

**The Vatican and the Making of the Atlantic Order, 1920-1960**

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## **Abstract**

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Historians have traditionally paid little attention to the influence of institutional Catholicism in shaping the international state system in the twentieth century. This dissertation argues that the Vatican played a crucial role in facilitating the rise of anti-liberal and anti-socialist political movements after World War I, and in laying the foundations for the emergence of the Cold War Atlantic Order after 1945.

Following its loss of the Papal States in 1870, the Vatican fought to regain influence on the European continent by pioneering a new form of treaty diplomacy and by launching a transnational anticommunist campaign with broad appeal. These actions enabled the Vatican to seize a prominent place in European affairs, and integrate elements of its vision of state-society relations within the legal, economic and social framework of nearly a dozen European states. The Vatican's interwar gains led it to partner during World War II with the United States and Christian Democratic leaders, forging an alliance that would contribute decisively to Europe's moral and material reconstruction, and shape the emergent Cold War Atlantic alliance.

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*To Farid, with love*

## Introduction

As evening fell on December 24, 1944, hundreds of thousands of men and women, old and young, crowded into the central square of Europe's smallest state. Adults crawled up on newsstands and light-posts; small children were eagerly hoisted on shoulders. Natives brushed shoulders with foreign soldiers, gear-laden sentinels of the international press, and scores of prominent European politicians. As midnight approached, the crowd swelled. Those who had made it inside St. Peter's Cathedral scaled confessional booths and perched on statues to get a better view of the coming spectacle. At last the long-awaited moment arrived, as Eugenio Pacelli, known since 1939 as Pope Pius XII, rose to the altar to make his annual Christmas speech. His stern-looking face, flowing robes and carefully choreographed movements (recently immortalized in the popular 1942 film, *Pastor Angelicus*) imbued the scene with *gravitas*. Only a careful observer would have noticed the array of modern contraptions surrounding the sixteenth-century altar, including a special lighting set-up and several microphones poised at various heights. The trappings helped Pius XII's momentous speech reach millions, as it was broadcast live over the radio and reprinted on the pages of international newspapers.

On this night in 1944, Pope Pius XII did more than use his words to give hope in a time of crisis. He articulated a vision that the Vatican had begun to translate into reality in the interwar years and which the Pope and his speechwriters hoped would live on at war's end. The European continent would enjoy peace and prosperity, Pius XII intimated, only if the Vatican and state leaders could continue to work in close partnership to build Christian polities, which avoided the excesses of both liberalistic and communist political systems by instantiating social, economic and legal policies in keeping with Church teachings. In a first in Church history, Cardinal Pacelli affirmed that the ideal Christian polity could in theory be realized within a democracy, though he cautioned that democracies would receive the Pope's full sanction only if they were grounded in Christian beliefs and characterized by the interdependency of Church and



state. In practice, the Pope's speech constituted a promise and a warning. As long as emergent powers in Europe heeded the Pope's teachings, they would receive his blessing. But if these powers sought to break with the Vatican, they would lose the backing of both Pope and the wider Catholic world.

Largely ignoring the conditional and theocentric nature of Pius XII's statement, the United States government and leaders of the Christian Democratic movement welcomed the 1944 message. Both sides had been pressuring the Pope for years to make a clear statement in their favor and they saw in this message the promise of support. As the war drew to an end, the Pope issued several additional endorsements of the U.S. and Christian Democratic parties. He readily lent the Vatican's network of hospitals, schools, and churches to the distribution of American aid and propaganda materials, praised the generosity of the American occupiers, and provided the Americans with crucial intelligence information. The Pope also emerged as a crucial partner of Christian Democratic movements, as Vatican funds gave Christian Democratic movements an indispensable starting budget, and parishes and monasteries acted as early meeting halls. Vatican-directed Catholic lay organizations helped bring hesitant voters to the polls, through classic door-to-door campaigning and an array of modern means of persuasion, including striking posters and short films screened in the remotest of villages. Once the Christian Democrats had seized power, they would engage in near-daily backdoor negotiations with papal officials to ensure that the victories of interwar Vatican diplomacy be re-enshrined in postwar laws and constitutions. The Vatican became a partner of utmost importance and utility as the Cold War took root on European soil by disseminating the notion that Christianity was a bulwark against communism -- a message that the Americans and Christian Democratic parties took to heart by protecting the Vatican's privileged place in European politics and society.

There was, of course, nothing predetermined about the centrality the Vatican came to occupy in postwar Europe. Indeed, some saw it as quite a surprise that an institution ruled by an absolute monarch, long opposed to liberal democracy, and convinced of its status as a bastion of

non-pluralist, absolute, truth emerged as a leading partner of democratic powers in the years following 1944. How did this strange turn of events come to pass? In what ways did the intellectual and diplomatic history of the Vatican in the interwar years prepare the ground for the events such as the 1944 sermon and the postwar partnership with the United States and Christian Democratic powers? How might this story give us new perspectives on the history of modern European and transatlantic relations? These are the questions my dissertation explores.

