PETER CANISIUS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN GERMANY, 1549–97

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Peter Canisius, S.J. (1521–97) became widely respected as a catechist, pedagogue and preacher who worked tirelessly on behalf of the Catholic faith. Canisius's set of three catechisms – the Large, Small *and* Smaller *– were the most popular and widely available Catholic catechisms in sixteenth-century Germany: by his death, at least 357 editions had appeared, in multiple languages. Employed in Catholic schools, churches and homes across the Holy Roman Empire, his catechisms have been interpreted as a direct response to the Protestant attack on Catholicism in Germany. However, the boundaries between Catholicism and heresy were not always clear to the laity. Drawing on examples from his catechisms and his approach to the Index of Prohibited Books, this article suggests that Canisius sought to promote a policy of inclusion between his fellow Catholics in a time of conflict and uncertainty. In recognizing the distinct nature of German Catholicism, Canisius advocated a tailored educational approach to contentious doctrines and practices. Directed towards the German laity, this approach taught the lesson of compromise and acceptance between those who identified as Catholic. This article adds to existing scholarship on Jesuit education, Canisius's contribution to the development of a German religious identity, and the dissemination of religious knowledge in German society.*

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With a career spanning five decades, Peter Canisius (1521–97) was instrumental in the protection of Catholicism in the Holy Roman Empire. In 1583, Canisius observed in a letter to Claudio Acquaviva that 'most Germans are by nature straightforward, simple and good-natured, born and educated in the heresy of Lutheranism, they imbibe what they have learned partly in school, partly in church and partly in heretical writings, and that is why they have gone astray'.[1] To save the erring from damnation, Canisius centred his career on the education of German society. This article examines the nature of the education that he promoted. The first part focuses on Canisius's German-language catechisms, while the second section explores his response to the Index of Prohibited Books. The overall impression given by his activities and literary works is that Canisius fought to establish an educational programme influenced by, and designed for, German Catholics, as opposed to implementing the universal Catholicism promoted by the Council of Trent. The outcome was that Canisius promoted an inclusive approach to religion for those who identified as Catholics, whilst remaining utterly opposed to Protestants.

Education was a crucial method by which the minds of the laity could be shaped. Attitudes towards education began to change in the early sixteenth century, when it came to be seen as vital for the formation of well-rounded, pious Christians.[2] Pedagogical techniques developed and, in particular, catechisms for children grew in popularity, featuring prominently on curricula across the empire. Indeed, in 1516 Erasmus commented that

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1 'Errant ut plaerique Germani, natura simplices, rudes, faciles ad ea imbibenda, quae in haeresi Luterana nati et educati, partim in scholis, partim in templis, partim in scriptis haereticis didicerunt': *Beati Petri Canisii, Societatis Iesu, Epistulae et acta*, ed. Otto Braunsberger, 8 vols (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1896–1923), 8: 131.

2 Gerald Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation* (Baltimore, MD, 1978), 34–5.

'nothing makes so deep and indelible a mark as that which is impressed in those first years'.[3] The drive to influence the minds of children coincided with growing efforts to teach the laity as a whole, and Canisius was but one of the many pedagogues of early modern Germany. Significant figures include Martin Luther, whose catechisms influenced the content and structure of other catechetical texts, as well as his colleague and friend, Philip Melanchthon, who formulated the Augsburg Confession of 1530 and whose educational efforts in schools and universities earned him the name 'teacher of Germany'.[4] Canisius shared similar pedagogical ambitions with these Lutheran educators: each sought to teach the tenets of Christian doctrine to the German laity, as well as the clergy, in an accessible and simple format.

Modern scholarship views Canisius in two opposing ways. The first stems from a nineteenth-century interpretation of Canisius, viewing him as a man ahead of his time with regard to ecumenical dialogue.[5] Julius Oswald argues that Canisius engaged with Protestants in a 'friendly manner', and tried to 'settle theological differences objectively'.[6] Similarly, Rita Haub argues that Canisius relied on 'objectivity, gentleness and understanding', and suggests, in particular, that his catechisms were not polemical.[7] In contrast, Hilmar Pabel views

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3 *Erasmus: The Education of a Christian Prince, with the Panegyric for Archduke Philip of Austria*, ed. Lisa Jardine (Cambridge, 1997), 5.

4 Sachiko Kusukawa, 'Melanchthon', in David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology* (Cambridge, 2004), 57–67, at 57.

