

The Roman and Viennese indices of prohibited books in Austrian and Bohemian lands under Maria Theresa

Luka Vidmar¹

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Abstract

Under Maria Theresa (ruled 1740-1780), handling books in Austrian and Bohemian lands was largely governed by the Index librorum prohibitorum, which the Catholic Church in Rome started publishing in 1559, and the Catalogus librorum a commissione aulica prohibitorum, which the Court Book Censorship Committee in Vienna published from 1754 onward. Through censorship secularization, the Viennese index gradually replaced the Roman one, but that did not mean it did not copy it or that it was more liberal. It was created under the influence of the (moderate and Catholic) Enlightenment, but its main goals continued to be protecting the faith and the Church, as well as pursuing the interests of the (Catholic) ruling dynasty and its state. The Viennese index soon reached the same length as the Roman one, but it by far exceeded it in the frequency of its updates and releases. Compared to the Roman index, it had a more internal character: it did not list the names of the ruler (and co-regent) and responsible officials, nor the areas it applied to. It was more forgiving toward scholarly and older Protestant, political, and philosophical works. It treated pseudo-scholarly and more recent Protestant works, as well as old literature, in a similar way as the Roman index (i.e., mostly strictly), and it was stricter toward religious Catholic works and more recent political and philosophical works and literature (especially plays).

Keywords Censorship \cdot Index \cdot Prohibited books \cdot Maria Theresa \cdot Catholic Church \cdot Austrian lands \cdot Bohemian lands

Book censorship in Austrian and Bohemian lands, which began to be established with the escalation of the religious conflict in 1521 and reached its final form after the Counter-Reformation in the early seventeenth century, was initially closely connected with religion. Because of the pressing religious issue and a lack of qualified

¹ ZRC SAZU Institute of Slovenian Literature and Literary Studies, Novi trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia



 [□] Luka Vidmar luka.vidmar@zrc-sazu.si

staff, when it came to censorship, the Habsburg dynasty, which remained loyal to Catholicism, relied on the domestic Church authorities and institutions—just like other European rulers and governments, regardless of their religious affiliation. The Habsburgs relied heavily on the Bishop of Vienna, the University of Vienna, which came into Jesuit hands in 1623, local bishops, and Jesuit colleges. On behalf of the Habsburgs as the archdukes of Austria and kings of Bohemia, these authorities and institutions performed censorship and thus served as intermediaries between the secular authorities and the central Church censorship offices in Rome. Thus, censorship was a power mechanism of the ruler. However, with the ruler's permission, it was initially largely directed by the Church (Dović & Vidmar, 2021, p. 23).

Secularization of censorship

Compared to France, Prussia, and many German Protestant principalities, secularization of censorship in Austria and Bohemia took place relatively late (Sashegyi, 1958, p. 15), also due to a strong Catholic identity reinforced during the Counter-Reformation and the wars against the Ottoman Empire (Vidmar, 2021, p. 146). The first signs of a separation between secular and Church authorities appeared in the early eighteenth century: in 1725 Emperor Charles VI ordered university censors to send their opinions on political works to his court, which made the ultimate decision on whether to allow or ban a work; in addition, censorship committees began to be established with some provincial governments (Olechowski, 2004, pp. 59–61; Bachleitner, 2017, p. 47; Dović & Vidmar, 2021, pp. 30–31).

The nontransparent and ineffective system began to be institutionalized, centralized, and bureaucratized by Maria Theresa (ruled 1740-1780). In this process, led by the prefect of the Court Library, Gerard van Swieten, for over two decades, censorship was incorporated into the state administrative apparatus, and the Church was gradually driven out of it or removed from direct and decisive influence in this area (Papenheim, 2007, p. 90; Bachleitner, 2017, p. 49). In line with the reform, the ideological orientation also changed to a great extent: the old censorship defined by the largely harmonized religious policy of the Catholic dynasty and the Church was founded on the Counter-Reformation, whereas the new censorship, which primarily pursued the interests of the (still Catholic) dynasty and its state, was influenced by the moderate and Catholic Enlightenment (Vidmar, 2021, p. 147). Hence, secularization did not remove Catholicism and the indirect influence of the Church from censorship. Even though the Church was pushed out of political decision making, it continued to set the norms of what was allowed and desired in society together with the state (Bachleitner, 2017, p. 407). Moreover, secularization did not bring liberalization: compared to censorship in Saxony, France, and Prussia, Austrian censorship—together with Bavarian—remained relatively restrictive (Angelike, 2007, p. 228; Wolf, 2007, p. 312; Bachleitner, 2017, p. 41; Vidmar, 2021, p. 152). Its main task was still to protect the faith and morals of individuals and especially young people against harmful influences and to protect the ruler, the Church, and the existing social order against attacks.



