutes choses, seolon que le Sainct Esprit luy avoit revele"; Euseb. 1541, 20ᵃ: "Bolviendo el apostol de la isla de Pathmos rogaron le que visitasse las provincias comarcanas, o para fundar iglesias do no las avia, o para informa alos sacerdotes donde ya estavan edificadas, segun que en ambas cosas el Espiritu Sancto le inspirasse"; Tramezzino 1547, 68ᵃ: "Egli, dopo la morte del tiranno ritornato dall'isola di Patmo in Efeso, era pregato di visitare anchora le provincie vicine, si per fondare la Chiesa in que' luoghi dove non era, o dove erano ordinarle di sacerdoti et di ministri, secondo che dallo Spiritosanto gli fusse ordinato di ciascuno".

From the comparison of these extracts, all directly deriving from Rufinus's ancient Latin version of Eusebius, it emerges that the translations coincide with those of the Magdeburg Centuries. However, the fact that these vernaculars were translated from the Latin of Rufinus, probably without consulting the original Greek version, demonstrates that they did not feel the need to consider deeply the nature of the text they were working on.

Things changed considerably in the following decades. The two Latin translations of Eusebius, deriving directly from Greek without Rufinus's mediation demonstrate a more complex and stratified picture. The first was provided by the English Marian bishop, John Christopherson (d. 1558) and published posthumously in 1569. His Latin stated:[92]

hic episcopos constiturus

The second, from Swiss Protestant circles, was published in 1570 by Michael Rapenberger and Kaspar Herwagen (1528-1577), with some commentary by Johann J. Gryner. This version had:[93]

ut partim constitueret episcopos

In these two versions, surprisingly, the translations coincide. In the first case, what must be kept in mind is that the author was a Catholic bishop, who under the reign of Mary I (1553-58) helped restore Roman Catholicism in England. Therefore, the transliteration of ἐπίσκοπος to *episcopus* results naturally and provides a precedent for Baronio.

Much different was the second case, in which the translators could have used *sacerdotes*, *ministri* or *presbyteri* in line with the Magdeburg Centuries. However, this interpretation can be better understood if one considers one of Gryner's later works, *De episcopo Christiano* of 1586. At the beginning of this, the Swiss Reformed theologian was interested in establishing the semantic and lexical equivalence of the words bishop and shepherd (*episcopus – pastor*) through an etymological analysis. More than once, their synonymy was reiterated to the extent that the absolute hierarchical equivalence of the

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92   Christopherson 1569, 52ª: "Ubi vero, Tyranno mortuo, ex insula Patmo erat Ephesum reversus, quorundam rogatu ad finitimas gentes proficiscitur. Hic Episcopos constiturus, illic integras Ecclesias rite dispensaturus, alibi certos homines sibi Spiritus Sancti instinctu demonstratos Clerum delecturus". This translation is mentioned by Vessey 1997, 809.

93   Herwagen, Rapenberger 1570, 37: "Post mortem tyranni, quum ex insula Patmo Ephesium reversus esset, abiit etiam rogatus, ad vicina gentium loca, ut partim constiueret episcopos, partim totas ecclesias componeret, partim clerum ex his quos Spiritus Sanctus indicasset, sorte deligeret".

terminology was affirmed.[94] The authority of the role was led back to an original unity; and if someone would have denied it, it was due to ignorance. So considered, *episcopus* was the equivalent of *minister – pastor – sacerdos*: this encourages one to believe that a sophisticated debate existed in contemporary controversies, since Rapenberger and Herwagen would have considered fully legitimate the use of a Protestant interpretation of a term that was of historic Catholic usage.

