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Semantics and Ideology During the Renaissance: Confessional Translations of the Greek Word ἐπίσκοπος

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ABSTRACT
During the sixteenth century the disputes between Catholics and Protestants became the battleground to determine and shape authentic Christianity and the Church. Humanism played a key role in this process conditioned by cultural and theological diversity, justifying doctrinal positions and legitimizing the existence of respective institutions with an appeal to history. Translations from church historical sources illustrate how they often derived from theological preconceptions. Starting with the 'episcopacy issue' opened initially by Luther and Calvin inter al., this article analyzes the translations of the Greek word *episkopos* in the *Magdeburg Centuries*, Cesare Baronio's *Ecclesiastical Annals*, in contemporary vernacular versions of Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, in J. C. Dietrich's *Lexicon* and in some English Bibles. The material gathered and also compared with the position of the Council of Trent shows how these confessionally conditioned translations impacted on the scholarly world, and how they influenced church law with religio-political consequences, thereby having a striking significance.

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.[1] The history of the Church (or *historia divina*)[2] 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.[3] 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

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[1] See Backus, "The Fathers and the Reformation," 428–41; Bauer, "La transizione storiografica," 133; cf. Krumenacker, "La généalogie imaginaire," 263–4; Backus, *Historical Method and Confessional Identity* – here it is demonstrated that a powerful historiographical orientation in the theological reflections of the Renaissance and Reformation assisted the affirmation confessional identity.

[2] Possevino, *Bibliotheca selecta*, 148. Historical analysis in the Reformation era focused on the Early Church; see Jedin, *Riforma e Controriforma*, 661–71.

[3] On the impact of Humanism on ecclesiastical history, see Grafton, "Church History in Early Modern Europe," 3–26 – this distinguishes between 'lay' and 'religious' antiquarian research: the former sought through different disciplines an little-known past, whereas the latter wanted to prove prior beliefs (p. 5); cf. Dost, *Renaissance Humanism in Support of the Gospel*.

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.

Emergence of Dissensus on Episcopacy

One particular case with repercussions throughout the decades was the issue of episcopacy, which revolved around election and the role of the bishops in ecclesiastical hierarchies.[4] Largely speaking, many Protestants wanted to abolish the office, while Catholics tried to reinforce its authority.[5] 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.[6] 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 and intending to downgrade their status and even abolish them in light of Scripture; from this it can be believed that all Christians can be priests in view of the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers.[7]

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 included a long excursus on the nature of ecclesiastical order.[8] The elimination of the traditional offices of the church hierarchy also followed from 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:[9] he stated that all the words (bishop, priest, presbyter, pastor) identifying the different ecclesiastical offices in the Holy Writ were confusing and ambiguous, intending that they were indifferently 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 (d. *c*.100) as a witness to the apostolic and papal ordination of bishops. The Clementine Constitutions represented, it was held, an ancient text on how the bishop's mandate was included in the evangelical mission governed by the

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[4] 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 and Prodi, *Il Concilio di Trento*, 65–75; for discussions of the episcopacy topic in this era see, for example, Barrie-Curien and Vernard, "La vita dei cristiani. Il clero," 803–34, and Prosperi, "La figura del vescovo," 219–63. For early-modern Catholic writings on the ideal bishop, see Jedin, *Il tipo ideale di vescovo*, and Broutin, *L'évêque dans la tradition pastorale*.

[5] One has to keep in mind exceptional cases like the Reformed Church of England, which retained episcopalian polity.

[6] Luther, *De captivitate babylonica*: "De ordine," 74–82.

[7] 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. Ibid., 78.

[8] Calvin, *Institutio*, VIII, 168–9; XIX, 467–72.

[9] Ibid., VIII, 170. Erasmus also saw the word 'bishop' in antiquity as problematical; he reckoned that in Paul's letters the word could also refer to 'deacon' – 'olim episcopi diaconi vocabantur.' See Erasmus, *In Nouum Testamentum annotationes*, 552.

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.[10] The first Latin version, titled *De constitutionibus apostolicis*, was issued in the same year, by Giovanni C. Bovio (1522–1570), bishop of Ostuni. The words of Clement I, a witness of episcopal elections *(in vita nostra)*, seemed to confirm the existence of episcopacy since the origins of Christianity.[11]

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 – as was argued.