The Court Book Censorship Committee became the main censorship body in Austrian and Bohemian lands. It was established by Maria Theresa in 1751 and took over the responsibilities of older, mostly Church, institutions. The committee operated as part of the central state authority, Directorium in publicis et cameralibus, which was replaced by the Austrian-Bohemian court office in 1760. The Church initially still played an important role in the committee: the Jesuits censored the (most extensive) areas of theology and philosophy, as well as literature, whereas other areas were largely supervised by secular professors. Van Swieten, who censored medical works and became the committee's chair in 1759, soon took over the philosophical works and literature from the Jesuits; in addition, he also censored all natural science works. By 1764, the Jesuits were replaced by diocesan priests, who were easier to supervise. They were proposed by the Archbishop of Vienna but had to be approved by Maria Theresa (Klingenstein, 1970, pp. 161, 172; Bachleitner et al., 2000, p. 109; Olechowski, 2004, pp. 59–61; Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 41, 49, 50). In 1767, the committee included four secular professionals and only three diocesan priests (Klingenstein, 1970, p. 158). After van Swieten's death in 1772, the committee was converted into a purely state body with paid officials, which also took over the censorship of theological and religious texts from the Church (as its last remaining censorship area; Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 57–58; cf. Wolf, 2007, p. 311; Papenheim, 2007, p. 90).

The Roman and Viennese indices

In evaluating books already published and especially those from other countries, until 1754, censorship in Austrian and Bohemian lands relied heavily on the *Index librorum prohibitorum* (Vidmar, 2018, p. 23). This list of prohibited authors and works began to be published by the Church in 1559. In principle, it applied to the entire Catholic world, but its implementation in individual lands depended on the local secular authorities. Usually a new, updated edition was produced in Rome every few decades, and it was reprinted if needed. From the 1564 edition approved by the Council of Trent onward, the indices contained ten rules (*Regulae Indicis*) together with later papal decrees and explanations, and an updated alphabetical list of banned authors and works (*Index librorum prohibitorum*).

The Congregation of the Inquisition and the Congregation of the Index were in charge of enforcing the rules and updating the Roman index. Books were banned through decrees of the Inquisition, which were approved by the pope, or through papal bulls or briefs. Anyone that violated the rules (e.g., publishers, printers, booksellers, and readers) faced Church penalties, the worst among which was excommunication. In the worst case, the prohibited books were destroyed. Local Church authorities were required to report any violations to the secular authorities, which could also impose much stricter penalties on individuals. According to the index's rules, those that wanted to read the prohibited books had to obtain permission from the Congregation of the Inquisition (for the most strictly forbidden, or Class I, works) or from the local bishop (for less problematic works, such as the Protestant translations of the Bible; cf. Putnam 1906–1907; Romeo, 2011; Pattini & Rambaldi,



2012; Vidmar, 2012, pp. 233–234). From 1724 to 1770, following the model of the Roman index and to update it, the Church in Bohemia published three local indices, including the *Index Bohemicorum librorum prohibitorum et corrigendorum* as the last one (Píša & Wögerbauer, 2017, pp. 195–196).

In 1754, the Court Book Censorship Committee began to publish its own Catalogus librorum rejectorum per consessum censurae, which in later editions changed its title to Catalogus librorum a commissione (caes. reg.) aulica prohibitorum (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 55, 74). Hence, the Viennese index de facto ended the twocentury-long universal validity of the Roman index in Austrian and Bohemian lands or, in line with the progressing secularization of censorship, began to gradually limit it to the Church sphere (Vidmar, 2018, p. 23). However, that by no means meant that the compilers of the Viennese index did not take into account or copy the Roman index. On the contrary, they clearly sought to make the new index as close to the old one as possible, even in terms of its physical appearance. In the eighteenth century, the Roman index, including its last edition before the first publication of the Viennese index (*Index* 1752), was printed in crown octavo format (approximately 17–18 cm), which was suitable for manuals. The Viennese index (e.g., Catalogus 1768) was of completely the same size. Its title (in all editions) was printed in capital letters, just like in the Roman index, and it was only modified in the sense that it drew attention to the state, rather than Church, character of the publication. The alphabetical list of forbidden works naturally remained the core of the index.

Over the last years of Maria Theresa's rule, the two indices were comparable in length. The Viennese index rapidly grew longer (Hadamowsky, 1979, p. 294; Wolf, 2007, p. 314) and ultimately came close to the length of the Roman index (Vidmar, 2021, p. 16): the list of prohibited works in the Viennese index grew from eighty pages in 1754 to 360 pages in 1776 (a comparable list in the Roman index in 1786 included 318 pages, albeit in slightly smaller print). The Viennese index by far exceeded the Roman one in the frequency of its releases and the average number of bans per year: from 1754 to 1780, it was published in four editions and seventeen supplementary volumes, with an average of 157 titles included each year (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 55–56, 73–75). In contrast, only one new edition of the Roman index was published during Maria Theresa's rule (*Index* 1758), and from 1701 to 1813 the Congregation of the Index and the Congregation of the Inquisition banned a total of approximately 1,600 books (Wolf, 2011, pp. 27, 29), or only fourteen a year on average.

