CULTURE WARS

Secular–Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe

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The European culture wars

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Across Europe, the emergence of constitutional and democratic nation-states was accompanied by intense conflict between Catholics and anticlerical forces over the place of religion in a modern polity. There had always been intermittent institutional friction between church and state in central and western Europe, but the conflicts that came to a head in the second half of the nineteenth century were of a different kind. They involved processes of mass mobilisation and societal polarisation. They embraced virtually every sphere of social life: schools, universities, the press, marriage and gender relations, burial rites, associational culture, the control of public space, folk memory and the symbols of nationhood. In short, these conflicts were 'culture wars', in which the values and collective practices of modern life were at stake.

In Prussia, the largest member state of the German Empire, Otto von Bismarck's government launched a salvo of laws intended to neutralise Catholicism as a political force, triggering a 'struggle of cultures' (*Kulturkampf*) that shaped the contours of German politics and public life for more than a generation. In Italy, the annexation of the Papal States and the city of Rome, and the 'imprisonment' of the pope within the walls of the Vatican produced a stand-off between the church and the secular Kingdom of Italy, with far-reaching consequences for Italian political culture. In France, the elite of the Third Republic and the forces of clericalism waged bitter rhetorical battles, to the point where it seemed that secular and Catholic France had become two separate realities. In Belgium, a long period of growing friction between liberals and Catholic political interests culminated in the 'school war' of 1879–84, during which liberal and Catholic crowds clashed in the streets of Brussels, again with lasting repercussions for Belgian society and political culture. In the Netherlands, heated conflict over Catholic processions, which were legally forbidden, together with the pressurising impact of the *Kulturkampf* underway in neighbouring Germany, accelerated the articulation of Dutch society into discrete

socio-cultural milieux. In Switzerland, confessional and secular–Catholic tensions at local and cantonal level became intertwined with the most important issues in national politics. Political life in nineteenth-century Spain was marked by an extreme antipathy between Catholic and liberal-progressive interests that engendered a climate of mutual intolerance whose effects would be felt far into the twentieth century. In Austria and Hungary, Catholics and liberals clashed over civil marriage, schooling and Protestant burials in the aftermath of the new political settlement established by the Compromise of 1867. In England, concern over the growing confidence and strength of Roman Catholicism in Europe and Ireland goes a long way towards explaining the sharpness of the conflicts between Anglicans and nonconformists over issues of church, state and schooling, which were in any case Protestant variants of the Catholic–secular clashes occurring elsewhere in Europe.

At the national level, the chief protagonists in these struggles were liberal-dominated state institutions and anticlerical politicians and journalists, as well as the Vatican, the Catholic hierarchy, Catholic parties, and the Catholic press. However, they were also a socially deep phenomenon whose effects were felt not only in legislatures and parliamentary committees, but also in towns and villages. They involved not only political parties, ministerial factions, and senior clergymen, but also urban free-thinking clubs, local liberal committees, parish priests and lay parish councils, Catholic activists and the masses of the faithful. In some parts of Europe, the culture wars were intensified by confessional tensions between Catholics and Protestants; in other states, anticlericalism and secularism were powerful social forces in their own right.[1]

Historians have generally treated these conflicts in a purely national context. In part, this reflects the dominant concern of the European historiography of this era with the process of nation-state formation. It is

[1] For a stimulating interpretation of the nineteenth century as a 'second confessional age', see Olaf Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000), 38–75. From Blaschke's perspective, the German *Kulturkampf* appears as an episode in an epochal process of 'confessionalisation'. This is an illuminating perspective for countries of mixed confession such as Holland, Germany or Switzerland, where secular–clerical conflicts were overlayered by historical tensions between the confessions. It is less helpful in explaining secular–Catholic conflict in predominantly mono-confessional states such as Spain, France, Belgium, Austria and Italy, where the faultlines of conflict were primarily between Catholic ultramontanes and Catholic (or secular) liberals. Even in nations of mixed denomination, the confessionalisation paradigm captures one of the important motors of conflict, but does not take account of secularism and anticlericalism as autonomous social and political forces with their own deep historical roots. It is worth noting that Rudolf Virchow, who coined the term 'Kulturkampf' for general usage, was in fact an unbeliever and thus a Protestant only in a nominal sense.

also an inevitable consequence of the culture of national specialisations that still prevails in academic history. Germany's *Kulturkampf* figured as a specifically German eruption of forces unleashed by the Reformation, Napoleon's reordering of the German states, and the belated unification of the German Empire. Swiss historiography focused on the interaction between confessional and secular–clerical tensions on the one hand, and the evolution of Switzerland's peculiar federal system on the other. Italian historians emphasised the unique complex of problems thrown up by the Roman question. The conflict between the 'two Frances' was seen as part of that nation's distinctive revolutionary legacy, while it has often been assumed that Britain was insulated from the heat of continental confessional struggle by the supposedly temperate, consensual and pragmatic quality of its political culture. The literature on nineteenth-century confessional or secular–clerical conflict has also tended until recently to focus more or less exclusively on high politics. The emphasis has been on parliamentary debates, legislation, partisan conflict and the skirmishing of journalists.

These are, of course, perfectly valid perspectives on a phenomenon that was intimately tied up with questions of national identity and marked by sometimes spectacular public interventions by governments. Yet it has recently become increasingly clear that the Europe of the mid- and later nineteenth century should in some respects be seen as a common politico-cultural space. The mobilisation of European Catholics around a papalist agenda was a transnational phenomenon, as were the profound changes that transformed Catholic devotional cultures across the continent. The same can be said for that robustly secular political and literary culture that was common to so many liberal administrations in the second half of the nineteenth century. In this sense, it appears justified to speak of *European* culture wars; a pan-European phenomenon of this scope demands an all-European and comparative perspective, not least in order more precisely to ascertain the relative weight of the particular factors that determined the outbreak, course and consequences of the culture wars in the European states.

At the same time, recent historical research, while remaining alert to the national and high-political dimension of the conflicts, has begun to focus on regions and localities. The rediscovery of cultural history has stimulated interest in the symbolic representations that fed the culture wars: national and local commemorations and festivities, liberal or republican monuments, the deployment of resonant phrases and key words, the evolution, on both sides of the conflict, of a language of visual caricature, the demonstrative staging of religious festivities such as pilgrimages and processions.

The aim of this volume is to draw upon these recent research trends in order to facilitate a comparative analysis of the Catholic–secular culture wars as a European phenomenon. Two introductory essays by the editors discuss the two transnational antagonists: the revitalised Catholic church of the nineteenth century and the liberal and anticlerical networks of mid- to late nineteenth-century Europe. In the country-by-country studies that follow, an effort has been made to maintain sufficient consistency of approach to allow comparative and overarching themes to emerge. We have tried, as it were, when writing Italy (or Germany, or the Netherlands) to think Europe. The specificity of national experiences has of course necessitated variations in emphasis, but all contributions combine a general introduction to the origins and course of the culture wars in each national setting with analysis of a particular case study focusing either on an individual locality or on an individual issue in the conflict. Where the case study concerns local conflicts, the aim has been to link an understanding of how the issues were played out in specific political cultures with the virtues of a 'micro-history' that can offer, in Carlo Ginzburg's words, 'a graphic image of the networks of social relations into which the individual is inserted'.[2] Where the focus is on a specific policy issue, the aim has been to illuminate the conditions and mechanisms by which particular institutions (schools, for example) could become invested with a symbolic importance capable of mobilising powerful collective allegiances.

The country chapters that follow yield a number of general insights. They show, firstly, how interconnected the various culture wars were in the eyes of contemporary observers. The spectacle of the *Kulturkampf* in Bismarck's Germany exercised a powerful influence on political and cultural elites in the other European states, though frequently as a warning of what was to be avoided rather than as a model for emulation. Developments in Rome had an even more powerful effect, both on Catholics, who responded with indignation and vows of allegiance to the privations imposed upon the pope by the nascent Kingdom of Italy, and upon liberals and other anticlericals, who responded with outrage and paranoia to the increasingly robust doctrinal and political assertions emanating from Rome. As these chapters also show, the transnational resonance of such issues was heightened by the thickening of communicative networks – anticlerical and Catholic – that spanned the continent. The Catholic press nourished a sense of solidarity among Belgian, Austrian and Italian Catholics with

[2] C. Ginzburg and C. Poni, 'The Name and the Game: Unequal Exchange and the Historical Marketplace', in E. Muir and G. Ruggiere (eds.), *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe* (Baltimore, 1991), 6.

their beleaguered co-religionists in other countries, while the translation and reprinting of anticlerical books and articles created a European pantheon of secular celebrities and a stock of shared images and arguments. How these cross-border affinities interacted with commitments closer at hand depended, as the chapters show, upon the conditions obtaining in each case.

As all the single-country studies demonstrate, the course and ferocity of the culture wars both influenced and were determined by broader processes of political and social change. Of these, perhaps the most important was the expansion of political participation that occurred within the European states during the middle and later decades of the nineteenth century. In many of the countries studied in this book, the most intense phase of culture war followed a moment of historically significant constitutional innovation – the Compromise of 1867 in Austria and Hungary, for example, franchise reform in Belgium and Britain, the formation of new partly democratic national polities in Italy and Germany, or the establishment of the Third Republic in France. In an environment where franchises were opening up and parliaments were acquiring more power, institutions that had been locked into relatively fixed systems of representation – marriage and burial, schooling, dress, public space, even the sacral quality of royalty or of the state – were now up for grabs. One of the most disturbing and exhilarating aspects of democracies – especially emergent ones – is their competitive character. This is essential to understanding not only the intensity of the culture wars, but also the crucial role played in them by the print media and by those pseudo-plebiscitary mass performances – demonstrations, marches, processions – by which each side sought to show the other how successful it had been in gaining the allegiance of 'the people'.

The importance of newspaper journalism in fanning the flames of culture war is a theme that runs through many of the chapters. After all, as Margaret Lavinia Anderson has pointed out, the culture wars of nineteenth-century Europe were not literally wars.[3] Although there were certainly episodes of physical violence against people and property, these wars were primarily fought through the cultural media: the spoken and printed word, the image, the symbol. The 'mediated' quality of these conflicts is evident in many of the studies below. One of the most striking features of this era is the sometimes gaping discrepancy between the virtual reality of culture war rhetoric, in which we appear to be contemplating a struggle to the knife

[3] Margaret L. Anderson, 'Afterword: Living Apart and Together in Germany', in Helmut W. Smith, *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany, 1800–1914* (Oxford, 2001), 319–32; here 326.

between two diametrically opposed socio-cultural universes, and the lived reality of European societies, in which the shock of confrontation was muted at every level by a range of compromises and pragmatic fudges, even at the height of the 'hot culture wars' that raged across Europe from the 1860s to the 1880s. In the intermittent phases of rhetorical escalation that characterise this era, a key role fell to those 'snipers' on both sides of the divide whose intransigent appeals to prejudice and fear raised emotional temperatures in both camps.

In the dynamic and troubled environment of Europe's fledgling democracies, the era of liberal dominance proved short-lived. In the battle for mass support, the liberals were often outperformed by the Catholics, who proved much more skilful in mobilising those elements of the population – particularly in rural areas – whose presence in politics had previously scarcely been felt, and who feared they would gain little from the economic prescriptions and elitist politics of liberalism. But as a number of chapters in this volume make clear, the liberals were also under threat from secular political forces closer to home. As Europe's societies industrialised, the popular pressure behind left-progressive, and later socialist, programmes grew dramatically. In one sense, it could be said that the socialist parties, with their forthrightly secular outlook, merely inherited the culture warrior's mantle thrown aside by the declining liberal parties. On the other hand, most socialists had bigger fish to fry than the priests, and the presence of increasingly successful mass parties on the left tended to drive liberals and Catholics into an uneasy truce in the name of property and the 'social order'. In this sense, the rise of socialism cooled the heat of the culture wars by diverting some of its energies into other confrontations.

Yet this does not imply that the polarities of culture war left no lasting trace on Europe's political cultures. On the contrary, as many of these essays show, they structured politics in ways that outlasted the period of most intense conflict. In some states, this was reflected in a realignment of partisan allegiances or in subtle but lasting changes in their character. In others, the culture wars left an enduring imprint on popular voting behaviour. Their impact on political cultures more generally appears to have been ambivalent. It has been argued, on the one hand, that they contributed in many states to processes of democratisation by encouraging vast reserves of previously inactive subjects to mobilise in support of specific objectives, using the tools provided by newly devised regimes of mass suffrage. But it has also been suggested that they contributed in some states to a climate of intolerance and a tendency to shroud political claims in a rhetoric of intransigent absolutes.

Of all the goods for which Catholics and anticlericals contended during the culture wars era, the most encompassing was the nation itself and the collective identity that attached to it. As the essays in this volume show, anticlericals across Europe aligned themselves with the cause of the nation, which was imagined as an autonomous collectivity of unbound (male) consciences. They denounced their opponents as the stooges of a 'foreign' power structure bent on undermining the integrity and distinctiveness of the nation-states. The passionate commitment to a specific concept of the nation was one of the central escalatory mechanisms of the culture war era, for it could always be argued (by liberals) that what was at stake in the burial of a Protestant corpse in a Catholic graveyard, or the unveiling of a memorial to a condemned Renaissance 'heretic', or the closing of a local girls' school run by nuns, was not simply the right of an individual to a dignified interment, or control over public representation, or the entitlement of children to an education free of potentially divisive religious content, but the very soul of the nation itself, its independence, its cultural, political and economic modernity. Indeed, the equation of secularism with modernity, which passed via the Protestant National Liberal political theorist Max Weber into the fabric of the 'modernisation theory' that has underwritten so much of the most authoritative writing on European history since the 1960s, may well be the most enduring legacy of the European culture wars.

