

## Sources for the Study of Vatican II

### **Abstract:**

*This chapter surveys the principal sources for a critical study of the event and teachings of the Second Vatican Council, taking into account the variety and scope of materials available to students and scholars today. It introduces readers to the best English language editions of the sixteen council documents, critical commentaries, and the complex task of navigating the official “acts” of the council. Next, it points to other significant sources in the form of archival and published materials generated by conciliar commissions, bishops, theologians, ecumenical observers, and auditors. Finally, it directs the reader to significant historical studies and bibliographical resources.*

### **Keywords:**

Second Vatican Council; Vatican II; History of Catholicism; Vatican II Archives; Documents of Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council stands as one of the most extensively documented conciliar events in the history of the church. In addition, the council texts themselves are more extensive than any other body of conciliar teaching in the history of Christianity. These facts, to say nothing of the vast reservoir of secondary and tertiary sources, can make the prospect of critical research on any aspect of Vatican II a daunting one.

This chapter provides the reader with an initiation into the sources for a critical study of the Second Vatican Council. First, it considers the documentary sources of the council’s teaching. A

brief presentation of the various editions of the sixteen conciliar documents is followed by a consideration of available commentaries that merit consultation for a sound interpretation. Next, an introduction to the complex apparatus of the official “Acts” of the council and to the various synopses available for scholarly research urges researchers to go behind the documents to the council debate, properly speaking. The second section explores the variety of sources left behind by participants of the council: bishops, theologians, auditors, and observers. These provide a unique and unprecedented window into daily events and encounters both within and outside of official meetings. The third section considers the available sources for a general history of the council including chronicles of the conciliar period and later histories, works that explain the role and function of the various conciliar commissions and meetings in the conciliar process, and finally works that introduce council participants. The final section provides a brief overview of bibliographical instruments intended to support the historical and textual study of the conciliar event and its teaching. In this short space it is only possible to provide a thumbnail sketch of the vast array of sources at hand. While this survey is not intended to be exhaustive, it suggests a number of representative works.

## **Documentation**

### **The Sixteen Conciliar Documents**

English-speaking students of the Second Vatican Council are likely familiar with two major translations of the sixteen council documents, both of which were prepared in the wake of the council. Latin was the official language of discourse of the council fathers in the four sessions which met each fall in Rome from 1962 to 1965. It was the language of the preliminary

drafts or *schemata* and of the official version of the final council documents—four constitutions, nine decrees, and three declarations. The first English language translation was prepared under the editorship of Walter Abbott (*The Documents of Vatican II* [New York: America Press / London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966]), and included brief introductions to each of the documents by Catholic authors with responses by Protestant and Orthodox scholars. This translation relied on the earliest versions of the council documents that appeared in the *Acta Apostolica Sedis* and the publication of the Vatican news service, *L'Osservatore Romano*.

A second English translation was prepared a decade later, this one based on the official Latin collection of council documents which by then was published by the General Secretariat of the council in *Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum II: Constitutiones. Decreta, Declarationes* (*Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Postconciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery [New York: Costello Publications / Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1975]). The Flannery edition was revised and updated in 1992 and incorporated gender-inclusive language. Translators of this edition were able to consult other existing editions including the Abbott edition and those appearing in French and Italian.

A critical edition with a new translation of the documents of Vatican II appeared in 1990 in the two-volume *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press / London: Sheed & Ward, 1990). The English version of this compendium, originally compiled under the direction of Giuseppe Alberigo, was edited by the British Jesuit Norman P. Tanner.<sup>1</sup> It has the merit of providing the reader with side by side versions of the Latin original and an excellent rendering in English, also employing gender-inclusive language.

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<sup>1</sup> G. Alberigo, *et al*, ed. *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 3rd ed. (Bologna: Istituto per le Scienze Religiose, 1973).

This edition also includes helpful indices of references to scriptural, patristic, and conciliar sources.