A quantitative comparison thus shows that the Viennese index was updated much more efficiently, which was the result of the different goals, organization, and historical dynamics of censorship. The Roman index was conceived in the mid-sixteenth century as a tool for supervising the book markets of the Catholic world supported by the meagre administration of both congregations, which relied on denunciations rather than systematic reviews (Papenheim, 2007, p. 85). Already by the seventeenth century, the index had increasing difficulty keeping up with the ever-growing book production, which also became increasingly diverse in terms of content and the language used. Through its 1758 reformed edition published under Pope Benedict XIV (*Index* 1758), it ultimately renounced the practically unattainable universal control and focused on works with Catholic content (Green & Karolides, 2005, p. 266),



which further slowed down its updates. The Viennese index was able to be significantly more thorough because it focused primarily on books coming to Austria and Bohemia (especially from Germany and France); in addition, it was compiled by a committee that was incorporated into the growing and increasingly better-organized state bureaucracy. Due to effective preventive censorship, the index did not contain many domestic titles or titles of works by domestic authors (Vidmar, 2021, p. 161).

The two indices also differed somewhat in terms of structure. In contrast to the Roman index, the Viennese index did not contain any additional texts, only a list (e.g., Catalogus 1754), which was probably due to its slightly different use. What both indices had in common was the fact that they were, first and foremost, intended for a specific (professional) group of users—that is, Church or state representatives, censors, librarians, and other high-ranking officials, and not the public (in practice their circle of users was much wider because they were also used by the lower clergy, lower officials, publishers, and printers, as well as readers that were simply driven by curiosity; Vidmar, 2018, p. 24). However, the Roman index was used in a wide variety of Church institutions across the Catholic world, and so relevant legal and explanatory texts had to be added to the list; otherwise, these would have remained unknown to many readers. In turn, the authorized users of the Viennese index already operated within a centralized administration, where they could check the censorship legislation at any time; this legislation was substantially more extensive than in the Roman case and it therefore would not have made sense to add it to the list of prohibited works.

What is more surprising is that the Viennese index was not entirely unambiguous regarding the identity of the authority issuing the index and the areas of its application. In the Roman index editions, the name of the ruling pope was displayed demonstratively in the title, the title pages featured the papal coat of arms or emblem and the name of the printing house (usually the papal printing house in Rome), and the authors of additional texts were clearly listed (e.g., the address to the Catholic reader written by Giacinto Maria Bonfiglio, the Congregation of the Index's secretary, for the edition published under Pope Pius VI; Index 1786, pp. vii-viii). For comparison: even more detailed in this regard was the Spanish index published in 1667, which already listed the name of the Spanish king, the Grand Inquisitor, the lands the bans applied to, the place and year of publication, and the printer on the title page (Index 1667). In contrast, the Viennese index editions did not list the name or coat of arms of Maria Theresa or Joseph II (her co-regent from 1765 onward) in any place, nor the names of the responsible officials. In addition, the committee was not listed with its full name and area of jurisdiction (only as "consessum censurae" in 1754 and as "commissio caes. reg. aulica" in 1776); the first edition even had no numbered pages and provided no information on the publisher, printer, or bookseller (Catalogus 1754). Even the place of publication (usually listed as "Viennae") did not communicate clearly which lands the index applied to because Vienna was the place of residence of both Emperor Francis I and then Joseph II as well as the Hungarian and Bohemian queen and Austrian archduchess Maria Theresa.

The absence of such information indicates that the Viennese index was conceived as an internal publication to a much greater extent than the Roman one. Based on their experience with the Roman index, the Viennese censors must have sought to



control the access to their index as much as possible so it would not fall into the wrong hands. This assumption is confirmed by a 1772 report, in which the actuary of the Prague censorship committee explains that there is no copy of the index in Prague other than the four he received for work purposes from Vienna and distributed among the three censors and himself (Píša & Wögerbauer, 2017, p. 198). References to Austrian and Bohemian lands in the index may have also been avoided because of a desire to gradually spread the use of the publication to other Habsburg dominions.

The Viennese censors certainly checked the Roman index, but they nonetheless sometimes understood and ranked the problematic works differently, which resulted in a different selection of prohibited books. They primarily focused on books in German and French: German books accounted for 46.8% and French books for 32% of banned works (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 78–79). Namely, German books reached by far the largest number of readers in Austria and Bohemia, whereas the French—even though comprehensible to a significantly narrower circle of intellectuals—introduced significantly more dangerous ideas. Compared to the Roman index, which was compiled in Italy, for the most part, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the number of prohibited books in Latin and Italian decreased, which was completely understandable: Latin works accounted for 13.2% and Italian ones for 3.5% of all the works banned (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 78–79). Both indices usually sought to ban all the editions and translations of problematic works. However, the Roman index often failed to list the specific editions or it only listed the oldest known ones, whereas the Viennese index more often contained more bibliographic information and it listed concrete editions, especially the translations of French and English works into German. For example, the Roman index explicitly prohibited Montaigne's Essais regardless of their edition and language (Index 1752, p. 135), whereas the Viennese index also listed the 1753 German translation published in Leipzig in addition to the original French title (*Catalogus* 1776, p. 209).

Theological and religious works

The Roman index continued to focus on religiously problematic works, and until the 1758 edition especially on Protestant, anti-Catholic, and anti-Church works (cf. Green & Karolides, 2005, p. 266). The 1564 edition approved by the Council of Trent introduced the category "auctores primae classis" (Class I authors) for the most dangerous authors of these works: all works by authors labeled that way were automatically banned, which is why they were not even separately listed on the index. This label was primarily given to the main representatives of the Reformation, such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, Philipp Melanchthon, Bernardino Ochino, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, and King Henry VIII. All these authors retained that label even in the later editions of the index published in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when this category was no longer updated with new names (Vidmar, 2018, p. 27). However, there were a few times when the Roman censors still banned the entire body of work of certain authors.