Constraints of space and the need to maintain a degree of thematic coherence have meant that we have had to limit the scope of this volume in various ways. We have chosen to focus above all on those areas where Catholic minorities or majorities found themselves in contention with liberal or secularising forces. It has thus not been possible to incorporate the Scandinavian countries or Russia, although analogous debates over the place of religion in public life took place in both. Readers may be surprised to find that we have not included chapters on Ireland and Poland. There are two reasons for this. The first is that neither was a sovereign state during the period covered in this book. The struggle between legislatures, executives and constituencies that was a defining feature of the culture wars thus took place within the framework of other states – Prussia-Germany and Austria in Poland's case (conditions in Russian Poland being such as to prevent the triangulation of the conflict in this sense), and Britain in the case of Ireland. More important, however, is the fact that the conditions of 'foreign' dominion obtaining in these two nations on the opposite peripheries of Catholic Europe militated against the unfolding of a culture war in the sense explored in this volume. Neither in Poland nor in Ireland was the Catholic identity of the nation plausibly contested by a powerful secular

or heterodox competitor (despite the presence of Protestant Irish patriots in the emergent Irish nationalist movement). In both cases, the divisive questions posed by the culture wars in other states were overshadowed by the quest for national autonomy or independence.

The title of this book will inevitably evoke parallels with the 'culture wars' fought out within Anglo-American academia during the 1990s over such bones of contention as multi-culturalism, the literary canon and 'political correctness'. Some of the specific policy questions on which these debates have turned – the conflict between the suburb and the inner city in huge conurbations, for example, or the explosive relationship between race and education in underprivileged urban ghettos[4] – would be quite alien to the protagonists who feature in this book. Yet there are also some striking connections. James Davidson Hunter, the writer generally credited with coining the term 'culture wars' in the 1980s, has himself declared that it was devised in order to evoke the 'similarities and dissimilarities between our own time and that of the German *Kulturkampf*'.[5] 'Culture wars' is of course a mistranslation of *Kulturkampf*, but for our purposes this is precisely its virtue: it captures the essence of the German without replicating it and thus lends itself to a far more encompassing application than the term *Kulturkampf* would bear.

There are also many thematic parallels. The meaning of marriage, for example, is at stake for those who have resisted calls for the legal recognition of non-marital relationships in the 1990s, just as it was for the exponents and opponents of civil marriage in the 1870s. The recent controversy over the inclusion of Darwinian or creationist material in school textbooks would have struck a chord with those nineteenth-century Europeans who demanded confessional schools, or fought to drive the religious orders out of primary and secondary education. Now as then, the meanings of 'culture' have been contested; the dyad culture/civilisation, manifested in the putative opposition between 'multi-culturalism' and 'western civilisation' would have been perfectly intelligible to those nineteenth-century observers who saw themselves as participants in a struggle for national 'cultures' against the European 'civilisation' of Catholicism.[6] In the 1990s, as in the 1880s,

[4] On these, see Joseph A. Rodriguez, *City Against Suburb. The Culture Wars in an American Metropolis* (Westport, Conn., 1999), esp. 3–14; Robin D. G. Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional. Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Boston, 1997), esp. 4–12.

[5] James Davidson Hunter, *Culture Wars. The Struggle to Define America. Making Sense of the Battles over Family, Art, Education, Law and Politics* (New York, 1991), xii.

[6] On the culture–civilisation dyad, see Joan de Jean, *Ancients against Moderns. Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago, 1997), x; on the contestation of the meaning of culture more generally, see Gregory Melleuish, *The Packaging of Australia. Politics and Culture Wars* (Sydney, 1998), 9.

the conflict was framed, somewhat misleadingly, as a stand-off between the forces of tradition and those of transformation. There was a tendency then as now to slip into martial metaphors: 'cultural combatants', 'canon fodder' (*sic*), 'ghetto wars' and 'textbook battles' in the 1990s; 'Jesuit infiltration', 'fortress', 'bastions', 'campaign' and 'black battalions' in the 1880s.[7] In both eras, the assumption that the integrity of national cultures was at stake ensured that ostensibly quite circumscribed issues could become contentious symbols of a greater struggle. It has been observed, moreover, of the 1990s that 'differences are often intensified and aggravated by their presentation in public', thanks to a 'media technology' that 'gives public discussion a life and logic of its own'.[8] Precisely the same can be said for the last decades of the nineteenth century. These contemporary resonances are welcome inasmuch as they sharpen our awareness of the public passions that are stirred 'on those rare occasions when society goes to war over culture'.[9]

If the issues contested in late nineteenth-century Europe remain alive – albeit in different forms – at the outset of the twenty-first century, the same applies *a fortiori* to those South Asian and Middle-Eastern societies in which secular elites have come under pressure from growing religious movements. That there are parallels between the conflicts analysed in this book and developments in nineteenth-century Latin America and the nineteenth- and twentieth-century non-Christian world is beyond doubt. Within the orbit of Islam and Hinduism, modernising intellectuals like Sayyid Ahmad Khan or Mohammad Abduh, who pioneered the critical historical study of religion or expounded the primacy of reason, posed a challenge to traditional religious elites. At the same time, efforts were underway within Islam to impose greater uniformity in religious schools through curricular reform, while improved communications facilitated the emergence of the great mosque at Cairo, al-Azhar, as an internationally authoritative teaching institution. Even within the much less centralised culture of Hinduism, nineteenth-century religious authorities strove, not without success, to bring local devotional practices into closer conformity with temple-based religion. 'Almost everywhere', Christopher Bayly has written, 'the world religions sharpened and clarified their identities', expanding to 'absorb and discipline . . . variegated systems of belief, ritual and practice'.[10]

[7] On this tendency, see Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams. Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York, 1995), 1, 13; Michael Keefer, *Lunar Perspectives. Field Notes from the Culture Wars* ([Canada], 1996), vii.

[8] Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 34.

[9] De Jean, *Ancients Against Moderns*, ix.

[10] Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World. Global Interactions 1780–1914* (Oxford, 2003). I am grateful to Professor Bayly for making a draft version of this text available to me.

The consequence for many societies has been an ongoing conflict over the role of religion in politics, law and public space, even after the establishment of emphatically secular political orders, as in Turkey (1923) or India (1947). An exploration of these linkages lies beyond the scope of this book. But their existence alone reminds us that the religious conflicts still troubling so many of the world's societies are less exotic to modern 'western' political culture than we are often encouraged to believe.[11]

[11] The most egregious influence in this respect has been that of Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, 1996).

CHAPTER I

The New Catholicism and the European culture wars

Christopher Clark

The history of Catholic societies in nineteenth-century Europe was marked by the paradoxical intertwining of two transformative processes: secularisation and religious revival. On the one hand, church properties were seized and sold off; ecclesiastical privileges were removed; clerical authorities came under pressure to retreat from their positions in education and charitable provision; and liberal, national, radical and socialist political discourses were marked by an uncompromisingly anticlerical rhetoric. At the same time, however, this era saw a flowering of Catholic religious life across Europe. There was a proliferation and elaboration of popular devotions, church buildings, religious foundations and associations, and confessionally motivated newspapers and journals. This revitalisation of religious energies coincided with profound changes within the church itself. The New Catholicism of later nineteenth-century Europe was more uniform, more centralised, and more 'Roman' than the eighteenth-century church had been. It was marked by a convergence of elite and popular devotions, an interpenetration of lay and clerical organisation, a rhetorical vehemence and a resourcefulness in the management of communicative media that impressed contemporaries, whether sympathetic or hostile.

These transformations were a crucial precondition for the 'culture wars' that polarised European societies in the later nineteenth century. There had always been intermittent friction and conflict between church and state in western Europe. But the all-encompassing ideological and political struggles of the later nineteenth century would have been inconceivable had the church not acquired the means to mobilise its support base and to mount effective campaigns against its adversaries. This chapter thus focuses on the developments that shaped the New Catholicism of nineteenth-century Europe and defined the character of the battles it fought. In doing so, it aims to get to grips with two general problems.

I would like to thank Professor D. E. D. Beales, Professor Olaf Blaschke, Dr Nina Lübbren and Dr John A. Thompson for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

The first concerns the dynamics of change within European Catholicism as a social and cultural system. Where did the pressure for change come from? Did it originate with Rome and feed down through the hierarchy via the 'papalist' orders, as some accounts would suggest, or were forces on the periphery also involved? Were the changes clerically led, or were autonomous lay impulses also implicated? While acknowledging the impact of the initiatives launched by the curia, this chapter argues that the external pressures brought to bear on Catholic networks and communities across Europe throughout the century generated parallel processes of lay and clerical mobilisation that in turn created potentially destabilising cross-currents within the Catholic system. The campaign waged by the curia to secure central control, give 'Catholicism' a stable and clearly defined ideological content and homogenise Catholic devotional and associational cultures was in part driven by the need to capture and contain these currents. The 'Romanisation' of nineteenth-century Catholicism was thus a rather less tidy process than is implied by those contemporary anticlerical images of fanatically obedient Jesuits herding servile Catholic masses that are discussed in Wolfram Kaiser's contribution to this book.

Our second problem concerns the relationship between the developments underway within the Catholic camp and broader processes of historical change. Contemporary liberal and anticlerical publicists framed the culture wars as a struggle between 'modernity' and a reactionary, backward-looking worldview that had no legitimate place in a modern society. To a striking degree, an implicit antinomy between modernity and 'tradition' still informs the way we think about this conflict.[1] One of the reasons for this is that the teleological, secular concept of 'progress' celebrated by the nineteenth-century liberals lives on in the 'modernisation theory' whose assumptions have underwritten some of the best writing on the European history of this era. The days are long past when historians conceived of modernisation in terms of a linear decline in religion, but there is still a tendency to view the phenomenon of religious revival as a detour, a distraction, from the 'norm' of an irreversible process of secularisation. As a consequence, the history of Catholic revival and mobilisation becomes wholly or partly detached from the history of European modernity, as if it

[1] On this problem, see David Blackbourn, 'Progress and Piety: Liberals, Catholics and the State in Bismarck's Germany', in David Blackbourn, *Populists and Patricians. Essays in Modern German History* (London, 1987), 143–67; and David Blackbourn, 'The Catholic Church in Europe Since the French Revolution', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33 (1991), 778–90. For a trenchant example of the persistence of 'backwardness' as a way of thinking about nineteenth-century Catholicism, see Oded Heilbronner, 'From Ghetto to Ghetto: The Place of German Catholic Society in Recent Historiography', *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 453–95.

inhabited a simultaneous but parallel universe. Catholic mobilisation and societal modernisation are seen as antipathetic and mutually undermining principles; the one's gain is the other's loss.

This chapter takes issue with the view that the culture wars amounted to a stand-off between 'regression' or 'tradition' on the one hand, and the forces of 'modernity' on the other. Liberalism, anticlericalism and socialist secularism were all artefacts of political modernity, but so was the New Catholicism, with its networks of voluntary associations, newspapers, mass-produced imagery and mass demonstrations. Like its contemporaries, socialism and nationalism, the New Catholicism was deeply implicated in that epochal sharpening of collective identities that reshaped political cultures across Europe. The political universe we now inhabit is not the outgrowth of any one of these antagonists alone, but the consequence of an intermittently acrimonious but ultimately fruitful argument among them. For the fundamental problem that faced all the great ideological formations of late nineteenth-century Europe was not whether to embrace or reject 'modernity' but how best to respond to the challenges it posed. The relationship between the New Catholicism and its various antagonists should thus rather be seen in terms of competing programmes for the management of rapid political and social change.

REVIVAL

The religious revival of the early and middle decades of the nineteenth century followed a nadir in the fortunes of the church. The Enlightenment had seen a secularisation in literary tastes, the expulsion of the Jesuits from many European states and their subsequent suppression (under pressure) by the pope himself. At the same time, there were strivings in many parts of the episcopate in central and western Europe for 'national' ecclesiastical autonomy and – especially in the Habsburg Monarchy during the 1780s – a dramatic escalation of state interference in the management of church resources. The era of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars brought waves of wholesale secularisation, the suppression of many religious foundations, the abolition of the ecclesiastical principalities and the imposition in many states of more extensive regimes of control and supervision over ecclesiastical activities.

The early and middle decades of the nineteenth century nevertheless saw a massive expansion of confessional commitment among the Catholic populations of Europe and the emergence of a more cohesive and Rome-centred clergy. There was a spectacular rise in the numbers of persons entering holy orders and a proliferation of new religious houses, evangelising

missions and devotional associations. Many areas witnessed a sharp and sustained upswing in the rate of lay observance. There was a surge in popular pilgrimages to established and new holy sites. The era of growth and revitalisation was associated with the rapid diffusion of a mode of piety marked inwardly by an emphasis on mystery, miracle and immediacy of experience, and outwardly by a partiality for highly demonstrative – even provocative – collective acts of devotion. These developments unfolded on a scale that dwarfed the incipient revivals of the late Enlightenment.

In some ways, the blows dealt out to ecclesiastical institutions and personnel during the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras and sporadically across Europe thereafter may actually have laid the ground for the later revival. The trauma of revolution and de-Christianisation in France shaped the contours of the subsequent revival, polarising communities around the choice between collaboration and resistance and generating more 'baroque' and communally based forms of piety than had been the norm at the end of the *ancien régime*.[2] The 'Organic Articles' imposed unilaterally by the French administration as a supplement to the Concordat of 1801 and subsequently imitated in other European states, were conceived with the chief aim of subordinating clerical structures to state control. But they also had the effect, through the introduction of standardised training and state-subsidised salaries, of creating a more cohesive and integrated clergy. By seeking to confine the activity of the clergy to its core religious functions and redistributing church incomes towards parochial provision, secularising regimes encouraged the development of more close-knit relationships between the clergy and the faithful. The confiscation and resale of ecclesiastical property and the abolition of the old ecclesiastical principalities had an analogous effect, since it narrowed what had once been a vast wealth gap between the upper and lower clergy.[3] Confiscations also worked in favour of a more Rome-dominated clergy, since they undermined the autonomy of the great French and German bishoprics whose incumbents had

[2] M. Vovelle, *The Revolution Against the Church: From Reason to the Supreme Being* (Cambridge, 1991); S. Desan, *Reclaiming the Sacred. Lay Religion and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France* (Ithaca, 1990); O. Hufton, 'The Reconstruction of a Church 1796–1801', in C. Lucas and G. Lewis, *Beyond the Terror. Essays in French Regional and Social History 1794–1815* (Cambridge, 1983).