### **Commentaries on the Council Documents**

The earliest commentaries on the documents of Vatican II make for essential reading as they were written by many participants at the council, often with first-hand knowledge of the elaboration of the conciliar texts. Among the most significant is the five-volume *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (Burns and Oates / Herder and Herder, 1967–1969). This collection, which first appeared in German as a supplement to the *Lexikon für Kirche und Theologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1966–1968), provides a brief historiography and detailed commentary for each of the sixteen documents.

The postconciliar period also saw the publication of commentaries on individual council documents by theologians who had collaborated in their redaction. Among these, one might consider: Gérard Philips, *L'Église et son mystère au IIe concile du Vatican: Histoire, texte et commentaire*, 2 vols. (Desclée: 1967–1968); *L'Église dans le monde de ce temps: Constitution pastorale Gaudium et Spes*, 3 vols., Unam Sanctam 65, ed. Y. Congar, M. Peuchmaurd, P. Delhaye (Paris: Cerf, 1967); George A. Tavard, *De Divina Revelatione: The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation of Vatican Council II* (Glen Rock, NJ: Paulist Press, 1966); Gustav Thils, *Le décret sur l'œcuménisme: commentaire doctrinal* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1965); Pietro Pavan, *La dichiarazione conciliare Dignitatis Humanae a 20 anna della pubblicazione* (Cassale Monferrato: Piemme, 1986).

More recently, scholars have begun to produce new commentaries that take some account of the post-conciliar reception: *Herders theologische Kommentar zum Zweiten Vatikanischen*

*Konzil*, eds. P. Hünemann, J. Hilberath, G. Bausenhart (Freiburg: Herder, 2009); *Commentario ai documenti del Vaticano II*, 6 vols., eds. S. Noceti and R. Repole (Bologna: EDB, 2014–2018); and the *Rediscovering Vatican II* series published by Paulist Press, 2005–2009.

### **Navigating the *Acta Synodalia***

Anyone interested in the critical study of the development of the council’s teaching will benefit greatly from putting to use those skills acquired in their study of ecclesiastical Latin and consulting the official council proceedings, or the *Acta Synodalia*. Somewhat like the Congressional Record—the official record of the proceedings of the US Congress, or the Acts of Parliament in other democratic systems of government—the *Acta Synodalia* are the official record of the proceedings of the council, a legislative event by the most important governing body in the church. It includes procedural rules, the names of those in attendance, the composition of commissions, the various drafts of conciliar documents, speeches, written remarks, reports, and records of voting. Published over the span of three decades from 1960 to 1991 and filling over fifty volumes, this mass of material is sometimes poorly indexed and can be a challenge to navigate.<sup>2</sup>

The *Acta* are organized into three series. Each series is divided into several volumes, and each volume has several parts which fill separate folios or bound volumes of material. The first series, *Acta et documenta Concilio Vaticano II apparando. Series I: Antepreparatoria*, is a compilation of materials from the ante-preparatory period from May 1959 to June 1960. It includes the *vota* (hopes, expectations, and suggested items for the conciliar agenda) of bishops from each continent, from faculties of theology and seminaries, and from the offices of the

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<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed presentation, consult G. Lefevre, “Les actes du concile Vatican II, I et II,” *Revue théologique de Louvain* 11, nos. 2-3 (1980): 186-200; 325-351.

Roman Curia. These were submitted in response to a consultation on the conciliar agenda initiated by Pope John XXIII and intended to orient the work of the various preparatory commissions.

The second series, *Acta et documenta Concilio Vaticano II apparando, Series II: Praeparatoria*, covers the official preparatory phase of the council from June of 1960 to September 1962, and is organized into three volumes. The first contains the official acts of Pope John XXIII in this period; the second, the mandates of the ten preparatory commissions—each of which corresponded roughly to existing congregations of the Roman Curia and to two new secretariats—one for Social Communications, the other for the Promotion of Christian Unity; finally, a third volume comprising the proceedings of the Central Commission established to ensure the smooth conduct of the conciliar process under the guidance of the council’s Secretary General, Archbishop Pericle Felici.

