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## All Things to All Men: Catholic Social Teaching in Reaction to Anti-Catholicism in Late Nineteenth-Century France and Germany

John Anderson Abbott Harris

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All Things to All Men: Catholic Social Teaching in Reaction to Anti-Catholicism in Late  
Nineteenth-Century France and Germany

by

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Undergraduate honors thesis under the direction of

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## Introduction

Over many centuries of episodic conflict between the Catholic Church and secular authorities, the period from 1864 to 1891 stands out. The various Italian principalities and city-states that had long occupied the peninsula, in increasing tension with the Papal States, finally decided to forge ahead, united against the Vatican. In the summer of 1864, the papacy was in crisis; before the end of the year, Pope Pius IX would publish a statement of the Church's absolute unwillingness to cooperate with modernity. Under increasing intellectual, political, and military pressure from the unifying state of Italy, the Papal States had dwindled effectively only to Rome. Then, in September, the Emperor of France, Napoleon III, negotiated terms with the Italian king, Victor Emmanuel II, under which the French troops defending Rome would withdraw and the Italians would not annex Rome. Furthermore, the Italians agreed to defend Rome from potential foreign invaders, and "undertook to transfer their capital from Turin to Florence as a sign of good faith."<sup>1</sup>

The Church's response was quick and decisive. Having not been consulted by either party to the September Convention, as this was known, and knowing that the agreement was tenuous at best, Pope Pius IX took this moment as a "last small straw," a catalyst for the December publication of his famed Syllabus of Errors.<sup>2</sup> An addendum to the encyclical *Quanta Cura*, the Syllabus outlined a litany of objections to 80 perceived modern evils, among which were liberalism, exclusively violent conflict resolution, religious freedoms for non-Catholics, absolute freedom of the press, and the breaking of solemn oaths.<sup>3</sup> A diverse list, several points of which were otherwise unobjectionable, the Syllabus came to be an object of ridicule for its unabashed

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<sup>1</sup> Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 165.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

<sup>3</sup> Pius IX, *Syllabus of Errors* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1864).

and, to many Europeans, tone deaf anti-modernism. The 80<sup>th</sup> and final point, which articulated the (supposedly) erroneous view that the “Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization,” was a particular flashpoint for many across Europe.<sup>4</sup> Under siege both temporally and spiritually, the papacy (and Church at large) developed an increasingly reactionary and hostile attitude toward the errors outlined.

Over the course of the following decades, the Church radically shifted from this anachronistic attitude of Pope Pius IX to an organization willing to immerse herself in the moral, political, social, and economic issues of a contemporary, liberalizing Europe. Fewer than 30 years after the publication of the Syllabus, the Church’s priority of economic justice was outlined explicitly in Pope Leo XIII’s 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, with its imperative, among others, that “wealthy owners and all masters of labor should be mindful of this - that to exercise pressure upon the indigent and the destitute for the sake of gain, and to gather one's profit out of the need of another, is condemned by all laws, human and divine.”<sup>5</sup> A categorical denunciation of unfettered capitalism, as well as atheistic socialism, *Rerum Novarum* set the tone for a Church willing to disrupt social order insofar as it undermined the inherent, divinely-ordained dignity and autonomy of the worker, a markedly different attitude from that of the Church that had long served to buttress landed gentry and feudal monarchs. Without altering her fundamental teachings, the Church underwent a substantial transformation in the generation subsequent to the publication of the Syllabus of Errors.

Of course, thanks to Italian nationalism, the crisis of modernity was felt acutely in the Vatican, the center of the global Church and thus an object of both intense devotion and derision. Throughout Europe, however, the wedge between Church doctrine and emerging liberal ideology

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1891).

came to affect nearly every citizen, whether religious or not. Over the course of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, two storied European nations, France and Germany, emerged as battlegrounds in which the Church was forced to stand her ground on eternal dogma, while at the same time negotiating with the states in pursuit of solutions to the problems that liberalism sought to address. This thesis will chart that course of Catholic history in late 19<sup>th</sup> century France and Germany. Specifically, I will seek to understand the Church's reaction to the nascent liberal democratic states of the French Third Republic and the German Empire. The driving question is: to what extent did the Catholic clerical hierarchy and laity concede ground to secular state aims, and what particular forms did their compromise and resistance take?

In France, many in the Church remained hostile to encroaching liberal authority, especially in the school system, whereas German Catholics were more willing to engage in the liberal political structure inaugurated by the Empire. For French Catholics, memories of a state-supported Catholicism and the alignment of national policy with Catholic aims were not distant—regardless of their piety, French absolutists had long worked with the Church, largely to consolidate their own power. On the other hand, even before unification, German Catholics had often found themselves opposed to the Protestant-majority Prussian state, a fact that no doubt contributed to their willingness to participate in democracy through the Catholic Center Party in a *kleindeutsch* (i.e., not inclusive of Austria) Empire, without the intra-imperial solidarity of an even larger group of German-speaking fellow Catholics.

In selecting France and Germany as the cases for a comparative analysis of the Catholic Church, several considerations were made. To begin with, their shared border and prominence as European powers over the course of many centuries has created an explicitly adversarial, but similarly linked, relationship between the two. France has long served as the foil to Germany,

and vice versa. Furthermore, they are both places of particular importance in Church history, with the birth of the Reformation effected by the German Martin Luther in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century and France's storied distinction as the "eldest daughter of the Church."<sup>6</sup> In their traditional styles of governance, they also diverge; traditionally, "France has been a country with a high degree of central authority, [whereas] Germany is a federal country where self-government of local communities" had been important since the time of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>7</sup> Most directly connected to the content of this thesis, however, is the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War, the ramifications of which were, among other things, newly liberalized (and explicitly anti-Catholic) governments in both countries. Given the differences in respective national situations, the local clerical and lay structures responded in distinctive manners to secular governments and powerbrokers that, though obviously themselves unique, participated in a broader, continent-wide anti-Catholic intellectual, social, and political movement.

The Franco-Prussian War itself was a relatively short engagement, one that has been described as a "provoked defensive war."<sup>8</sup> That is to say, French invasion of the North German Confederation<sup>9</sup> appeared to be imminent, which prompted a preemptive German strike on France. Whether or not France was the initial aggressor is disputed. Napoleon III, the "ailing, pain-racked emperor [of France] was torn between desires for a military triumph that would magically resolve all his problems, and hope for the preservation of peace under conditions that

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<sup>6</sup> Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, *Discours sur la vocation de la nation française* (1841).

<sup>7</sup> Edith Archambault, Eckhard Priller and Annette Zimmer, "European Civil Societies Compared: Typically German—Typically French?" *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* (New York: Springer, 2014), 516.

<sup>8</sup> Josef Becker, "The Franco-Prussian Conflict of 1870 and Bismarck's Concept of a 'Provoked Defensive War': A Response to David Wetzel." *Central European History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 98.

<sup>9</sup> The immediate predecessor to the German Empire; Prussia-dominated conglomeration of mostly Protestant states.

would not further erode his position at home.”<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the conflict was bound to happen, given the overtly expansionist desires of Prussia, which were necessarily bound to a weakening of the French position on the continent. Regardless of his role in the immediate sparking of the war, Napoleon’s counterpart, Otto von Bismarck, undoubtedly welcomed the opportunity to finally unite Germany under his command. Thus, war erupted in July of 1870. Less than two months later, France’s disastrous defeat at the Battle of Sedan effectively ended the conflict. With the capture of Napoleon III, the French Second Empire collapsed, and the North German Confederation emerged victorious. As the continent welcomed 1871, two new nation-states emerged—the French Third Republic and the German Empire, entities that both lasted into the First World War.

Recognizing the shifting ground on which the Church found herself during the political and social turbulence in Europe, the Vatican organized an ideological response. Pope IX called, in 1869, the First Vatican Council “for the increase and exaltation of the Catholic faith and religion, for the uprooting of current errors, for the reformation of the clergy and the Christian people, and for the common peace and concord of all.”<sup>11</sup> Out of the Council, in 1870, emerged two documents, *Dei Filius* and *Pastor Aeternus*; the first was intended as a definitive statement of the Catholic faith and the second an enumeration of the institution, permanence, power, and character of the Roman Pontiff, by virtue of his succession in the office established by Christ upon St. Peter.<sup>12</sup> To a well-catechized Catholic, nothing surprising was included in the *Dei*

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<sup>10</sup> S. William Halperin, “The Origins of the Franco-Prussian War Revisited: Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne.” *The Journal of Modern History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), 91.

<sup>11</sup> Pius IX, *Decree of opening of the council* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1869).

<sup>12</sup> Pius IX, *Pastor Aeternus* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1870).



*Filius. Pastor Aeternus*, however, outlined dogma that had never been fully defined—the doctrine of papal infallibility, articulated as follows:

With the approval of the Sacred Council, we teach and define as a divinely revealed dogma that when the Roman Pontiff speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his Church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals.<sup>13</sup>

This dogma, which is not especially controversial when considered in light of the immense authority given to Peter (and, by extension, his successors) by Jesus, nevertheless caused an immense political uproar across Europe.<sup>14</sup> Papal infallibility, more than any other proclamation by the Vatican in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, defined the political antagonism between emerging secular governments and their Catholic citizens.