The Magdeburg Centuriators and Baronius

In direct opposition to the contents of the *Constitutiones* were some passages of the *Ecclesiastica historia*, also known as *The Magdeburg Centuries* (1559–1574), written by a pool of Protestant historians led by the Croatian theologian, Matija Vlačić [Matthias Flaccius] (1520–1575).[12] In the section 'De propagatione', on the origin and diffusion of the primitive Church, the authors stated that the spread of the divine Word came about through the Apostles and also through some unspecified subordinate figures, omitting reference to the official investiture of bishops.[13] The general vagueness of these words was explained by the Centuriators as due to the general scarcity of primary sources for the period. As a result of this documentary deficit and vacuum,[14] 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 (c. 260-340). Eusebius referred to a passage in Clement of Alexandria (c.145–220), in which the Apostle John with others appointed 'ministers' – *et ministros constituerent*.[15] The word *ministros* was a translation of the Greek ἐπισκόπους;[16] it recalls the synonymic dictology, *sacerdotibus ac ministris*, found in the ancient Latin translation of Eusebius's work done by the monk, Rufinus of Aquileia (c.345–410) published in the *Autores historiae ecclesiasticae* edited by Beatus Rhenanus and others: *sacerdotibus ac ministris instrueret*.[17]

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[10] Clement of Rome, *Diatagai ton agion Apostolon*; this understanding of these texts occurred previously in a letter of 27 November 1557 from the Spanish bishop, Antonio Agustín, in the attempt to help the Augustinian church historian, Onofrio Panvinio, prepare his papal chronotaxes: Panvinio, *Epitome Pontificum*, and *Romani Pontificum et Cardinales*; these provide a list of sources useful in the study of ecclesiastical chronology, such as Clement of Rome's *Constitutiones apostolicae*. See letter in Carbonell Manils, *Epigrafia*, 195–200: 'Quanto alli Patriarchi mostrerò a M. Agnolo vostra lettera, ed esso vi risponderà: lo 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.' On 6 April 1559 Agustìn underlined once again this passage, see ibid., 373–5: "Dalle costituzioni apostoliche di Clemente si desumono le ordinazioni vescovili fatte dagli apostoli."

[11] Clement of Rome, *De constitutionibus apostolicis*, VII 46, 110 a–b.

[12] For the method employed by the Centuriators in their *Historia ecclesiastica*, see Norelli, "The Authority Attributed to the Early Church," 745–74.

[13] 'alij nonnulli sed inferiori gradu,' [*Magdeburg Centuries*]: *Ecclesiastica historia*, cent. I, lib. II., chap. 2, col. 2.

[14] 'tam pauca de ea re ad nostram usque memoriam pervenerunt,' ibid., cent. II., chap. 2, cols 6–9.

[15] Ibid., col. 7.

[16] Eusebius, *Chronicon*, III, 23, in Eusèbe de Césarée, *Histoire Ecclésiastique*; Clement of Alexandria, *Quis dives salvetur*, 42.2.

[17] Rufinus, *Autores historiae ecclesiasticae*, 81.

Radically different is the version of the same passage of Eusebius presented in the *Annales ecclesiastici* (1583–1607) of Cardinal Cesare Baronio (1538–1607), in which ἐπισκόπους was transliterated with the Latin *episcopos*: *hic episcopos constiturus*.[18] The contrast in translation between 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 passage was translated in the Latin of the *Magdeburg Centuries* in the same way 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 indeed in Baronio, but with a substantially opposite intent: *et ordinasse episcopos*.[19] The Centuriators in this case 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 ordinations 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.

Such 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*, *minister*), close to the Reformed notion of ministerial parity. Among the many examples that can be found in this work,[20] 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: *Nam episcopi et presbyteri pro issdem accipiuntur*.[21] 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.

Semantic variability in other translations

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:[22]

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[18] Baronio, *Annales*, I, 751 (*anno* 97, XIV).
[19] [*Magdeburg Centuries*]: *Ecclesiastica historia*, cent. I, lib. II., chap. 7, cols 528 et seq.
[20] Ibid., chap. 4, cols 400–13: "De ministerio Evangelico docendi et administrandi sacramenta."
[21] Ibid., chap. 7, col. 508.18; see also chap. 4, col. 403.7.
[22] Eusebius, *L'Histoire ecclésiastique*; Eusebius, *Historia de la Iglesia*; Eusebius, *L'Historia ecclesiastica*.

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

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.[23] His Latin stated: *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 [Grynaeus] (1540–1617). This version had: *ut partim constitueret episcopos*.[24] 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 (1553–1558) 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 Grynaeus's later works, *De episcopo Christiano* of 1586.[25] 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 terminology was affirmed.[26] The authority of the role was led back to an original unity; and if someone would have denied it, it was due to ignorance.[27] 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',

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[23] Christopherson's Eusebius translation, *Historiae ecclesiasticae*, is mentioned by Vessey, *English Translations*, 809.

[24] Eusebius, *Historiae ecclesiasticae*, 45; Eusebius, *Ecclesiastica historia*, 37.

[25] Gryner, *De episcopo Christiano*, I–II.

[26] 'est autem episcopus, seu pastor, seu presbyter … gradibus eminentiae eiusmodi Presbyteros, Pastores et Episcopos, neutiquam differre,' ibid., IV.

[27] 'sed parem esse eorum omnium auctoritatem … ac inscitiam esse, si quis Pastori Episcopum anteponat,' ibid., V.

there was noted: 'whether he be pastor or elder.'[28] 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, equalizing 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 Grynaeus.