The third and most comprehensive series, the *Acta synodalia sacrosancti concilii oecumenici Vaticani II*, covers the council proceedings properly speaking from October 11 of 1962 to December 8 of 1965. Materials in these volumes are presented in chronological order, somewhat like a series of minutes for the council meetings of each day, known as “General Congregations.” The council met in 168 General Congregations over four years. The proceedings for each year are found in separate volumes, one for each “session” which ranged over the months from September to December of 1962 to 1965: Vol. I: First Session, 1962, 4 parts (AS I/I-IV); Vol. II: Second Session, 1963, 6 parts (AS II/I-VI); Vol. III: Third Session, 1964, 8 parts (AS III/I-VIII); Vol. IV: Fourth Session, 1965, 7 parts (AS IV/I-VII).

These four volumes of the *Acta Synodalia* fill twenty-five folios and contain different forms of documentation. Most common among them are the *orationes*—the text of the oral

interventions or speeches made by the council fathers in favour of a given argument or perspective in their own name, and often on behalf of a group of conciliar bishops. Another significant form of intervention were the *relationes* (*relatio* in the singular) or reports of the conciliar commissions. Presented by bishops designated as *relators* (reporters) by the various conciliar commissions, these reports present the draft documents for debate or deliberation and provide the rationale for the general orientation of each document. Other reports explain the reason for the various revisions made in response to the requests for modifications (*modi*) made by the bishops. Detailed lists of the amendments (*emendationes*) made in response to the written remarks (*animadversiones*) and requests for revision submitted by the council fathers are found in Volumes I and II. Each speech and written request for amendment is attributed to the bishop concerned and given a protocol number. The volume of indices for this series contains a list of the General Congregations and their corresponding dates, a useful bit of information to have at hand.

The three series of *Acta* are generally abbreviated as *ADA*, *ADP*, and *AS* respectively. References to the *Acta Synodalia* include the volume number – a reference to one of the four council sessions – and the “part” or bound folio. By way of example: *AS* I/III refers to the first session (*periodus prima*), part III (*pars* III), and contains material from General Congregations XIX–XXX (14–30 November 1962). The *Acta* are now available in a searchable digital format at [archive.org](http://archive.org).

A valuable instrument for exploring the development of the council documents is found in a series of synopses prepared by Francisco Gil Hellin. These place the various draft schemas side by side. A useful set of notations refers the reader to the speeches and written remarks made by the conciliar bishops which inspired the various revisions of each draft. The full text of these

interventions is compiled in the same volume with the protocol numbers that appear in the official *Acta*. Six volumes have appeared to date, including: *Synopsis. Constitutio Dogmatica de Divina Revelatione "Dei Verbum"* (1993); *Synopsis. Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia "Lumen Gentium"* (1995); *Synopsis. Decretum de Presbyterorum Ministerio et Vita "Prebyterorum Ordinis."* (1996); *Synopsis. Constitutio Pastoralis "Gaudium et Spes"* (2003); *Synopsis. Constitutio de Sacra Liturgia "Sacrosanctam Concilium"* (2005); and *Synopsis. Decretum de Oecumenismo "Unitatis Redintegratio"* (2006) (all published by Libreria editrice vaticani, Citta de Vaticano). These synopses have the advantage of enabling the reader to find all pertinent documentation in a single volume, rather than having to consult multiple volumes of the *Acta*.

### **Archival Sources and Inventories**

A still under-utilized source of primary data is the archival material held in the official Archives of Vatican II located in the Vatican Secret Archives in Rome. In 1966 to 1967 the documentation of the various Conciliar Commissions and Secretariats, with the exception of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity, were gathered together into a single archive in the Vatican. Since then the long process of cataloguing these materials has resulted in an inventory of seventeen volumes. While the work of cataloguing continues, the archive is now open to scholars and researchers. Piero Doria, chief archivist of this special collection, has helpfully described in detail the development of the Archives of Vatican II and their significance.<sup>3</sup>

### **Eye-Witness Accounts of the Conciliar Event**

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<sup>3</sup> Piero Doria, "L'Archivio del Concilio Vaticano II: Storia e Sviluppo [The Archives of Vatican II: History and Development]," *Annuario de Historia de la Iglesia* 21 (2012): 135-155.