5 Johannes Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters*, 8 vols (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1885), 8: 382–3; Peter Lippert, 'Petrus Canisius, der Heilige (Zu seiner Heiligsprechung 21. Mai 1925)', *Stimmen der Zeit* 109 (1925), 161–72; Max Pribilla, 'Canisius und die Protestanten', ibid. 396–400.

6 Julius Oswald, 'Ringen um die Einheit der Kirche, Petrus Canisius und Philipp Melanchthon', in idem and Rita Haub, eds, *Jesuitica. Forschungen zur frühen Geschichte des Jesuitenordens in Bayern bis zur Aufhebung 1773* (Munich, 2001), 20–40, at 37.

7 Rita Haub, *Petrus Canisius. Botschafter Europas* (Limburg an der Lahn, 2004), 65, 49.

Canisius as a 'typical Catholic controversialist' who was 'disposed to display hostility, more than good will to Protestants' and argues persuasively that to see Canisius as ecumenical in his dealings with Protestants 'distorts historical vision'.[8] Indeed, it is evident from his wider literary career that Canisius was not gentle towards Protestants. Therefore, rather than focusing on his treatment of Protestants, this article examines his attitude towards his fellow Catholics, arguing that he adopted an inclusive pedagogical approach to those Catholics living on the fringes of orthodoxy. This did not extend to non-Catholics, but it permitted those who identified as Catholics to remain as such. In part, this was because Canisius had to engage with the political objectives of the emperor and the Bavarian dukes, particularly Duke Albrecht V (r.1550–79). Though Catholic, these rulers were influenced by political considerations in their dealings with Protestants and the Roman Curia, leading to the implementation of policies designed to minimize confessional tensions. Furthermore, Canisius recognized the realities of being a Catholic in a time of religious heterogeneity, leading him to adopt a policy of inclusion regarding wavering Catholics in his German catechisms and his interactions with the laity. This is not to imply that Canisius was an 'ecumenicist before his time', as Pabel accuses modern historians of suggesting, but to suggest that Canisius promoted a brand of Catholic orthodoxy to ordinary Germans that was influenced by the political and religious climate of Germany.[9]

In acknowledging Canisius's agenda, this article suggests that there was a difference between the developing Tridentine Catholicism and the Catholicism that was emerging in sixteenth-century Germany. It contributes to discourse on the nature of Jesuit political

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8 Hilmar Pabel, 'Peter Canisius and the Protestants: A Model of Ecumenical Dialogue?', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 1 (2014), 373–99, at 373, 376. Hallensleben asks whether we should view Canisius as an early ecumenist: Barbara Hallensleben, 'Kirche in der Sendung. Die Antwort des Petrus Canisius auf die Erfahrung des "draußen"', in Rainer Berndt, ed., *Petrus Canisius SJ (1521–1597). Humanist und Europäer* (Berlin, 2000), 347–63, at 363.

9 Pabel, 'Canisius', 373.

thought, as well as the development of German confessionalism in the sixteenth century and enhances our understanding of early modern German education.[10] It engages with Robert Evans's interpretation of 'aulic Catholicism': a form of Catholic doctrine and practice which developed at a pace set by the Austrian authorities, rather than by Rome.[11] Moreover, aspects of Canisius's pedagogical approach resonate with Howard Louthan's examination of the imperial court in the later sixteenth century, at which Viennese peacemakers searched for compromise between opposing confessions.[12] By viewing Canisius's catechetical activities in the light of these broader themes, his attitude towards education can be better understood.

Born in Nijmegen in 1521, Canisius rejected his father's ambition for him to study law and get married, instead electing to join the Society of Jesus in 1543. Founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1540, the society's purpose was to strengthen Catholicism across Europe and beyond.[13] After a series of wars and political setbacks, Emperor Charles V lost his fight to prevent the spread of Lutheranism, and the Peace of Augsburg confirmed its legal status in the empire in 1555. This development was not welcomed by Catholics, with Canisius informing Cardinal Truchess in January 1556 that, in Austria and Bavaria, many people continued to 'pester and attack rulers' to adopt the 'Confession, or rather, Confusion of Augsburg'.[14] The Peace made the containment of Lutheranism a far harder task for the

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10 Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought*: *The Society of Jesus and the State,* c.*1540–1640* (Cambridge, 2004).

11 R. J. W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarch 1550–1700: An Interpretation* (Oxford, 1979), 59–61; Elaine Fulton, 'Wolves and Weathervanes: Confessional Moderation at the Habsburg Court of Vienna', in Luc Racaut and Alec Ryrie, eds, *Moderate Voices in the European Reformation* (Aldershot, 2005), 145–61.