## **1. Outline of the Argument**

Between World War I and the early 1950s, the Vatican shifted from the margins to the center of European political and social affairs. My dissertation argues that this transformation came about as a result of the Vatican's response to the recasting of the Western state system after World War I, and specifically its decision to make peace with the nation-state -- a political form it had long abhorred. The Vatican signaled the shift via the conclusion of binding treaties with European state leaders, effectively tying the fate of global Catholicism to its protection and promotion by individual nation-states. These treaties helped the Vatican expand its influence within and across European states, in domains as varied as civil society, law, public and private education, and the drafting of foreign policy. By the eve of World War II, the Vatican had successfully brought into being a new form of religious politics and begun taking advantage of its newfound position so as to gain concessions from the emerging global hegemon of the United States.

The story of the Vatican's re-emergence after World War I is as much one of high-power politics as it is one of ideas, for the Vatican's diplomatic shifts were accompanied by large-scale ideological transformations within the Vatican and the larger Catholic world. The decision to make peace with the nation-state as a political form was accompanied by the Vatican's validation of a theological position that saw the nation-state as a crucial ally in the re-

Christianization of European society. From the early 1930s, this view grew more detailed and became a Vatican-sanctioned theological school defending the notion that corporatist economics was the solution to the nineteenth-century social question and to the scourge of Marxist socialism and liberal capitalism. This school of thought justified state invention in this-worldly affairs, calling on the state to recognize and protect purportedly pre-existing social units like the family, worker's associations, and the Church. By the latter half of the 1930s, this school of thought registered an important shift, in response to tensions with Nazi Germany and the emergence of a trans-Atlantic Catholicism characterized by increased dialogue between Vatican officials, theologians, and lay Catholic exiles on both sides of the Atlantic. From this moment on, theologians with direct institutional ties to the Vatican began to refer to a key phrase -- the "rights of the human person" -- in their attempts to delineate the proper degree of state intervention in human affairs. As the new position affirmed, the Church's role was to protect the "rights of the human person," defined as the right of Catholic citizens to fulfill Catholic religious duties, such as attending mass or sending their children to religious schools. In the name of these rights, the Church must protect individuals against the potential incursion of overly powerful, "totalitarian," states. The position was rigidly integralist, in the sense that it was based on Catholic norms, values and epistemic standards and was committed to the idea that these norms, values and standards had priority over all other considerations and belief systems.<sup>1</sup> Though initially elaborated in response to Nazism, the juxtaposition of individual Catholic rights to "totalitarian" states was soon mobilized by the papacy in the fight against the Soviet Union and used to justify the violence of Catholics in armed conflicts in Mexico and Spain. This, combined with the launching of the Second World War and the further diversification of the Vatican's interlocutors -- who now also included Christian democrats and American Protestants -- caused the teachings of the Vatican to shift subtly once again. For the first time in Church

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<sup>1</sup> This definition of "integralism" is borrowed from Nancy L. Rosenblum, "Pluralism, Integralism and Political Theories of Religious Accommodation," in *Obligations of Citizenship and Demands of Faith: Religious Accommodation in Pluralist Democracies*, ed. Nancy L. Rosenblum (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3-32.

history, Vatican theologians affirmed that democracy might be able to protect the rights of individuals and "natural" social units like the family against totalitarian states, on the condition that democracy be redefined in theocentric terms and commit to socio-economic solutions that averted the excesses of liberal capitalism and communist collectivism.

My dissertation argues that the Vatican turn towards a new mode of interaction with the nation-states emerged in the aftermath of World War I, in reaction to the failure of a preceding diplomatic goal: the restoration of the Papal States, which had been seized in the course of Italy's wars of unification (1859-1870). Between 1870 and 1917, the Vatican sought to regain its former statehood by centralizing its government structure and growing a modern, efficient, bureaucracy. Though these reforms failed to restore the Papal States, they did lead to the emergence of a cadre of Vatican functionaries trained in civil and canon law that developed a new mode of diplomacy eschewing the previous focus on reconstituting the Papal States. It depended on the conclusion of international treaties, known as concordats, which sought to prevent the liberal separation of Church and state and the instantiation of religious freedom by establishing regimes of joint sovereignty, in which power was shared between religious and lay leaders. From 1917 on, the Vatican successfully concluded nearly a dozen concordats with European state leaders. In exchange for the concessions it was granted, the Vatican promised to help European politicians defeat rival political factions and militate against the Wilsonian Versailles order and the rise of left-wing radicalism. It also began to develop its corporatist third way solution to the twin excesses of liberalism and communism.

By the mid 1930s, the challenge of an increasingly mobilized civil society, coupled with the perceived effects of the Great Depression and the rise of the Soviet Union, led the Vatican to draft official statements of doctrine that emphasized the imperative to protect the rights of the human person against the potential incursions of an all-encompassing state. This counterrevolutionary ideology was primarily directed against international communism, and served to unite a newly centralized Catholic lay associational culture by reifying Church-state

partnerships and casting communism as Catholicism's antithesis. Over the course of the 1930s, the Vatican's anticommunist campaign was institutionalized and became more radical, particularly by virtue of its increased imbrication with right-wing political movements. Having stamped out a range of alternative Catholic political ideologies that aimed to describe and shape contemporary affairs, the Vatican's counterrevolutionary anticommunist campaign grew in strength and tenacity and began to justify recourse to violence in the resurgent Mexican *Cristeros* conflict and in the Spanish Civil War. By the eve of World War II, the campaign had provided the Vatican with international visibility and proof that its words had concrete consequences, as Catholics in both Europe and the Americas were increasingly perceived as a mobilized political force that must be taken seriously in the drafting of domestic and foreign policy.