Around the world the conciliar papers, notes, and diaries of individual bishops and theologians await the attention of knowledgeable investigators in research centres, diocesan, and personal archives. Massimo Faggioli and Giovanni Turbanti have helpfully taken stock of many existing archives in *Il concilio inedito: Fonti del Vaticano II* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001). In the case of the more significant collections, scholars may consult published inventories containing catalogues and brief descriptions of available archival materials. By way of example, complete inventories can be found in *Carnets conciliaires de Mgr Gérard Philips, secrétaire adjoint de la commission doctrinale*, eds. L. Declerck and Cl. Soetens (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), and P. Fontaine, *Inventaire des archives conciliaires du Fonds Paul-Émile Léger* (Outremont: Editions des Partenaires, 1995). Both of these figures played important roles in the leadership of the council. With the passing of the generation of eye-witnesses to Vatican II, more archival materials have become available. The work of cataloguing these materials and the preparation of new inventories is proceeding apace.

A full telling of the story of Vatican II is enriched by the personal accounts of the protagonists. Alberto Melloni has written on the significance of personal journals as a source for scholarly research on Vatican II and provides a helpful typology of personal journals, diaries, and memoirs.<sup>4</sup> While personal notes and journals are admittedly subjective, they nonetheless provide important insights into the complexity and the humanity of the conciliar process. Their accounts of meetings, conversations, and encounters in the wings of the conciliar assembly can help to clarify the chronology of events, shed light on the dynamics of personal interactions, and illuminate the clash and convergence of theological and pastoral concerns. Today we have access

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<sup>4</sup> Alberto Melloni, "Introduction: Private Journals in the History of Vatican II," in Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Vatican II Notebook*, trans. Paul Philibert (Adelaide: ATF Theology, 2015), 1-56.

to the personal journals of many council fathers, of theologians who served as expert advisors to the various commissions and to individual bishops, or of lay and religious auditors. Ecumenical observers kept personal diaries and produced official reports following each session for their delegating church bodies.

### **Council Fathers**

While a good number of council fathers have left behind important personal journals and notes, many remain in archival form and have yet to be published. Some have been inventoried. Recent publications include the memoirs of Cardinal Léon-Joseph Suenens, Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussels, *Mémoires sur le Concile Vatican II*, ed. Werner van Laer (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), and the council daybook and notes of Cardinal Julius Döpfner, Archbishop of Munich, *Konzilstagebücher, Briefe und Notizen zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*, Schriften des Archives des Erzbistums München und Freising, Band 9 (Schnell und Regensburg: Steiner, 2006). Both men served on the Central Preparatory Commission, the Coordinating Committee of the Council, the Secretariat for Extraordinary Affairs, and were two of the four Moderators appointed by Pope Paul VI in 1963 to guide the council proceedings.

Archival notes and personal diaries form the basis of a number of publications that provide insight into the role of other important protagonists including: Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, Secretary of the Holy Office and President of the council's Doctrinal Commission (E. Cavaterra, *Il prefetto del Sant'Ufficio*. [Milano, Mursia, 1990]); Cardinal Augustin Bea, President of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity (S. Schmidt, *Augustin Bea: The Cardinal of Unity* [New Rochelle, NY: New City, 1992]); and Cardinal Giuseppe Siri, a vocal

member of the conciliar minority (B. Lai, *Il papa non eletto: Giuseppe Siri, cardinale di Santa Romana Chiesa* [Roma e Bari: Laterza, 1993]).

### **Conciliar Theologians**

A valuable resource for the background of the theological debates at the council are the journals and diaries of the *periti*, consultants to the conciliar commissions and to individual bishops. Many had a hand in drafting portions of the council documents or in crafting the texts of the oral and written interventions of the bishops. Perhaps the most detailed daily account of the inner workings of the council is to be found in Yves Congar's *My Journal of the Council*, (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012) (original version: *Mon journal du concile* [Paris: Cerf, 2002]). A remarkable document of over 900 pages, his penetrating insights shine a light on the true character of the men around him and on the crushing workload borne by the commission members in formal meetings, informal lectures, and working groups.