[3] I am indebted to Hazel Mills for sharing with me her unpublished research on Catholic revival in the French regions. On the other issues raised, see R. Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism 1789–1914* (London, 1989), 78–80; D. Beales, 'Joseph II and the Monasteries of Austria and Hungary', in N. Aston (ed.), *Religious Change in Europe, 1650–1914* (Oxford 1997), 161–84, here 162; on the wealth gap, J. McManners, *The French Revolution and the Church* (London, 1969), 18, 39; J. McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. I: *The Clerical Establishment and its Social Ramifications* (Oxford, 1998), 216–17, 308, 332–46. On the popular impact of secularising measures: C. M. Naselli, *La soppressione napoleonica delle corporazioni religiose. Contributo alla storia religiosa del primo ottocento italiano 1808–1814* (Rome, 1986), 203–5.

traditionally been so resistant to encroachments from the curia. These indirect stimuli to revival were supplemented in some states after 1815 by 'restorative' measures whose purpose was to encourage the expansion of clerical activity – especially missions – as a means of legitimating authority and neutralising political discontent.

These enabling conditions are well known, but the phenomenon of revival itself remains elusive. When exactly did it start? Did it take off in the 1850s, as some historians have argued? Was it already underway in the 1830s, or did it perhaps involve the gradual consolidation of a process of renewal that was already in evidence at the end of the eighteenth century?[4] Particularly difficult is the question of the balance of forces driving religious revival. Was it clerically inspired, or did it bubble up unbidden from below? Were the faithful 'mobilised' by the clergy, or was clerical activism 'demand-driven'? The complexities that beset any effort to answer this question can be illustrated by reference to one of the most celebrated manifestations of Catholic mass devotion in the post-Napoleonic era, the Trier pilgrimage of 1844. In the space of a few weeks, some 500,000 Catholic pilgrims converged on the city of Trier (population *c*. 20,000), lured by the opportunity to view and venerate the robe reputed by local tradition to have been worn by Christ until his crucifixion. The pilgrimage demonstrated, among other things, the enhanced authority of the clergy among the masses of the faithful – whereas late eighteenth-century pilgrimages had tended to be anarchic,

[4] Emmet Larkin's influential analysis of devotional revival in Ireland after 1850 ('The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850–1875', *American Historical Review* 77 (1972), 625–52) has been much challenged; see, e.g., T. K. Hoppen, *Elections, Politics and Society in Ireland 1832–1885* (Oxford, 1984), 171, 173, 197–211, which argues that revival was well underway by 1850. Historians of German Catholicism likewise disagree over the periodisation of revival: J. Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, N.J., 1984) favours the 1850s and 1860s, whereas Christoph Weber, *Aufklärung und Orthodoxie am Mittelrhein, 1820–1850* (Munich, 1973) and M. L. Anderson, 'Piety and Politics: Recent Work on German Catholicism', *Journal of Modern History* 63 (1991), 681–716, both date the beginnings of revival to the 1830s and 1840s. Over the last two decades, a revisionist historiography has shown that the image of the late Enlightenment as a period of helter-skelter retreat for Catholicism is misleading. Louis Chatellier and others have argued that this period saw an expansion of missionary activity, through which 'Catholicism became, more than it ever had been, a mass phenomenon', especially among rural populations. In the 1760s and 1770s, there was a new wave of popular devotions and cults – to the Sacred Heart, the Immaculate Virgin, or around the person of the pious illiterate mendicant Benoît Labre, popularly acclaimed as a saint on his death in Rome in 1783. In this era, as later, these devotions received papal support and women played a prominent role in consolidating them in popular practice. Yet the impact of these trends upon the church as a whole remained limited, partly because of ambivalence and institutional rivalries among the lesser clergy and partly because of the profound distrust and distaste with which an influential sector of the European episcopate viewed such manifestations of popular piety. For samples of this literature, see L. Chatellier (ed.), *Religions en transition dans la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle* (Voltaire Foundation Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, 2000: 02), (Oxford, 2000), esp. 74, 138, 230. A useful brief overview of some of the issues raised by Catholic revival is D. Blackbourn, 'The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution'.

ill-disciplined affairs, the Trier pilgrims appeared in well-ordered ranks, under the supervision of their priests.

In a classic account of these events, the German historian Wolfgang Schieder discerned in the Trier pilgrimage evidence of a counter-revolutionary alliance between Catholic clergy and the Prussian authorities, whose purpose was to 'channel' latent social discontents into a politically harmless act of collective devotion. According to this view, the role of the clergy was essentially manipulative.[5] By contrast, others have highlighted the popular dimension of the Trier pilgrimage. Many of the parish clergy were themselves 'representatives of the people' in the sense that they hailed from families of humble status, and enthusiasm for this demonstrative act of collective veneration drew on widespread Rhenish Catholic hostility towards the Protestant administration of the kingdom of Prussia. Pilgrimages had in any case traditionally been more popular with the people than with the clergy, who had tended to see them as occasions for disorder and misbehaviour.[6]

These viewpoints reflect divergent emphases and perspectives in the historiography,[7] but they are not mutually exclusive. Clerical initiatives were crucial to the organisational boom that occurred within European Catholicism during the middle decades of the century. But they were not imposed upon an unwilling populace. Indeed they could only succeed by tapping and responding to 'popular' demand. In France, where there has been much detailed research on revival in the localities, it is clear that the new devotional culture was substantially lay-driven and that women often played a prominent role. In some areas, new venerations even flourished despite the scepticism of the local clergy. In the small town of Arbois in the Jura, for example, a group of laywomen revived a religious association (Dames de Charité) without any support whatsoever from the local priest, a former revolutionary juror.[8] It has long been acknowledged that German

[5] W. Schieder, 'Kirche und Revolution. Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte der trierer Wallfahrt von 1844', in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 14 (1974), 419–54.

[6] Rudolf Lill, 'Kirche und Revolution. Zu den Anfängen der katholischen Bewegung im Jahrzehnt vor 1848', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 18 (1978), 565–75; Andreas Holzem, *Kirchenreform und Sektenstiftung. Deutschkatholiken, Reformkatholiken und Ultramontane am Oberrhein (1844–1866)* (Paderborn, 1994), 6, 13–17.

[7] Sperber (*Popular Catholicism*) sees the western German revival as essentially clerically driven; Emmett Larkin ('Devotional Revolution'), likewise, stresses the role of the hierarchy (esp. Cullen), in stimulating Irish revival. For contrasting views that see the activism of the clergy more as a 'symptom' than an 'agent' of revival, see M. L. Anderson, 'The Limits of Secularisation: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany', *Historical Journal* 38 (1995), 647–70; Hoppen, *Elections*, 173, 211.

[8] I am grateful to Hazel Mills for drawing my attention to the Dames de Charité in Arbois.

Catholic revival after 1850 owed much to the remarkable expansion in missionary activity by the Jesuit, Redemptorist and Franciscan orders in the German states. But here too demand preceded supply: already during the pre-March, when the government of Baden and Prussia prohibited such missions on their territory, it had been common for western German Catholics to travel across the borders in order to attend missionary events in Alsace and Belgium. The same pattern can be observed in the rapid spread of 'May venerations' of the Virgin across Catholic Europe between the 1820s and the 1850s. The May venerations were propagated in many areas by local religious houses, but such was their popularity that some parochial clergy were obliged to introduce them under pressure from their congregations. The proliferation of such devotions was thus a somewhat haphazard process that depended less upon impulses from the senior clergy than upon local conditions. Where parish priests were flexible enough to cater to demand from the community, the resulting success was often sufficient to trigger emulation from clergy and faithful in nearby areas.[9]

What was significant, then, about the Trier pilgrimage and other such acts of collective devotion in the post-Napoleonic era was not the imposition of clerical control as such, but a potent convergence of clerical activism at many levels with a revitalised popular piety, a 'rediscovery' as one historian has put it, of Catholic popular religion.[10] One of the most interesting features of nineteenth-century Catholic revival is the extent to which it drew on extra-sacerdotal forms of worship and experience – pilgrimage, rosarial devotions, visionary encounters with divine persons.[11] Another distinctive feature was the rise of certain formerly local cults to integrative, supra-regional devotions with a mass base.[12]

[9] O. Weiss, *Die Redemptoristen in Bayern (1790–1909). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Ultramontanismus* (St Ottilien, 1983); Kurt Küppers, 'Die Maiandacht als Beispiel volksnaher Frömmigkeit', *Römische Quartalschrift* 81 (1986), 102–12, here 104.

[10] Antonius Liedhegener, *Christentum und Urbanisierung. Katholiken und Protestanten in Münster und Bochum 1830–1933* (Paderborn, 1997), 103–6, 570. Other historians who emphasise the importance of popular piety (as opposed to clerical leadership) to the cohesion of the German Catholic milieu include Josef Mooser, 'Katholische Volksreligion, Klerus und Bürgertum in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts: Thesen', in W. Schieder (ed.), *Religion und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1993), 144–56 and Siegfried Weichlein, 'Konfession und Region: Katholische Milieubildung am Beispiel Fuldas', in O. Blaschke and F.-M. Kuhlemann (eds.), *Religion im Kaiserreich. Milieus, Mentalitäten, Krisen* (Gütersloh, 1996), 193–232. On the same phenomenon in Spain, see William J. Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain, 1750–1874* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 231–6.

[11] Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy. The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1975* (Oxford, 1987), 22–3, 28–9; Ruth Harris, *Lourdes. Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (London, 1999); David Blackbourn, *Marpingen. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1993).

[12] Olaf Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000), 38–75, here 45.

Ordinary Catholics were 'subjects', not just 'objects' of the new devotional culture that resulted.[13] The same point could be made with regard to the dramatic growth of women's congregations, which was driven by the aspiration of many peasant and working-class women to participate in the work of new communities of 'sisters' whose commitment to social action distinguished them from the enclosed orders of contemplative nuns that had been the norm under the *ancien régime*. 'Religious life', as Theodore K. Hoppen has observed, 'does not change merely in response to Episcopal command. Revolutions in outlook and behaviour, in practice and belief, depend ultimately upon deeper shifts in the practices of a community and in the relationships within it.'[14] For these reasons, it is perhaps unhelpful to conceptualise revival around a dichotomy between clerical and lay initiative. In many localities, the clergy was itself divided – some supporting the new emotive devotional culture, while others kept their distance. Our conclusions on these matters must in any case remain tentative. The historiography of Catholic revival remains extremely patchy – we still know much more about clerical activism than we do about popular religiosity and much work is still to be done, both on the local roots of the new devotional trends, and on the networks that allowed new or revived practices to consolidate themselves at regional, national and European level.

THE ASCENDANCY OF ROME

Although it would be mistaken to see the upswing in popular devotions in terms of the systematic implementation of a policy concept emanating from Rome, it is nonetheless clear that the new trend was closely associated with the increasingly Roman orientation of the clergy and of the faithful more generally. The 'papalist' orders – especially the Jesuits – were prominently involved in the propagation of the May devotions and of the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which in turn was closely linked, after 1859, with the cause of the pope in his struggle with the Italian state. Furthermore, endorsements from the papacy were crucial in providing new and revived devotions – and the associations that supported them – with a secure place in the life of the church.[15] The popes also played a central role in supporting the spread of Marian devotions. The most dramatic example of a papal

[13] See N. Busch, 'Fromme Westfalen. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte des Herz-Jesu-Kultes zwischen Kulturkampf und Erstem Weltkrieg', *Westfälische Zeitschrift* 144 (1984), 329–50, here 348.

[14] Hoppen, *Elections*, 211.

[15] Busch, 'Fromme Westfalen', 329–50, here 332; for other examples of papal support for pious associations, see also O. Heim, *Die katholischen Vereine im deutsch-sprachigen Österreich 1848–1855* (Salzburg, 1990), 113, 163, 173, 175, 203, 223.

intervention along these lines was the definition by Pius IX on 8 December 1854 of the Immaculate Conception of Mary as Catholic doctrine. This initiative was marked by a dialectical interlocking of curial authority with popular aspirations that was characteristic for the mid-century papacy. On the one hand, the declaration signalled a qualitative leap in the pope's capacity to exercise doctrinal authority without formal consultation of his bishops – in this respect, the declaration of 1854 foreshadowed the later formal promulgation of papal infallibility. On the other hand, the Immaculate Conception had long been a popular devotional theme among Catholics in Europe and Pius IX made extensive enquiries into the state of Catholic opinion before proceeding to define it as dogma.[16]

The 'Romanisation' of the nineteenth-century church was a complex process that was driven at different levels by a range of internal and external pressures. Some have seen it as an essentially coercive enterprise, in which dissenting clergy were disciplined, discriminated against and hounded from positions of influence.[17] There is something to be said for this perspective. The curia certainly supported that loose network of 'ultramontane' Catholic clerical and lay activists who championed the rights of Rome over those both of the state and of the 'national' church hierarchies and it also made use of all available resources to discredit, isolate and sabotage the opposing camp.[18]

Yet a top-down paradigm can only partially capture the complexity of the process. The career of the ultramontane movement throughout Europe indicates that powerful voluntarist forces were at work. Ultramontanism profited, for example, from the remarkable surge in female religious vocations that accompanied the mid-century Catholic revival.[19] The curia

[16] On Immaculate Conception, see Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes 1830–1914* (Oxford, 1998), 119–23; G. Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)* (Rome, 1990), 118; Roger Aubert, Johannes Beckmann, Patrick J. Corish and Rudolf Lill, *The Church in the Age of Liberalism*, trans. Peter Becker (London, 1981), 307; on the populist dimension of the new doctrine, see also T. Kselman, *Miracles, Magic and Prophecy in Nineteenth-Century France* (New York, 1983).

[17] In addition to the studies cited above in n. 5, see I. Götz von Olenhusen, *Klerus und abweichendes Verhalten. Zur Sozialgeschichte katholischer Priester im 19. Jahrhundert: Die Erzdiözese Freiburg* (Göttingen, 1994), 21.

[18] The term 'ultramontane' (literally 'beyond the mountains' refers to those Catholics in northern, central and western Europe who looked beyond the Alps towards Rome for leadership and authority. The validity of the term as a historical category is questioned in C. Weber, 'Ultramontanismus als katholischer Fundamentalismus', in W. Loth (ed.), *Deutscher Katholizismus im Umbruch zur Moderne* (Stuttgart, 1991), 20–45, here 20, 36. However, Weber's proposal that the term 'fundamentalism' be adopted in place of ultramontanism also raises problems, and his remains a minority view.