12 Howard Louthan, *The Quest for Compromise: Peacemakers in Counter-Reformation Vienna* (Cambridge, 1997).

13 John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Harvard, MA, 1995).

14 'Urgent et infestare pergunt Principes … Augustanae confessionis aut potius confusionis': *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 1: 595.

Catholics and in despair Charles abdicated, leaving his brother Ferdinand to succeed as emperor. Unfortunately, the pope did not recognize Ferdinand's succession because Charles had not asked for permission to abdicate.[15] This slight to Ferdinand's pride caused Canisius to worry that the new emperor might make 'dangerous concessions' to the Lutherans.[16] Political considerations remained important to Canisius for the remainder of his life and, along with his concerns regarding the spread of heresy, featured prominently in his publications and activities.

Canisius's publications can be categorized broadly into two groups. One sought to challenge Protestant doctrines: his most polemical treatises were his works on John the Baptist (1571) and the Virgin Mary (1577). These were intended as a Catholic response to the *Magdeburg Centuries*, a thirteen-volume history of the Christian Church written in Magdeburg by a group of theologians under the direction of Matthais Flacius Illyricaus and published between 1559 and 1574. In his works, Canisius rejected the claims of 'the corrupters of the Word of God'.[17] Personal correspondence echoed his disdain for Protestants: in a letter to the archbishop of Cologne written in August 1572, Canisius declared that if the leading Protestant figures 'were all crushed up with a mortar, they would not produce one ounce of theology'.[18] Such views earned Canisius the nickname 'hammer of heretics', as well as the scorn of Protestant leaders.[19]

However, the second category of Canisius's publications – those directed either to a general audience or to his secular patrons – stand in marked contrast to his polemical activities: his German catechisms refrained from intense polemic on disputed points, while his

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15 James Brodrick, *Saint Peter Canisius* (Chicago, IL, 1980), 354.

16 Ibid. 424.

17 Pabel, 'Canisius', 389.

18 'Qui onnes si in mortario contunderentur, non exprimeretur, inquit, vna uncia verae Theologiae': *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 7: 73.

19 Pabel, 'Canisius', 374.

response to the Index cautioned against banning all Germans from reading prohibited material in order to avoid antagonizing secular patrons and German students. This second category is all the more noteworthy because of the difference in approach compared to his other literary endeavours. It represents Canisius's understanding that a tailored response was needed to address the religious strife in Germany. This was summed up in a letter to Claudio Acquaviva in January 1583, in which Canisius warned that understanding the cause of the religious problems in Germany was the only way they could be addressed.[20] Twenty-five years earlier, he had declared in a letter to Duke Albrecht of Bavaria that 'we must forget Italians and Spaniards and devote ourselves only to Germany … . Here we must work with all [our] strength and with the greatest enthusiasm'.[21]

Soon after arriving in Germany in 1549, Canisius informed Loyola's secretary, Juan Alfonso de Polanco, that 'it is useless to look for practical interest in religion among present day Germans', noting that they rarely attended church sermons, did not fast during Lent and read heretical books.[22] To combat this apathy and the spread of heresy, Canisius advised that 'various seminaries' ought to be established.[23] Children, too, were not to be overlooked: in a sermon delivered at Innsbruck in 1572, Canisius declared that children 'are the best part of Christianity, the noblest provision of the Church'.[24] Thus his educational programme was intended not only to encompass the training of future clerics drawn from Germany to serve

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20 *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 8: 139.

21 'Italiens und Spaniens müssen wir vergessen und uns Deutschland allein hingeben, nicht auf einige Zeit, sondern für das ganze Leben. Hier müssen wir aus allen Kräften und mit dem größten Eifer arbeiten': Otto Braunsberger, *Entstehung und erste Entwicklung der Katechismen des seligen Petrus Canisius aus der Gesellschaft Jesu* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1893), 126.

22 'Oltre di questo, communemente il zelo de la religione non bisogna cerear hora nelli Tedeschi': *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 1: 308.

23 Ibid. 7: 358.

24 'Sunt optima portio Christianismi – Der edelste uorrat der Kirchen': ibid. 7: 630.