Uncertain political arrangements, along with increased militarism and nationalism, made for a generally divisive and hostile atmosphere across Europe. Increasingly, nation-states expected, and demanded, primary loyalty from citizens. Patriotism was not a cursory sentiment but a requirement of trustworthy citizenship. Vatican leaders not only saw this abroad but experienced intimately the perils of nationalist fervor in the midst of the unification of Italy. In 1859, “the emerging Italian republic took from Pius [IX] all the papal territories except for Rome itself.”<sup>15</sup> The Syllabus followed shortly thereafter. Amid such tension, allegiance to the Church in Italy, France, Germany, and elsewhere was, at best, somewhat outdated and, at worst, perfidious. Faithful Catholics across an increasingly liberal Europe were perceived to have divided loyalties between the Church and the state. With the definition of papal infallibility as

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 16:17-19; John 21:15-17

<sup>15</sup> Gene Burns, “The Politics of Ideology: The Papal Struggle with Liberalism.” *American Journal of Sociology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 1130.

divinely revealed dogma, state officials and chauvinists continent-wide believed that they had proven correct in their belief that, if forced to choose between the values of the nation or of the Church, steadfast Catholics would spurn the nation. The charge most commonly levied against Catholics, then, was that of ultramontanist. Meaning, literally, “over the mountain”-ism, ultramontanist referred to the alleged absolute fidelity of Catholics to the Pope, whose residence in southern Italy was separated from most of Europe by the Alps mountain range. One could not be a loyal patriot and an ultramontane Catholic, liberal state officials proclaimed. At some point, the choice between Church and nation had to be made.

The subsequent confrontation between Church and nation was long, arduous, and belligerent across the continent. Its particular contours in France and Germany, though, offer unique insights into the ways in which secular political, social, and cultural advances impacted the Church’s response. Specifically, the Church in France found herself without a coherent, organized response on liberal, democratic terms, which was made clear in the failure to compete effectively for parliamentary ascendancy, as well as the radical expansion of a secular, anti-Catholic school system. German Catholics, on the other hand, rallied around the Center Party and were able to, as a minority population, effect pro-Catholic change, especially in regards to labor laws across the Empire. In many ways, the Church in France reflected more of the character of Pius IX, whereas German Catholicism was more like that of Leo XIII. Different expressions of the same faith, France and Germany offered diverging examples of how to approach the post-Enlightenment world. In a time of crisis, the Church was forced to adapt—willingly or not.

## Chapter 1

### **La Nouvelle France: A Post-Catholic Nation?**

The century of French history leading up to 1870 reveals a Church whose influence was deep and broad, but waning. In the wake of the Revolution of 1789, the Catholic Church in France found herself in a position appreciably weaker than she had occupied in previous centuries. Heavily informed by Enlightenment ideals of freedom, individual autonomy, progressivism, and self-governance, the revolutionaries were decidedly anti-Catholic. Catholicism in France was a storied and prominent belief system, to say the least. The Church had exercised considerable moral and temporal authority in France over the centuries, stretching back to a time well before any notion of “France,” as a unified nation or people, even existed. Thus, with the violent institution of the First Republic as successor to the *Ancien Régime*, and the popular prevalence of desire to eradicate those institutions and practices that were seen by many as old, sclerotic, and retrograde, the Church was the most immediately obvious target. Deeply rooted in rural France, traditional Catholic practice was not only seen as a backwards object of derision and scorn by radical revolutionaries, but numerous acts of violence were committed against Catholic clergy and laity by more urbanite revolutionaries. Church property was seized by the state, churches were looted by vandals, priests were exiled or killed, and Catholic communities were left in disarray over the course of the 1790s. A decade of disorder hamstringed Church life and severely impacted the religious practice and formation of the post-revolutionary generation.<sup>16</sup> Though the Church remained deeply rooted in French culture, the faith was not as vibrantly practiced after the anticlerical mania of the Revolution.

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<sup>16</sup> Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 342.

Oscillating between a republic and an empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, France's polity was dynamic. The Church, however, was not. Weakened by the events at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but still integral to French culture, Church leadership appeared unaware of the extent of the danger posed by the new century. Any attempt at uniting France again, after the Reign of Terror, would have to involve some concessions to the Church due to the reality of the Church's uniqueness; in this way, the Church remained strong and essential to French governance. On the other hand, the great Revolutionary upheaval had left the Church with a looser grip on the religious practice of French families; in a number of regions across France, "the laity defied priests on issues big and small, from working on Sundays to practicing birth control. In these regions, the Church never really recovered from the forced abdications and persecutions" that had targeted Catholic clergy.<sup>17</sup> In short, the Church was bloodied, but unbowed. The wounds were extensive, however, to the extent that the Church would seek state support to continue to carry out its mission as widely as it had before 1789.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century French Church was defined largely by the Concordat of 1801, a treaty explicitly linking the Church and the French state. Signed by Napoleon Bonaparte, the ascendant military leader who would be crowned emperor in 1804, and Pope Pius VII, the Concordat was designed as a mutually beneficial, and utilitarian, agreement. The Church regained a sizeable amount of temporal authority that had been lost in the Revolution by her proclamation as "the 'religion of the great majority of French citizens.'"<sup>18</sup> With this declaration, Church leadership in France, as well as in the Vatican, was assured consultation by French statesmen. In return, the Church renounced her claim to lands that had been forcibly taken by the revolutionaries and

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<sup>17</sup> D.M.G. Sutherland, "Claude Langlois's French Revolution." *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* (Brooklyn: Berghan Books, 2013), 43.

<sup>18</sup> Joan Coffey, "The Aix Affair of 1891: A Turning Point in Church-State Relations before the Separation?" *French Historical Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 551.

allowed the head of state to nominate French bishops. A last point, the beneficiary of which depended largely on the inclination of the state, authorized the payment of clerical salaries by the state. With its ratification, the Concordat largely tied the fates of the Church and the authoritarian state together.

Though it was by no means an expression of genuine piety by Napoleon, the Concordat remade French Church-state relations such that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between the aims of the Church and the aims of right-wing authoritarians. From Napoleon, to the 1814 restoration of the conservative Bourbon monarchy, to the moderate July Monarchy, even to the short-lived Second Republic<sup>19</sup>, the Church remained in a position of relative political comfort, often to the dismay and disgruntlement of those who sympathized with republican values and ideals. As the *de jure* or *de facto* state religion from 1801 through the Franco-Prussian War, Catholicism in France remained strong. Bonaparte was notable for his attempt to bring the Church totally under his authority, but he never posed a serious threat to the Church, in large part on account of the fact that he had numerous international enemies, which kept his attention outward. Thus, the Church was not forced to defend herself very seriously, which helped give the impression that the 1790s had been an outlier. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, French Catholicism was ostensibly secure, but a lack of serious challenges had, in some ways, contributed to a decay of Church life. A false confidence, on the part of many Church leaders, in the security of the Church's position, combined with the ramifications of a generation of adults whose parents' formation had taken place in the chaos of the Revolution, and a blurring of state-Church lines, placed the Church in a somewhat tenuous position entering the 1850s.

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<sup>19</sup> The predecessor state to the Second Empire.

In the wake of the 1848 revolutions, Bonaparte's nephew, Napoleon III, seized imperial power in 1852 and, with it, authority over the Concordat. Like his uncle, Napoleon III was intent on taking advantage of the Church's standing in France in order to strengthen his grip on the country. Over the course of his reign, the Church was willing to overlook or encourage his absolutist impulses in order to ensure her continued standing as a dominant force in French political life. Catholicism, thus, was seen by many as inextricably linked with the ancient, reactionary, and authoritarian power structures of an aging version of France; the ascendant France was one whose essence was largely informed by its perceived growth beyond such structures. Furthermore, the Concordat's claim about Catholic dominance of France obscured the reality of failing devotion. For example, in the diocese of Orléans in 1852, "only 3.8% of males [and 20%] of females over twenty years of age" attended Easter mass, a central requirement of the Church for the faithful.<sup>20</sup> Not simply an issue of impiety among a rebellious young generation, broader French Catholic devotion, especially in urban areas, was atrophying while Church leaders spent time negotiating political deals at home and promoting Gallicanism, a movement that advocated for a more independent control of Church affairs at the national level, in conferences leading up to the First Vatican Council. In fact, Gallicanism was one of the errors enumerated in Pope Pius IX's Syllabus, evidence that it remained noteworthy in Church circles right up to the Council.<sup>21</sup> Instilling and encouraging French piety was not the *summum bonum* of French Catholic bishops, if the continued Gallican power struggle is any indication.