The Second World War confirmed and consolidated the Vatican's interwar gains, as emergent powers keen on expanding their influence at home and abroad increasingly turned to the Vatican for support. The most important country to do so was the United States, which promised to protect Church prerogatives in Europe in exchange for being supplied with wartime intelligence and being invited to help shape European affairs at war's end. In the course of building its alliance with the United States, the Vatican expanded upon its interwar theological innovations, developing an improvised language that allowed it to preserve the core of its interwar agenda. Now, in place of pitting Wilsonian liberalism against Church-state partnerships, and Soviet-style communism against Vatican-led Catholicism, the Vatican began to present the ontological antithesis as that between a materialistic Nazi-Soviet totalitarianism and Christian democracy. In other words, the theological critique of Nazism had finally been made public, though it was now "democracy" which was presented as totalitarianism's antithesis. The keywords "totalitarianism" and "Christian democracy" in fact summarized the Vatican's demand that the U.S. prolong World War II so as to ensure the double defeat of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The words also signaled the Vatican's willingness to accept

democratic forms of rule in Europe and Christian Democratic political movements, on the condition that they preserve concordats and the Vatican's new organs in civil society. In this way the Vatican's interwar theology made peace with democracy, all the while preserving its anti-liberal and anti-secular core.

In the early years following World War II, the Vatican was quite successful in maintaining its prominence in European affairs. The Vatican benefitted from the United States' increased willingness to join hands in the battle against the Soviet Union through the support of organized religion. Throughout the 1940s, the Vatican was also able to press pliant Christian Democratic parties to keep international communism at bay and maintain recently accorded Church protections through new state constitutions and civil laws. By the 1950s, however, the Vatican's prominence in European affairs began to fade, as Catholicism's weakening social appeal, the Pope's increasingly heavy-handed attempts to control domestic and foreign policy, and the reactionary policing of Catholic thought, estranged American and Christian Democratic allies. At this point, the Vatican began to shift its attention to non-democratic countries in Europe, like Spain and Portugal, and to certain parts of Latin America.

## **2. Review of the Literature**

Recent and landmark overviews of contemporary European and international history make only passing mention of the Vatican, as do more detailed studies.<sup>2</sup> With only a few exceptions, scholarly interest in the Vatican has been limited to the question of the Vatican's relations with

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<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Charles Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilization in France, Germany and Italy in the Decade after World War I* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History, 1919-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Id., *The Triumph of the Dark: European International History, 1933-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Knopf, 1998); Id., *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012); Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005); and Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and whether Vatican policies and ideologies facilitated the slaughter of European Jewry during the Second World War. Though the so-called Pius wars have generated some useful studies, they have also produced an abundance of polemical tracts, based on thin archival research.<sup>3</sup> Most importantly, overemphasis on the ideological and political "totalitarian kinship" (or lack thereof) between the Vatican and Nazi-Fascism has occluded the important story of the Vatican's restoration to prominence in Europe as a whole, and the role of the United States and small states in Eastern Europe therein.<sup>4</sup> It has also led to comparatively little work on the Vatican's contribution to the democratization of Europe after 1945. Thus rather than trying to fit the Vatican into what Charles Maier has usefully called the dominant "moral narrative" of the twentieth century (the narrative of mass atrocity, which concerns the causes, content, and consequences of the Holocaust), I here try to take stock of the Vatican's broader contributions to contemporary Western politics and society.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, I

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<sup>3</sup> The Pius wars have generated a vast literature, and prosecutors and apologists abound. Stimulating contributions to the debate include Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Susan Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Suzanne Brown-Fleming, *The Holocaust and Catholic Conscience: Cardinal Aloisius Muench and the Guilt Question in Germany* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); and John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933-1965* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012). For a useful review of the literature, see William Patch, "The Catholic Church, the Third Reich, and the Origins of the Cold War: On the Utility and Limitations of Historical Evidence," *Journal of Modern History* 82 (June 2010): 396-433, as well as Mark Ruff, *The Battle for the Catholic Past in Germany, 1945-1975* (forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> Prominent defenses of the "totalitarian kinship" thesis include Arturo Carlo Jemolo, *Chiesa e stato in Italia negli ultimi cento anni* (Turin: Einaudi, 1963); Fabrice Bouthillon, *La Naissance de la mardité: une théologie politique à l'âge totalitaire* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2001); and Vincenzo Ferrone, ed., *La chiesa cattolica e il totalitarismo* (Florence: Olschki, 2004). For important rebuttals that show how the Vatican and Catholic clergy either partially or fully resisted Nazi-Fascist totalitarianism, see Hubert Wolf, *Pope and Devil: The Vatican's Archives and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Kevin Spicer, *Resisting the Third Reich: The Catholic Clergy in Hitler's Berlin* (DeKalb, Ill: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004); Emma Fattorini, *Pio XI, Hitler e Mussolini: La solitudine di un papa* (Turin: Einaudi, 2007); and Lucia Ceci, *Il papa non deve parlare: Chiesa, fascismo e guerra d'Etiopia* (Rome: Laterza, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> See Charles Maier, "Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era," *The American Historical Review* 105, 3 (June 2000): 807-831, here 826. On the Vatican's historiographical ghetto, see David Blackbourn, "The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33, 4 (1991): 778-790; and Vincent Viaene, "International History, Religious History, Catholic History: Perspectives for Cross-Fertilization (1830-1914)," *European History Quarterly* 38, 4 (October 2008): 578-607.