In contrast, the Viennese index editions listed a very small number of older Protestant works, such as individual (including more recent) editions of works by Luther, Melanchthon, Flacius, and Ochino (Catalogus 1776, pp. 92, 98, 105, 181, 223, 244). They left out two key local authors that the Roman index listed under Class I: the Bohemian reformer, Jan Hus, and the Slovenian reformer, Primož Trubar (Vidmar, 2018, p. 30). Another example: the Roman index banned all the works by the German theologian and historian David Chyträus and the German philologist and playwright Nicodemus Frischlin (*Index* 1786, pp. 59, 116), whereas the Viennese index only banned one work of each (Catalogus 1776, pp. 57, 110), even though the authors were closely connected with the Reformation in Austrian lands. It is highly likely that older Protestant works were no longer registered in detail because they were effectively covered by the Roman index and because they were already cumulatively prohibited in Austria and Bohemia. Under Maria Theresa, Catholicism remained the only religion permitted, whereas Protestantism was considered a heresy outside the law (Žnidaršič Golec, 2018, p. 264). Between 1759 and 1761, Maria Theresa approved measures to prevent the spread of Protestant works (Bachleitner, 2017, p. 43), and in the following years she imposed a fine on those reading them (Žnidaršič Golec, 2018, p. 269). The fact that the attitude toward Protestantism fundamentally did not change is confirmed by increased eagerness of Viennese censors to prohibit new Protestant works, such as the periodical Antipapistisches Journal oder der unparteyische Lutheraner (Catalogus 1776, p. 156), which was published from 1770 to 1774 in Hamburg and Leipzig by the former Augustinian monk Ferdinand Ambrosius Fidler. Nonetheless, the share of Protestant works on the Viennese index remained relatively small, which shows that the Viennese censorship—in contrast to the Roman censorship up to Pope Benedict XIV-no longer saw such content as by far the greatest problem that should be paid most attention to.

A second group of religious works banned by the Roman index consisted of Catholic works that did not agree with the Church doctrine and the policy of the Roman Curia after the Council of Trent, including certain works related to humanism (e.g., Erasmus of Rotterdam), Jansenism (e.g., Antoine Arnauld), Gallicanism (e.g., Louis Maimbourg), and Febronianism (e.g., Johann Nikolaus von Hontheim), as well as some anti-Jesuit works (e.g., Pascal's Lettres provinciales). In this area, too, changes occurred in Vienna because the censorship there sought balance between the opposing ideologies and supported moderate Reform Catholicism or Jansenism (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 50, 52). It allowed most Catholic works that were previously considered problematic, and it only included the most extreme ones on the index, such as the works Relatio ad reges et principes Christianos (the 1641 edition) and Le jesuite secularisé (the 1683 edition), which fiercely attacked the Society of Jesus (Catalogus 1776, pp. 150, 293). It handled the opposite side—the authors loyal to the papacy and the Jesuit order-in a similar way. In his 1772 memorandum to Maria Theresa, van Swieten also mentioned the Jesuit books that emphasized the absolute power of the papacy over churchgoers, including secular rulers, among those that should be banned (Bachleitner, 2017, p. 52). Thus, unimaginable to the Roman censors, the index included works such as Tractatus de potestate Summi Pontificis in rebus temporalibus (1610), in which the Jesuit and cardinal Roberto Bellarmino discusses papal power in secular matters, and Antifebronio (1767), in which the



Jesuit theologian and historian Francesco Antonio Zaccaria defended the rights of the Holy See (*Catalogus* 1776, pp. 15, 32). The Viennese censors even banned the 1772 German translation of Italian sermons by the renowned Jesuit Paolo Segneri, *Panegyrici sacri*, published in Augsburg (*Catalogus* 1776, p. 294).

Compared to the Roman censors, those in Vienna showed significantly less interest in older polemics among Catholic theologians and so, for example, they had nothing against the Mariological works by the Carniolan theologian and historian Johann Ludwig Schönleben, which the Roman index prohibited in 1677 and 1679 due to their excessively polemical tone (Deželak Trojar, 2021). However, the Viennese censors reviewed the religious Catholic works that reached the common folk much more strictly and in much greater detail. Because the court committee participated in the state's efforts to cultivate the lower social classes as religious, reasonable, moral, and hard-working citizens, it banned works it identified as superstitious; for example, those describing the miracles of the saints or adoration of effigies, simulating conversations with the dead (Catalogus 1776, p. 122), and thematizing the devil (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 282–287). The banned works included the 1733 Frankfurt edition of Geschichte des Teuffels (Catalogus 1776, p. 118)—that is, the German translation of Defoe's The Political History of the Devil. In contrast to the Roman index, the Viennese index prohibited a series of ascetic, hagiographic, and meditative works by the German Capuchin Martin of Cochem (Bachleitner et al., 2000, p. 111; Ogrin, 2021, p. 201), who thus ended up among the most frequently banned authors (Bachleitner, 2017, p. 80). Moreover, the Viennese index banned a variety of domestic confraternal and pilgrimage publications that were most certainly not known, let alone persecuted in Rome; for example, the works Marianischer Zinnsgroschen, printed in 1746 for the Scapular Confraternity in Prague, and Marianischer Gnadenpfennig, published in 1770 in the main Austrian pilgrimage center Mariazell (Catalogus 1776, pp. 124, 358), where the Habsburgs also traditionally went on pilgrimages and sent their gifts.