After the demise of the Second Empire in 1871, a Third Republic was hastily instituted. In only a few weeks, the "Second Empire collapsed, France lost Continental hegemony to the

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<sup>20</sup> John McManners, *Church and State in France, 1870-1914* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 9.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Farrugia, "Vatican I and the Ecclesiological Context in East and West." *Gregorianum* (Rome: Gregorian Biblical Press, 2011), 457.

new German Reich [and a] Commune erupted in Paris.”<sup>22</sup> The Paris Commune was a group of working-class artisans who forcibly took control of Paris in the wake of the war, taking advantage of the immense confusion and unrest. Explicitly antagonistic to Catholicism, the members of the Commune largely saw themselves as continuing in the secular, republican legacy of the Revolution. The newly installed government of the Third Republic deployed what remained of the French army to disband the Commune. Ironically, it was this Third Republic that would come to articulate and implement very clearly and definitively the state’s secularism with its 1905 law of the Separation of Church and State, which abolished the Concordat. In its beginning stages, however, the Republic’s democratic processes indicated the possibility of an elected, conservative, Catholic government. After “the elections of February 1871, France was ruled by an Assembly dominated by Royalists.”<sup>23</sup> The Commune, then, arose in March as a “response to a government attempt to reassert its authority in a city whose population had contempt for it both as the symbol of military defeat and as the product of a conservative provincial National Assembly which constantly revealed its monarchist sentiments.”<sup>24</sup> The government had little trouble suppressing the revolt, and the conservative Assembly remained largely intact, despite significant ideological and physical energy on the part of the Communards. Two major problems arose with the Assembly, however, which prevented a monarchist (i.e. avowedly pro-Catholic) restoration—one structural and one situational.

Structurally, the Republic was organized in such a way that allowed and encouraged pluralism, a key desire of liberals. Though the Royalists took charge of the embryonic legislature, they were divided among Bonapartists, Legitimists, and Orléanists. This division

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<sup>22</sup> Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit In the Secular Age* (London: Penguin Press, 1999), 211.

<sup>23</sup> McManners, *Church and State*, 34.

<sup>24</sup> R.D. Price, “Ideology and Motivation in the Paris Commune of 1871.” *The Historical Journal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 75.

ensured that quick, decisive action would not be taken by the new government, as a result of bickering over who would take the throne if, indeed, the throne was restored. Furthermore, pro-Catholic dominance of the legislature was a chimera created by the particular situation of Frenchmen in the immediate post-war period. During the elections, “the Church was enjoying an ephemeral popularity. The clergy had distinguished themselves in the [Franco-Prussian] war as chaplains and unpaid hospital orderlies, the Catholic gentry by their heroism as officers.”<sup>25</sup> The election results indicated a national fervor for the Church that was misleading and bound more by situational uncertainties and emotions than a resurgence in true devotion. Thus, the Royalists found themselves both divided internally and with a much shorter timeframe for restoration than was indicated by their vast initial wave of electoral support.

More broadly, however, the French Church found herself divided even among the devout. The revolutionary generation of 1848 across Europe, but especially in France, advocated social Catholicism,<sup>26</sup> a “movement centered on Catholic initiatives to come to terms with the social and economic problems afflicting modern society,” within the structures of “a democratic republic based on universal manhood suffrage.”<sup>27</sup> The French journal, *L’Avenir*, first published in 1830, espoused a motto of “God and Liberty,” which encapsulated its shared devotion to both the Church and liberalism. For republican Catholics, there was no contradiction to be found; the Church had truth on her side and, thus, a polity and society dedicated to free expression and rational discourse would allow for a reinvigorated Church to stake her claim as the possessor of that truth. Among these liberal Catholics was the Bishop of Digne, Marie-Dominique-Auguste Sibour, who ran as a political candidate in the Second Republic, arguing for “complete civil and

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<sup>25</sup> McManners, *Church and State*, 32.

<sup>26</sup> “social,” “liberal,” and “republican” are here used interchangeably to refer, broadly, to belief in Enlightenment values of democracy, liberty, etc. tied to Catholic devotion.

<sup>27</sup> Caroline Ford, *Creating the Nation in Provincial France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 100.



political liberty, higher taxes for the rich, tax relief and easy credit for the poor, and the creation, in addition to private businesses, of social workshops to protect workers from unemployment and arbitrary wage decreases.”<sup>28</sup> Economic justice in a capitalist system and freedom of expression in a democracy formed the practical political base from which liberal Catholics operated.

Many conservative Catholics, on the other hand, were loath to relinquish the temporal authority accumulated by the Church over the course of the Middle Ages into modernity. They were also committed to living with a “spirit of charity,” modeled after Christ’s encouragement that to feed the hungry is to give Him food, but they imagined a romanticized medieval *noblesse oblige* rather than a socialist-leaning democratic republic.<sup>29</sup> Both sides were committedly Catholic; doctrinal obedience was hardly an issue. As intellectual debates became increasingly heated and politically relevant, however, the intra-confessional division became more apparent. With the continued existence of the Concordat, various papal censures of French social Catholic leaders, the Syllabus and, finally, the articulation of papal infallibility, the social “Catholic project ended in defeat in 1870.”<sup>30</sup> Liberal French Catholics had long faced antagonism from their conservative counterparts, but it was the hardline anti-liberalism of Pius IX that sealed the fate of social Catholicism in France, at least for the time being. The 1891 publication of *Rerum Novarum* revived the movement but, in the interim, the French Church was divided. Many republican Catholics were disillusioned with the Church’s continued official support for conservatism, a reality that hamstrung Catholic participation in the new democracy. Voters who were otherwise Catholic were forced to choose between monarchists supported by the Church hierarchy or anticlerical liberals, an unsavory choice either way.

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<sup>28</sup> Mark Gabbert, “The Limits of French Catholic Liberalism: Mgr Sibour and the Question of Ecclesiology.” *French Historical Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978), 645.

<sup>29</sup> McManners, *Church and State*, 31; Matthew 25:35.

<sup>30</sup> Carol Harrison, *Romantic Catholics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), 275.

The possibility, then, of Catholic-inflected liberal French republic was a fleeting one. The Assembly gave way, in January of 1876, to a true republic under a new constitution. The resolution to pass the constitution and rename the government a Republic passed by one vote, at which point republican victory was inevitable. Despite the narrowest of margins, the passage of a constitution, combined with the continued ineptitude of the opposition, assured that the Third Republic was headed decidedly toward liberal republicanism. After the elections in February, the new Chamber of Deputies was Republican-controlled, with 340 of 533 seats. The monarchists, in the eyes of the French people, were “not fit to govern. They had no practical policy to offer; beyond allegiance to Catholicism, they had no common ideology relevant to the needs of France; they extolled the virtues of a form of government which they could not implement.”<sup>31</sup> It was clear that the movement with which Church officials had made their bargain was devoid of dynamism, conviction, or political wherewithal. The Church had entered into the political arena in order to restore the *Ancien Régime*, and had been handily demolished, with no political future in sight. If there was to be a government in France, it was going to be Republican; the Church could no longer rest in her cultural capital or aristocratic backing and continue to effectively carry out her salvific mission in France.

With the delegitimization of the monarchists, the Church was forced to do two things—defend and maintain France’s identity as a Catholic nation as well as reorient her gaze from the halcyon days of devout monarchs such as St. Louis IX to a future in which legislatures and presidents led a state whose authority was derived from the citizenry, not the Church or God. Problematic, too, for the Church was the fact of their adversaries’ thirst for revenge and the vast control of the state over national affairs, the result of authoritarian compromises with which the

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<sup>31</sup> McManners, *Church and State*, 39.

Church had been complicit, such as the Concordat. As long as the head of state had an interest in good relations with the Church, it was not too much of a problem for the Church to divest herself of authority. The Republicans, however, were not simply indifferent to the Church's influence on the state and, consequently, the nation, but were openly hostile and antagonistic. The arena in which this was the most clear and adversarial was the school system—control of the schools meant, for either the Republicans or the Catholics, control of the future.

### **Molding the French Citizen**

Leading up to the showdown in the Third Republic, elementary schooling, both Catholic and secular, became more widespread. This parallel rise revealed tensions and diverging pedagogical philosophies, which set the stage for conflict. In 1850, the Falloux Law was passed under the Second Republic. This law “permitted any qualified Frenchman to open a secondary school and to receive subsidies for it from municipal governments,” which led to the creation of “256 Catholic secondary schools by 1854.”<sup>32</sup> As more widely available education became a social priority in the middle of the century, Catholic priests and aristocrats were ready, able, and willing to offer their services to educate the masses. Bounded by tradition, “Catholic noblewomen and noblemen founded *écoles libres* [free schools] because of their families’ historic property-based and charitable ties to rural communities.”<sup>33</sup> Over the course of the Second Empire, Catholic schooling was vibrant, enthusiastic, and growing in popularity. Recognizing the importance of education in the intellectual and spiritual formation of French

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<sup>32</sup> Patrick Harrigan, “The Church and Pluralistic Education: The Development of and Teaching in French Catholic Secondary Schools, 1850-1870.” *The Catholic Historical Review* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1978), 185.

<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth Macknight, “The Catholic Nobility’s Commitment to *Écoles libres* in France, 1850–1905.” *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques* (Brooklyn: Berghahn Books, 2017), 20.

youth, the Church eagerly rallied to the cause of mass education. Importantly, this was a key goal shared by secular liberals. The mutual interest in ensuring proper socialization and indoctrination, whether for assurance of social equality, right belief, reliable childcare, or any other reason, set the stage for a sort of arms race between state- and Church-funded schooling for French children.