One finds a more sober and sparing outline of the business of the council chronicled in Latin in the daybooks of Sebastian Tromp, Secretary of the Doctrinal Commission (*Konzilstagebuch Sebastian Tromp mit Erläuterungen und Akten aus der Arbeit der Theologischen Kommission. II Vatikanisches Konzil*, ed. A. von Teuffenbach, 3 vols. [Pontificia Universita Gregoriana / Bautz Velag, 2006, 2011, 2014]). The perspectives of Henri de Lubac fill two substantial volumes (*Vatican Council Notebooks*, 2 vols. [San Francisco: Ignatius, 2015]; original version: *Carnets du Concile*, 2 vols. [Paris: Cerf, 2007]), while the brief notes of Marie-Dominique Chenu cover only the first two conciliar sessions (*Vatican II Notebook* [Adelaide: ATF Theology, 2015]; original version: *Notes quotidiennes au Concile* [Paris: Cerf, 1995]).

## Ecumenical Observers

Over the span of four years no less than 174 official non-Catholic observers and guests took part in the conciliar assembly. Their numbers expanded with each successive session of the council, from fifty-four in the first session to 116 in the fourth. While not permitted to vote nor to speak *in aula*, they followed each General Congregation closely with the help of simultaneous translation. On Tuesday afternoons they attended meetings organized by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity where bishops and theologians explained the significance of the draft texts under discussion. These meetings developed into a forum for frank exchanges with the observers, whose concerns were often relayed to the council floor by sympathetic bishops and members of the Secretariat. Many observers published personal accounts and relayed reports back to their churches and world-wide confessional families. Mauro Velati has drawn from many available archival sources to provide a balanced account of the significant contribution of the observers throughout the council.<sup>5</sup>

Among the more comprehensive accounts by the ecumenical observers, one might consider the reports provided to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and published in *The Ecumenical Review* (1962–1966) by Lukas Vischer, a Swiss Reformed theologian and Director of the Faith and Order Commission, and by the Greek Orthodox theologian and director of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, Nikos Nissiotis. A significant delegation from the Anglican Communion was supported by the establishment of a new Anglican Centre in Rome. Their work is reflected in a volume, *Observing Vatican II: The Confidential Reports of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative, Bernard Pawley, 1961-1964* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Others penned more personal

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<sup>5</sup> Mauro Velati, *Separati ma Fratelli: Gli osservatori non cattolici al Vaticano II (1962-1965)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2014).

accounts, including Edmund Schlink, representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany, *Nach dem Konzil* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1966); Hébert Roux, representative of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, in *Foi et Vie* (1963–1965); and the American Albert Outler, representing the World Methodist Council, *Methodist Observer at Vatican II* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1967), to name but a few.

### **Lay Auditors**

The laity were represented from the second session of the council in 1963 by thirteen male auditors chosen for their experience in the leadership of international Catholic organizations, many of them connected to the Standing Committee of International Congresses for the Lay Apostolate (COPECIAL) and the Conference of International Catholic Organizations. Twenty-nine men in all would participate in this or in subsequent sessions. Beginning with the third session they were joined by ten religious and thirteen lay women, also selected for their role in international organizations for the laity, the family, and for women religious. They contributed both directly and indirectly to commissions responsible for the drafting of the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, and of schema XIII, the basis of the council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*. On six occasions laymen addressed the council fathers on matters pertaining to ecumenism, poverty, and the apostolate of the laity. First to address the council fathers were the

French philosopher, Jean Guitton<sup>6</sup> and the Italian President of COPECIAL, Vittorino Veronese, who spoke on December 3, 1963.<sup>7</sup>