Germany, but also the general education of German children. The most popular tool Canisius used in his ambitious educational programme was the catechism.[25]

Canisius produced three versions of his catechism: the *Large*, the *Small* and the *Smaller*. The *Large Catechism*, aimed at university students and the clergy, was published in Latin in 1555 and a German translation followed in 1556.[26] The *Smaller Catechism*, intended for young children, appeared later in 1556, and the *Small Catechism*, designed for older school children and 'simple' adults, in 1558.[27] In his *Testament*, Canisius recalled that the *Small* and *Smaller* catechisms were used 'in the schools for the first instruction of the children, and also in the churches, so that from them the faithful can be brought closer to the rudiments of Catholic piety'.[28] The 1596 edition of Canisius's *Smaller Catechism* was 'divided from syllable to syllable, so that [children may] with little difficulty learn to read quicker, which will then serve them well for writing'.[29] In a similar manner to Melanchthon's

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25 For the development of his catechisms, see Braunsberger, *Entstehung und erste Entwicklung*. For their popularity, see Paul Begheyn, 'The Catechism (1555) of Peter Canisius, the most published Book by a Dutch Author in History', *Quaerendo* 36 (2006), 51–84.

26 Peter Canisius, *Summa doctrinae christianae* (Vienna, 1555); idem, *Frag und Antwort Christlicher Leer* (Vienna, 1556).

27 Peter Canisius, *Catechismus Minimus* (Ingolstadt, 1556); a German translation of this catechism appeared as idem, *Der Klein Catechismus sampt kurtzen Gebeten für die ainfältigen* (Ingolstadt, 1556); idem, *Parvus catechismus* (Dillingen, 1558).

28 'Und man benützt sie in den Schulen fur die erste Unterweisung der Kinder und auch in den Kirchen, damit die Anfangsgründe der katholischen Frömmigkeit von da aus besser den Gläubigen nahegebracht warden können': *Das Testament des Petrus Canisius. Vermächtnis und Auftrag*, ed. Julius Oswald and Rita Haub (Frankfurt am Main, 1997), 86–7.

29 'Der lieben Jug-end zum Nu-ßen ha-be ich die-sen Ka-te-chis-mum von Sil-ben zu Sil-ben ab-getheilt ver-fer-ti-get, da-mit sie mit leich-ter Mü-he de-sto ge-schwin der le-sen ler-nen, wel-chet ih-nen als dann zum Schrei-ben be-stens die-nen wird': Peter Canisius, *Kleiner Catechismus* (Freyburg im Uchtland, 1596), 3.

pedagogical approach, Canisius merged educational and religious texts to teach the basics of religious doctrine and to offer direction on civic duty and obedience.[30]

Höpfl has commented on the reality of early modern Catholic obedience: while in theory the papacy expected secular authorities to be subordinate to them, in practice this goal was incompatible with the secular interests of the princely powers in the context of imperial policy.[31] The result was that Christians owed obedience to two sets of authorities with potentially conflicting demands.[32] In Germany, this can be seen clearly in the actions of Duke Albrecht V, who ignored instructions from Trent that did not support his political ambitions. For example, while Philipp Apian, a Protestant, was expelled from Ingolstadt in 1568 for refusing to swear the *professio fidei tridentinum*, in other instances Albrecht allowed dynastic ambitions to undermine Tridentine decrees.[33] In 1564 and 1567 Albrecht installed his eleven- and three-year-old sons as bishops of Freising and Regensburg respectively, in direct defiance of Trent's efforts to outlaw the appointment of minors to ecclesiastical benefices.[34] It was under conditions such as these that Canisius adopted a policy of inclusion rather than exclusion in his educational programme.

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30 Bert Roest, 'Rhetoric of Innovation and Recourse to Tradition in Humanist Pedagogical Discourse', in Stephen Gersh and Bert Roest, eds, *Medieval and Renaissance Humanism: Rhetoric, Representation and Reform* (Leiden, 2003), 115–48, at 147.

31 Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*, 1: *Maximilian I to the Peace of Westphalia, 1493–1648* (Oxford, 2013), 38–9, 339–42.

32 Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought*, 54.

33 Jürgen Helm, 'Religion and Medicine: An Anatomical Education at Wittenberg and Ingolstadt', in idem and Annette Winkelmann, eds, *Religious Confessions and the Sciences in the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden, 2001), 51–70, at 53.

34 Philip M. Soergel, *Wondrous in his Saints: Counter-Reformation Propaganda in Bavaria* (Berkeley, CA, 1993), 79.

In 1568, rumours began to circulate that Canisius had converted to Protestantism. In response, he began to include a confession of faith at the end of some of his publications.[35] This 'author's confession' rejected the doctrines of Luther and Calvin, declaring that Canisius had 'nothing in common' with any heretic, and affirmed his adherence to the 'one holy, Catholic, apostolic and Roman Church'.[36] Canisius evidently was a 'hammer of heretics' but the question is, when did one cease being a Catholic and become a heretic?[37] The answer is not always clear in the catechisms. Instead, Canisius tailored his material to suit his audience: he was operating in Germany at a time when Lutheranism was a legal alternative to the Catholic faith; the Bavarian dukes and the emperor were making concessions to Lutherans; and he had first-hand experience of confessional diversity in Germany. To prevent the loss of those who identified as Catholics, Canisius forebore to attack those whose devotional practices verged on heresy but did not become heretical.