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.[29] The popular circulation of the Geneva Bible could be seen as undermining the worship and government of the English Church by 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 Authorized 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*).[30] 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.[31]

The lexicon of J. C. Dietrich

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.[32] Dietrich approached the issue from a philological point of view, just like the Centuriators and Grynaeus. 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 (*appellationis tantum sono differentes*).

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

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[28] *The Bible and Holy Scriptures*.
[29] See, for example, Biasori, "Il luteranesimo, il calvinismo e il contesto inglese," 227–31.
[30] *The Holy Bible*.
[31] See the dictionaries of the period. Therein are some broad references to reconstruct the case history, e.g. De Nebrija, *Vocabulario español-latino*; Aleandro, *Lexicon graecolatinum*; Curio, *Dictionarium Graecum*; *Lexicon Graecolatinum*; Estienne, *Dictionarium*; Placus, *Lexicon biblicum*; Gessner, *Lexicon Graecolatinum*; Toussain, *Lexicon Graecolatinum*; Knaap, *Dictionarium Triglotton*; Jimenez Arias, *Lexicon ecclesiasticum*; Estienne, *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*; Altenstaig, *Lexicon theologicum*; Balthasar, *Lexicon latinograecum*; Arnd, *Lexicon antiquitatum ecclesiasticarum*; Dietrich, *Novi Testamenti illustramentum*.
[32] Dietrich, *Novi Testamenti illustramentum*.

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 (*Honoratius tum nomen Episcopi haberi coepit, postquam in maiore quam Presbyter honori gradu collocatus fuit*).

The sanction of tradition for the term *episcopus* is identified by Dietrich at precise historical moment, when Jerome (*c*.347–420) chose to accept without restriction all that had evolved in the customs and usages of the Church up to his time (*nihil movendum aut mutandum censuit de recepto tum in Ecclesia more*). 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.[33]

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 tract – later republished frequently – on the lives of the Roman popes by Bartolomeo Platina (1421–1481),[34] Renaissance humanist, Vatican librarian and gastronomist. 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 (*ac presbyteros sex, diaconos duos, episcopos per diversa loca numero quinque creavit*).[35] 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 (*Romanos episcopos huius aetatis plures ad diversa loca episcopos ordinasse*). But what is most impressive in this passage is how the Protestant historians accepted Platina's statement as an authoritative, despite the absence of sources[36] providing evidence. It was uncritically received only by virtue of the acknowledged reputation and reliability of the author (*verum cum loci non exprimantur, fides penes scriptorem esto*).[37]

The Council of Trent

The entire philological discussion has to be considered in relation to its potential theological and ecclesial objectives. Indeed, during the Council of Trent, episcopacy was broadly discussed.[38] An extremely sensitive issue, it caused unexpected jitters among the prelates, destabilizing the united front of council participants. 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*

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[33] See Acciarino, "Ecclesiastical chronotaxes," forthcoming.
[34] *[Magdeburg Centuries]: Ecclesiastica Historia*, Cent. II, chap. 2, col. 7.
[35] Platina, *B. Platinae Historia*, 13 b.
[36] For the controversial personal relationships of Platina with the papacy, see Bauer, *The Censorship and Fortuna*, and Platina, *Platina. On Right Pleasure and Good Health*.
[37] Cozzi, *Storici del Medioevo nell'età moderna*, I, 7.
[38] Alberigo, *Lo sviluppo della dottrina*, 11–99.

pontificio)[39] had potentially enormous repercussions – especially on the aspiration to autonomy from papal authority among various national churches that gathered at the Council – each with the intent of advancing their own interests.

These discussions took place between 1 October 1562 and 10 November 1563 when the specific canons were approved.[40] In 'De ecclesiastica hierarchia et ordinatione', the hierarchical ranking was reaffirmed within the Church, structured by the threefold distinction of bishops, priests and deacons. The Council declared the superiority of the *episcopus* over the *presbyter* [priest], restating the direct succession from the Apostles (*episcopos, qui in Apostolorum locum successerunt … eosque presbyteris superiores esse*) and eliminating any semantic ambiguity. The power of bishops derived from the Holy Spirit and which consolidated the hierarchy (*ad hunc hierarchicum ordinem praecipue pertinere*). The fact that only bishops could ordain other Church ministers (*ministros Ecclesiae ordinare*) 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*.[41]

Conclusion

From these 'confessional translations', it emerges that the shifting semantics of the word ἐπίσκοπος with all its potential variations was tied to the theological propensities of each interpreter and institution.[42] 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.

Notes on contributor

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[39] The issue was also obviously considered relevant in a Protestant context, as by Dietrich in his dictionary on the word *episcopus*.

[40] *Enchiridion symbolorum*, 732–5.

[41] Ibid., 732.

[42] A modern study dealing with this linguistic issue is by Penna, *Le prime comunità cristiane*, 134–6; there, the original semantics of the Greek word ἐπισκόπος in Paul's epistles is discussed. It does emerge that in early Christianity it was anachronistic to translate *episcopus* as 'bishop'.

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