see my work as being broadly in line with a new religious history that is beginning to examine the central role played by religious groups and ideologies well into the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup>

My dissertation attempts to restore the Vatican to modern European and international history by offering new perspectives on the following three historiographical questions: (1) How did the Vatican help undermine liberal and communist visions of the international state system in the interwar years, and what impact did its actions have?; (2) Why did the Vatican turn to democracy in 1944, and how might the Vatican have contributed to Western Europe's democratization after World War II?; and (3) How did the Vatican's theology and diplomacy legitimize the Cold War Atlantic order, by welcoming the United States' presence in postwar Europe and helping determine the success of Christian Democracy -- one of the most long-standing political experiments in modern European history?

I argue that the Vatican's concordat diplomacy helped undermine liberal and communist visions of the international state system in the interwar years in two ways: first, by empowering anti-liberal and anti-communist state leaders against rival factions; and second, by creating a legal framework for the socialization and mobilization of national Catholics in a distinctly anti-liberal and anti-communist sense. Concordat diplomacy was explicitly conceived as a response to the Versailles settlement and the rise of communist revolution, and advertised as such to European state leaders. Though scholars have tended to argue that the secular, sovereign, and self-determining nation-state came to represent the leading political form in the international state system after World War I, concordat diplomacy actually instantiated complex forms of joint sovereignty, wherein the Vatican was allowed dominion over certain domains, and the

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<sup>6</sup> For an overview of the recent "religious turn" in history and international relations, see Andrew Preston, "Bridging the Gap between Church and State in the History of American Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 30 (November 2006): 783-812; "The Persistence of Religion in Modern Europe," special issue, *The Journal of Modern History* 82, 2 (June 2010): 255-517; Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred C. Stepan, Monica Duffy Toft, eds. *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); and the proceedings of the American Historical Association's 2011 annual meeting, "History, Society and the Sacred."



state over others.<sup>7</sup> These joint sovereignty models allowed the Vatican to work in concert with a large number of state leaders to actively militate against liberal and communist internationalism, in both national settings and before international courts of opinion like the League of Nations.

My research on the Vatican's interwar concordat diplomacy as instrument in the fight against liberalism and communism thus connects to recent scholarly work that seeks to complicate an older emphasis on the ideal of ethnic or national homogeneity under the state by paying attention to the role of religion in structuring statehood in the interwar years.<sup>8</sup> As scholars are beginning to show, ideals of religious homogeneity under the state and hostility to the notion of religious liberty was pervasive in the interwar years, and advocated by a range of lesser-studied historical actors, including East Central European nationalists, Pan-Islamic lobbyists, and League of Nations lawyers, despite (or alongside) their commitment to minority rights. The notion that greater religious homogeneity and peace went hand in hand helped determine population movements and forced deportations, such as the landmark Greco-Turkish population exchange of 1923, which separated Christian and Muslim populations on purportedly humanitarian grounds.<sup>9</sup> League of Nations lawyers also argued that accelerating

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<sup>7</sup> Versions of this consensus position have been strongly defended in several recent path-breaking works, including Charles Maier, "Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era," *The American Historical Review* 105,3 (June 2000): 807-831; Eric D. Weitz, "From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions," *The American History Review* 113,5 (December 2008): 1313-1343; and Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> On the ideal of national and ethnic homogeneity, see, e.g., Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (West Lafayette, Ind., 2006); Pieter Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006); and Matthew Frank, "Fantasies of Ethnic Unmixing: Population 'Transfer' and the End of Empire in Europe," in *Refugees and the End of Empire: Imperial Collapse and Forced Migration in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Panikos Panayi and Pippa Virdee (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 81-101. For a complicating case, see Dominique Reill, *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation: Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg Dalmatia, Trieste and Venice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> See Alexis Alexandris, "Religion or Ethnicity: The Identity Issue of the Minorities in Greece and Turkey," in *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey*, ed. Renée Hirschon (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 117-133; and Dirk Moses, "Partitions,

religious homogenization processes could be a useful way to control revolution and curb disruptive nationalism in the colonies, League Mandates, and protectorates.<sup>10</sup> So too, Muslim activists of the interwar years appealed to the notion that religious homogeneity was a stabilizing force as they petitioned the League for the re-establishment of the Caliphate, the religious-*cum*-political institution which had received strong European support during Ottoman times, only to be abolished by Mustafa Kemal's nationalist government in the early 1920s.<sup>11</sup> Finally, several East Central European nationalists sought to appeal to the power of Christianity as a source of national identification, as a means of opposing liberalistic and communist worldviews.<sup>12</sup> As will be argued, it was no accident that the Vatican's concordat diplomacy began in East Central Europe, where many new state leaders partnered with the Vatican to resist the Versailles settlement and its attempt to protect ethnic and religious minority groups.