In 1558, Albrecht V ordered a visitation of the Bavarian dioceses. The results were disappointing, revealing a lack of Christian knowledge amongst the people, an alarming degree of clerical concubinage, the use of Lutheran practices and the inclusion of Lutheran songs in churches, specifically Luther's *Aus tiefer Not*, which rejected works of penance through its emphasis on repentance and faith in God's word.[38] In early 1558, Canisius spent

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35 Hilmar M. Pabel, 'Augustine's Confessions and the Autobiographies of Peter Canisius, SJ', *Church History and Religious Culture* 87 (2007), 453–75, at 470.

36 'Ich will nichts mit denen gemein haben': Canisius, *Testament*, 91; 'Non noui Lutherum, Caluinum respuo, haereticis omnibus dico anathema: nihil mihi cum his commune esse volo … cum vna sancta Catholica, Apostolica, & Romana Ecclesia': Peter Canisius, *Summa doctrinae christianae* (Antwerp, 1574), unpaginated.

37 'haereticorum malleum': *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 8: 447.

38 Alexander J. Fisher, *Music, Piety, and Propaganda: The Soundscape of Counter-Reformation Bavaria* (Oxford, 2014), 35–6; Anton Landersdorfer, *Das Bistum Freising in der bayerischen Visitation des Jahres 1560* (St Ottilien, 1986).

six weeks in the Bavarian city of Straubing, which had witnessed the successful infiltration of Lutheranism. Canisius openly acknowledged the heretical faith and lack of Catholic devotion in his sermons there.[39] In the same year, in response to Duke Albrecht's removal of a schismatic preacher in Straubing, Canisius counselled him to 'act confidently in the matter of religion, do not allow wolves to rage in either the churches or in the schools'.[40] Canisius did not accept Protestantism and strove to protect Catholicism, but the bounds of Catholic orthodoxy were not rigid. Indeed, in 1562, Canisius delivered a sermon in Augsburg which addressed the question of dancing on Sundays. Despite this, and other such activities, being 'accompanied by many sins', Canisius declared that he would 'consider it an impertinence were anyone to judge, condemn and despise his neighbour because he indulged in such recreations'.[41] Here he was teaching a lesson of coexistence, and this can be detected in his catechisms.

In 1563, a Bavarian territorial diet approved the granting of the chalice to the laity as part of a package of conciliatory measures designed to reconcile dissenters with the Catholic Church. Emperor Ferdinand pushed for a similar concession for the rest of Germany and, in 1564, Pope Pius IV allowed bishops in five German provinces, including Bavaria, to administer the sacrament in both kinds.[42] Canisius's 1563 German edition of the *Large Catechism* appears to have predicted this papal concession because it did not forbid the chalice to lay people.[43] Analysis of the precise wording employed in the *Large Catechism*

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39 *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 2: 816.

40 'Et oro, ut Christi gratia fauente pietas tua confidenter agat in negotio Religionis, nec sinat usquam grassari lupos [siue in] templis, siue in scholis': ibid. 2: 284.

41 Brodrick, *Canisius*, 831; *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 3: 648–9.

42 Michael A. Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation* (London, 1999), 57.

43 Canisius, *Catholischer Catechismus oder Sumārien Christlicher Lehr Inn frag un̄ anntwort / der Christlicher jugent / unnd allen einfaltigen zu nuz und heil gestelt* (Cologne, 1563), unpaginated.

reveals that there was a limited degree of flexibility in the Jesuit's discussion of communion in both kinds.

On the question on whether communion should be offered to the laity in one or two kinds, Canisius explained:

> The faithful laity … are not obliged [*verbunden*] by the command of God to receive the sacrament in two kinds … the custom (that the laity receive under one kind) was established by the Church and the Holy Fathers, not without reason and has been so long held, [that] it is to be regarded as a law which may not be overturned or the Church's authority changed at the behest of a single person.[44]

Here, Canisius challenged the Protestant argument that divine law requires communion in both kinds, drawing on church teachings to argue that communion in one kind 'is established not without reason'.[45] He expressed astonishment regarding those who conspired with the 'new despisers of the Church' regarding communion in both kinds and he taught that the fruits of the sacrament are available only to those who 'persist in the unity of the Church', emphasizing that those who insisted on 'the external signs of the sacrament' would make themselves unworthy partakers and would not receive its fruits.[46] Nonetheless, he taught that divine law did not 'oblige' the laity to receive communion under both kinds. In contrast, the