While the Franco-Prussian War revealed and exacerbated many preexisting tensions in the French sociopolitical landscape, “French society was undergoing fast-paced turnover and transition even before” the war.<sup>34</sup> Frenetic liberalization, along with the rise in Catholic influence through schools, in the decades preceding the Third Republic polarized the French people. As the socio-political intranational battle lines—nationalist, secular liberalism versus conservative, traditional Catholicism—crystallized, so did the politics of the school system. Liberals and Catholics alike “assumed that teachers could instill in students the values that would last a lifetime, an assumption central to that faith in education which during the nineteenth century brought schools to every hamlet and made schooling universal.”<sup>35</sup> With the paramount importance of the school established, and enrollment rates skyrocketing in the second half of the century, the question that remained was one of control.

For the Third Republic, historians “agree that education in republican primary schools and military service were key mechanisms for the formation of a sense of national identity in the second half of the nineteenth century.”<sup>36</sup> The two means whereby Frenchmen were made into loyal nationalists were both funded and heavily supervised by the state. A territory that had long

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<sup>34</sup> Jan Ziolkowski, *The Juggler of Notre Dame and the Medievalizing of Modernity* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2018), 94.

<sup>35</sup> Raymond Grew and Patrick Harrigan, “The Catholic Contribution to Universal Schooling in France, 1850-1906.” *The Journal of Modern History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 211.

<sup>36</sup> Briony Neilson, “Youth, Literacy and Social Emancipation in Third Republic France: The ‘Crime de July.’” *Crime, History, and Societies* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2014), 91.

been united by Catholicism was being formed into a conglomeration whose unity was defined by militancy and childhood education, both in the pursuit of state aims. The leaders of the Third Republic, formed in opposition to the emergent German Empire, felt acutely the sting of defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, which informed subsequent efforts at building a properly disposed citizenry.

A large reason for the French loss in the Franco-Prussian War, it was understood, was that failure of the education system. Ill-equipped in mind, as well as body, the citizens of the Second Empire were no match for the Prussian armies; at least, so the rhetoric went. As a result, this “defeat, which represented a substantial humiliation to the French, was the impetus for a reform of the country’s school system aimed at enabling it to provide a higher level of education.”<sup>37</sup> Again, the importance of free, widespread, and socially relevant schooling was made clear. The majority of Catholic schools provided schooling that met the first two criteria, but a cultural struggle emerged on the question of social indoctrination. In a liberal society committed to rationality, equality, and nationalist fervor, it was anathema to proclaim a worldview contrary to absolute commitment to these principles. Numerous state officials expressed sentiments to the effect that “Catholic schools still taught that supernatural dogma was superior to manmade laws, that ‘the spirit of Bonald and de Maistre [Catholic theocrats], ultramontaniam, and intolerance’ dominated teaching in such schools, and that they promoted ‘ideas of privileged classes.’”<sup>38</sup> In short, royalism, a marriage of church and state, papal allegiance, and a hierarchical society were all virtues extolled, or least not denounced, in Catholic schools. Not every Catholic classroom was organized and instructed in such a way, but

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<sup>37</sup> Jörg Lehmann, “Civilization versus Barbarism: The Franco-Prussian War in French History Textbooks, 1875-1895.” *Journal of Educational Media, Memory & Society* (Brooklyn: Berghahn Books, 2015), 51.

<sup>38</sup> Patrick Harrigan, “The Social Appeals of Catholic Secondary Education in France in the 1870s.” *Journal of Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 133.

such ideas were sufficiently common that Catholicism in schools was seen as antithetical to the tenets of a modern society and, thus, undesirable. This perspective is, again, reminiscent of the fears of German liberals and Protestants, whose contemporary efforts at undermining Catholicism were expressed in the *Kulturkampf*. Beyond their perceived gaucheness among liberal intellectuals, however, Catholic schools were not up to the task of forming young minds that could assert French dominance, especially militarily.

State-run schools, however, offered visions of an emerging France whose virtues were true, modern, and just, especially juxtaposed with the Prussian-led German regime. The attitudes expressed by, but certainly not limited to, textbooks of the young Third Republic were condescending in their treatment of the German Empire, a “backward form of government that waged unjust and barbarian wars, annexed provinces, and denied equal rights to its citizens.”<sup>39</sup> Partially in order to help cope with the abrupt loss of continental primacy, as well as to provide a narrative into which French schoolchildren (and adults) could easily and happily place themselves, political and social discourse accentuated the distinctions between the forms and ideals of French versus German governance. This point is important in and of itself, but it must be remarked here, too, that the charges levied against the German Empire by French republicans were similar to, and in some cases the same as, common criticisms of Catholicism. The Empire and the Church were rarely, if ever, compared directly, but the primitiveness and anti-liberalism of which they were both representative was very important for the formation of liberal French identity.

Entering the era of the Third Republic, Catholic schooling showed no signs of a slowdown in popularity or enthusiasm. In fact, over the course of the 1870s, many Catholic

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<sup>39</sup> Lehmann, “Civilization versus Barbarism” 61.

schools saw an uptick in enrollment. For instance, Dominican-run schools “grew rapidly” during this period, and the Collège de St. Bertin, a parochial school in Pas-de-Calais that was funded primarily by wealthy laity, “increased its enrollment from eighty-one in 1863 to 285 in the late 1870s.”<sup>40</sup> There was a clear demand for Catholic schooling in this period, and the Catholic schools were able to keep pace with the secular schools as far as tuition costs were concerned. Demand for schooling at all, though, was not universal. According to statistics from 1876, “nearly 800,000 of 4.5 million school-age children were still not registered in any school. Most of these belonged to rural communes; and many who were registered hardly ever attended class.”<sup>41</sup> Such rural peasant families were notably more Catholic, on average, than France’s urban population. The importance, for the secular state, of mandating school attendance was all the more pronounced, then, because the majority of those without formal schooling were being formed in the traditional Catholic faith. Compulsory attendance, combined with generous public-school subsidies, would tear the peasantry from their reputedly retrograde and menial superstitions.

As devoted republicans came to dominate the legislature of the Third Republic, more and more opportunities to amend school practice (or lack thereof) presented themselves. With the 1880 election of Jules Ferry as Prime Minister, the floodgates were opened. Over the course of the decade, laws were passed in which “republicans introduced free, compulsory state schooling [and] banned clerics and members of religious orders from teachings posts and education committees.”<sup>42</sup> This sort of anti-Catholic social engineering was similar to some *Kulturkampf* measures passed in Germany, as will be explored later. Furthermore, religious instruction was

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<sup>40</sup> Harrigan, “The Church and Pluralistic Education” 190-192.

<sup>41</sup> Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 308.

<sup>42</sup> Macknight, “The Catholic Nobility’s Commitment” 18.

banned from public schools in 1882; the Church's grip on widespread social influence was being loosened significantly. The Church did not, however, relinquish control of schools without serious resistance. In a majority of the instances wherein clerics were replaced by lay teachers, "laicization of the public school was met by the establishment of a private Catholic school."<sup>43</sup> Attempting to counter the blows of a rabidly secular government at every turn, Catholics enthusiastically sought to maintain the gains of the previous generation. Thus, the decade was a time of deep conflict, informed by diverging visions of the nation's horizons, a future that would be determined by the education of the present day.

By 1891, however, the year of the publication of *Rerum Novarum*, levels of enrollment at Catholic schools had dipped down to where they had been at the time of the implementation of the Falloux Law.<sup>44</sup> While the reasons behind this are sundry, Eugen Weber ably notes that it was not just the fact of school being made compulsory and free that precipitated the rise in secular education. Rather, state-run schools were made "meaningful and profitable, once what the school offered made sense in terms of altered values and perceptions."<sup>45</sup> Part of much broader nationwide intellectual warfare, schools' ability to teach on topics relevant to the modern student defined their popularity during the period and, by extension, the content of the subsequent generation of minds. The battle for control of French education, while valiant, had failed to result in the hoped-for victory for devout Catholics. The aforementioned "measures were strenuously opposed by Catholic clergy and laity alike, but their efforts were hampered at the national level by political disunity."<sup>46</sup> Catholicism's roots in France ran sufficiently deep that the Church could

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<sup>43</sup> Grew and Harrigan, "The Catholic Contribution" 232.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

<sup>45</sup> Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 303.

<sup>46</sup> Alfred Perkins, "From Uncertainty to Opposition: French Catholic Liberals and Imperial Expansion, 1880-1885." *The Catholic Historical Review* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 205.



offer widespread resistance to secularization. The Church's failure, though, lay in the unwillingness of the faithful to participate in the processes of democracy that, ultimately, were the most instrumental in dismantling (at least, official) Catholic social influence.

Open hostility to any form of republicanism prevented most Catholics from working from the inside to temper the anticlericalism of the Republic. Within the first few years of "an anti-clerical [Third] Republic," collaboration "was ruled out by mutual suspicion and fear of contamination," the fruits of much antagonism and failure to compromise in the post-Revolutionary century.<sup>47</sup> Catholic parliamentarians squandered their initial opportunity for control of the Republic through infighting and discombobulated attempts at the restoration of a monarch. Once control of the Republic was taken by secular liberals, the Catholic attitude was defined more by intransigence than dialogue. To be sure, republican opponents of the Church were less than desirous of any concessions to the Church, themselves. The opportunities for Catholic democratic participation were present, however, and were largely ignored and wasted. Participation in electoral politics was not denied at all to Catholics and, in any event, the vast majority of France identified as Catholic. Therefore, it would have been more than possible to organize some sort of moderately conservative popular Catholic party to vie for seats in the parliament. Instead, the Church relied on aristocratic fortunes, which "were vulnerable in a period of falling land values and agricultural crisis."<sup>48</sup> Faithful, willing, and enthusiastic though they were, the Catholic nobility failed to adapt to the changing world; aristocrats did not become "all things to all men."<sup>49</sup> This failure, in turn, hindered Catholic efforts to build moral authority in the Third Republic.