Given the role of religious claims in structuring political discourse and praxis, my research suggests that it is insufficient to paint the interwar years as a caricatured contest between "Fascism" and "communism," or as the Cold-War academy suggested, between "totalitarianism" and "democracy." Doing so leaves out an important third-way religious politics that developed with Vatican support from c.1917.<sup>13</sup> During the Great War, the Vatican began to

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Population 'Transfers,' and the Question of Human Rights and Genocide in the 1930s and 1940s" (unpublished paper, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> See Nathaniel Berman, "'The Sacred Conspiracy': Religion, Nationalism and the Crisis of Internationalism," *Leiden Journal of International Law* 25 (2012): 9-54.

<sup>11</sup> See Hussein Alkhazragi, "The Globalization of World Politics and Religion: Islam at the League of Nations" (unpublished paper, 2012); Joshua Teitelbaum, "'Taking Back' the Caliphate: Sharif Husayn Ibn 'Alī, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate," *Die Welt des Islams* 40, 3 (2000): 412-424; and Saad Omar Khan, "The 'Caliphate Question': British Views and Policy toward Pan-Islamic Politics and the End of the Ottoman Caliphate," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 24, 2 (2007):1-25.

<sup>12</sup> See Holly Case, *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during World War II* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); and Paul Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism and Antisemitism, 1890-1944* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Scholars who have made this point, highlighting in particular the limited appeal of liberal democracy in interwar Europe, include Mazower, *Dark Continent*; Case, *op. cit.*; Martin Conway, "Democracy in Postwar Western Europe: The Triumph of a Political Model," *European History Quarterly*, 32 (2002):

advance a distinctive political ideology that responded directly to the worldviews put forward by liberal and communist thinkers and sought to engage with some of their core insights. By the 1930s, its ideology had come to advocate the joint creation of neo-corporatist structures and the expansion of Catholic civil society, as a means of avoiding the twin extremes of ungrounded liberalistic individualism and mechanized communitarianism. The Vatican's theological program was further developed in the course of the anticommunist campaign, and won broad appeal during and after World War II -- not least because of its presumed compatibility with a new vision of democracy as a political system emerging from Christian principles, and grounded in Christian teachings.

My dissertation also engages with recent work on Europe's democratization after World War II. The existing literature has tended to adopt one of four broad positions on the question of European democratization. The first holds that Europe "truly" democratized only in the latter part of the 1960s, as a result of student uprisings and contestations against previous hierarchical forms of rule. On this view, the rigidities of the Cold War froze Europe's transition to a truly democratic continent for the better part of twenty years, and it was only the children of the "1945ers" who were able to see through the divide and demand a more participatory, democratic, system.<sup>14</sup> The second historiographical position presents Europe's democratization as primarily the result of the rising influence of the United States as a political and economic power. Through covert and overt strategies -- from its distribution of aid and consumer goods to its status as a model for war-torn Europe -- the United States, on this reading, helped determine

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59-84; Tom Buchanan, "Anti-Fascism and Democracy in the 1930s," *European History Quarterly*, 32 (2002): 39-57; Nadia Urbinati, "Surviving but Not Governing: Intellectuals in Italy's Second Republic" (unpublished paper, 2012); and Jan-Werner Müller, *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

<sup>14</sup> This was the dominant position in an older strand of the left-wing historiography. More recently, it has been picked up anew in, e.g., Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), esp. 164-213; and Quinn Slobodian, *Foreign Front: Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

the continent's turn to democracy.<sup>15</sup> Finally, the third and most recent strand in the literature presents democratization as the doing of European actors. This work emphasizes the vibrancy of postwar social democratic thought, the collaboration of "left Catholics" and socialists during the Resistance, or the dialogue between individuals who stood ranged at opposite ends of the political spectrum, but were able to reach an agreement on the viability and advisability of democracy through deliberative consensus formation.<sup>16</sup> In some cases, the discursive consensus-formation model -- which holds that divergent camps (e.g., the social democrats and the Christian conservatives) crafted a working relationship based on a shared commitment to democracy via dialogue over certain core ideas -- also incorporates elements of the second strand in the historiography, for instance by suggesting that American actors and European émigrés based in the United States contributed decisively to fomenting democracy-talk on the continent.