[19] There is a substantial and growing literature on the role of women in Catholic revival; see, for example, C. Clear, *Nuns in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Washington D.C., 1988); C. Langlois, *Le catholicisme au fêminin. Les congrégations françaises à supérieure générale au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1984); I. Götz von Olenhusen (ed.), *Wunderbare Erscheinungen. Frauen und Frömmigkeit im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 1995).

might, as in mid-century Ireland, be drawn into a more interventionist role by conflicts within the episcopate and appeals to Rome for arbitration. In many areas, it was above all the younger, lesser or rural clergy who mobilised around the ultramontane agenda against an older generation of enlightened, Jansenist, Gallican or Febronian churchmen whose political and ecclesiastical formation dated back to the closing years of the eighteenth century. The movement thus drew at least some of its energy from tensions generated by deep social and institutional cleavages within the clergy.[20]

The spread of ultramontanism was also assisted by factors external to the church and beyond its control. Aggressive intervention by the state, for example, could trigger a collective reorientation towards Rome. In 1841–3, when the liberal government of Spain set about creating a national church under state control, prompting a formal protest from Gregory XVI, the consequence was a wave of outrage articulated in the battle cry 'Rome is our goal! Rome is our hope!' and an unprecedented ultramontane mobilisation among the parochial clergy.[21] The same pattern could be observed in the Prussian Rhineland during the 1830s, where a clash between the Prussian authorities and the archbishop of Cologne triggered not only mass protest demonstrations in the city, but also a dramatic and lasting mobilisation of Romanist allegiances, manifested in the rapid proliferation of ultramontane journals and newspapers throughout the Rhineland.[22] Even where it did not culminate in such dramatic conflict, interference by state administrations in the internal affairs of the church tended to have a polarising effect on the clergy, since it opened a divide – sometimes embittered by careerist rivalries – between those clerics who were inclined to collaborate in, or stood to benefit from, state initiatives and those who opposed them on the grounds that they endangered the autonomy of the church.[23]

Ultramontane views also enjoyed widespread support among lay European Catholics. In this connection it is important to remember that ultramontanism was a 'broad church' that embraced a range of constituencies.

[20] Götz von Olenhusen has shown that ultramontanism in Baden was supported above all by clergy from rural backgrounds, *Klerus*, 133, 136–7; on the generational structure of ultramontanism within the Rhenish clergy, see Liedhegener, *Christentum*, 126, Holzem, *Kirchenreform*, 200; on ultramontanism in France as a movement of protest against bishops, see Roger Aubert, *Le pontificat de Pie IX (1846–1878)* (Paris, 1963), 343. For a powerful concise rejoinder to top-down interpretations of ultramontanism, see M. L. Anderson, 'The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany', *Historical Journal* 38 (1995), 647–70; esp. 655–6.

[21] Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 169–72; also Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy*, 2; S. J. Payne, *Spanish Catholicism. An Historical Overview* (Madison, 1984), 98.

[22] Bernhard Schneider, *Katholiken auf den Barrikaden? Europäische Revolutionen und deutsche Katholische Presse 1815–1848* (Paderborn, 1998), 52–4; Aubert *et al*., *Church*, 32, 53–6.

[23] Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 169; Chadwick, *Popes*, 163–4.

At one end of the spectrum were reactionary integralists like Louis Veuillot, whose worldview was essentially absolutist and theocratic; at the other were those lay and clerical progressives for whom the ultramontane cause was consonant to some degree with liberal principles and denoted the emancipation of an international church from oppressive state control. As Owen Chadwick has observed, the central 'paradox' of ultramontanism was that 'an authoritarian pope could be invoked in the interest of the "liberty" of Catholics in the face of state interference'.[24] A state that pressed the church hard naturally strengthened the hand of the ultramontanes, since it alienated observant Catholics from those (anti-ultramontane) elements within the senior clergy who favoured a far-reaching accommodation to the demands of secular governments.[25]

Finally, the ultramontane tendency drew on a powerful – and arguably unprecedented – allegiance among many European Catholics to the person of the pontiff. Devotions to the person of the pope first gained ground during the pontificates of Pius VI and Pius VII, when they were triggered by indignation at the harassment of the church authorities by a succession of anticlerical regimes. Their apogee came during the pontificate of Pius IX, when the annexation of the northern Papal States by the Kingdom of Piedmont/Italy and the reduction of the pope's temporal domains to a rump territory around Rome triggered outrage among Catholics. A wave of addresses to the pope followed, gathering 5,524,373 signatures. Although there was some covert encouragement from papal representatives, this mass demonstration of sympathy was largely spontaneous. Among the most dramatic expressions of Catholic solidarity with the pontiff was the revival – on a voluntary basis – of the levy known in the Middle Ages as the 'Peter's Pence' (*deniers de Saint-Pierre*, *Peterspfennig*, *obolo di San Pietro*). This movement appears to have begun in 1859 when a Catholic journal in London reported that an Italian and a Pole resident in the city had sent a modest sum of money to offset the military costs incurred in defending the integrity of the Papal States. The gesture was widely imitated by lay Catholics, first in Vienna and Austria, then in Germany and later in France

[24] Chadwick, *Popes*, 38–9; Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 131–2; Bruno Horaist, *La dévotion au pape et les catholiques français sous le pontificat de Pie IX (1846–1878) d'après les archives de la Bibliothèque Apostolique Vaticane* (Rome, 1995), 17; Harris, *Lourdes*, 118–28; Klaus Schatz, *Vaticanum I, 1869–1870*, 2 vols. (Paderborn, 1992), vol. I: *Vor der Eröffnung*, 21–2.

[25] In Switzerland, for example, pressure from this quarter in the early 1870s had the effect of closing down internal Catholic debate on infallibility and consolidating support for the line adopted at Vatican I. Urs Altermatt, *Der Weg der schweizer Katholiken ins Ghetto. Die Entstehungsgeschichte der nationalen Volksorganisationen im Schweizer Katholizismus 1848–1919*, 2nd edn (Zurich, 1991), 58.

and Belgium.[26] Although the Peter's Pence movement was encouraged by elements of the ultramontane clergy and by ultramontane press organs, it was driven above all by a spontaneous wave of lay activism in which women played a prominent role. Papalist voluntarism took other forms as well – Catholic military volunteers flocked to join the Zouave army of the pope during the 1860s, there were successive waves of mass petitions supporting the pope in his struggle with the Kingdom of Italy and there was a surge in pilgrimages to the Holy See, especially after the seizure of Lazio and Rome in 1870.[27]

Ultramontane[28] propaganda sought to amplify and exploit this groundswell of support. After the events of 1870, an entire literature was dedicated to recounting in detail the suffering and 'poverty' of the pope. Many faithful Catholics responded to this message with imaginative acts of generosity, as this passage from a letter composed in 1877 by a Parisian woman demonstrates:

> Permit your humble daughter, Holy Father, to offer You a little underclothing intended for your personal use: I have heard harrowing details of the deprivations of Your Holiness in this regard! and I am happy to alleviate your distress![29]

Ultramontane clergy and publicists sought not only to fashion solidarity out of outrage, but also to invest the person of the pope with an emblematic status. Catholics were encouraged to see in the suffering, despoliation, 'imprisonment' and 'martyrdom' of the pontiff the embodiment of the troubles currently afflicting the church. The pope's intransigence in negotiations with the Kingdom of Italy was likened to Christ's steadfastness in the face of Satan's blandishments. There was even a widespread tendency to equate the Sacred Heart of Jesus with the person of the 'suffering' pontiff.[30]

[26] On the wave of addresses in 1859, see Vincent Viaene, 'The Roman Question. Catholic Mobilisation and Papal Diplomacy during the Pontificate of Pius IX (1846–1878)', in E. Lamberts (ed.), *The Black International. L'Internationale noire. 1870–1878*, Kadoc Studies XXIX (Leuven, 2002), 135–77, here 143; Giacomo Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)* (Rome, 1986), 22; Hartmut Benz, 'Der Peterspfennig im Pontifikat Pius IX. Initiativen zur Unterstützung des Papsttums (1859–1878)', *Römische Quartalschrift* 90 (1995), 90–109; on the personal charisma of this pope, see Schatz, *Vaticanum* I, II, 22.

[27] Pieter de Coninck, 'En Les uit Pruisen. Nederland en de Kulturkampf 1870–1880' (Ph.D. dissertation, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1998), 48–9, 51–3; Roger Aubert, *Pie IX* (Paris, 1963), 88–90; Horaist, *Dévotion*, 22–5, 34–6, 43; Altermatt, *Der Weg*, 257–60.

[28] Some accounts use the term 'neo-ultramontane' to underline the distinctiveness of the extreme papalist phase of the movement. But since this term is not in universal use and does little to clarify the arguments advanced here, I have done without it. See Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, II, 29–34; Aubert *et al*., *Church*, 312–15.

[29] Letter from Marie de Blair to the Holy See, Paris, 1877 cited in Horaist, *Dévotion*, 52.

[30] See, e.g., anon., 'Een feitelijke Ordeel der Wereld', *De Katholiek* 57 (January 1870); on the tendency to equate Pius IX with Christ (with references to the literature), see Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 30.

But if the pope was a 'martyr' who embodied the contemporary sufferings of the church, he was also, in the eyes of many, the timeless incarnation of the eternal church. Narratives of suffering and deprivation thus alternated with images of beatific serenity:

> He has never seemed to us more beautiful, more grand, more majestic, more radiant with the triple halo of the patriarch, the king and the pontiff [reports the *Correspondance de Genève* on the occasion of the pope's eightieth birthday]. An air of vigour, of health and even of freshness, made the more remarkable by the serene joy that illuminated his countenance, struck all eyes and reassured all hearts. Beneath his snow-white cap could be seen the even whiter hairs that were traced upon his venerable brow like a diadem of silver, and his smile replied with an expression of unutterable tenderness to the demonstrations of love that his children were bringing to him in abundance.[31]

The effect of such word-pictures was reinforced by evocative lithographic portraits whose mass distribution was facilitated by new techniques in cheap colour reproduction. By these means the ultramontanes conveyed a sense of proximity to the pope's person and concerns to those millions who would never acquire the means to travel to Rome. The pontiff came to encompass and signify the values for which the church was waging its culture war against the forces of secularisation, and the privations it was suffering as a consequence. The result – in the short term at least – was a drastic personalisation of authority that knew no contemporary parallel and anticipated in some respects the totalitarian cults of the twentieth century.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY

Newspapers and journals were the pre-eminent medium of the ultramontane transformation of European Catholicism. They were used in that sustained assault on contrary positions within the church that we might describe as the 'long culture war'. The primary task of the ultramontane press was to drive back and marginalise liberal and statist elements within Catholicism. But at the height of the culture wars it was also wielded with great effect against the outer opponents of the New Catholicism. Ultramontane journals framed mordant critiques of liberal regimes and the secular cultures that flourished under them; they supported Catholic politicians and parties and maintained solidarity and morale amongst the Catholic populations. In areas where Catholic associational life was relatively

[31] Anon., 'Le 13 Mai', *Correspondance de Genève*, no. 69 (19 May 1871).

undeveloped, the press could play a crucial consciousness-raising role.[32] Most importantly, perhaps, it created a discursive space that transcended national boundaries and nurtured the emergence of Europe-wide networks of communication and solidarity, so that Catholics in one country could – to an ever-increasing extent – be moved by the contemporaneous tribulations of co-religionists in another. However, although the ultramontane press defined itself to some extent by its support for the ascendancy of Rome, it was – with some exceptions – not the compliant organ of papal authority that the curia might have wished for. In this respect, as we shall see, it reflected the cross-currents and internal conflicts generated by Catholic revival and mobilisation.

One of the striking features of the early and mid-nineteenth-century Catholic press was the predominance of ultramontane journals. In the Italian states, the few Catholic titles successfully launched during the Restoration era were mainly of ultramontane inspiration.[33] In France, the single most important journal of Catholic opinion in the 1840s was *L'Univers*, initially founded by Abbé Migne in 1833 for purposes of general edification but subsequently transformed by its new editor-in-chief, Louis Veuillot, into the most combative and influential organ of European ultramontanism.[34] In Spain, the 'New Catholic press' of the 1840s – *La Revista Católica* of Barcelona, *El Católico* of Madrid and *La Cruz* of Seville – focused Catholic attention on incidents of government harassment and provided a forum for ultramontane opinion in the parishes.[35] In Germany, too, where a detailed survey has been made of the Catholic press in the Restoration era, journals of ultramontane orientation accounted for the lion's share of the ninety-five new titles launched between 1815 and 1847. While the 'liberal' and 'enlightened' sector stagnated or collapsed altogether during the church–state strife of the later 1830s, ultramontane titles proliferated, from ten in 1834 to twenty-five in 1839, thirty in 1844 and thirty-six in 1847.[36]

These publications were for the most part fairly small enterprises serving a local readership. About half of the German Catholic journals published between 1815 and 1848 produced print-runs of under 1,000.[37] Even *L'Univers* had only 1,530 subscribers in 1840; *L'Amico Cattolico*, published in Milan

[32] De Coninck, 'Een Les uit Pruisen', 273–9; Winfried Halder, *Katholische Vereine in Baden und Württemberg 1848–1914. Ein Beitrag zur Organisationsgeschichte des südwestdeutschen Katholizismus im Rahmen der Entstehung der modernen Gesellschaft* (Paderborn, 1995), 178; Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 174; Aubert *et al*., *Church*, 56.

[33] Angelo Majo, *La stampa cattolica in Italia: Storia e documentazione* (Milan, 1992), 15–18.

[34] Aubert, *Pie IX*, 273–6; Harris, *Lourdes*, 118–20; Chadwick, *Popes*, 323–5.

[35] Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 174.

[36] Schneider, *Katholiken*, 52.