Although they worked closely with their male counterparts, women auditors were not permitted to address the council. The full story of their participation and influence has yet to be told. The Australian Rosemary Goldie, a leading member of COPECIAL and one of the most active lay auditors, would be appointed as Undersecretary of the new Pontifical Council for the Laity in 1967.<sup>8</sup> Maria Pilar Bellosillo, president of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations and a leading proponent of Catholic Action in Spain, exercised considerable influence.<sup>9</sup> Carmen McEnroy produced a first survey on the participation of women at Vatican II in the mid-nineties, *Guests in their Own House: The Women of Vatican II* (New York: Crossroad, 1996). More critical studies have begun to emerge, including the collections found in "*Tantum Aurore Est.*" *Donne e Concilio Vaticano II*, eds. M. Perroni, A. Noceti, A. Melloni, (Berlin: Lit Verlag 2012) and *Katholikinnen und die Zweite Vatikanische Konzil: Petitionen, Briefe, Fotografien*, eds. Regina Heyder und Gisela Muschiol (Münster: Aschendorff, 2018).

## The Council in Context

### Chronicles

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<sup>6</sup> Jean Guitton, *Regard sur le concile* (Paris: Aubier, 1963); English translation: *Guitton at the Council: A Layman's Appraisal and Predictions* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1964).

<sup>7</sup> F. Malgeri, C. Casula. R. Franch *et al*, *Vittorino Veronese dal dopoguerra al Concilio: un laico nella Chiesa e nel mondo*. Atti del convegno di studi promosso dall'Istituto Internazionale J. Maritain, l'Istituto Luigi Sturzo e l'Istituto Paolo Vi di Roma. Roma, 7-8 maggio 1993 (Rome: AVE, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> Rosemary Goldie, "La participation des laïcs aux travaux du concile Vatican II," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 62, no. 1 (1988): 54-73.

<sup>9</sup> M. Salas Larrazabal and T. Rodriguez de Lecea, *Pilar Bellosillo: Nueva imagen de mujer en la Iglesia* (Madrid: Acción Católica Española, 2017).

The Second Vatican Council was a significant media event, capturing the world's attention at the very moment that satellite communications became possible and televisions had become affordable to middle-class families in the developed world. Religious and secular journals included regular chronicles, interviews, and journalistic accounts that traced the progress of conciliar debate. Among the most readable were the "Letters from Vatican City" that appeared in *New Yorker* magazine from the pen of the American Redemptorist, Francis Murphy (a.k.a. Xavier Rynne), now reprinted in *Vatican Council II* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), and R. M. Wiltgen's *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber* (New York: Hawthorne Books, 1967). Antoine Wenger, editor of the French Catholic journal *La Croix* was among the only journalists permitted inside the council hall. From this unique perspective he produced a detailed weekly chronicle of events: *Vatican II*, 4 vols. (Paris: Centurion, 1963–1966); English translation: *Vatican II* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1966). M. von Galli and B. Moosbrugger contributed a series of "Briefe aus Rom" to the German review *Orientierung* (1963–1966). A collection of significant council speeches and texts was made available to American readers in *Council Daybook—Vatican II: Session 1–4*, ed. Floyd Anderson (Washington, DC: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1965–1966). In every local context one is likely to find newspaper coverage and commentary from religious and secular sources. These provide insight into the expectations of church and society and the initial reception of the council.

### **Historical Studies**

A good place to begin the study of the council is with the reading of the highly accessible *What Happened at Vatican II* by the Jesuit historian, John W. O'Malley (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008). For a shorter introduction, one might consider Giuseppe Alberigo's *A*

*Brief History of Vatican II*, trans. Matthew Sherry (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2009). These well-researched volumes complement the perspectives reflected in the journalistic chronicles written for a wider audience from the conciliar period suggested above.

Access to the *Acta* of the council has made it possible to re-examine the conciliar event and its teaching from a more critical perspective. The first comprehensive study of both the council itself and the development of the sixteen documents to draw consistently from the *Acta* and from many of the eye-witness accounts described here is found in the five-volume *History of Vatican II*, developed by an international team of scholars under the direction of Guiseppe Alberigo, and appearing in several languages: English edition, eds. Guiseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak (Maryknoll, NY / Leuven: Peeters, 1996–2005). These provide a fuller picture of the council than the original detailed chronicle prepared in the immediate aftermath of the council by G. Caprile, *Il Concilio Vaticano II: cronache del Concilio Vaticano II*, 5 vols. (Roma: La Civiltà Cattolica, 1966–1966). New studies on various aspects of the individual conciliar documents have begun to appear in recent years that draw from these same historical sources.