Much of the existing literature on Europe's democratization continues to treat 1945 as a year zero and pays little heed to how interwar political, intellectual and diplomatic shifts prepared the ground for postwar developments. Furthermore, little attention is paid to the independent role of institutional Catholicism and the Vatican in the story of Europe's democratization. My dissertation attempts to fill this gap in the scholarship by showing how the support of democracy emerged as a potentiality within trans-Atlantic Catholicism in the

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<sup>15</sup> The literature on Europe's postwar "Americanization" is vast. Some recent contributions include Richard L. Merritt, *Democracy Imposed: U.S. Occupation Policy and the German Public, 1945-1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Volker Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe; Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy and Diplomacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); and Konrad H. Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans*, trans. Brandon Hunziker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). On how the U.S. occupation of Europe became a model for its attempted "democratization" of other occupied countries, see James Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica: Rand Monograph, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> For the former view, see, e.g., Gerd-Rainer Horn and Emmanuel Gerard, eds., *Left Catholicism 1943-1955: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001) ; for the latter view, see Dirk Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), and Noah B. Strote, "Emigration and the Foundation of West Germany, 1933-1963" (PhD. diss. University of California, Berkeley, 2011). An example of a recent work combining strands two and three is Udi Greenberg, *Cold War Weimar: German Émigrés and the Intellectual Origins of the Cold War* (work-in-progress). I thank Aline-Florence Manent for the helpful label "discursive consensus formation."

interwar years. This implies that the model that posits the centrality of the Resistance and postwar reconstruction to enabling the dialogue between social democrats, socialists, communists, and Catholics, dates the Catholic shift to considerably later than when it actually took place. As my dissertation will try to show, it was processes internal to Catholicism that initially brought about the shift, and though dialogue is important to explaining it, the relevant dialogue was not across socialist-Catholic divides, but rather across Catholic-Catholic, and at best Catholic-Protestant, lines. The Vatican's willingness to engage in dialogue with lay Catholics and Protestant thinkers about state-society relations was what in fact what helped determine the subtle discursive shift which paved the way for the Christian Democratic moment. So too did a series of Vatican diplomatic choices.

In addition to shedding light on the origin and appeal of some Christian Democratic ideas, the dissertation also illuminates the sociological bases of Christian Democratic support. Following decades of neglect, Christian Democracy has happily become the object of recent scholarly attention, in an effort to complicate the previous vision of a postwar Europe dominated by the contest between "Marx and Coca-Cola" (as Jean-Luc Godard playfully put it), or communism and American consumer culture. But by not giving due attention to the Vatican, scholars continue to have trouble explaining why Christian Democratic parties emerged as hegemonic in so many Western European countries, and why they were able to put in place highly constrained, neo-corporatist, democracies, with such relative speed. Some have provided "arguments from absence," by suggesting that Europeans turned to Christian Democracy because of the exhaustion of alternatives, while others have appealed to myths of sudden awakening, according to which a highly minoritarian strand of Christian Democracy -- one that was liberal democratic, pluralistic, and anti-Fascist -- suddenly became mainstream.<sup>17</sup> Others

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<sup>17</sup> Wolfram Kaiser, who has written one of the most sophisticated accounts of the origins of postwar Christian Democracy, argues strongly against this second option, but nonetheless presents a variant of it. See Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of the European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For a concise articulation of the myth of sudden awakening, see, e.g.,

still have focused in a more limited way on the activism of Catholic lay organizations with close ties to the Pope, without however paying due attention to the interwar years or filling in the picture to provide a fuller account of Vatican-Christian Democratic relations.<sup>18</sup> My dissertation instead suggests that postwar Christian Democracy owed its existence in part to the Vatican's interwar civil society structures, in which many of Christian Democracy's leaders were born and bred, and in which many core intellectual innovations took shape.<sup>19</sup> If these findings are correct, they cast further doubt on the idea of 1945 as the beginning of an entirely new era, and suggest interwar and postwar continuities worthy of future study.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, attention to the Vatican can help us answer the question of what local forces encouraged American hegemony in Western Europe after the Second World War. Restoring the Vatican to this history shows us that it was not just European consumers who -- to use Geir

Gerd-Rainer Horn and Emmanuel Gerard, eds., *Left Catholicism, 1943-1955: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001).

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., Mark Ruff, *The Wayward Flock: Catholic Youth in Postwar West Germany, 1945-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), Carolyn M. Warner, *Confessions of an Interest Group: the Catholic Church and Political Parties in Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); David Ellwood, "The 1948 Elections in Italy: A Cold War Propaganda Battle," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 13, 1 (1993): 19-33; and Martin Conway, *Catholic Politics in Europe, 1918-1945* (London: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>19</sup> Similar arguments are indirectly suggested in Philippe Chenaux, *Une Europe vaticane? Entre le Plan Marshall et les Traités de Rome* (Bruxelles: Editions Ciaco, 1990), and Giovanni Sale, *De Gasperi, gli USA e il Vaticano all'inizio della guerra fredda* (Milan: Jaca Books, 2005). The most impressive attempt to theorize Christian Democratic-Vatican relations can be found in Renato Moro, *La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica (1929-1937)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979).

<sup>20</sup> The postwar survival of Europe's interwar institutions and institution-builders is analyzed in Stanley Hoffmann's classic 1963 essay, "Paradoxes of the French Political Community," in *In Search of France: The Economy, Society and the Political System in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Hoffmann et al. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), 1-117. More recent accounts defending continuity in institutional and intellectual terms include Jan T. Gross, "Themes for a Social History of War Experience and Collaboration," in *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath*, eds. István Deák, Jan T. Gross and Tony Judt (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 15-37; Susan Pedersen, *Family, Dependence and the Origins of the Welfare State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880-1960* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002); Phillip Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); and Udi Greenberg, "Germany's Postwar Re-Education and its Weimar Intellectual Roots," *Journal of Contemporary History* 46 (January 2011): 10-32.