This semantic variability can be also found in the English Reformed translation of the Bible, published in Geneva between 1557 and 1560 by a team of exilic English churchmen led by William Whittingham (1524-1579). Here, several occurrences of the word bishop appear in the marginal gloss to Paul's Letters to Philippians (1:1), where the Apostle mentioned bishops and deacons. In the marginal notes it was stated that (a) "By bishops here he meaneth them that had charge of the worde and governing, as pastors doctors, elders"; and (b), further on, in the gloss to the 1 Timothy (3:1), after defining "the office of a bishoppe", there was noted: "whether he be pastor or elder".[95] In light of this, it emerges how this English use of the word 'bishop' reflected an accommodation to minister or shepherd of the Greek ἐπίσκοπος, not considering it as implying vertical authority. Hence, equalising the function of bishops to the one of pastors and elders reflected Luther and Calvin's thought on the nature of the different roles within the Church and anticipated the concept of Gryner.

This textual situation is to be considered also in relation both to the later Church of England, which adhered to an episcopal polity that preserved the hierarchical structure inherited from the Roman Catholic Church, and to other Protestant options like presbyterianism, congregationalism and independency current in Britain at the time.[96] The popular circulation of the Geneva Bible could be seen as undermining the worship and government of the English Church by

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94 Gryner 1586, 3: "IV. Est autem episcopus, seu pastor, seu presbyter (qui, inquam, laborat in sermone et doctrina 1. Tim. 5, 17) persona, ad hoc rite vocata, ut Ecclesiae commissae caussa in precibus et administratione sermonis perduret, clavibusque coelorum regni recte utatur. [...] V. Nuncupatur primum Episcopus ab adiuncto, quia debet προσέχειν attendere toti gregi, Act. 20, 28 deinde pastor, a fine Θεοῦ, quia eius est ποιμαίνειν, pascere gregem Domini. 1. Petr. 5, 2 postremo, et presbyter, senior, ad differentiam τοῦ νεοφύτου, novitii, hoc est, eius qui recens conversus et Ecclesia insitus est. 1. Tim. 3, 6 Tit. 1, 5 non autem simpliciter iuvenilis aut senilis aetatis ratione. Nam de Timotheo, qui aetate iuvenis, virtute autem, et scientia Scripturarum sanctaru senex erat, dicitur. Nemo tuam iuventutem despiciat, sed esto exemplar fidelium in sermone, in conversatione, in charitate, in spiritu, in fide, in puritate 1. Tim 4, 12. Ex hisce liquet gradibus eminentiae eiusmodi Presbyteros, Pastores et Episcopos, neutiquam differre: sed parem esse eorum omnium auctoritatem: ac inscitiam esse, si quis Pastori Episcopum anteponat".

95 Whittingham 1560.

96 Biasori 2015, 227-31.

puritans in the late-sixteenth century. Partly for this reason, King James VI and I (1566-1625) promoted a new English translation of the Bible, known as the King James or Authorised Version, published in 1611. This eliminated all glosses and notes, and furnished a text subject to the highest authority of the Church of England (as specified even in the title: by his Majesty's special command). In this Bible, the word 'bishop' appears seven times, but with no gloss alluding to its semantic mutability. What emerges is how the theological impulses which influenced these translations reverberated in the linguistic context.

Greek and Latin lexicons, ecclesiastical, theological and polyglot dictionaries offer a spectrum of the development of this issue: the sense of ἐπίσκοπος/*episcopus* appears to have varied according to the religious confession of the lexicographer. The entire issue of linguistic archaeology is well exemplified by the German Protestant theologian, Johann C. Dietrich (1612-1667). This was in his *Lexicon Novi Testamenti* published posthumously in 1680, about one century after the earlier debates, when a synthesis of the many opinions that had animated the councils and the synods of the sixteenth century became possible.[97] Dietrich approached the issue from a philological point of view, just like the Centuriators and Gryner. He underlined the equivalence of meaning of the Greek words ἐπίσκοπον and πρεσβύτερον in the Early Church, and he added that the difference between the two words was only nominal. Subsequently, he recalled the associations which led to the later substantial distinction between the two forms namely, two modes of ordination implying at first different duties and then specific powers and privileges for one but not for the other. This referred to the power and the right on the part of the *episcopus* to ordain priests, a function denied to the presbyter. Therefore, owing to these differences, the prestige of one position started to exceed the other and to mark the difference. The sanction of tradition for the term *episcopus* is identified by Dietrich at precise historical moment, when Jerome (ca. 347-420) chose to ac-