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[44] 'Die glaubigen Leien … sein nit verbunden auß dem gebot Gottes zu der empfahung des Sacraments under zweierlei gestalt … die gewonheit (den Leien zu peisen unter einerlei gestalt) von der Kirchē und heiligen Vattern nit on ursach eingefurt und gar lang gehaltē ist / ist si fur ein gesaz zubehalten / welchs nit mag uṁ gestollen / oder an der Kirchen Authoritet nach eins jeden wolgefallen verkert werden': Canisius, *Catholischer Catechismus* (1563), unpaginated.

[45] 'Nit on ursach eingefurt': ibid.

[46] 'Die eusserlichen zeichen dieses Sacraments … Mit den newn verachtern der … bestendigen in der einigkeit der Kirch': ibid.

Tridentine Catechism explicitly forbade the laity to receive the chalice. This is a subtle difference: Canisius defended the practice of administering only the bread to the laity without expressly forbidding the wine.

Secondly, Canisius taught that the 'law' of communion in one kind could not be changed 'at the behest of a single person'. While this was probably a direct challenge to Luther and other reformers, it may also reflect Canisius's context. The policies adopted by the emperor and the Bavarian dukes indicate that there was a demand for the chalice from the laity. Moreover, the legalization of Lutheranism in the empire after the Peace of Augsburg meant that Catholics could find themselves living in areas where they had little choice but to receive communion in both kinds. Thus the question of audience becomes significant. Canisius's *Large Catechism* was intended primarily for the clergy and was designed, in part, to provide them with a defence against Protestant doctrines. Therefore Canisius provided a robust defence of communion in one kind, which could be used to support a priest in their administering of communion to the laity, but which stopped short of expressly forbidding communion in two kinds. The *Small Catechism*, however, was designed for the laity, some of whom could be living in Lutheran territories, or in a Catholic area where receiving communion in two kinds had been declared the normal practice. David Luebke has demonstrated that in Westphalian Haltern, for instance, which lay on the border between the Hochstift Münster and Recklinghausen Vest, the priest permitted those who wished to receive communion in both kinds to do so.[47] Luebke argues that lay people 'were fully equipped to pick and choose among the ritual offerings available to them', despite their adherence to an otherwise orthodox Roman Catholicism.[48] In the *Small Catechism*, Canisius taught that unbelievers, sectarians and heretics would not receive the sacrament worthily, so that only a

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47 David M. Luebke, *Hometown Religion: Regimes of Coexistence in Early Modern Westphalia* (Charlottesville, VA, 2016), 93.

48 Ibid. 101.

Catholic would be a worthy partaker.[49] However, Canisius was faced with a conundrum: if he excluded those Catholics who received communion in both kinds by prohibiting the lay chalice, this could potentially exclude otherwise loyal Catholics from the fold. Therefore, in not expressly forbidding communion in both kinds in the *Small Catechism*, Canisius left open the possibility that an individual who identified as a Catholic and participated in the sacrament as a repentant believer would receive the fruits of that participation. In this way, Canisius's *Small Catechism* seems to have been designed to promote inclusivity within Catholicism.

More broadly, this indicates that catechisms could offer a more fluid expression of confessional identity than existing scholarship has recognized.[50] Canisius's audience was Catholic, but the practical expression of Catholic faith was not uniform across Germany. The subtleties in Canisius's catechisms acknowledge this confessional fluidity within German Catholicism, which arose from the political and social realities of being a Catholic in a bi-confessional empire, as well as from the pre-existence of local practices that were not all consistent with the developing Tridentine Catholicism of the later sixteenth century. Canisius' approach to communion in both kinds suggests that he tailored his catechisms to include as many as possible of those who identified as Catholic. In so doing, he made space to accommodate the experience of those Catholics living in areas where receiving the chalice was an established practice.

Despite Albrecht's conciliatory measures, in 1563 Graf von Ortenburg led an unsuccessful Lutheran conspiracy to overthrow Catholicism in Bavaria. As a result, in February 1564 Canisius informed Laynez that the duke was taking a much firmer position against the Protestants, and in April he asserted that 'little by little' Catholicism was

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49 Canisius, *Der kleine Catechismus, oder kurtze Summa des wahren Christlichen und Catholischen Glaubens* (Dillingen, 1574), 107.