Lundestad's terms -- "invited" Americans into the continent.<sup>21</sup> Through complex overt and covert channels, Vatican officials strongly encouraged the United States to stay in Europe and expand its influence there. I argue that they did so because they sought a powerful ally to carry on the Vatican's anticommunist campaign, and because the United States had promised the Vatican extensive powers to shape European affairs. In exchange, the Vatican encouraged the United States not only to stay and distribute aid and political assistance to noncommunist and religious groups, but also to rearm countries in the event of a Soviet attack. Though scholars have commented in passing on the U.S.-Vatican partnership after World War II, few have provided a systematic account of its history. Most have tended to focus on the U.S. side of the story, looking less at how the alliance between the two powers was forged around the construction of joint hegemony in Europe and on European soil.<sup>22</sup>

My dissertation suggests that in the early Cold War, the U.S. and the Vatican converged on the centrality of Christianity in the self-projection of the Western or "Atlantic" international order. To date, this phenomenon has been most studied by scholars of U.S. diplomatic history post-1945, who have shown how Christianity as a social force and rhetorical construct was mobilized to differentiate the Cold War West from its "Godless" Eastern enemy.<sup>23</sup> Seen from the

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<sup>21</sup> Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952," *Journal of Peace Research* 23, 3 (September 1986): 262-277. The export of American products and the American way of life to European citizens has been beautifully analyzed by Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g., Peter D'Agostino, *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Charles Gallagher, S.J., *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Dianne Kirby, "The Anglo-American Cold War Alliance and the Defense of Western Civilization and Christianity, 1945-8," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35 (2000): 385-412; Patrick McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War: Edmund A. Walsh, S.J. and the Politics of American Anticommunism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005); and John Cooney, *The American Pope: The Life and Times of Francis Cardinal Spellman* (New York: Times Books, 1984).

<sup>23</sup> Many recent works have stressed the centrality of Christianity in the early Cold War. Some of the most important include Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950-1957* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Dianne Kirby, ed., *Religion and the Cold War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 2012); William

perspective of the interwar years, it is reasonable to conclude that Christianity played this role not only because American and European state leaders used religion in a calculating, instrumental, way, to advance their power within individual countries and on an international scale -- the only function an older generation of diplomatic historians seemed willing to accord religion.<sup>24</sup> Instead, perhaps Christianity assumed the justificatory status it did because of the survival of a certain idea of international affairs that had taken shape in the interwar years; an idea that had been fortified by the Vatican's concordat diplomacy and its launching of a transnational anticommunist campaign. This idea was that Christianity could and should dictate transnational blocs of allegiance and draw the line between friends and foes. On this view, the postwar battle against the Soviet Union leaned so heavily on Christian rhetoric and on Christian organizations because the ideational map had already been partly redrawn in this sense by a group of European and American actors in the interwar years.<sup>25</sup>

### 3. Source Base

This dissertation is based on recently released sources culled from various archives associated with the Vatican, and the Jesuit and Dominican orders, and housed in Italy, France and Canada.

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Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945-1960: The Soul of Containment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Wendy Wall, *Inventing the 'American Way': The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jonathan P. Herzog, *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: America's Religious Battle Against Communism in the Early Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Owen Chadwick, *The Christian Church in the Cold War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993).

<sup>24</sup> First-generation diplomatic historians tended to dismiss the place of religion in politics by presenting it as instrumental, in much the same way that certain Marxist scholars rejected ideology as that which elites use to manipulate the masses. Echoes of this long-standing bias can be found in the *fora* following the publication of some of the most influential articles bringing religion back into the study of diplomatic history, such as that of Andrew J. Rotter, "Gender Relations, Foreign Relations: The United States and South Asia, 1947-1964," *Journal of American History* 81 (September 1994): 518-42. See, e.g., Patricia R. Hill, "Religion as a Category of Diplomacy Analysis," *Diplomatic History*, 24, 4 (fall 2000): 633-40.

<sup>25</sup> The notion of an "ideational map" is drawn from Andrew L. March, *The Idea of China: Myth and Theory in Geographic Thought* (New York: Praeger, 1974), and Karen E. Wigen and Martin W. Lewis, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).



It also makes extensive use of the private and public papers of American, French and Italian state officials, consulted in university, political party, presidential and state archives on both sides of the Atlantic. Finally, the dissertation draws on an array of printed primary sources, such as pamphlets, newspapers, journals, photographs, novels, memoirs, and political and religious tracts. The kinds of sources analyzed might be usefully classified as follows: 1/ Sources relating to internal Vatican communication; 2/ Sources relating to the Vatican's communications with the outside world; 3/ The private or administrative musings of non-Vatican officials regarding the Vatican; 4/ Bureaucratic byproducts of daily Vatican operations.<sup>26</sup>