Both indices treated the Quran very similarly: they did not ban the work per se, but only those editions that could reach a wider circle of readers. The Roman index banned the 1543 and 1550 Basel editions of the work's Latin translation and prohibited—except with permission from the Inquisition—any possession of translations into vernacular languages (*Index* 1786, p. 179). The Viennese index banned the German translation by Theodor Arnold, which was based on the English translation and published in 1746 (*Catalogus* 1776, p. 165).

Scholarly and pseudo-scholarly works

Due to its Enlightenment premises, the Viennese index showed more understanding for scholarly (especially natural science) works founded on rationalism and empiricism. Most credit for this goes to van Swieten, who in 1772 even recommended that Maria Theresa tolerate scholarly books by Protestant writers that might contain anti-Catholic barbs (Bachleitner, 2017, p. 52). The chief censor, typically, decided against banning the works of Paracelsus, whom the Roman index had listed among Class I authors at the end of the sixteenth century, primarily because he was



suspected of having supported Protestant ideas (cf. de Vries & Spruit 2018). An exception in the Viennese index was the occult work *Arcanum arcanorum* (specifically its 1750 Frankfurt and Leipzig edition), which was incorrectly attributed to Paracelsus (Paulus, 2022, p. 370). Even less problematic for the Viennese censorship was Copernicus' *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*, which, due to its opposition to geocentrism and disagreement with the Bible and Church doctrine, from 1620 to 1835 the Roman index prohibited and only allowed its censored version, and Galileo's *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo*, which the Inquisition prohibited in 1634 for the same reasons (*Index* 1786, pp. 72, 118, 219; Heilbron, 2005).

The Roman and Viennese indices were in significant agreement regarding the persecution of pseudo-scholarly or occult books. For example, they both prohibited the popular medieval compendium of philosophical, medical, and occult knowledge about women and human reproduction De secretis mulierum, initially incorrectly attributed to Albert the Great, which was widely distributed through numerous editions and translations. The same fate was met by the similar and also very popular work Sybilla Tryg-Andriana, first published in 1610, in which the lawyer Heinrich Kornmann discussed the rights and obligations of women and their love and sexual behavior (Vidmar, 2012, pp. 252-253). The exorcism handbooks Flagellum daemonum and Fustis daemonum by the Franciscan friar Girolamo Menghi, which the Roman index prohibited in 1709 due to being outdated, were naturally also unacceptable on the Viennese index. In addition, the Viennese censors prohibited the notorious handbook on witchcraft Malleus maleficarum, which, surprisingly, was not even listed on the Roman index in the eighteenth century, but it was included on the Spanish index in 1667 (*Index* 1786, pp. 6, 192, 155; *Catalogus* 1776, pp. 7, 192, 203, 296; *Index* 1667). The Viennese censors were more successful than the Roman ones in detecting more recent occult books, such as the Frankfurt edition of the alchemical work Cabalae verior descriptio (1761), originally published in 1680 in Hamburg (*Catalogus* 1776, p. 50; Kopp, 1886, p. 230).

Political and philosophical works

Neither index tolerated any political attacks on the Church and the Habsburg rulers in the form of polemic writings, pamphlets, or satires. For example, Rome prohibited all works by Gregorio Leti, who converted to Protestantism and attacked the Church and papacy in the second half of the seventeenth century (*Index* 1786, p. 162; Vidmar, 2012, p. 249). Vienna was not much more forgiving, despite the greater time distance: it banned thirteen of Leti's works (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 79, 80). The Viennese censors no longer thought it was necessary to include the Renaissance treatise on court etiquette, *Il cortegiano*, by Baldassarre Castiglione on their index, whereas, due to a few jokes aimed at the clergy, the Roman index only permitted its censored version of 1584 (Burke, 1998, pp. 103–106). The same applied to the satire *Ragguagli di Parnasso* by Traiano Boccalini, which was listed on the Roman index due to its criticism of the political situation in Italy (*Index* 1786, pp. 34, 51). On the other hand, it was only the Viennese censors that banned the satirical periodical *Des Träumenden Pasquini kluger Staats-Phantasien (Catalogus* 1776, p.



235), which was critical toward the pope and Catholic monarchs, and was published in Leipzig from 1697 onward (the Roman censors probably did not even notice it).