50 Lee Palmer Wandel, *Reading Catechisms, Teaching Religion* (Leiden, 2016).

strengthening in the duchy.[51] Demonstrating this growing strength, in 1565 a territorial decree was issued that prohibited the sale or inheritance of books that were not printed in approved German cities.[52] In the following year, the duke forbade books to be sold in Bavaria that were not included in his catalogue of permitted material.[53] This catalogue was different to the Index of Prohibited Books, which had been issued by the pope in 1559. Canisius had immediately expressed doubts regarding the nature of the Roman Index, and in a letter to Laynez he confided that he would rather have a list of approved rather than prohibited texts.[54] Despite official endorsement of censorship, enforcing the law was not straightforward and Canisius continued to push for a settlement that was suited to the political and religious conditions in Bavaria.

In October 1559, Canisius informed Laynez that he wanted to 'obtain grace from the pope on behalf of our confessors, that they may not be kept from conferring absolution to students who have any impure' texts.[55] In other missives sent to Laynez that year, Canisius reported that the Catholics of Germany, Bohemia and Poland considered the 'Index intolerably severe, nor can we obtain that which it prescribes'.[56] He warned 'we do not see how we are to maintain our classes and schools if we must obey this strict decree to the

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51 *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 4: 447, 406.

52 John Frymire, *The Primacy of the Postils: Catholics, Protestants, and the Dissemination of Ideas in Early Modern Germany* (Leiden, 2010), 339.

53 Allyson F. Creasman, *Censorship and Civic Order in Reformation Germany, 1517–1648: 'Printed Poison & Evil Talk'* (Farnham, 2012), 58.

54 *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 2: 358.

55 'Tum apud nouum Pont. impetrari gratiam velim Confessarijs, vt ne rigore Cathalogi arceantur ab absolutione conferenda studiosis ratione librorum, si quos habent impuros': ibid. 2: 533.

56 'Accedit durities Cathalogi, ut isti interpretantur, intollerabilis; nec videmus obtineri posse, quod praescriptum est': ibid. 2: 380.

letter'.[57] Certainly, Canisius was aware that his students possessed heretical books: while teaching at the University of Ingolstadt in 1549, his pupils had surrendered their copies of prohibited books over Christmas on the understanding that they would be returned in the New Year.[58] In 1561, the pope provided a dispensation for Germany, lifting the ban on classical texts and books that had been annotated or published by heretics, leaving prohibited only those books with expressly heretical content.[59]

Canisius's letters reflect the complex relationship between his obligations and the realities of being Catholic in early modern Germany. As a Jesuit, he owed allegiance to the pope and was expected to protect papal authority and interests. Concurrently, while in Germany he owed allegiance to the emperor, and while in Bavaria to the dukes. Each of these superiors demanded obedience from Canisius and his fellow Jesuits, but their individual policies and objectives did not always reflect the conditions facing Catholics in their daily lives. Canisius's responses to censorship mark him out as a keen defender of Catholicism, but his approach was inclusive rather than exclusive. Essentially, those who declared themselves Protestant would have no quarter from Canisius, but those who identified as Catholic could be treated with more discretion. This approach is exemplified in his evaluation of a library of books inherited by a member of the powerful Fugger family of Augsburg in 1577.

Canisius first became acquainted with the Fuggers when he converted Ursula Fugger to the Roman faith in 1559. Simone Laqua-O'Donnell comments that Canisius saw this conversion as particularly important because her elite status meant that she was a powerful tool in the promotion of post-Tridentine Catholicism in Augsburg.[60] It was important,

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57 'Certo non vedemo modo di potere intratenere le nostre classe et schole se dovemo andare secondo la lettera della stretta prohibitione': ibid. 2: 446.

58 Brodrick, *Canisius*, 138.

59 Ibid. 468.

60 Simone Laqua-O'Donnell, 'Family Matters: Peter Canisius as Confessor and Spiritual Guide in Early Modern Augsburg. A Case Study', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 2 (2015), 606–23, at 607.