[37] Ibid., 75.

from 1841 in emulation of *L'Univers*, ran to only 500 copies. But these figures scarcely convey the significance of such publications. The readership of the key ultramontane journals was much larger than the print-run, since individual copies were widely circulated, either informally, or through Catholic reading societies like that of the Thiessingsche Buchhandlung in Münster, which offered access to twenty-one Catholic journals for a yearly subscription of only 3 thalers.[38] In addition to publicising ultramontane views on the key issues of the day, the new journals, though locally inspired and founded, helped to consolidate a Europe-wide sense of connectedness and solidarity among ultramontanes in different countries: there was extensive reprinting and translation of articles, and certain prominent issues such as the controversy surrounding the published works of the liberal ultramontane Félicité Lamennais were widely discussed in the Catholic journals of Belgium and the German states.[39]

Perhaps the most distinctive and significant feature of the ultramontane press was the mixed lay–clerical character both of its personnel and of its readership. Some journals were run by clergymen, but others were independent lay initiatives. Contributing authors often included both priests and laymen, and many editors explicitly aimed to appeal both to clerical readers and to persons from the 'pious laity'. 'Laymen have become theologians and theologians have turned into journalists', the *Revue des Deux Mondes* observed in a report on the Catholic press in 1844.[40] This element of lay engagement and the mixed constituency that it helped to create were something new. The Catholic press was becoming a force in its own right, capable on the one hand of mobilising lay energies around clerically generated projects, but also on the other of critical public reflection on the activities (or lack thereof) of the hierarchy. This latter function was made explicit by the conservative and ultramontane publicist Johann Baptist Pfeilschifter, editor of the *Katholische Kirchen-Zeitung* (Aschaffenburg), who saw in the Catholic press a 'voice of the people' vis-à-vis the pastors of the church.[41] There was clearly enormous potential here for tension with the diocesan authorities, especially in areas where the bishops did not share the views of the ultramontane press. Already in the 1840s there were instances where bishops appealed to the local secular authorities or even to Rome for disciplinary action against ultramontane journals, and such conflicts became more frequent and more intense as the ultramontane

[38] Chadwick, *Popes*, 324; Schneider, *Katholiken*, 83.

[39] Gerhard Valerius, *Deutscher Katholizismus und Lamennais. Die Auseinandersetzung in der katholischen Publizistik 1817–1854* (Mainz, 1983).

[40] Cited in Aubert *et al*., *Church*, 56.

[41] Schneider, *Katholiken*, 55, 67.

movement gathered momentum. In this sense, the growth of the ultramontane press shifted the balance of power between the clergy and the laity in the direction of the latter, introducing a new element of dynamism and instability into Catholic affairs.

Although there were occasional bursts of polemic from parts of the ultramontane press in the 1830s and 1840s, most journals strove to avoid political controversy and focused on religious questions in the narrower sense. The revolutions of 1848 produced a less restrained climate. The lifting of press restrictions in many countries encouraged the launching of new journals and removed some of the constraints on tone and content. More importantly, the secularising and sometimes anticlerical thrust of liberal demands across Europe opened a gap between liberals and ultramontanes that had previously been cloaked by a shared rhetoric of 'liberty' in the face of repressive state measures. In France, for example, as a liberal Catholic camp began to coalesce around the newspaper *L'Ere Nouvelle*, there were polemical blasts against the 'democratic-social' elements in contemporary Catholicism from Veuillot and other Catholic conservatives. In Italy, too, the ultramontane press now issued blanket condemnations of republicanism and nationalism and their fellow-travellers in clerical garb, expressed in a new mordant style exemplified by the writing of Don Giacomo Margotti, editor of the Turin paper *L'Armonia*.[42] The note of intransigence and polemical sharpness sounded during the months of revolution was to remain a defining feature of much ultramontane publicistic activity.

It was only after 1848, under the pressure of the dramatic expansion in political print which accompanied the revolutions, that the papacy actually developed a broad-circulation press organ of its own. Several factors converged here. From the beginning of his reign, Pius IX was more flexible – if not positive – in his attitude to the press than his predecessor had been, and there were some tentative moves in the direction of a more relaxed press regime within the Papal States. The situation of acute instability created by the revolutions of 1848 brought home the need to correct potentially damaging misperceptions of his political intentions – late in April, for example, he issued an allocution to the cardinals urging them to refute rumours to the effect that he was encouraging the Catholics of Lombardy and Venetia to rise up against the Austrians. This was followed by a formal repudiation of 'all the newspaper articles that want the pope to be president of a new republic of all the Italians'. Later, during his exile in Gaeta, the pontiff

[42] Full title: *L'Armonia della Religione colla Civiltà*; Majo, *Stampa cattolica*, 31–5.

issued a *motu proprio* urging bishops – for the first time – to defend 'the truth' through the press.[43]

When Carlo Curci, a young Neapolitan Jesuit undergoing training in Rome, proposed that a moderately priced vernacular journal of broad cultural interest be founded to assist the curia in combating directly the spread of revolutionary ideas, the pope was receptive. The proposal was controversial, for the Constitution of St Ignatius forbade any involvement by the order in political affairs. It was opposed for this reason by Curci's superior, the Jesuit General P. Roothaan, who had also been pressing for a new journal, but envisaged a much less accessible organ devoted to erudite subject matter and published in Latin. Pius IX preferred Curci's option and even offered to take on the costs of the first issue. The result was the foundation in April 1850 of *Civiltà Cattolica*. Initially published in Naples, the paper was moved to Rome six months later, where it soon boasted a print-run of over 12,000. Considerable effort was invested to maximise the new journal's public impact: some 120,000 programmes and 4,000 manifestos were distributed, and the first issue was widely announced in the Catholic press.[44]

Civiltà Cattolica was a nominally independent, self-funding enterprise, yet it was produced under the close supervision of the curia and, in particular, of Pius IX himself, who frequently examined the proofs of the journal before publication. As a consequence, *Civiltà Cattolica* came to occupy a unique place in the panorama of the international press as the 'semi-official voice of the Pope'.[45] There was a striking parallel here with developments elsewhere in Europe after the revolution. Like many other European sovereigns, Pius IX, having been forced to flee his own capital by a violent republican insurrection in November 1848, emerged from the upheavals of revolution with a heightened sense of the importance of the press and public opinion. Across Europe many regimes responded to this challenge by developing a more proactive, centralised and flexible press policy involving covert financial assistance and editorial manipulation of semi-autonomous press organs for which the epithet 'semi-official' – '*offiziös*', '*officieux*', '*officioso*' – was widely used. *Civiltà Cattolica* thus exemplified to some extent the new post-revolutionary climate in European administration. Pius IX's willingness to engage with public opinion has often been identified as a defining feature of his pontificate. He spoke more often

[43] Cited in Chadwick, *Popes*, 75–7.

[44] Majo, *Stampa cattolica*, 49; Aubert, *Pie IX*, 39; F. Dante, *Storia della 'Civiltà Cattolica' (1850–1891). Il laboratorio del Papa* (Rome, 1990), 57–63, 141–52.

[45] Dante, *Storia della 'Civiltà Cattolica'*, 66, 67, 71.

impromptu to a greater variety of audiences than any of his predecessors had, and he was the first pontiff to see his speeches edited for publication. Since, with the advent of railways and faster long-distance shipping, a steadily growing mass of devout visitors converged on Rome each year, the pontiff's personal charisma and confidence in his own communicative gifts were of enormous importance in building an awareness of the special claims of the Holy See among European Catholics.

It would be going too far to say that these developments signalled the emergence of a modern papal 'publicity policy'. The pontiff's own views on the press remained deeply equivocal. On the one hand, the encyclical *Inter multiplices*, issued on 21 March 1853, was among the earliest documents of this kind to refer to Catholic journals in a way that implied that these could be of importance to the work of the church.[46] On the other hand, Pius IX himself remained antipathetic to freedom of the press in principle – in an unsigned document probably dating from 1856, he stressed the right of the government in his own states to take action against journalists who set out to denigrate it, and contrasted the papal regime favourably with 'the unlimited and so harmful freedom of the press that exists in the so-called free countries'.[47] By contrast with many other European regimes, the Holy See did not establish a centralised 'press bureau' in the immediate aftermath of 1848. No consistent effort was made to supply either clerical or lay activists with assistance in handling the controversies generated by announcements issuing from the Holy See.

The most striking example of this lackadaisical attitude to publicity management was the *Syllabus of Errors* (*Syllabus errorum*) of 1864 with its accompanying encyclical *Quanta cura.* The *Syllabus*, one of the most controversial utterances in the history of the papacy, was a composite, improvised document that was edited by many hands and was hurried to press without the pope's having checked the final version. Substantial parts of it had been cut and pasted wholesale from other documents in which various erroneous views had been condemned by Pius IX or his recent predecessors. The wording of Article 80, for example, which notoriously condemned the notion that the pope should reconcile himself with 'progress, liberalism and civilisation as lately introduced', derived from an earlier document denouncing the secularisation of education in the Kingdom of Piedmont, where it was clear that the reference was specifically to certain anticlerical initiatives. Shorn of their context, such broadly formulated denunciations,

[46] Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)*, 168; Chadwick, *Popes*, 324; the earlier encyclical *Nostris et nobiscum* (1849) had also touched on the positive role of the press; see Majo, *Stampa cattolica*, 23.

[47] Cited in Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)*, 6.

which bore directly upon the great political questions of the day, were guaranteed to provoke a furious response from the liberal press. And yet no guidelines – aside from the intemperate and unfocused text of the accompanying encyclical – were issued on how this troublesome document might be interpreted, justified to the faithful, or presented to the public; nor did the curia make any efforts at damage limitation. It fell to gifted and persuasive publicists like Bishop Dupanloup of Orléans and Bishop Ketteler of Mainz to contextualise and interpret the *Syllabus* in such a way as to reconcile sceptical Catholics to its theses.[48]

It is clear nonetheless that the existence after 1848 of *Civiltà Cattolica* provided the pope with a potent means of influencing public opinion. On 1 June 1867, the journal ran a leading article entitled 'A New Tribute to Saint Peter', which argued that, having rendered up their tribute of gold (the Peter's Pence) and blood (the Zouave volunteer movement), Catholics should now offer the tribute of intellect (*tributo dell'intelletto*). This was to take the form of an oath to expound faithfully and if necessary to the point of martyrdom the infallibility of papal *ex-cathedra* pronouncements.[49] The article had a remarkable impact, especially in France, where fly-sheets bearing oaths to infallibility were distributed on the streets, and parish priests were pressed to add their signatures to petitions collected by laymen. In retrospect it is evident that this important gambit signalled a transition to concerted work towards the definition of infallibility at the Council of 1870. And yet, appearances notwithstanding, it did not derive from a papal initiative. As Klaus Schatz has shown, the 'threefold tribute' was in fact the inspiration of a young Jesuit studying in Rome. The editors adopted the idea and allowed the student (anonymously) to compose the article.[50] Pius IX subsequently welcomed the sentiments expressed, though he appears also to have been doubtful about whether the time was right for such forthright signals.[51] The editor of *Civiltà*, Matteo Liberatore, later claimed that the function of his journal in the run-up to the Vatican Council had been essentially provocative: his aim was to goad the opponents of the papal

[48] On preparations for the *Syllabus*, see Frank J. Coppa, *Pius IX: Crusader in a Secular Age* (Boston, 1979), 140–53; Aubert *et al*., *Church*, 293–9; on the defects of papal publicity management, J. Bachem, *Vorgeschichte, Geschichte und Politik der Zentrumspartei. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der katholischen Bewegung, sowie zur allgemeinen Geschichte des neueren und neuesten Deutschland, 1815–1914*, 9 vols. (Cologne, 1927–32), III, 52–3, 61; Chadwick, *Popes*, 176; Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 32; for a similar damage limitation exercise in Austria in 1867, following an intemperate papal condemnation of recent Austrian laws, see Bachem, *Zentrumspartei*, III, 81–2.

[49] 'Un nuovo tributo a S. Pietro', *Civiltà Cattolica* (1867), ser. 6, vol. X, 641–51.

[50] Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 201–2.

[51] G. G. Franco, *Appunti storici sopra il Concilio Vaticano (1870)*, ed. G. Martina (Rome, 1982), 233 (no. 422).

cause to leave their hiding-places and come out into the open, much as the hunting dog 'raises game, forcing it to pass before the eyes of the hunter'.[52]

The question of whether the pope himself was involved in starting and steering such initiatives is in any case of secondary importance. For it was precisely the relative informality of papal press management – which allowed enthusiasts across Europe to 'work towards the pope' by anticipating his intentions – that unleashed forces that may well have been suppressed in a more tightly controlled regime. A good example of this principle in operation is the publication in the French press in June 1868 of a personal letter from Pius IX to Archbishop Darboy in Paris, admonishing him in sharp terms for his Gallicanism. It was subsequently revealed that the letter, which was taken up by the ultramontane press and used to scourge the archbishop in public, had been leaked by the Paris nuncio, Mgr Chigi, who had a copy of his own. It is extremely unlikely that this manoeuvre was personally authorised in advance by the pope, who categorically denied any involvement.[53] On the other hand, Chigi, himself an enthusiastic ultramontane who had long been an important agent of papal policy in France, will have known that his tactical indiscretion would not be unwelcome in Rome. The power of ultramontane publicity lay precisely in this combination of clarity over certain shared general objectives with a flexible, fuzzy structure in which boundaries of competence and responsibility were blurred. A crucial advantage of this arrangement was that it permitted phases of rapid rhetorical radicalisation, while leaving the pope free to disassociate himself, when this was convenient, from published statements, even when they appeared in *Civiltà Cattolica*.[54]

Only in October 1870, after the seizure of Rome and the surrounding territory by the armed forces of the Kingdom of Italy, was a concerted effort made to steer and coordinate news coverage of the Roman question and of papal issues more generally in the European press. The consequence was the foundation in October 1870 of the *Correspondance de Genève*, a bulletin whose function was to supply the Catholic press internationally with a centrally coordinated news service covering Catholic affairs. It was published between two or three times a week in a French and German

[52] M. Liberatore, *Il domma dell'infallibilità pontificia. Dialogo fra un cattolico e un teologo Romano* (Naples, 1870), cited in Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 203.

[53] A. B. Hasler, *Pius IX (1846–1878), päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit und I. Vatikanisches Konzil. Dogmatisierung und Durchsetzung einer Ideologie*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1977), I, 18; see also Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 154–5.