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<sup>47</sup> Jennifer Birkett, "The Ideology of the French Catholic Revival." *New Blackfriars* (Hoboken: Wiley, 1977), 500.

<sup>48</sup> Macknight, "The Catholic Nobility's Commitment" 34.

<sup>49</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:22

## Catholic Politics in the Republic

Turning from primary schools to more broad social welfare, a broader vision of Catholic vs. French state dialogue, tensions, and opportunities emerges. Surprisingly, given liberal French rhetoric, the Third Republic failed to keep pace with their eastern neighbors when it came to classic welfare state measures. Among other things, the “German social security system in particular proved to be an advantage, with France scurrying to keep up.”<sup>50</sup> The Bismarckian era, one that defies easy characterization, was a trailblazer in terms of its level of government support for and funding of a basic social safety net, at least in terms familiar to the modern observer (i.e. not feudal). This was due, in no small measure to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, a collection of principles for good modern governance, advocated for by the vibrant Catholic Center Party in Germany, as will be explored below. France, on the other, for all of its anti-imperial, secular invective, lagged remarkably behind Germany in its welfare system. The Third Republic came into being during a time of great economic inequality and uncertainty; there was a “long economic depression after 1873, which resulted from sustained underinvestment, extensive speculation, foreign competition and the aftermath of the war with Prussia, involving substantial reparations.”<sup>51</sup> In the midst of the unease, a France solidly in the hands of Enlightened republicans did little to assuage feelings of restlessness and insecurity, especially among the lower classes.

Low-income workers were not, however, a monolith in the Third Republic. For the most part, the workers who became politically active were those who lived and worked in urban

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<sup>50</sup> Nikolas Dörr, “‘As far as Numbers are concerned, we are beaten’ Finis Galliae and the Nexus between Fears of Depopulation, Welfare Reform, and the Military in France during the Third Republic, 1870-1940.” *Historical Social Research* (Köln: GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 2020), 69.

<sup>51</sup> Birkett, “French Catholic Revival” 499.

France.<sup>52</sup> Rural peasants, on the other hand, were not as quick to become democratically involved. Thus, even in a time of dire economic straits, a rural/urban divide prevented mass lower class political unification. With an unclear democratic prerogative for the republicans in control of the government, their hands were largely tied. Catholics, on the other hand, held firm to a belief in the sufficiency of traditional local ties of nobility and peasantry to the land to provide for a just economic arrangement. Most “politically conscious Catholics who saw themselves as Catholics *avant tout*” followed the lead of Pope Pius IX “by simply rejecting modernity entirely.”<sup>53</sup> Rather than create a Catholic political party to mount resistance from within the newly imposed democratic governance structures, Catholics worked from without.

One key area, however, offered common ground for republicans and Catholics alike. Reeling from the shock of defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, many in France came to understand that Germany’s advantage in birth rate was key to their success in the war. As a result, moderate “leftists, centrists, conservatives, monarchists, nationalists, and racists alike recognized, albeit for different reasons, the need for a higher birth rate to secure the military’s strength and thus maintain France’s position as a global power.”<sup>54</sup> In effect, pronatalism was a key plank for all but the most radical leftists’ political desires. For Catholics, of course, this was a welcome development. Openness to the creation of new life, in the context of marriage, is among the most fundamental tenets of the Catholic faith. Thus, pronatalist policies found widespread support across France, regardless of ideological bent. Seen as key to a vibrant welfare state, the political pursuit of an increased birth rate in the Third Republic offered a key opportunity for cooperation and increased Catholic political involvement. Catholic pronatalism

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<sup>52</sup> Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 247.

<sup>53</sup> Gabbert, “French Catholic Liberalism” 661.

<sup>54</sup> Dörr, “Finis Galliae” 103.

*long* predated French democracy, and non-governmental Catholic influence was exerted, in the Third Republic, to encourage more births. However, this did not translate as clearly as might have been expected into overt republican political action. Again, Catholics failed to offer a defense in the new republican public forum, a fact that limited their ability to mold the Third Republic in the Catholic image.

### **French Catholic Realignment**

French Catholic stubbornness, especially with regards to the new Republic, eventually led to papal censure, after the death of Pius IX. His successor, Leo XIII, the author of *Rerum Novarum*, advocated a much more conciliatory approach to prevalent social and political sentiments, which explains the about face on Vatican policy, as it related to the Church's role in the modern nation-state. He spearheaded an effort known as the *Ralliement*, essentially an exhortation to French Catholics to recognize the legitimacy of the Third Republic and to seek to work within that paradigm. In November of 1890, French Cardinal Lavigerie, an ally of Leo XIII, gave "a short speech appealing to France's Catholic to abandon their monarchist loyalties and accept the Third Republic, a regime to which most Catholics had long been opposed and under which the situation of the Church had become increasingly difficult."<sup>55</sup> Seeing clearly the failures of obstinate resistance at every turn, Church leadership stepped in and forcefully rejected the ways in which French Catholics had responded to their rightful political authorities. On the eve of the publication of *Rerum Novarum*, a great triumph of liberal Catholicism, the Church officially repudiated the ultraconservatism of French Catholics. This ushered in the genesis of a comprehensive outline of Catholic Social Teaching. A reconciliation of ancient Catholic values

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<sup>55</sup> James Ward, "The French Cardinals and Leo XIII's *Ralliement* Policy." *Church History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 60.

and morals with modern governments and societies was seen as both possible and desirable. No longer bounded to a categorical repudiation of modernity, the Church, with France now included, approached the 20<sup>th</sup> century in a spirit of cautious optimism for collaboration with the nearly unanimously secular governments of Europe.

## Chapter 2

### **Creating the German Empire: Which Kultur?**

The religious landscape of pre-unification Germany was influenced immeasurably by the post-Reformation dictate of *Cuius regio, eius religio*, which asserted that “subjects of states should, for purposes of inner-state cohesion, remain unified confessionally.”<sup>56</sup> Given the loosely confederated nature of the Holy Roman Empire, by and large the predecessor state of the German Empire, the variety of kings, dukes, and princes, both Catholic and Protestant, gave rise to a landscape defined more by its religious plurality than by its cohesion as an Empire. As the Kingdom of Prussia came to dominate Central Europe in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, its primacy among the Germanic states was solidified. Thus, with victory in the Franco-Prussian War, the Prussian-led majority Protestant German states had the momentum to amalgamate the majority Catholic states with the budding German Empire. In 1871, a Germany emerged that was unified by an Emperor, Chancellor, and Constitution, but deeply divided along religious, political, and regional lines.

The divisions that plagued the Empire, from the onset, were rooted in generational and historical tensions that reached back centuries. The particular forms and expressions of anti- and pro-Catholicism at the nascence of the Empire were much more recent developments, however. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, “Prussian Catholics were harassed by a variety of discriminatory practices ranging from rules requiring Catholic conscripts to attend Protestant services to spectacular actions, such as the arrest of the Archbishop of Cologne in 1837.”<sup>57</sup> As a minority population, Catholics in Prussia had been subject to legal strictures specifically

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<sup>56</sup> Helmut Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 5.

<sup>57</sup> Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 11.

designed to marginalize and undermine their religious practice. Catholics remained, however, an important and influential population even in the face of condescension, legal harassment, and widespread distrust.

With the Europe-wide revolutions in 1848, conservative parliamentarians and other traditional German élites began to see Catholics as potential allies in the ideological fight against those that sought to usurp the power of the state and institute liberalizing reforms. The Church had already been gearing up for a series of evangelizing missions across Germany, and conservative governments were happy to enlist the aid of Catholic missionaries in the “process of counterrevolutionary rollback during the decade of reaction.”<sup>58</sup> As fellow combatants against the agitation and liberalism of the late 1840s, the Church and German reactionary states found common ground in the 1850s. Travelling priests from the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) preached the importance of moral fortitude, including such principles as obedience and unity, both of which were virtues of particular use to the political establishment. Thus, the Church was given leeway and encouragement from state officials across the German lands, with an eye toward a comprehensive counteroffensive directed against secular liberals, the primary threats to the maintenance of a conservative status quo. In this effort, Catholic influence in Germany was on display, both as a social and moral force, as well as an important political bloc.