Both the Roman and Viennese censors prohibited those works on philosophy and especially political philosophy that, in their view, opposed the established religious and political regime of Catholic Europe, such as De republica by Jean Bodin (Index 1786, p. 34; Catalogus 1776, p. 42). The Viennese censors were more forbearing toward certain older works, whose content seemed to be sufficiently distant from contemporary issues. The 1564 index approved by the Council of Trent listed Niccolò Machiavelli among the Class I authors primarily because of his criticism of the role of the papacy in Italian history and his political realism, which subjected religion and morals to state interests (Bireley, 1990, p. 14). In turn, the Viennese index "only" prohibited all the editions of his best-known and controversial work, II principe, in which these ideas were most clearly expressed. Surprisingly, it did not even mention François Hotman, who was also declared a Class I author in Rome due to his religious (Calvinist) and political views; among other things, he advocated an elected monarchy and a representative government (*Index* 1786, pp. 139, 179; *Cata*logus 1776, p. 189; Vidmar, 2012, pp. 237, 246; Svoljšak, 2018, pp. 89, 93). Moreover, unlike in Rome, Dante's De monarchia (Index 1786, p. 7) was not banned in Vienna; it opposed the primacy of papal power in the secular sphere and thus agreed with the policy of Maria Theresa and Joseph II.

The Roman index listed several seventeenth-century metaphysical works that the Austrian censorship no longer considered harmful: in 1663, the Inquisition banned several of Descartes's works until they were corrected (donec corrigantur—Mantovani, 2023, p. 343) and, in 1679 and 1690, it declared Spinoza's posthumous works as absolutely banned (*Index* 1786, pp. 49, 277). With regard to philosophical works from this period dealing with contemporary society and politics, the two indices were more in agreement, but the Roman one was again stricter: all works by Thomas Hobbes were banned in Rome by 1709 and all works by Pierre Bayle by 1757; in contrast, Vienna "only" banned some of their works, including Leviathan and Dictionnaire historique et critique (Index 1786, pp. 16, 137; Catalogus 1776, pp. 28, 68, 100, 144). On the other hand, Vienna was more sensitive toward works that had to do with Habsburg power: it banned those editions of Lacon politicus (first edition published in 1706) and Arcanorum status (first edition published from 1709 to 1713) by the Carniolan aristocrat Franz Albert Pelzhoffer that were published in Augsburg and Frankfurt without prior review and approval by the Austrian censorship (Catalogus 1776, pp. 19, 237; Polec, 1935; Vidmar, 2018, p. 37). Because these two works, which sought a perfect political system, were in great favor of the Church (as well as the Habsburgs), there was no reason to include them on the Roman index. More recent works on the Viennese index included the anonymous bilingual (French-German) protest against the first division of Poland, Examen du systeme des cours de Vienne, de Petersbourg et de Berlin concernant le demembrement de la Pologne, published in 1773 (Catalogus 1776, p. 339).

The two indices were in significant agreement in dealing with the philosophy of the Enlightenment, where they categorically persecuted deism, atheism, materialism, and freemasonry. For example, they prohibited the first Italian translation of Lucretius's poem *De rerum natura* (*Index* 1786, p. 183; *Catalogus* 1776, p. 186),



first published in 1717. The translation by the mathematician Alessandro Marchetti was deemed controversial because of its propagation of epicureanism and materialism (Costa, 2012). Both indices also banned Baron d'Holbach's work Système de la nature (Index 1786, p. 284; Catalogus 1776, p. 309). However, some advocates of the moderate Enlightenment also ended up among the authors banned: both indices prohibited several works by John Locke, especially the French translation of *The* Reasonableness of Christianity (Index 1786, p. 174; Catalogus 1776, pp. 278–279). Moreover, both indices quickly banned Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers edited by Diderot and d'Alembert, as well as many of Rousseau's works, including his Émile ou De l'éducation and Du contrat social (Index 1786, pp. 95, 255; Catalogus 1776, pp. 89, 184; Bachleitner, 2017, p. 80). In some cases, the Roman index was stricter: it prohibited two of Montesquieu's works, Lettres persanes and De l'esprit des lois; in contrast, the Viennese index only banned the former, whereas Maria Theresa allowed the latter in 1752 based on the majority opinion of the censorship committee (Index 1786, pp. 101, 168; Catalogus 1776, p. 178; Bachleitner, 2017, p. 51). The Viennese censors were nonetheless generally more thorough: they banned more works by Bolingbroke, Hume, Helvétius, La Mettrie, d'Argens, Voltaire (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 80, 81), and Toland than the Roman censors. For example, the Roman index only banned the French translation of Hume's An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, whereas the Viennese index prohibited as many as eleven of his works (*Index* 1786, p. 140; Bachleitner, 2017, p. 80). Moreover, it was only the Viennese index that banned several works by Georg Friedrich Meier, including Gedanken von der Religion, and Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, including Die Natur und das Wesen der Staaten, and Kant's Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen (Catalogus 1776, pp. 33, 160, 197).

Literature

In principle, the Roman and Viennese censors treated literature in the same way: primarily from the perspective of its potentially harmful influences on people's faith and morals. Both indices thus listed many classical works of European literatures, such as *Epistolae obscurorum virorum*, Ariosto's *Satire*, Rabelais's *Gargantua et Pantagruel*, Owen's *Epigrammata*, La Fontaine's *Contes et nouvelles en vers*, Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*, and Voltaire's *Candide*. Nonetheless, in this area, too, they differed somewhat in terms of their thoroughness and focus.