[54] Hasler, *Päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit*, I, 45; for an example of the same practice under Leo XIII, see R. Lill (ed.), *Vatikanische Akten zur Geschichte des deutschen Kulturkampfes. Leo XIII. Teil I (1878–1880)* (Tübingen, 1970), doc. 64, 130–1.

edition and was sent free of charge to some three hundred Catholic journals in Europe. Thanks to an informal – and secret – link with Mgr Wladimir Czacki, private secretary to Pius IX, the paper's editors in Geneva enjoyed access to accurate and privileged information. It depended upon the collaboration of a network of lay activists around the Dutch Catholic tycoon J. W. Cramer that included some of the most prominent and influential figures in the associational landscape of European Catholicism. While a number of these individuals became active within the editorial structure of the journal, others acted as 'permanent agents' whose task was to gather information and file reports covering state–church relations and Catholic affairs in their respective countries.[55]

The *Correspondance* was initially a great success, in that its reports were widely reprinted in the European Catholic press.[56] Some historians have discerned in this venture the emergence of a 'Black International' capable of mobilising support for the papal cause through a centrally steered apparatus.[57] But the experiment was short-lived. It foundered above all on the deep ambivalence of the curia towards all forms of autonomous lay initiative. The secrecy of the Vatican link provided a certain flexibility for the curia, which remained free to distance itself from the journal when this was diplomatically convenient. However, it also spelled frustration for many of the lay agents of the network, who would have preferred to operate openly as papally authorised crusaders for a revitalised church.[58] The operation by elements in the Vatican of a covert lay network also generated resentment among those who were officially entrusted with the gathering and dissemination of information on the curia's behalf. In 1876, the Vatican link to the journal was severed under the new secretary of state, Cardinal Simeoni, on the grounds that it was the nuncios who ought to be entrusted with orienting the Catholic press on matters of importance to the papacy.

The real danger, from the curia's point of view, in extended collaboration with autonomous lay networks lay in the possibility that such groups might ultimately subordinate the requirements of the curia and the hierarchy to

[55] A comprehensive study has been made of the *Correspondance* by a team of historians coordinated by Professor Emiel Lamberts at the Katholiek Documentatie en Onderzoekscentrum (KADOC), an inter-faculty institute of the K.U. Leuven, Belgium. See esp. E. Lamberts, 'L'Internationale noire. Une organization secrète au service du Saint-Siège', in Lamberts, (ed.), *Black International*, 15–101. I am grateful to Professor Lamberts for making a copy of this paper available to me before its publication.

[56] Jacques Lory, 'La "Correspondance de Genève", 1870–1873: un organe de presse singulier', in Lamberts, *Black International*, 103–31.

[57] Lamberts, 'L'Internationale noire'.

[58] Vincent Viaene, 'A Brilliant Failure: Wladimir Czacki, the Legacy of the Geneva Committee and the Origins of Vatican Press Policy from Pius IX to Leo XIII', in Lamberts, *Black International*, 231–55.

the pursuit of a different, alien agenda. The scale of the problem was made clear when the death of Pius IX was followed by the inauguration of a more conciliatory curial policy under his successor, Leo XIII. Although there were many strands of continuity, Leo's pontificate was marked by a readiness to seek a modus vivendi with the secular authorities, even where these were fundamentally anticlerical or anti-Catholic in outlook, and by a growing emphasis on 'social' themes, such as labour protection.

The ultramontane publicity networks that had prospered under the informal sponsorship of Pius IX now came in part to present an oppositional front against the new curial regime, and a hindrance to the new pope's efforts to bring about a change of course. There were demonstrative acts of veneration for the deceased pontiff, part of whose purpose was to imply damaging comparisons with his successor. In 1885, an innocuous letter from Cardinal Pitra, a favourite of Pius IX, was published in *Amstelbode*, an intransigent Belgian journal. Construed by the ultramontanes as an attack on Leo XIII, the article was quickly snapped up and reprinted in ultramontane papers across Europe, notably *El Siglo Futuro*, the *Journal de Rome* and the *Osservatore Cattolico*. A storm erupted over the unfortunate Pitra, whose letter had not been intended to give offence and who lost no time in assuring the Holy See of his filial devotion.[59]

There were also direct protests against the new policy of accommodation pursued by the curia. The ultramontane Bavarian organ, *Das Bayerische Vaterland*, for example, which had served the curia well in the campaign against Old Catholics, now criticised the Holy See for entering into negotiations with Bismarck.[60] Bismarck may have assumed that the Catholic newspapers were operated by remote control from the Holy See, but the reality was different. Reporting on the state of affairs in the German states during the negotiations between the curia and Bismarck over ending the *Kulturkampf* in Germany, the Munich nuncio Cardinal Aloisi Masella expressed his concern that the Catholic press with its 'excess of zeal' and its 'democratic attitudes' would be more of a hindrance to a settlement than the liberal opposition.[61] In Germany in particular, the existence of a powerful Catholic Party created potentially serious conflicts of interest. Even the most 'Roman' and clerical Catholics often found it difficult to reconcile their loyalty to the curia with the demands of local, regional or national

[59] Francesco Malgeri, *La stampa cattolica in Roma dal 1870 a 1915* (Brescia, 1965), 143–4; Giuseppe Grabinski, *Leone XIII e la stampa cattolica*, 2nd edn (Florence, 1885), 84–8.

[60] Lill, *Vatikanische Akten* 130, n. 1.

[61] Masella to Cardinal Secretary of State Nina, Munich, 27 August 1878, in Lill (ed.), *Vatikanische Akten*, doc. 64, 130–1.

politics.[62] Thus, while it was relatively easy by means of permissive signals to mobilise the German Catholic press for the culture war, reining it in was quite another matter. Similar problems arose in Spain, where the intransigent circles around the journal *Siglo Futuro* openly accused senior clerical figures, such as Cardinal Moreno, archbishop of Toledo, of being too servile in their relations with the constitutional monarchy, or vilified the activities of the conciliatory *Unión Catolica*, whose work had been publicly praised by the new pope.[63]

The problem underlying all these cases was that 'ultramontanism' had never been reducible simply to the idea of obedience to impulses from Rome. By the late 1860s, the ultramontane networks were increasingly dominated by figures from the legitimist, ultra-conservative right who felt little inclination to accommodate themselves to the new climate within the church and were hostile to the implicit labourism of 'social Catholicism'. Ultramontanism, in other words, represented specific social and political constellations whose interests – though they might generally overlap with – were not necessarily identical to those of the Holy See.

In an effort to counter-balance the disruptive influence of the extremist press, Leo XIII sponsored and established loyalist 'Leonine' journals, secretly subsidised from the Vatican, whose task was to respond robustly to all attacks from the ultramontane press.[64] In the early 1880s, Leo XIII encouraged the establishment in Rome of the French-language journal, *Le Moniteur de Rome*, whose editor, Joseph Denais, reacted vigorously to all attacks from the ultramontane papers. However one judges the success of these ventures, they demonstrate the irreversibility of the changes wrought by the pontificate of Pius IX.

A central concern under the new regime was to repair the damage that had been done by extremist journals under the previous pontificate to the public authority and prestige of the hierarchy.[65] After repeated attacks on moderate Spanish bishops by Candido Nocedal's *Siglo Futuro*, for example, Leo XIII responded in June 1883 with a forthright letter to Mgr Rampolla del Tindaro, the nuncio in Spain:

> The press that arrogates to itself the title of Catholic and that makes a profession of fighting under the sacred banner of our holy religion must, by absolute necessity, profess with respect all the doctrines and all precepts, accepting fully the living

[62] M. L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 2000), 117–23.

[63] Grabinski, *Leone XIII*, 58–9.

[64] Ibid., 35; Malgeri, *Stampa cattolica*, 142–3.

[65] Maria Franca Mellano, *Cattolici e voto politico in Italia. Il 'non expedit' all'inizio del pontificato di Leone XIII* (Casale Monferrato, 1982), 81, 135.

authority of the Church . . . Consequently, if this press were to neglect these same fundamental duties, it is evident that it would no longer be entitled to bear the glorious title of Catholic, nor to deceive the faithful with a false appearance of orthodoxy.[66]

During the mid-1880s, repeated warnings of this kind were issued to French, Italian and Spanish journals in encyclicals and letters to nuncios.

Papal press policy under Leo XIII thus manifested a curious reversal of polarities. Whereas the papalist press of the previous regime had distinguished between 'liberal Catholics' and Catholics 'properly speaking',[67] the Leonine papacy and its agents impugned the right of certain ultraconservative groups to call themselves 'Catholic'. Whereas Pius IX, notwithstanding moments of ambivalence, had tended to support ultramontane journals against moderate bishops, Leo supported his bishops against the intransigent journals.

The oppositional energies of parts of the formerly ultramontane press after 1878 invite comparison with the 'Bismarck press' that raged against the German imperial government after the departure of the chancellor who had created it using trusted personal allies, covert subsidies and carefully targeted leaks. The comparison is less far-fetched than it sounds. Cardinal Wladimir Czacki, the Polish clergyman who ran Pius IX's secret liaison with the 'Black International' in Geneva during the 1870s, is reputed to have learned from observing Bismarck's skill in the management of public opinion.[68] Moreover, for all their differences, Bismarck and Pius IX had something in common. They were both 'men of 1848', whose conception of power and authority had been shaped in good part by the trauma of revolution. Both emerged from this experience with a confidence in the soundness of the masses of 'little folk' whose loyalties remained to be mobilised, both were acutely sensitive to the power of the press and public opinion, and both presided over significant innovations in publicity management. The paradoxical consequence in both cases was the creation of a press network

[66] Cited in Grabinski, *Leone XIII*, 59; see also Lannon, *Privilege*, esp. 125. For clerical criticism of the 'disobedience' of the integralist press in Spain, see Vicente Carcel Orti, *León XIII y los catolicos españoles. Informes vaticanos sobre la Iglesia in España* (Pamplona, 1988), esp. 878–9; F. Diaz de Cerio and M. F. Núñez y Muñoz, *Instrucciones secretas a los nuncios de España en el siglo XIX (1847–1907)* (Rome, 1989), 255–62; B. Urigüen, 'La prensa contrarevolucionaria durante el reinado de Isabel II', in A. Gil Novales (ed.), *La prensa y la revolución liberal: España, Portugal y America Latina* (Madrid, 1983), 583–612; here 590.

[67] This distinction was drawn by *Civiltà Cattolica* in an article of 6 February 1869 attacking the opponents of infallibility; see Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 154–5.

[68] Viaene, 'A Brilliant Failure'.

that was more attached to a specific charismatic individual than to the abstract formal authority that he represented.

The impact of the ultramontane press on literate European Catholics should not be underestimated. Wolfram Kaiser has pointed to the ways in which liberal and anticlerical publicity began to speak for a transnational, 'partially Europeanised' public sphere. The same can be said for the Catholic organs. Irish readers of *The Tablet* could follow in detail the debates over secularising measures in the Piedmontese parliament; the Italian readers of *Civiltà Cattolica* could follow the unfolding of Bismarck's struggle with the German Catholics; the Spanish Catholic press reprinted articles from *L'Univers, Civiltà Cattolica*, *L'Unità* and *The Tablet*; by the 1870s the latest news from Rome was standard fare in hundreds of Catholic newspapers across the continent.[69] Catholic journalism may have been second-rate by the belletristic criteria of the liberal press, but it helped to sustain the sense of simultaneity and urgency, the sense of a shared predicament, that moved tens of thousands of Catholics – including many from the poorest classes – to support the Holy See with money and gifts. Of course it would be going too far to suggest that these trends sufficed to displace the nation as an object of increasing emotional attachment in the minds of many European Catholics – Europe remained, despite the homogenising efforts of the ultramontanes, a continent of national 'Catholicisms', and the great struggles of the culture wars were fought within the framework of the nation-states and their distinct political cultures.[70] But the achievement of the Catholic press lay precisely in the capacity to link these discrete conflicts with each other, to draw out common themes, to build a sense of solidarity: not only with the pope, but also with beleaguered co-religionists across the continent. In this way, the Catholic papers helped to build that transnational community of sentiment that was so characteristic of European (and to a lesser extent, global) Catholicism in the last decades of the century.

[69] See, for example, from *The Tablet*: 'Piedmont', 20 January 1855, 37; 'From our Roman Correspondent', 22 October 1870, 524–5; 'Rome', 26 November 1870, 686; 'Paderborn', 11 December 1875, 756; 'Condizione dei Cattolici dopo le leggi fondamentali in Austria', *Civiltà Cattolica* 7 (1869), 641–56, 'La persecuzione della chiesa nella Svizzera', *Civiltà Cattolica* 12 (1873), 272–85, the regular feature 'Contemporanea' in *Civiltà Cattolica* routinely included the latest news on Catholic affairs in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, Italy and Spain; see also Urigüen, 'La prensa contrarevolucionaria', 595. Historical research on the Catholic press in most parts of Europe has scarcely advanced beyond the cataloguing of titles and tendencies; further research is needed before more precise claims can be made about its impact on Catholic opinion.

[70] On the persistence of national commitments within (German) Catholicism, see B. Stambolis, 'Nationalisierung trotz Ultramontanisierung oder: "Alles für Deutschland. Deutschland aber für Christus". Mentalitätsleitende Wertorientierung deutscher Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* 269 (1999), 57–97.

RHETORIC AND REALITY

The culture wars were waged with a range of instruments: legislation, civil disobedience, demonstrations and on some occasions even physical violence. But they were, above all, wars of words and images. From the middle decades of the century, the conflict between anticlerical and Catholic/ultramontane forces was marked – and to a certain extent driven – by a process of rhetorical radicalisation. On both sides, the purpose of polemic was twofold: to define one's own cause and the values espoused in its support, and to define the 'enemy' in terms of the negation of those values. So extreme and all-pervasive was this process of rhetorical inflation that it came to constitute a kind of 'virtual reality', quite independent of the complex and nuanced relationships that actually existed between and within the Catholic and anticlerical milieux.