Also of interest are critical studies of the contribution to the council by protagonists from different regions and works exploring the regional reception of the conciliar teaching. Worth consulting, given the extraordinary influence of the Belgian bishops and theologians, is *The Belgian Contribution to the Second Vatican Council*, ed. Doris Donnelly (Leuven: Peeters, 2008). Other contextual studies include: *Vatican II: Reception and Implementation in the Australian Church*, Niel Ormorod *et al*, eds. (Strathfield: St Paul's, 2012); and *Vatican II: Expériences canadiennes – Canadian Experiences*, G. Routhier, M. Attridge, C. Clifford, eds. (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2012). In many contexts, one is likely to find collected

papers in special issues of local reviews to mark significant anniversaries. By way of example, we mention Kathllen Coyle, ed., “40 Years of Vatican II and the Churches of Asia and the Pacific: Looking Back and Moving Forward,” *East Asian Pastoral Review* 41-42 (2005).

## **Other Research Instruments**

### **The Council at Work**

A number of resources provide insight into the actual functioning of the council. Among the most useful is *Vatican II: The Complete History* (New York: Paulist Press, 2015), produced under the direction of Alberto Melloni (Italian edition: *Atlante Storico del Concilio Vaticano II* [Milano: Jaca Book, 2015]). Its chapters helpfully introduce readers to the history of the council session by session and include useful timelines, tables, comprehensive lists of council participants, commission members, and descriptions of their respective roles.

A more critical study of the contributions of the various conciliar commissions can be found in *Les commissions conciliaires à Vatican II*, eds. M. Lamberigts, C. Soetens, J. Grootaers (Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Godgeleerdheid, 1996). In a similar vein, readers will find it useful to consult *Experience, Organizations and Bodies at Vatican II*, *Instrumenta Theologica* 21, ed. Maria Teresa Fattori (Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid, 1999).

Yet another practical resource is the *Personenlexikon zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*, eds. Michael Quisinsky and Peter Walter (Freiburg: Herder, 2013), which provides biographical information on several hundred council participants, indications of their roles on various conciliar commissions, and bibliographical data. To complete this picture, one might consult the numerous biographical works pertaining to council participants, many of which are referenced here. An introduction into the theological themes of the council, with greater attention to the

contributions to the council by Latin American and Spanish-speaking protagonists, is found in the *Diccionario Teológico del Concilio Vaticano II* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2015), prepared by Jose Ramon Saldana.

### **Bibliographical Surveys**

Keeping up with the volume of literature treating the Second Vatican Council is a challenge. This is especially true since the fiftieth anniversary of the council (2009–2015), which generated a renewed interest in conciliar studies. Philippe Roy-Lysencourt has produced a general bibliography in *Bibliographie du concile Vatican II*, Atti et Documenti 34 (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2012). While it makes no claim to be an exhaustive compilation, this volume can be a helpful starting point for anyone wishing to identify essential reading. Researchers will also find it informative to consult the occasional literature reviews published by Gilles Routhier, “Recherches et publications récentes autour de Vatican II,” in *Laval théologique et philosophique* (1997, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2013), or the bibliographical surveys of Massimo Faggioli appearing in both Italian and English in *Cristianesimo nella storia* (2003, 2005, 2008, 2016).

### **Conclusion**

From this brief survey it is clear that a wide array of tools exists to assist scholars and historians as they probe the history and theological developments of the Second Vatican Council. If the volume of documentation and the variety of existing publications is formidable, determined readers seeking to understand the events of the council will be rewarded by a broader and deeper understanding of the church in council—a drama in several acts, filled with

thousands of players on a stage as wide as the world itself. Attentive readers will discover how God has made use of the most human of instruments to speak the Gospel to a new age of human history and will witness how the church itself is formed in the processes of sustained prayer, study, encounter, and dialogue.

### For Further Reading

*Acta Et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando*. Vol. I-IV, 16 tomes, *Series I (Antepreparatoria)*. Citta del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960-1961.

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