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97   Dietrich 1680, 318-19: "Certe apostolicum aevum nullum agnoscit discrimen inter ἐπίσκοπον et πρεσβύτερον, inter quos discrimen deinde factum procedente aetate. Prima nova aetate Ecclesiae, quae erat temporibus Apostolicis, unum eundemque ordinem in ordine gradum constituebant Episcopi et Presbyteri, re iidem ipsi, appellationis tantum sono differentes. Postea factum, ut primum una res scilicet χειροτονία sive ordinatio distingueret; et differre faceret a Presbyteris Episcopos. Accedente tempore accesserunt et aliae res, quae differentiam ordinum constituerent. Ordinandi potestas et ius solis Episcopis concessa, negata Presbyteris. [...] Honoratius tum nomen Episcopi heberi coepit, postquam in maiore quam Presbyter honori gradu collocatus fuit. Ecclesiae solius institutione et usu major Episcopatus factus Presbyterio. Olim antiqua non fuerat sic, uti Episcopi nulla erat auctoritas supra Presbyterem, nulla erat inter utrumque differentia [...] Hieronymus vero, ejus tempore Episcopi majore Presbyteris, nihil movendum aut mutandum censuit de recepto tum in Ecclesia more. Non juris esse divini illam differentiam, sed Ecclesiastici usus ab Hieron. scriptum ingenue".

cept without restriction all that had evolved in the customs and usages of the Church up to his time. This situation was authoritative not so much by virtue of divine right (*iure divino*) as by church tradition (*ecclesiastici usus*). However, with the weakening of the direct and consequential relationship between developing episcopal office and the proclamation of the Word through the Apostles, the office was arguably illegitimate, since it was not grounded in a direct emanation of the Holy Spirit in time, as originally.

Therefore, it is in light of these passages that one can interpret the position of the Magdeburg Centuries in which the first consecration of bishops is dated back to Pope Evaristus (100-105); reference was made to the fifteenth-century treatise – later republished frequently – on the lives of the Roman popes by Bartolomeo Platina.[98] The original passage of Platina described the variable tradition in the ecclesiastical rankings at the base of the hierarchy, and in which one can clearly notice the effective bifurcation of the duties as described by Dietrich.[99] In this case, the Centuriators were interested in underlining that the episcopal appointments took place in Rome, carried out by its bishop and not directly by now defunct Apostles.

The entire philological discussion has to be considered in relation to its potential doctrinal and ecclesial objectives. Indeed, during the Council of Trent, episcopacy was broadly discussed. An extremely sensitive issue, it caused unexpected jitters among the prelates, destabilising the united front of council participants.[100] The discussion gave rise to the definition of the nature of the power of bishops and the ecclesiastical hierarchies that aimed at refuting Protestant notions on the matter. But this also became a problem for the Catholic Church itself, since it generated in turn internal tensions. The question of whether bishops derived their power from divine right (*de iure divino*) or pontifical right (*de iure pontificio*) had potentially enormous repercussions – especially on the aspiration to autonomy from

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98   Flacius 1559, 2: 1, 7: "Recenset Platina, Romanos episcopos huius aetatis plures ad diversa loca episcopos ordinasse: verum cum loci non exprimantur, fides penes scriptorem esto".

99   Panvinio 1562, 13ᵇ: "At Evaristus (ut Damasius ait) titulos in urbe Roma presbyteris divisit, [...] Ordinationes ter habuit mense Decembri, ac presbyteros sex, diaconos duos, episcopos per diversa loca numero quinque creavit".