The Catholic missions were extraordinarily successful, with few exceptions. Protestants and Catholics alike were attracted to persuasive and intelligent sermons, and Catholic devotion saw a resurgence across Germany. The Jesuits, who spearheaded the effort, were an order founded during the time of the Counter-Reformation known for their aggressive evangelism, often through universities and foreign missions. They, along with other consecrated Catholic

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<sup>58</sup> Michael Gross, *The War Against Catholicism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 35.

communities, encouraged and facilitated a “renaissance of devotional expressions and especially the renewal of forms of popular piety.”<sup>59</sup> The middle of the century was a time of intensely devout practice among German Catholics, laity and clergy alike, as opposed to the complacent Catholicism of many of their contemporaries in France. Furthermore, conservative political hegemony was stabilized due, in large part, to the aid, explicit and otherwise, of Catholics. According to one notably anti-Catholic Protestant official, the sermons of the Jesuits “had a laudable effect. [The] Jesuits’ lectures frequently discuss the obedience due the laws and the authority of the state, especially when one considers that the democratic party... has never found any encouragement from the Jesuits.”<sup>60</sup> Far from being perceived as a menace to authentic Germanism, the Jesuits were celebrated for their role in the restoration of order among the masses.

Concurrent with the rise in popular Catholic revivals was a proliferation of monasteries and convents across Germany. According to figures from Prussia in the late 1860s, male religious communities had seen an increase of over 50% since the beginning of the decade and “90 percent of the female orders had been established since 1849.”<sup>61</sup> This rise was especially notable in historically Protestant strongholds, where Catholic clergy had not been traditional pillars of the community. The increased popularity and presence of explicitly set apart Catholic communities, though, highlighted the particular tensions and ideological disparities between Catholicism and the hopes of the new German state-builders. While an uptick in Catholic devotion and influence was welcomed by officials insofar as it quelled dissent and offered opportunities for the positive redirection of mass energies, monasteries became flashpoints that

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<sup>59</sup> Olaf Blaschke, *Marian Devotions, Political Mobilization, and Nationalism in Europe and America* (Germany: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 98.

<sup>60</sup> Sperber, *Popular Catholicism*, 61.

<sup>61</sup> Gross, *War Against Catholicism*, 133-34.



revealed the instability of the Church-state alliance. In debates over the merits of monasticism, too, common ground was revealed between liberals and the elite classes. Rapidly moving toward a united Germany and a future defined by Enlightenment (and, by necessity, Reformation) ideals, “the monk and the monastery could be, at best, only social and economic deadweight [...] from a bygone age of dogma, superstition, and stupidity. At worst they were treasonous ultramontane agents of the Vatican, enemies dedicated to the destruction of a united, modern, and dynamic German nation,” according to a classic German liberal.<sup>62</sup> Even understood charitably, monasticism and, broadly, Catholicism, was seen as a medieval relic whose very nature was opposed to the professed ideals of a modern, industrial, Enlightened nation-state. Coincidentally, as dissatisfaction with the encroachment of Catholicism into the lives and habits of Germans grew, Prussian sights were turned outward, seeking to lay unquestionable claim to ascendancy in Central Europe in the mid-1860s.

The most immediate target of Prussian domination was the Austrian Empire, a historically powerful (and, notably, Catholic) empire to the south of Prussia. In order to ensure that central Europe was solidly within the Prussian grasp, Austrian influence had to be neutered. This was effectively and thoroughly accomplished in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. Within about 40 days, the nearly universally Protestant, Prussian-led coalition of northern German states handily defeated the Austrian Empire and its Catholic-majority southern German allies creating, in the process, a “Prussian-dominated entity called [the] North German Confederation,” the immediate predecessor to the German Empire formed four years later.<sup>63</sup> This conflict marked a turning point in the relationship between the Prussian (soon, German) state and the Church for

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>63</sup> Nicholas Sambanis, Stergios Skaperdas, and William C. Wohlforth. “Nation-Building through War.” *The American Political Science Review* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 286.

several reasons. To begin with, the Prusso-German identity that crystallized during the war was one that was primarily Protestant to begin with, as well as one forged in the fire of a conflict defined, to some degree, by opposition to Catholic neighbors. Furthermore, the military victory against Austria ensured both that a unified Germany of some sort would emerge soon, and that this Germany would not include Austria. Confessional identity was certainly not the only factor in the conflict, nor was it even necessarily the dominant force. However, Catholic-Protestant battle lines had been drawn, both literally and figuratively, and the state-supported German Catholicism of the 1850s was overwhelmed by the new push for Prussian-led unification.

### **Liberalism and Protestantism On The March**

Though the conflict with Austria itself was short-lived, its ideological, political, and social ramifications were vast—the victory was heralded as a vindication both of liberalism *and* Protestantism against Catholicism. The defeat of the Catholic monarchy at the hands of the Protestant democratic empire “was celebrated [by German Protestants and liberals] as the guarantee of the cultural legacy of the Reformation, the Enlightenment, philosophical idealism, and bourgeois neohumanism.”<sup>64</sup> No longer were Catholics the faithful allies of a conservative establishment against liberal agitators, but Protestants found themselves united with liberals against Catholics that stood in the way of a new nation defined, broadly, by Protestantism and democracy. With this victory, new political alliances began to emerge in which Catholics were, once again, the undesirable minority. Within a few years of the war, France launched its ill-fated attempt to recover dominant continental status, which ended with another Prussian annihilation of an identifiably Catholic military foe. From the rubble of the Franco-Prussian War emerged a

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<sup>64</sup> Gross, *War Against Catholicism*, 115.

German Empire, under the aegis of the militant Prussian state, once again conquerors of Catholic rivals. This time, however, a sizeable (roughly one-third) Catholic minority was contained in the borders of the new German state with the inclusion, however hesitant, of the southern German states, erstwhile allies of the Austrian Empire.

Immediately, the task at hand, in order to attempt to fashion a systematic and patriot-filled Empire that could effectively maintain its status as the prepotent continental force, was to establish a coherent vision of German identity. As opposed to France, the faith of the majority in the new Germany was Protestant. Furthermore, Otto von Bismarck, the Prussian Chancellor and architect of the unified Germany, was a Lutheran, along with most other top government leaders. As a result, the dominant cultural identity among the masses as well as in the seats of political power was one that existed, from its inception, as a protest of Catholicism. Condescension toward Catholic fidelity to “papal rubbish,” as opposed to reason and personal Scriptural interpretation, marked the attitudes of many Germans.<sup>65</sup> In addition to the religious opposition, the Church in Germany faced the same liberalism, sweeping the continent, that she was facing in France. German Catholic culture, devotion, and identity came under fire, then, from two distinct but related forces—Protestantism and liberalism. A clever tactician, Bismarck recognized the opportunity presented by a common foe and implemented a large-scale governmental regime of Catholic oppression, known colloquially as the *Kulturkampf*. Through this “culture struggle,” Bismarck articulated a nationalistic vision that aimed to consolidate imperial authority, stifle minority dissent, and create a Germany with a common memory, creed, and vision.

Before examining the *Kulturkampf*, though, it will be helpful to understand the system of government implemented by the Empire after the war. The imperial “political structure was

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 94.

essentially a pyramid with three layers.”<sup>66</sup> Without a doubt, the Emperor and Chancellor, along with high-level military and bureaucratic officials, all nondemocratically chosen positions, held the most power in the Empire, at the top of the pyramid. There were two legislative bodies, however, the *Bundesrat* and the *Reichstag*, that allowed for democratic participation. The *Bundesrat*, in the middle of the pyramid, was the origin-point of legislation and was constituted of delegations from the various states within the Empire, of which Prussia was the most prominent and had *de facto* veto power. At the bottom was the *Reichstag*, a parliament comprised of representatives elected on secret ballots. Voting rights were extended to all men 25 and older, and ballot secrecy and the absence of property requirements for voters solidified the *Reichstag* as one of the most democratic bodies in contemporary Europe. Debate over the conservatism or liberalism of the fledgling German Empire has occupied modern historians but there is no doubt that Bismarck played a key role in the shaping of German life for the post-war generation. His authority was not, however, absolute, a fact that shaped both the official suppression of German Catholics and their sociopolitical counter-offensive.

The *Kulturkampf* was the government-supported and executed system aimed at undermining Catholic practice and identity in order to ensure loyalty to the Empire. Charges of ultramontanism were levied at many Catholics, who were seen as citizens with, at best, divided loyalties and, at worst, allegiance only to Rome. Furthermore, the struggle between Germany and Rome was seen as a historical clash, which lent both credence and gravity to Bismarck’s efforts. Centuries before Martin Luther’s nationalistic invective against the Church, there had developed a “specifically German piety in the early Middle Ages. Characterized by individuality and conscientiousness, Germanic piety had resisted Roman influence from the start.”<sup>67</sup> Even further

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<sup>66</sup> Mary Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 129.

<sup>67</sup> Smith, *German Nationalism*, 53.

back, one could see the clashes between Germanic tribes and the Roman Empire embodying this supposedly eternal struggle between Germany and Rome, at least according to certain Protestant historians such as Heinrich von Treitschke and Heinrich von Sybel.<sup>68</sup> The *Kulturkampf* was, in reality, a product of more specific 19<sup>th</sup> century German political, social, and religious tensions but the fact remained that neutering Catholic influence in Germany had taken many forms over the centuries. The primary method by which this would be effected was by the passage of various laws intending to “reassert the predominant influence of the state over the church in several key areas of social and political life, ranging from the control of the educational system to the legal validity of marriage, to the education, appointment and discipline of the Catholic clergy.”<sup>69</sup> Much like in France, the strategy to root out Catholic influence from society involved a consolidation of power in the hands of a government hostile to Catholicism.