The Roman censors (understandably) placed greater emphasis on the religious aspect and so, for example, they banned the Italian translation of Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* (*Index* 1786, p. 195). In turn, respectfully discussed Christian material in literary works, even though they were written by the Protestants, apparently no longer bothered the Viennese censors, who, on the other hand, strove to suppress immorality and indecency even more strongly than the Roman censors (Vidmar, 2021, p. 156). The difference was clear in their treatment of the humanist Giovanni Pontano: Rome banned his dialogue *Charon*, which was set in the mythological underworld, whereas Vienna prohibited his collection



of love poems, *Amorum libri* (*Index* 1786, p. 230; *Catalogus* 1776, p. 246). A pronounced moralism was introduced to the Viennese censorship by Maria Theresa, who was greatly concerned for her subjects' morals, and van Swieten, who considered literature useless, harmful, and godless (Wolf, 2007, pp. 312–313; Bachleitner, 2017, p. 53).

In relation to older works with erotic, satirical, and liberal elements, the Viennese index only occasionally showed some degree of forbearance. For example, the Roman index only permitted the censored versions of *Decameron* (McGrath, 2018, pp. 192–193), listed Pietro Aretino among the Class I authors, banned nearly all works by Ferrante Pallavicino by 1669 (Infelise, 2014), and banned twelve works by Giambattista Marino by 1678 (*Index* 1786, p. 184). In contrast, the Viennese index "only" banned the 1695 French translation of Boccaccio's work published in Amsterdam (Svoljšak, 2018, p. 147), the 1762 German translation of this same work titled Kern der lustigen und scherzhaften Erzählungen des Bocaz (Catalogus 1776, p. 162), five works by Aretino, ten by Pallavicino (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 80, 82), and a few works by Marino (Catalogus 1776, p. 194). Among Machiavelli's literary works, Vienna only prohibited his satirical poem Asino d'oro, and among the works by Vincentius Opsopoeus, who was also listed among Class I authors on the Roman index, it only banned his De arte bibendi (Catalogus 1776, pp. 22, 223), an ode to drinking. However, the Viennese censors banned many older works that the Roman censors did not, such as the *Heptaméron* by Marguerite de Navarre, the anthology of Italian burlesque poetry, *Opere burlesche*, Burchiello's sonnets, the poems by Francesco Berni and Pietro Michiele, Capriccia macaronica by Cesare Orsini, Malatesti's collection of verse riddles La sfinge, the collection of humorous texts in Latin Nugae venales sive Thesaurus ridendi et iocandi, and Grimmelshausen's novel Simplicius Simplicissimus (Catalogus 1776, pp. 67, 191, 222, 229, 244, 273, 297, 300, 304).

The Austrian censors were naturally much more thorough in reviewing more recent German works. Thus, the Viennese index listed Wieland's novel Die Abenteuer des Don Sylvio von Rosalva (most likely due to its lascivious passages and critical remarks about rulers), Goethe's novel Die Leiden des jungen Werthers (due to the suicide motif and descriptions of passion), Lessing's poem Der Eremit (undoubtedly due to indecency; Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 287–288, 296–300, 302–303), and Goethe's poem *Der neue Amadis*, which were not banned by the Roman index. Moreover, works that were only banned by the Viennese index included the first part of Gottsched's collection Gedichte printed in 1751 in Leipzig, the poem Die Walpurgis Nacht by Johann Friedrich Löwen, the poem Die Unterwerfung gefallenen Engel by Justus Friedrich Wilhelm Zachariä (Martin, 1993, p. 385), several works by the adventurer Friedrich von der Trenck, and three volumes of the Göttingen Musenalmanach (1774–1776; Catalogus 1776, pp. 124, 211, 345, 355), most definitely because of poems such as Bürger's Lenore, whose content was most likely considered blasphemous. In addition, the Viennese censors looked at and prohibited more recent English works significantly more than the Roman censors; for example, the poem The Rape of the Smock by Giles Jacob, the German and French translation of Defoe's novel Moll Flanders, the French translation of Smollett's novel The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle, the German translation of Fielding's Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon, and the German translations of Stern's novels Tristram Shandy



and A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy (Catalogus 1776, pp. 31, 105, 171, 199, 208, 257), which were not listed on the Roman index.

In addition, the Viennese censors were more conscientious in their search for (especially French) erotic novels and stories (including cheap ones), which were usually published anonymously. For example, they banned sixteen works by the libertine Restif de la Bretonne (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 79, 80), most of which were not listed on the Roman index. Another revealing comparison: the 1786 edition of the Roman index includes only three anonymous works whose titles begin with amor, amore, or amour 'love' (the last published in 1685), whereas the 1776 edition of the Viennese index lists as many as twenty-nine such works (the last published in 1769; Vidmar, 2021, pp. 156–157). The Viennese censors were more assiduous than the Roman ones in prohibiting works describing the intimate lives of rulers and their wives and mistresses (Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 269-281); for example, the German translation of The History of the Marchioness de Pompadour (Catalogus 1776, p. 118), the notorious biography of Louis XV's mistress and Austrian ally published in 1759 in London by Marianne-Agnès Falques. The Viennese censors also banned Cleland's erotic novel Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure (Fanny Hill)—specifically, one of its first editions published in 1749 (Catalogus 1776, pp. 200, 204) and its undated Italian translation titled *La meretrice* (Donato, 2019). In contrast, the Roman censorship clearly did not look for such works systematically, most likely because it was aware that there were too many of them and that they were in general already prohibited by the rules of the index.