Papal utterances played a crucial role in the process of rhetorical escalation that culminated in the culture wars. The public statements of Gregory XVI and especially of Pius IX were marked by a stridency of tone that set them apart from their eighteenth-century predecessors (with the possible exception of *Unigenitus*). The language was at once sharper and less focused. The 'enemy' identified in many encyclicals was not a person or organisation, but a pervasive tendency. 'Wickedness is exultant', Gregory XVI declared in 1832. 'Shameless science exults. Licentiousness exults. Truth is corrupted. Errors of every kind are spread without constraint. Wicked men abuse holy laws and rights and institutions'.[71] Pius IX's pontificate opened on a more conciliatory note, but with the papacy's defeat and expropriation at the hands of the Kingdom of Italy in 1859/61 and 1870 there was a drift into increasingly extreme rhetoric: the Italian government were 'wolves', 'liars', 'satellites of Satan in human flesh', 'monsters of hell' and so on.[72] The confrontation with the Piedmontese/Italian kingdom was the bitterest of the struggles waged by the papacy during these decades and the heat generated by it communicated itself to many public utterances whose purpose was ostensibly to address different or much broader questions. The *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) contained, as we have noted, polemical formulations from an earlier document bemoaning anticlerical measures launched under the Piedmontese monarchy, and the accompanying encyclical, *Quanta cura*, offered a vision of contemporary society that was nothing short of apocalyptic:

[71] Gregory XVI, *Mirari vos*, 15 August 1832, cited in Chadwick, *Popes*, 23.
[72] Chadwick, *Popes*, 235.

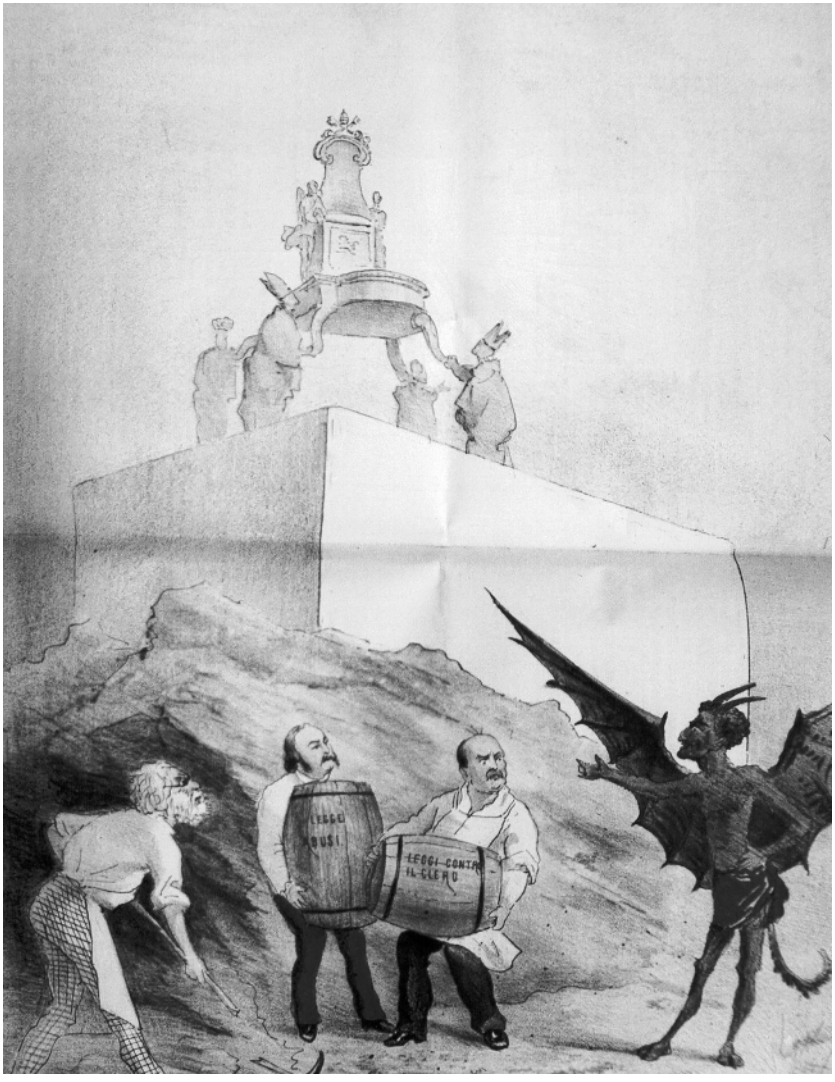

Figure 1 The devil and the anticlericals make common cause. In this heavy-handed allegory from the papalist journal *L'Iride*, two Italian anticlerical politicians, Agostino Depretis and Pasquale Mancini, are shown in company with the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck carrying earth away from the foot of the papal throne in barrels marked 'laws against the clergy'. The devil addresses them with the words: 'Trying to undermine this rock? Alas, barons! I have been trying it for nineteen centuries and I have never succeeded!' (*L'Iride. Periodico Romano Umoristico-Satirico*, 2/8, 25 February 1877).

Figure 2 Italian anticlericals emulate their German hero. The Italian anticlerical politician Pasquale Mancini, shown here bearing manacles and 'Laws against the abuses of the clergy', is depicted as the ape of Bismarck. The caption states: 'The master is a brute, but the monkey's not joking either!' Italian clerical journals often sought to discredit Italian anticlericals by suggesting that they were slavish imitators of the German *Kulturkämpfer*. (*L'Iride. Periodico Romano Umoristico-Satirico*, 1/7, 10 December 1876).

The criminal machinations of the evil ones . . . pour out their wickedness like waves from a storm-swept sea, and they promise liberty, while in reality these people above all are slaves of corruption, and with their false opinions and their lamentable writings they set about devouring the foundation of the Catholic religion and of civil society, expunging all virtue and justice, corrupting all minds and all hearts, so as to mislead the incautious and especially inexperienced youth, corrupt it, entwine it in errors, and finally tear it from the bosom of the Catholic Church.[73]

It was characteristic of such papal rhetoric that its arguments were couched in abstractions and statements of principle; there was no effort at differentiation, no genuine engagement with an authentically historical

[73] This text was composed by the secretary of letters Luca Pacifici but fully approved by the pope; *Pii IX. Pontifici maximi acta* (Rome, 1857; repr. Graz, 1971), 687–700; quotation from 688.

sensibility.[74] Thus, an early issue of *Civiltà Cattolica* presented the journal as an instrument in the 'great battle' currently raging 'between truth and error'.[75] Since the world was perceived as divided into two opposing camps, the dissenters within Catholicism (liberal Catholics, Jansenists, Febronians, anti-infallibilists, etc.) were no less dangerous than its enemies without. 'The Holy Father said', one eye-witness reported in the early days of the Vatican Council of 1870, 'that the most pernicious enemies of the church are the liberal Catholics, because [these are] internal'.[76] In June 1871, Pius IX told a delegation of French Catholics that he feared the communards of Paris ('true demons from hell who walk upon the earth') less than 'this unhappy political tendency, this Catholic liberalism, which is our true scourge'.[77] These were extraordinary words indeed, coming as they did so soon after the news that the Commune had shot fifty-two hostages, including Mgr Darboy, the liberal archbishop of Paris.

The same tendency towards an increasingly binary worldview could be observed across the ultramontane press network. The Catholic polemic of the culture wars era projected a manichaean vision of a world in which the forces of Christ were arrayed against those of Satan. 'This is no time for half measures', one anonymous author declared in *De Katholiek*, an ultramontane journal published in 's-Hertogenbosch. 'Everyone is forced openly to take up a position with or against Christ – there is no middle way.'[78] It was a question, another article in the same journal suggested in 1874, of choosing between the 'Church of Christ' and the 'Synagogue of Satan'.[79] The same theme was manifest in the satirical images generated by a number of Catholic journals after the annexation of Rome. A cartoon published in *L'Iride*, a Roman journal of ultramontane inspiration, showed the devil and his minions celebrating recent sittings of the Italian parliament in which anticlerical laws had been passed. In another image from the same journal, the devil remonstrates with a trio of notorious anticlerical politicians who have set about trying to undermine the throne of St Peter: 'You want to undermine this rock? . . . I've been trying to do that for nineteen centuries and I've never succeeded!'[80] In this manichaean worldview, the forces of

[74] Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)*, 125.

[75] Alvaro Dioscoridi, 'La rivoluzione italiana e "La Civiltà Cattolica" ', *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento* 42 (1955), 258–66.

[76] Franco, *Appunti*, 75–6.

[77] Allocution of 16 June 1871, cited in Y. Chiron, *Pie IX. Pape moderne* (Bitsche, 1995), 467.

[78] 'Rd.', 'Een enkel woord over Döllinger', *De Katholiek*, 60 (November 1871), 273–81, here 278.

[79] 'R.', 'Der vijand van de heilige Kerk', *De Katholiek* 66 (August 1871), 49–61. On this theme more generally, see Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 433–9.

[80] 'Gran carnevale del 1877 nella città di Dite', *L'Iride*, 4 February 1877; 'La chiesa cattolica e i suoi persecutori', *L'Iride*, 25 February 1877.

'obedience' – one of the cardinal virtues celebrated by the papalist camp – were ranged against the forces of 'Satanic rebellion' unleashed by the revolutions of 1789 and 1848, and the Italian unification of 1859.[81]

The first casualties of this rhetorical polarisation were naturally the conciliatory Catholics, the '*transigenti*' who sought to defend a range of positions between the ultramontane and the anticlerical camps. The denigration of Catholic liberalism had long been a central theme of the ultramontane press, but it became more strident after the revolutions of 1848 and more strident again after the formation of the Kingdom of Italy and the annexation of Rome. A recurring strategy was to define liberal Catholic positions in a way that made them appear self-contradictory. The very concept of the 'liberal Catholic', *Civiltà* declared in 1869, was 'not only a bizarre and monstrous, but also an entirely repugnant combination', since liberalism implied the exclusion of any religious influence from social relationships. Not only, the article argued, was an accord between liberalism and Catholicism impossible, war between the two was inevitable.[82] In a commentary on the current 'state of the Catholic liberals', a writer for *De Katholiek* declared that liberalism was 'the logical development of Protestantism' and that liberal Catholicism as a consequence was the 'bastard child' of two irreconcilable parents.[83] In a disturbing echo of earlier Spanish preoccupations with 'purity of blood', Cándido Nocedal, editor of the integralist journal *Siglo Futuro*, denounced liberal Catholics as '*mestizos*' (half-breeds). The same line was taken up by many Spanish provincial papers.[84] Veuillot's *Illusion libérale*, composed in the perfervid style for which his journal was famous, was dedicated entirely to proving the impossibility of any accommodation between Catholics and liberals, as was Sardà i Salvany's *Liberalism is Sin*, which expounded the thesis that liberalism was a worse evil than blasphemy, adultery or homicide.[85] A cartoon in the Roman satirical paper *La Lima* depicted a liberal Catholic publicist begging Satan for inspiration and writing leader articles under his whispered dictation.[86] Special vituperation was reserved for those 'Old Catholics' who publicly doubted the wisdom of declaring infallibility in 1870 or rejected the doctrine in principle;

[81] See, e.g., anon, 'Waartoe zijn de Katholieken in den tegenwoordigen Strijd verpligt?', *De Katholiek* 56 (July 1869), 1–21; also 'La Civiltà Cattolica nel 1860', *Civiltà Cattolica* 10 (1859), 641–56.

[82] 'Ripugnanza del concetto di cattolico liberale', *Civiltà Cattolica* 8 (1869), 5–19; here 5; on this theme, see also Dioscoridi, 'Rivoluzione italiana', 261.

[83] C. L. van Rijp, 'De Toestand der katholieke liberalen in 1872', *De Katholiek* 62 (July–December 1872), 221–37, here 222, 223.

[84] M. Cruz Seoane, *Historia del periodismo en España*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1983), vol. II: *El siglo XIX*, 175.

[85] L. Veuillot, *L'illusion libérale*, 2nd edn, (Paris, 1866); Sardà i Salvany, *El liberalismo es peccado* (Barcelona, 1884).

[86] 'La redazione del giornale d'esperance', *La Lima*, 21, 14 (15 Feb. 1871).

they were 'chorus-leaders in the camp that Satan commands against the eternal, infallible church'.[87] Only by reference to this extreme rhetorical climate can we explain the extraordinary receptiveness of the Catholic press throughout Europe to the spurious 'revelations' of the hoaxer 'Leo Taxil', who claimed to have witnessed Satan-worship, sorcery and diabolical apparitions while serving as a freemason.

A further corollary of the binary worldview that characterised much Catholic publicity in the era of the culture wars was the proliferation of conspiracy theories, in which the Jews frequently featured. Pius IX bestowed his blessing upon Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, whose book, *Le juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples Chrétiens*, published in Paris in 1869, depicted the Cabbala as a satanic cult and argued that the freemasons and the Jews were working together to overturn Christianity. Similar scenarios circulated in the published works of the parish priest and honorary canon Abbé Chabauty; Léon Meurin, the Jesuit archbishop of Port Louis in Mauritius; Mgr Anselme Tilloy; and Abbé Isidore Bertrand, whose brochure of 1903 described freemasonry as a 'Jewish sect'.[88] To be sure, Leo XIII's furious attack on free-masonry in the encyclical *Humanum genus* (20 April 1884) was free of any directly antisemitic content, but it lent support in principle to the scenarios of the antisemites, since it spoke of a world divided into followers of Christ and followers of Satan and observed that 'all those who follow this latter flag seem to be linked in one conspiracy'.[89] The church could thus reject antisemitism with one hand (on the grounds that its racist doctrine was incompatible with the infinity of divine grace) while broadly endorsing it with the other (on the grounds that Christianity needed defending against its most principled enemies).[90]

As often in polemical confrontations, both sides fought to associate themselves with the same prestigious topoi: 'light', 'truth', 'liberty', 'civilisation' and even 'reason' featured prominently on both sides. One man's 'liberty'

[87] 'Rd.', 'Een enkel woord over Döllinger', 273–81, here 278.

[88] Abbé Chabauty, *Les francs-maçons et les juifs. Sixième âge de l'Eglise d'après l'Apocalypse* (Paris, 1881); Léon Meurin, *La franc-maçonnerie, synagogue de Satan* (Paris, 1893); Mgr Anselme Tilloy, *le péril judéo-maçonique, le mal – le remède* (Paris, 1897); Abbé Isidore Bertrand, *La franc-maçonnerie, secte juive* (Paris, 1903). All these works are discussed in J. Rogalla von Bieberstein, *Die These von der Verschwörung 1776–1945. Philosophen, Freimaurer, Juden, Liberale und Sozialisten als Verschwörer gegen die Sozialordnung* (Frankfurt am Main, 1976), 193–6.