The first such law, passed in the summer of 1871, was the *Kanzelparagraph* (“pulpit paragraph”). Aimed at inhibiting Catholic political organization, the *Kanzelparagraph* outlawed politically motivated sermons across the Empire. The next year, in Prussia, school inspector positions were reclassified under state jurisdiction, which meant that local pastors, Catholic or Protestant, would only remain inspectors if appointed by government authorities. With both of these laws, the Empire and its most powerful state signaled that Catholic influence in the formation of voters and children was undesirable, if not illegal. It is worth noting here that, while these laws were aimed at Catholics in many ways, there were also numerous instances in which liberal politicians sought to undermine Christian influence at all, such as with the school inspector law. It was not, then, a simple and clear Protestant/Catholic divide that gripped the new Empire, but a complex web involving Catholicism, Protestantism, liberalism, and, later

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>69</sup> Sperber, *Popular Catholicism*, 207.

especially, conservatism all making concerted efforts to define the German Empire in their own image, or at least in such a way that allowed them a place at the table.

A particular example of interconfessional unity, to illustrate the complexity and subtlety of the myriad forces and issues at play in the creation of the Empire, was the ecumenical (i.e. broadly Christian, inclusive of both Protestants and Catholics) group *Ut Omnes Unum*. The group's name was drawn from the Vulgate translation of the Gospel of John, in which Jesus prays that all those who profess His lordship may be one.<sup>70</sup> Though not an organized political party, *Ut Omnes Unum* drew “support from arch-conservative Protestants opposed to Bismarck's militarism and nationalism,” along with “ecumenical and ultramontane Catholics who were opposed to the Kulturkampf.”<sup>71</sup> Catholics and conservative Protestants alike found refuge in an organization whose members opposed the increasingly centralizing and secularizing state. Seeing the confessional divide as the chief impediment to authentic German unity, the group shared the views of many across the Empire, but sought to bridge the divide through dialogue, rather than by the suppression of Catholic influence. Collaboration rested on the common belief in Jesus Christ, obviously, but interconfessional discourse and action were aided by a shared desire to “defend Germany against atheism, liberalism, and revolution.”<sup>72</sup> Political conservatism, thus, offered practical and tangible common ground among Christians in the early Empire, a fact that was significant by itself, but also that offered a glimpse at the eventual resolution of the *Kulturkampf*. Unity, the stated goal, was certainly far from realized among German Christians, but cooperation was both possible and realized, as evidenced by groups such as *Ut Omnes Unum*.

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<sup>70</sup> John 17:21

<sup>71</sup> Stan Landry, “That All May Be One? Church Unity and the German National Idea, 1866-1883.” *Church History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 287-88.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 287.

Despite signs of interconfessional solidarity, the imperial regime's *Kulturkampf* pressed on. Later in 1872, another *Reichstag* law was passed, expelling the Jesuits from all German lands. This law was an attempt to halt conversions to Catholicism, lest ordinary, upright German citizens be seduced into "papism," and become disloyal to the Empire. The scope and intention of this law was vast—with the expulsion of the Jesuits, imperial officials hoped to rid German society of the most effective tool of Catholic instruction, inspiration, and increase. Jesuits had been at the center of the Catholic revival of the previous generation and, to add to their unsavoriness, were often not even German. By virtue of their role as travelling evangelists, Jesuits were rarely bounded by any particular geographic diocese, with the result that many Jesuits in any given area, Germany included, were foreigners. The combination, then, of Catholic *and* foreign influence made the Jesuits particularly subversive to Protestant nationalism, by which the state hoped Germany would be united. Of course, this legislation came nowhere near a comprehensive uprooting of Catholic influence in Germany. However, the regime very clearly signaled that Catholicism was an unwelcome rival to Protestant (and, narrowly defined, German) hegemony.

### **Workers, The State, and the Center**

Catholicism continued to face legal and social attack over the course of the 1870s, as Bismarck attempted to steer the Empire toward its promised land of Enlightened Protestant nationalism. For the question at hand, however, it is not so much the minutia of the anti-Catholicism that is notable but, rather, the way in which the German Church responded. In late 1870, during the waning days of the Franco-Prussian War, several "Catholic parliamentarians gathered in Berlin [...] and dubbed themselves the Center Party, thus founding a political

organization which would exist with unbroken continuity until 1933.”<sup>73</sup> The proximate cause of their organization was “the destruction of a small Berlin convent by a crowd of young artisans,” a sign that the tide of popular opinion had turned back against the Church.<sup>74</sup> In stark contrast to the approach of elite French Catholics, who sought a return to (at least nominally) Catholic autocracy, the German minority signaled a willingness, and even desire, to participate in the parliamentary politics of the age. It was through this medium of free association and democratic governance that Catholics in Germany, by overwhelming margins, chose to assert their national and religious identity.<sup>75</sup> On the defensive against a combined Protestant and liberal onslaught, both systematic and popular, German Catholics found refuge, ironically, in a contemporary political structure. Through this effort, the faithful in Germany played a significant role in laying the groundwork for a more modern Church, anticipating and prefiguring the social Catholicism laid out by Leo XIII.

Long organized along feudal lines in which the nobility was bounded to peasants, and vice versa, by ties of blood and soil, Catholic visions of social justice had been, for centuries, founded on the “belief that nobles had a sacred duty to behave without self-interest, that they should act out of consideration for the good of the community, that they should be honest and use the Ten Commandments as their guiding principles.”<sup>76</sup> As the state became more centralized, Marxist social movements became increasingly popular, and free trade began to upend longstanding economic power structures, the traditional nobles lost prominence as providers and attention turned to the issues of workers’ rights and the ways in which the state would be

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<sup>73</sup> Sperber, *Popular Catholicism*, 187.

<sup>74</sup> John K. Zeender, “The German Center Party, 1890-1906.” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1976), 9.

<sup>75</sup> Todd Weir, “The Specter of ‘Godless Jewry’: Secularism and the ‘Jewish Question’ in Late Nineteenth-Century Germany.” *Central European History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 818.

<sup>76</sup> Beth Griech-Polelle, *Bishop von Galen* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 18-19.



responsible for ensuring that their dignity was upheld. It was in this arena that the democratically engaged Catholicism of the Center Party came most clearly to the fore, as their influence in parliamentary debate increased over the course of the 1870s. The Center's first task, though, was to put an end to the *Kulturkampf*. Once this was accomplished, they would be able to shift focus to the social and economic issues of the German Empire, from a distinctly Catholic perspective.

In the wake of the Jesuit expulsions of 1872, the Center Party mobilized with renewed conviction. Ludwig Windthorst, the leader of the Center, strongly denounced the anti-Jesuitism, saying that if "Germany is a civilized state, if we are a rational people, if we are a lawful people, then I would claim that the measures suggested here are anti-German and antinational. They have not grown from German soil, but rather have been borrowed from the actions of the Paris Commune."<sup>77</sup> Not only did Windthorst, as representative of the Center and, by extension, nearly all German Catholics, make clear his opposition toward and intent to undermine the state's actions, but he also couched his resistance in the language of reason and nationalism. The use of the Paris Commune as a foil to popular visions of the German Empire shows the prominence of France as embodying the antithesis of German identity; an appeal against France was almost always an effective one, *prima facie*. In short, Windthorst sought to achieve Catholic ends (i.e. legalized Jesuit activity) by means of an appeal to Enlightened German nationalists (i.e. the assertion that anti-Jesuitism is irrational, unlawful, anti-German, and akin to French Marxism). That the Center would seek to advance Catholicism in Germany is no surprise, of course. It is remarkable, however, that pro-Catholicism was framed in terms especially familiar and appealing to an audience whose primary instincts were, at best, distrustful of Catholics, of whom Jesuits were the least trustworthy. Antagonism toward the Church or her members was not a

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<sup>77</sup> Matthew Fitzpatrick, "A State of Exception? Mass Expulsions and the German Constitutional State, 1871–1914." *The Journal of Modern History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 782.

matter that could be resolved by a simple semantic maneuver by the leader of the Center Party, but it is in this deferential, yet assertive, manner that the Church in Germany was able to face modernity. Seeing the failures of the obstinate anti-modernism of Pope Pius IX, German Catholics adapted to receive, and attempt to shape, the modern world in which they found themselves.

The *Kulturkampf* took until the mid-1880s to officially unwind, and cultural clashes over Catholicism were widespread until the First World War. Through the Center Party, though, Catholics were able to effectively articulate, and attempt to implement, policies aimed at alleviating the woes of the modern, industrial world in ways that were true to traditional Christian teaching on human dignity. The most influential thinker on this front was, without a doubt, Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, the bishop of Mainz. In his writings and deeds are seen, most clearly, the intellectual influences on the Center Party (and, later, *Rerum Novarum*) as well as the practical application of a socially aware, orthodox Catholicism. Ketteler “argued that the church must aid the working class in the fight against unchecked capitalism, [...] established unions and cooperatives for workers, [and] promoted legislation against child labor and for factory inspection.”<sup>78</sup> Ketteler was on the front lines of advocating a paradigm shift among Catholics away from a reliance on a generous noble class and toward organized worker protections from wealthy industrialists. The core truth of advocacy for and service to the poor remained, as it always had, but the means of bringing about “righteousness, justice, and equity” began to shift, as the world abandoned, en masse, pre-industrial feudalism.<sup>79</sup> Ketteler also recognized that any integration of Catholic values into the new German Empire would require tolerance of Protestants, as well as the “embrace [of] the national and military objectives of

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<sup>78</sup> Griech-Polelle, *Bishop von Galen*, 10.