Ultimately, increased moralism in Vienna is also shown in the stricter treatment of Classical authors. The seventh rule of the Roman index prohibited lascivious and obscene books, but, due to the beauty and appropriateness of the language used, these types of works by pagan authors were excluded from this rule; it only prohibited their use in school instruction and the Italian translation of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* (*Index* 1786, pp. xi, 301). In turn, the Viennese censors prohibited as many as eight editions of Ovid's works (Bachleitner, 2017, p. 81). Addison's English translation of Petronius's works published in London in 1736, the German translation of Theocritus's *Idylls* by Johann Gottlob Samuel Schwabe published in Jena in 1769, and the French translation of Propertius's *Elegies* by Pierre de Longchamps published in Amsterdam in 1772 also ended up on the Viennese index (*Catalogus* 1776, pp. 88, 150, 353).

The Viennese index paid incomparably more attention to plays, especially more recent ones, than the Roman index because the Enlightenment-era state sought to control theater as an influential public space and use it to educate and cultivate the population. This was especially the case after the introduction of theater censorship in 1770 in Vienna, conducted by Joseph von Sonnenfels (Höyng, 2007, p. 103; Bachleitner, 2017, pp. 54, 239–241; Eisendle, 2020). By the second half of the eighteenth century this task was already beyond the reach of the Church censorship. The Viennese censors prohibited several older works (especially the German originals and translations into German) that the Roman censors did not, including the comedies by Girolamo Parabosco, the comedy *Il ruffiano* by Lodovico Dolce, Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy *The Noble Gentleman*, the comedy *Love for Love* by William Congreve, and the tragedy *Agrippina* by Daniel Casper von Lohenstein



(Catalogus 1776, pp. 7, 61, 186, 192, 279). The censors in Vienna paid special attention to more recent editions of German and English plays. For example, the Viennese index (unlike the Roman one) banned the English originals and German translations of the comedies *The Relapse* and *The Provoked Wife* by John Vanbrugh, the comedy *The She-Gallants* by George Granville, *The Beggar's Opera* by John Gay, the play *Der Vierte Heinrich Kaiser* by Johann Jakob Bodmer, the 1775 Frankfurt and Leipzig editions of Lessing's comedies *Damon* and *Die alte Jungfer*, and the tragedy *Masuren oder der junge Werther* based on Goethe's novel and published in Frankfurt and Leipzig in 1775 by August Siegfried von Goue (*Catalogus* 1776, pp. 31, 42, 51, 112, 174, 188, 195, 267, 279, 329, 351; Eisendle, 2020, p. 287). Moreover, it was only the Viennese censors that thought it necessary to prohibit the second part of Gottsched's bibliography of the German plays, *Nöthiger Vorrath zur Geschichte der deutschen dramatischen Dichtkunst*, published in 1765 (*Catalogus* 1776, pp. 341), which inevitably revealed several titles of controversial plays to the reader.

Conclusion

In some aspects, the Viennese index thus copied the Roman one: with its title, format, restrictiveness, and main goals (i.e., to protect the Catholic faith and morals, the Church, and the ruler). Its key special features included the following: it was rooted in the moderate and Catholic Enlightenment, it applied primarily to Austrian and Bohemian lands, it was updated and published more frequently than the Roman index, it had a more internal character, it focused on German and French books, it was more forbearing toward scholarly and older Protestant, political, and philosophical works, and it was stricter toward religious Catholic and more recent political and philosophical works and literature (especially plays).

Both indices undoubtedly had a strong influence on culture in Austrian and Bohemian lands during Maria Theresa's rule, even though their bans were less strictly enforced in practice (which was typical of censorship legislation in general; Píša & Wögerbauer 2017, p. 193). Initially, the Roman index most likely still had considerable authority, but it largely lost it through the gradual secularization of censorship in the 1760s and 1770s. In the end, it was only able to perform its original task (i.e., retroactive censorship) within the Church (e.g., at monastic libraries). Everywhere else it was supplanted by the Viennese index, whose power increased with the expansion of state administration, especially the network of lyceum and university libraries. Nonetheless, the legacy of the Roman index was not entirely forgotten: it was also with its help that the Viennese index, which partly absorbed and transformed this legacy, contributed to the fact that some new books arrived in Austria and Bohemia with delay (cf. Wolf, 2007, p. 316), that society mostly rejected the most radical texts or accepted them with great reservation, and that the moderate and Catholic Enlightenment prevailed in the general mindset.

On the other hand, the Viennese index—just like the Roman one before it—was unable to effectively prevent banned books from being acquired and read by members of the social elite in Austrian and Bohemian lands, who in the politically



fragmented Holy Roman Empire and through status-related privileges easily found ways to circumvent the regulations and obtain access to the works desired (cf. Bachleitner et al., 2000, p. 111). Despite both indices, banned books found their way into Church and state libraries, where they were supervised, and into the private libraries of intellectuals, where their reception was significantly less constrained. In such an environment, the Viennese index was unable to escape the same fate as the Roman index: contrary to the aspirations of its compilers, it also became a guide for readers looking for exciting works (Vidmar, 2021, p. 160).

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