[89] *Leonis pontificis maximi acta* (repr. Graz, 1971), IV, 43–70.

[90] On these contradictions in the logic of Catholic antisemitism, see Olaf Blaschke, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus im deutschen Kaiserreich*, 2nd edn (Göttingen, 1999), passim; on the role of antisemitism as a stabilising element in the 'ideological structure' of nineteenth-century Catholicism, see Olaf Blaschke, 'Die Anatomie des katholischen Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Eine Einladung zum internationalen Vergleich', in O. Blaschke and A. Mattioli (eds.), *Katholischer Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Ursachen und Traditionen im internationalen Vergleich* (Zurich, 2000), 3–54.

was another's 'libertinism'.[91] One characteristic article in *Unità Cattolica* (Turin) in 1876 contrasted 'the free sons of Pius IX' with 'the slaves of the revolution' (i.e. liberals) and asserted that 'the servitude of the *Syllabus* is the greater liberty, because it is undertaken from conviction and love'.[92] Catholic polemic often depicted the opposing camp as a distorted mirror of the church and its following, in keeping with a traditional view of Satan, as the rebellious 'ape of God'. Thus the freemasons worshipped in a 'synagogue of Satan' whose rites and hierarchy were conceived in grotesque mimicry of the church of Christ. Their 'perverse society', spawned in 'shadow and obscurity' to the 'ruin of both religion and human society' was juxtaposed with those 'pious societies of the faithful that flourish within the Catholic Church'.[93] The avowed aim of *Scuola Cattolica*, founded in Milan in 1873, was to 'declare and expound the doctrine of that school of Catholicism which is the open condemnation of all the schools of lies and corruption that are today held in such honour'.[94]

The same logic was at work in the notion that the culture war was a struggle to the finish between 'the two Frances' or 'the two Spains' or between 'the true Italy' and a 'subversive' or 'false' (*faziosa*, *fittizia*) Italy, which was little more than a travesty of the former.[95] 'For us in these days', one clerical journal announced, 'it is a great advantage to have a clear and neat division between the component elements of Italy . . . There is no middle path – we are either for or against the pope'.[96] To the 'two Italies' there corresponded 'two Romes': one the capital of world Christendom, the other the capital of a venal and inward-turned Italian kingdom. Thus the papalist journal *Rome ou la Patrie Catholique*, founded in October 1870 shortly after the annexation, informed its readers that its purpose was to 'work towards reinforcing the links that connect Rome with the entire world'.[97] Other journals (*La Frusta*, *La Voce della Verità*, *La Lima*) polemicised against the

[91] See, for example, 'La Civiltà Cattolica nel 1860', *Civiltà Cattolica* 10 (1859), 641–56; here 651.

[92] Cited in Mellano, *Cattolici e voto politico*, 39, n. 9, 10.

[93] Allocution *Multiplices inter machinationes*, September 1865, cited in Chiron, *Pie IX*, 360–1; on 'distorting mirroring' in Catholic rhetoric, see G. Cubitt, 'Catholics versus Freemasons in Nineteenth-Century France', in F. Tallett and N. Atkin (eds.), *Religion, Society and Politics in France since 1789* (London, 1991), 121–36, esp. 132.

[94] Cited in Majo, *Stampa cattolica*, 56.

[95] Dioscoridi, 'Rivoluzione italiana', 266; Claude Langlois, 'Catholics and Seculars', in P. Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory*, *Rethinking the French Past*, trans. A. Goldhammer, 3 vols. (New York, 1996), vol. I: *Conflicts and Divisions*, 109–43, here 111.

[96] *L'Armonia* (Turin), cited in John N. Molony, *The Emergence of Political Catholicism in Italy. Partito Popolare 1919–1926* (London, 1976), 19.

[97] *Rome ou la Patrie Catholique*, 23 October 1872, cited in Malgeri, *La stampa cattolica*, 25.

Piedmontese '*buzzurri*' – Roman slang for immigrants – who now thronged to the city from the north to take up positions in government service.[98]

To what extent did these images of extreme polarisation correspond with the lived reality of European societies? Recent research on the associational networks of Catholic Europe has shown how successful the church and its lay auxiliaries were, not only in organising the faithful around confessionally oriented activities, but also in confessionalising the contexts in which various non-religious activities – such as sport, reading, labour representation, or even banking and everyday consumption – were conducted. In Italy, for example, the Catholic 'movement' boasted 4,000 parish groups and 7,000 workers' societies by the late 1890s; by 1908, about an eighth of Italy's organised workforce was enrolled in 'white' or Catholic unions supported by a network of small banks.[99] Historians of German and Swiss-German Catholicism in particular have written of a Catholic 'ghetto', or of a 'Catholic milieu' characterised by close internal bonds and relatively impermeable boundaries.[100] In the context of the Low Countries, historians have highlighted the process of 'pillarisation' (*verzuiling*) by which Catholics and liberals came to constitute parallel but distinct societies within the broader 'national' community.[101] In Germany, and to a lesser extent in Italy and France, where the culture wars coincided with the formation and consolidation of new polities, the legacy of the culture wars was a lasting polarisation of political allegiances along confessional or clerical/anticlerical lines.[102] In France, Spain and Italy, moreover, levels of religious observance and the capacity of Catholic groups to mobilise the faithful around confessional objectives varied enormously from one region to another, to the

[98] Malgeri, *La stampa cattolica*, 28, 47–8, 59.

[99] Molony, *Political Catholicism*, 25, 34.

[100] U. Altermatt, *Katholizismus und Moderne. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte der schweizer Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Zurich, 1989), esp. 66–8; Altermatt, *Der Weg der schweizer Katholiken*, esp. 37, 52, 58; Peter Lösche and Franz Walter, 'Katholiken, Konservative und Liberale. Milieus und Lebenswelten bürgerlicher Parteien in Deutschland während des 20. Jahrhunderts', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 51 (2000), 471–92; for an overview of the relevant German literature, see Heilbronner, 'From Ghetto to Ghetto'.

[101] On Catholic *verzuiling*, see Hans Righaut, *De katholieke Zuil in Europa. Het ontstaan van verzuiling onder Katholieken in Oostenrijk, Zwitserland, België en Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1986); John A. Coleman, *The Evolution of Dutch Catholicism* (Los Angeles, 1978), esp. 58–87; J. M. G. Thurlings, *De wankende Zuil: Nederlandse Katholieken tussen assimilatie en pluralisme* (Deventer, 1978); Frans Groot, *Roomse, rechtzinnigen en niewlichters: Verzuiling in een Hollandse Plattelandsgemeente. Naaldwijk 1850–1930* (Hilversum, 1992).

[102] On Germany, see esp. Jonathan Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters. Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, 1997), esp. 265–82; on Italy, G. Candeloro, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia* (Rome, 1953), esp. 142, Mellano, *Cattolici e voto politico*, 132–3; on France, Ralph Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism, 1789–1914* (London, 1989).

extent that the bifurcation of society into believers and unbelievers seemed anchored in the cultural geography of the nation.[103]

We should not press this argument too far, of course. The polemical rhetoric, with its harsh oppositions, sometimes belied a reality of collaboration and pragmatic accommodation. The struggle waged by the papacy against the Italian state was fought over real issues and genuine abuses, but the tacit acceptance on both sides of the 'Laws of Guarantee' as the 'constitutional' basis of the Vatican's status within the new Italian nation-state was an important act of compromise. In the 1880s, one historian has argued, a 'tacit alliance' developed between the church authorities and the French state, based on habits of inconspicuous collaboration.[104] Catholics and secular nationalists worked in tandem to sustain the *Italianità* of the Italian diaspora, even while the culture war was at its height.[105] Throughout the 1870s, many Austrian Catholics continued to support those parliamentary liberals who defended the centralised Habsburg system against the federalist demands of the ethnic nationalists. In Germany, Catholic reading clubs nurtured a progressive and even mildly nationalist ethos among German Catholics without arousing the ire of the hierarchy.[106] Some historians have argued, moreover, that the term 'milieu' overstates the homogeneity and cohesion of Catholic society in the German Empire after 1871.[107]

CONCLUSION: MODERNITY AND THE CULTURE WARS

An influential view would have it that the marshalling of Catholic energies characteristic of the era of the culture wars was an essentially regressive phenomenon, in the sense that it retarded the emergence of modern political cultures by pledging committed Catholics to a struggle against 'modern civilisation' and concentrating them in a sociologically, ideologically and culturally backward 'ghetto'. But this view sits uneasily with the transformations we have examined in this chapter. Like many European states,

[103] On regional contrasts in Spain, see Lannon, *Privilege*, esp. 4–19; on France, Gérard Cholvy and Yves-Marie Hilaire, *Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine*, 3 vols. (Toulouse, 1985–8), I, 259–312.

[104] Livio Rota, *Le nomine vescovili e cardinalizie in Francia alla fine del secolo XIX* (Rome, 1996), esp. 357.

[105] R. J. B. Bosworth, *Italy and the Wider World, 1860–1960* (London, 1996), 121.

[106] Jeffrey T. Zalar, '"Knowledge is Power". The *Borromäusverein* and Catholic Reading Habits in Imperial Germany', *Catholic Historical Review* 86 (2000), 20–46; see also Stambolis, 'Nationalisierung trotz Ultramontanisierung'.

[107] See, e.g., Wilfried Loth, 'Soziale Bewegungen im Katholizismus des Kaiserreichs', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 17 (1991), 279–310; also H. W. Smith and C. M. Clark, 'The Fate of Nathan', in H. W. Smith (ed.), *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany 1800–1914* (Oxford and New York, 2001), 3–29.

the church entered a phase of centralisation whose foremost victims were the traditional holders of provincial authority. The *means* adopted by the nineteenth-century Catholics – mass-circulation media, voluntary associations, demonstrative forms of mass action, the expansion of schooling among deprived social groups[108] and the increasingly prominent involvement of women in positions of responsibility[109] – were quintessentially modern.

Moreover, it is far from clear that Catholic mobilisation hindered or delayed processes of political modernisation in the European states. In a number of European countries, confessional conflict contributed to the broadening of political participation by providing Catholics (especially rural ones) with the language and argument of collective interest and thus with a reason for entering the political arena as activists, deputies or voters.[110] Catholic mobilisation may even, in the longer term, have had a secularising impact on European politics. For the mass-membership parties that emerged in Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany and Italy – against the better judgement of the hierarchy – to defend the interests of European Catholics against liberal, Protestant or anticlerical elites soon emancipated themselves from clerical control. They gradually distanced themselves from the church, defining their identity and that of their constituency in terms that de-emphasised religion. Paradoxically, as one historian of the Catholic parties has observed, the organisations formed to bring religion into politics actually ended by taking it out. In these ways, liberal democracy in Europe was 'expanded and consolidated by its enemies'.[111]

It could still be objected that although the *means* deployed in creating the new Catholicism were 'modern', the *ends* by which it defined itself were emphatically not. This observation would seem to be supported by the denunciations of 'modern civilisation' that figured so prominently in later nineteenth-century Catholic rhetoric. To be sure, these outbursts have

[108] On Catholicism and schooling in Spain, see Payne, *Spanish Catholicism*, 100.

[109] On the role of women in Catholic associational culture, see, e.g., Ralph Gibson, 'Why Republicans and Catholics Couldn't Stand Each Other in the Nineteenth Century', J. F. McMillan, 'Religion and Gender in Modern France: Some Reflections', and Hazel Mills, 'Negotiating the Divide: Women, Philanthropy and the "Public Sphere" in Nineteenth-Century France', all in Tallett and Atkin (eds.), *Religion*, 107–20, 29–54, 55–66; Caroline Ford, 'Religion and Popular Culture in Modern Europe', *Journal of Modern History* 65 (1993), 152–75; Clear, *Nuns*, Langlois, *Catholicisme*. For an account that denies the 'emancipatory' potential in Catholic female voluntarism, arguing that it merely consolidated patriarchal power relations, see Götz von Olenhusen, *Klerus*, 19–20, 397–8.

[110] These themes are explored in M. L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy*, 69–151, and broadly supported by the statistical analyses presented in Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters*. A persuasive but more narrowly focused case for the constructive character of Catholic protest is made specifically for Italy in Gabriele de Rosa, *Il contributo dei cattolici alla formazione del nuovo stato* (Rome, 1963), esp. 13–14.

[111] S. N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1996), 262.

to be read in context. The term 'modern' as used by nineteenth-century liberals was not value-neutral; the furious rejection by Catholics of 'modern civilisation' was an attack on a specifically liberal conception of what it meant to be 'modern' and 'civilised', not a blanket condemnation of all that was changing in contemporary life. But the fact remains that the Catholic church and its lay auxiliaries were hostile to some of the principles that appear to have been central to the advent of modernity: the idea, for example, that societies ought to be composed of autonomous individuals with unbound consciences, or the idea that economic deregulation and the 'liberation' of entrepreneurial energies in an environment of more or less free competition are intrinsically virtuous.

We need nonetheless to move beyond a binary conception of the culture wars as a confrontation between 'modern' and 'anti-modern' forces. For even a very cursory look at all the parties reveals that all were selective and ideological in their celebration of 'the modern'. Liberals rejoiced in science, commerce and industry and a political order centred on the putatively autonomous (male, educated, tax-paying) subject but were deeply sceptical (with good reason, as it turned out) of the benefits of democratisation. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, Liberals could argue with some justice that they were the party of forward 'movement', but this claim rang rather hollow by the 1890s when they found themselves outflanked by new mass parties. Their elitist politics and their dependence upon informal networks of property-owning worthies now looked decidedly obsolete. As for the socialist left, whose successes in many parts of Europe helped to weaken the political purchase of liberalism, they too prided themselves on a worldview that was objective, scientific, progressive and emancipatory, but they were naturally critical of modern capitalism and the profit motive that lies at its root – there was some common ground here with social Catholic critiques of 'Mammonistic capital' and calls for the defence of labour. Profound ambivalences underlay even the most trenchantly modernist enterprises. The great ideologies of the nineteenth century – the New Catholicism included – were not animated by an unequivocal celebration of all that was 'modern', but by a desire to master and contain the challenges posed by rapid change, to seize the opportunities while averting the dangers.