100   A memorable picture of the tension generated by issue of episcopacy during the Council of Trent is reported in Sarpi 1619, 579-652, especially 579: "non si doveva intender d'una superiorità immaginaria [quella del vescovo sul sacerdote], et consistente in una preheminenza, o perfettione d'azioni; ma d'una superiorità di governo, sì che possi far leggi, et precetti, et giudicar cause, così nel foro della coscienza, come nell'esteriore" and 583: "del resto il Vescovato è ben de iure Divino, sì che manco il Papa può fare che non vi siano Vescovi nella Chiesa, ma ciascuno d'essi Vescovi sono de iure Pontificio; di onde viene, che egli può creargli, trasferirgli, restringergli, et ampliargli la Diocesi, dargli maggior o minor autorità, sospendergli anco, et privargli, che non può in quello, che è de iure Divino".

papal authority among various national churches that gathered at the Council – each with the intent of advancing their own interests.[101]

These discussions took place between 1 October 1562 and 10 November 1563 when the specific canons were approved. In *De ecclesiastica hierarchia et ordinatione*, the hierarchical ranking was re-affirmed within the Church, structured by the threefold distinction of bishops, priests and deacons.[102] The Council declared the superiority of the *episcopus* over the *presbyter* [priest], restating the direct succession from the Apostles and eliminating any semantic ambiguity. The power of bishops derived from the Holy Spirit, which consolidated the hierarchy. The fact that only bishops could ordain other Church ministers indicates clearly the respective roles in the hierarchical order. Crucially, it eliminated any potential translation of the Greek word ἐπίσκοπος with the more generic Latin *minister*.

From these 'confessional translations', it emerges that the shifting semantics of the word ἐπίσκοπος with all its potential variations was tied to the doctrinal propensities of each interpreter and institution.[103] The different literary outcomes, in Latin and in vernacular, had concrete repercussions on church law and the political life of the time: the Protestant usage of *minister* instead of *episcopus* could have subverted the basis of the institutions of the entire Catholic hierarchy and church government. In this light, philological and text critical analysis became fundamental either to challenge or vindicate the legitimacy of the traditional ecclesiastical structure.

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101   Once again according to the narration of Sarpi 1619, 580: "[disse] che il Vescovado è de iure Divino instituito da Christo per regger la Chiesa; che la Maestà sua ha instituito Vescovi tutti gl'Apostoli, quando gl'ha detto: Io vi mando, sì come son io stato dal Padre mandato: ma quella institutione fu personale, et con ciascuno di loro si doveva finire, et uno ne constituì, che perpetuamente dovesse durare nella Chiesa, che fu Pietro, quando disse, non a lui solo, ma a tutta la sua successione: Pasci le mie agnelle; et così intese Sant'Agostino quando disse, che Pietro rapresentava tutta la Chiesa, il che de nissun de gl'Apostoli fu mai detto", and 597: "Et chi leggerà il celebrato, et famoso Canone: Ita Dominus: si certificherà che così debbe tener ogni huomo Catholico, et così li Vescovi, che sono successori degl'Apostoli la ricevono tutta [la podestà] dal successor di Pietro".

102   Denzinger 2009, 732: "*Sessio XXIII. 15 Iul. 1563: Doctrina et canones de sacramento ordinis.* [...] *Cap. 4. De ecclesiastica hierarchia et ordinatione* [...] Proinde sancta Synodus declarant, praeter ceteros ecclesiasticos gradus episcopos, qui in Apostolorum locum successerunt, ad hunc hierarchicum ordinem praecipue pertinere, et positos (sicut idem Apostolus ait) a Spiritu Sancto "regere Ecclesiam Dei" [*Act*. 20:28], eosque presbyteris superiores esse, ac sacramentum confirmationis conferre, ministros Ecclesiae ordinare, atque alia pleraque peragere Ipsos posse, quarum functionum potestatem reliqui inferioris ordinis nullam habent [*Can*. 7]".

103   A modern study dealing with this linguistic issue is by Penna 2011, 134-6; there, the original semantics of the Greek word ἐπίσκοπος in Paul's epistles is discussed. It does emerge that in early Christianity it was anachronistic to translate *episcopus* as 'bishop'.