<sup>79</sup> Proverbs 1:3

Wilhelmine society.”<sup>80</sup> The coherent fusion of national sentiment, ecumenical tolerance, liberal politics, and Catholic virtues was Ketteler’s great achievement, one that would light the way for the development and refinement of Catholic Social Teaching, of which *Rerum Novarum* is commonly understood as the first comprehensive treatment.

### **Blueprint for a Catholic Future**

In practice, as the German Catholic vision of modern economic justice coalesced, the Center Party found itself once again allied to the conservative bloc of the Empire’s democratic bodies. The clearest example of this phenomenon was the 1878 tariff bill, which precipitated the political reunion of Catholics and conservatives. This reunion came with little of the zeal from the 1850s, and tensions remained high, so it cannot be said that the *Kulturkampf* ended in any glorious unification. The salient implication of the shared support for legislation was, instead, that Catholic participation in the democratic processes of the German Empire was vigorous and cooperative. The details of the tariff bill are unimportant, other than to note its attempt to limit the negative effects of free international trade on the traditional German economic structure, a key goal of conservatives who sought stability and Catholics who saw the dangers of unimpeded capitalism. This partnership helped set the stage for further alliances between the Center and other political groups over the course of the 1880s, as the Empire settled into relatively smooth democratic rhythm.

The political maneuvers and ambitions of the Center Party over the first 20 years of its existence are innumerable, but a focus on the economic legislation supported by the Center is sufficiently illustrative of its application of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. In

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<sup>80</sup> Griech-Polelle, *Bishop von Galen*, 11.

practice, the Center advocated “a program of worker protection calling for a six-day week, safety precautions, sharp restrictions on the working time of women and children, courts of arbitration, and eventual limitation on the working day of male adults.”<sup>81</sup> Not simply a matter of theological speculation, intellectual daydreaming, or image maintenance, the Center Party fought to protect and advance the Catholic values of family, work, and rest, all in the context of a liberal democratic polity in which the state was expected to take a leading role in the protection of those susceptible to tyranny, exploitation, or neglect. Underpinning all of this was the Catholic principle of solidarity, the assertion that there is an inherent and divine obligation among fellow men and women that necessitates a response, as part of a well-ordered, moral life. A term that “came into use in the wake of the French Revolution, [the] notion of solidarity represents a response to the rise of the ‘social question’” of the newly industrialized age.<sup>82</sup> Workers and capitalists were to be bound among and within their respective classes in order to protect against the potential hazards of economic relationships without ethical or moral underpinnings. Real-life experience had dispelled idealistic notions of the justice of an economy based on pure self-interest, but Catholics were also wary of labor movements with visions of a socialist-atheist workers’ utopia. Thus, the Center Party provided a modern Catholic alternative to the two extreme sides of the modern German economic arena.

This effort, while not singlehandedly responsible for what followed from many Catholic institutions and organizations, offered a substantive blueprint for Catholicism in the modern age. Forged in the crucible of minority status in a hostile empire, German Catholics, throughout the laity and hierarchy both, effectively united and reorganized socially, economically, and

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<sup>81</sup> Zeender, “The German Center Party” 15.

<sup>82</sup> Thomas Kohler, “Don't Mention It: The Unacknowledged Tie between Religion and Labour Law.” *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* (Dublin: Messenger Publications, 2019), 414.

politically in order to protect and promote the eternal truths of which they believed they were guardians.

## Conclusion

### **Hope Springs Eternal: Catholic Social Teaching in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century was, undeniably, a time of turmoil, confusion, and cautious optimism across Europe. Political institutions, economic structures, ethical paradigms, social hierarchies, and many other constitutive elements of the human experience were being reimagined, reinvented, and reoriented. The Catholic Church, too, underwent a period of trial and renewal. Remaining the same as it had been “yesterday, and today; and the same for ever,” the Church nonetheless began to respond in terms and means more cooperative with the challenges and structures of the modern world.<sup>83</sup> In 1864, Pope Pius IX had published, in the Syllabus of Errors, a vehement and categorical refutation of modernity and its associated evils. Fewer than 30 years later, Pope Leo XIII, the successor to Pius IX, offered the world *Rerum Novarum*. In this encyclical, the Pope offered a Catholic response to the tribulation of the working classes, a key theme of late 19<sup>th</sup>-century discontent and bitterness. Rather than continue to distance herself from contemporaneous issues, the Church, through Leo XIII, engaged the culture without a dilution of core Catholic principles. Such engagement, encompassing intellectual, spiritual, and physical dimensions, has come to be known as Catholic Social Teaching. This collection of active principles, whose influence grew steadily over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has remained core to the Church from Leo XIII through the pontificate of Francis today.

Leading up to its full articulation in *Rerum Novarum*, however, elements of Catholic Social Teaching could be found in pieces and shadows across the landscape of Catholic Europe. As local Church priests, bishops, and laity sought ways to respond to immediately relevant events, numerous models for a response to modernity emerged. In France and Germany,

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<sup>83</sup> Hebrews 13:8

particularly, two distinct reactions defined local Church-state relations that, in turn, offered diverging visions for the broader Church. In examining the extent to which Catholics in these new nation-states acceded to the demands of the modern world, it is clear that the German Church was, especially by virtue of its willing and active participation in the new structures of democracy through the Center Party, the more flexible and defiant of the two. Remaining doctrinally orthodox, all through the period, German Catholicism demonstrated a way forward for the Vatican—ever ancient, yet ever new. This model was imitated and decisively expanded by Leo XIII. France, on the other hand, largely failed to take advantage of the opportunities presented by a new era. Refusing to cooperate in virtually any way with the new Republic and offering few alternatives for authentic Catholic participation from within, the French clerical hierarchy and aristocracy alike left many of the faithful with an unnecessary and, for the faith, debilitating choice between democracy and Catholicism. This path forward, which reflected much of the attitude expressed by Pius IX in the Syllabus, made all the more explicit how the Church needed to pivot in her response to the upheavals of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Church that entered the 20<sup>th</sup> century was one decidedly different from its iteration in the 1860s, a change largely brought about by the demands of new intellectual, social, economic, and political revolutions and grievances. By taking account of how the Church operated differently on more local levels over the course of a generation, a rough sketch of how this transformation took place begins to emerge. Forty years after the publication of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Pius XI published *Quadragesimo Anno*, an encyclical that expanded on the themes of secularization, workers' movements, and political struggles for the interwar period. The document opens with a nod to *Rerum Novarum*, saying that the Catholic world, since its

publication, has undertaken to “commemorate it with befitting solemnity.”<sup>84</sup> A survey of French and German Catholic labor movements in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century confirms that the principles outlined by Leo XIII found concrete expression among the faithful. For instance, the *Volksverein* was “a mass organization founded and led by members of the Catholic clergy and laity for the purpose of combating socialism and furthering the aims of social Catholicism. It did so through meetings, workshops, and a high successful press... and by 1914 had reached a peak membership of over 800,000.”<sup>85</sup> Numerous other Catholic workers’ unions appeared across Germany, often interacting with the Center Party and forming a broad and effective network of Catholic cooperation amidst the turmoil of the early century. In France, after the *Ralliement*, labor groups, along with youth groups, charities, and other social clubs infused with explicitly Catholic values also saw a period of great success. Many French Catholics lamented that “Catholics were not the first and most active” in the post-industrialization labor movements, but their regret was assuaged by the accomplishments of a great number of Catholic social organizations whose activity was precipitated by serious secular gains under the Republic.<sup>86</sup> The period of intense Catholic advocacy, solidarity, and missionary action between *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* was facilitated and informed by the tumultuous rise of the modern nation-state, especially in France and Germany, that preceded the seminal contribution of Leo XIII.

This is, by no means, a comprehensive and thorough examination of what took place in the Church from 1864 to 1891. The hope, rather, is to offer the reader a sense of how the

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<sup>84</sup> Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1931).

<sup>85</sup> Thomas Knapp, “The Catholic Labor Movement in Germany 1850-1933: A Survey and a Commentary.” *Newsletter: European Labor and Working Class History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 15.

<sup>86</sup> Marie-Pierre Wynands, “(Re)Christianizing The Popular Classes: The Catholic Church And Faith Training (1921-1939).” *Revue française de science politique (English Edition)* (Paris: Sciences Po University Press, 2016), 48.



Church's shift in tone, during that period, was informed and instigated, particularly, by events in France and Germany. Seeing more clearly the seeds of both the Church's renewal and demise planted and cultivated across Europe will, I hope, give fuller expression to how and why the modern Church is what she is, not simply as a relic of a bygone medieval era but as an institution whose delicate balance of full and true humanity with equal divinity offers many challenges, lessons, and setbacks but, ultimately and eternally, hope.

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