therefore, to ensure Ursula and her family were taught how to be good Catholics and acted in a manner that supported Trent's vision of Catholicism. However, in his examination of Philip's library, Canisius discovered texts that were annotated by heretics or contained material that was not strictly orthodox. Describing his findings in a letter to Scipione Rebiba, Canisius declared that 'since the Index of Prohibited Books has not been published in Germany and since reading books on religious matters and using German bibles is encouraged here … I thought it fit not to condemn books that have become familiar to Catholics here in their daily confrontations with heretics'.[61] Moreover, 'most Catholics here are used to reading just about everything that is not utterly impious'.[62] While Canisius was no friend to heretics, Philip Fugger was not a heretic: he 'is a good Catholic and he has inherited most of the books from his father'.[63] Moreover, Canisius knew that Fugger was a powerful ally to Catholicism, and he therefore proposed that Fugger be granted a dispensation. In doing this, Canisius was acknowledging the nature of German Catholicism and the realities of living as a Catholic in a bi-confessional city. This was a radically different response to that shown by Canisius to members of his own family in 1565 when he burned their non-Catholic books, or when he wrote in 1583 that heretical books should be burned or removed from the empire.[64] Canisius would have preferred heretical books to be expunged from the empire, but he knew that this was an unrealistic goal and recognized the dangers of excluding otherwise loyal Catholics from the fold.

Canisius's experience of confessional diversity was not limited to Germany: the ageing Jesuit spent his final years in Fribourg, a member city of the Swiss Confederation

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61 Paul Begheyn and Vincent J. C. Hunink, 'Two Unpublished Letters by Peter Canisius (1521–97) to Cardinal Scipione Rebiba, 1577', *Lias: Sources and Documents relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas* 34 (2007), 3–10, at 4 (Letter 2).

62 Ibid. 4.

63 Ibid.

64 Pabel, 'Canisius', 379.

which had a strong Lutheran and Reformed presence. While Fribourg remained Catholic, the structure of the Swiss Confederation rested on a series of alliances, with bi-confessional territories developing in areas that were jointly ruled by Catholic and Reformed states.[65] In his final sermon, delivered in Fribourg on 5 August 1596, Canisius reflected that one objective of the Jesuits was to 'to bring [people] back from the error of heresy'.[66] He did not return to the pulpit, and on his death in December 1597 he left a pedagogical legacy that was to last centuries.

Canisius's *Testament* expressed the hope that he 'remained within the limits of an orthodox teacher'; of that there is little doubt.[67] However, although his activities and publications in the educational sphere reveal Canisius to be a skilful pedagogue, they show how far he was prepared to go in the defence of his faith. He avoided taking unpopular actions, such as endorsing the Index when it was practically and politically inexpedient; he minimized polemic in his German-language catechisms; and his teaching was conditioned by his daily interactions with ordinary Germans living on the brink of heresy. Recognizing the limits of a universal approach to education, Canisius explained to Cardinal Morone in 1576 that 'it is not easy for any to understand the poor state and needs of Germany, except those

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65 Daniela Hacke, 'Confessional Cultures and Sacred Space: Towards a History of Political Communication in Early Modern Switzerland', in Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo and Joan Pau Rubiés, eds, *Exploring Cultural History: Essays in Honour of Peter Burke* (Farnham, 2010), 169–90, at 174; Amy Nelson Burnett and Emidio Camp, eds, *A Companion to the Swiss Reformation* (Leiden, 2016).

66 'Reducendi ab haereseos erroribus in viam': *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 8: 881.

67 'Dass ich innerhalb der Grenzen eines rechtgläubigen Lehrers geblieben bin': Canisius, *Testament*, 82.

who see it with their eyes and learn from long experience'.[68] This experience led Canisius to develop a version of Catholic education that was suited to the needs of Germans.

The concept of identity and meaning is central to an understanding of the actions and events in early modern Germany and wider Europe. What did it mean to be a Catholic in Augsburg, or a Catholic in Straubing? Studies have demonstrated that identity and meaning varied across Germany, but how was this variety provided for in educational material intended for a wide readership?[69] Focusing on education as a way to bridge the gap between orthodoxy and the reality of confessional pressures might be a rational way to address these questions. Rather than beginning with the hypothesis that education facilitated confessional division, it may enhance our understanding of early-modern German education to see it instead as part of a broader process of accommodation or, for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, negotiated decision-making based on a pragmatic handling of religious pluralism.[70]

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[68] 'Non facile quiuis assequi uel compraehendere potest Germaniae miserum statum et necessitates, nisi qui eas suis oculis uidet et longa experientia didicit': *Beati Petri Canisii*, ed. Braunsberger, 7: 362.

[69] Simone Laqua-O'Donnell, 'Catholic Piety and Community', in Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen and Mary Laven, eds, *Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation* (Farnham, 2013), 281–97, at 286.

[70] Robert James Bast, *Honor your Fathers: Catechisms and the Emergence of a Patriarchal Ideology in Germany, 1400–1600* (Leiden, 1997), 231; Wandel, *Reading Catechisms*; Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*: *Religious Conflict and the Practice of Tolerance in Early Modern Europe* (Harvard, MA, 2010).