Sources relating to internal Vatican communication include internal meeting notes, private letters between Vatican officials, and telegrams and files to and from Vatican officials. These sources are useful in shedding light on how Vatican officials viewed their institution and the world and what they saw as the leading priorities for the Vatican moving forward. I consulted many files in this category at the Secret Vatican Archives, in the Holy Office Archives, and in the archives of the Jesuit order in Rome, Paris, and Montréal. The papers consulted in the files of the Secretariat of State, which may be viewed as the rough equivalent to an Interior Ministry, provide a neat summary of the Vatican's institutional priorities. Housed at the Secret Vatican Archives, the papers of this Secretariat deal with all matters internal to Church discipline and order, and concern the Secretariat's coordination of all other branches of the Roman Curia. This Secretariat is led by a single cleric, the Secretary of State, who is directly appointed by the Pope and typically considered his second-in-command. The Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, also presided over by the Secretary of State, is the rough equivalent to the Vatican's Foreign Ministry. The third branch of the Roman Curia whose papers shed light on internal Vatican communication is the Congregation of the Holy Office, charged with policing matters of doctrine and defending the faith through the proscription of error. The

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<sup>26</sup> This classificatory scheme is partly borrowed from Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making," in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, eds. Charles Tilly and Gabriel Ardant (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 3-84.

Pope, who appoints a Secretary of the Holy Office as the institution's de facto head, nominally leads the Holy Office, which issues a regular Index of prohibited books (known as the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*), drafts Syllabi of Errors cataloguing heretical doctrines, and produces less-binding (but often greatly damaging) reprimands against individuals, journals, organizations and states perceived in violation of Church teachings. Letters and notes of conversations between the Pope, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Holy Office, and the clerics of the Holy Office, provide important sources of information about the kinds of theological/political problems deemed most important, and the strategies drafted for handling them.

Material relating to the Vatican's relations with the outside world constitutes the second category of sources analyzed in the dissertation. Sources which fall into this category include letters to and from local churches, communications of various sorts between heads of state and lay Catholic leaders and politicians, and newspapers, posters, radio and film. They include means of communication with the outside world which are distinctive to the Vatican, such as the aforementioned Syllabi of Errors, which catalogue the heresies of the age, as well as papal sermons and Encyclicals, which are circular letters to the faithful communicating the Pope's teachings on pressing social, political and religious issues. The Secret Vatican Archives, state and foreign office archives, and the archives of Catholic Action and Christian Democratic parties, supply most of the sources relating to the Vatican's communications with the outside world.

Thirdly, my dissertation makes use of private or administrative communications about the Vatican written by diplomats and observers. Particularly rich sources here include the secret police files of agents tracking certain Vatican officials, as well as memoirs written by diplomats and state officials in residence at the Vatican. Documents wherein diplomats in regular communication with the Vatican report home to their superiors are also extraordinarily important, as they help solve interpretive problems, or triangulate information, though of course

bias and self-interest can make interpretation difficult. Many of the sources in this category are private papers or state archive material, some of which have already been partially studied by scholars eager to grasp, for instance, the workings of the Fascist secret police.

Finally, my dissertation makes use of the bureaucratic byproducts involved in the Vatican's day-to-day operations. These sources include multiple drafts and translations of documents directed at the outside world (letters to heads of state, Encyclicals, Syllabi of Errors, etc.). They also include records of Vatican accounts, which detail monthly and yearly moneys spent and earned in various Vatican operations, calendars of particularly influential Vatican and Jesuit officials, and log-visit books. The Secretariat's daily notes on his meetings with the Pope are particularly valuable byproducts, insofar as they provide crucial information not only about the Vatican's internal chain of command but also about which countries and issues were considered most pressing in any given moment in time. Most of these internal bureaucratic byproducts were consulted at the Secret Vatican archives, at the Holy Office archives, or at the Jesuit and Dominican archives, and are being used (to my knowledge) for the first time.

#### **4. A Note on Language**

The most important oft-recurring term in this dissertation is, of course, the "Vatican." I use the term "Vatican" to refer to the state of Vatican City since 1929 and the last absolute monarchy on earth. The word derives from the Latin word *Vaticanus*, which literally means "mound" or "hill," and was the name given since Roman times to a hill west of the Tiber River. It was on this hill that Popes resided since the fourteenth century, building an impressive complex of palaces, galleries, and museums, bounded by protective walls. Following the loss of the Papal States during the Italian wars of unification, it was to this hill that Popes retreated. The word "Vatican" became quite popular as a way not just to refer to the hill, but to the central government of the Catholic Church after the loss of the Papal States, thanks in no small measure to Pope Pius IX

(who reigned from 1846 to 1878), who had declared himself a "prisoner of the Vatican" following the breach of Porta Pia. By so doing, Pius IX was highlighting the fact that the Italian state had taken papal lands and titles without his consent and that it had left him free only to inhabit the small walled enclave atop Vatican hill. Pius IX's claim was largely performative, for the Pope was not actually being held captive or prisoner by the new Italian state. But the phrase gained traction. So much so that the papacy and its supporters insistently used it until 1929, when the "prison" of Vatican hill was officially recognized as a miniature sovereign state -- the state of Vatican City. Again, the word "Vatican" had received privileged status; from simple hill, it had become a city-state, and one that survives to this day. Scholars instead use the term "Holy See" to refer to the Petrine ministry and the bishopric of Rome. In Catholic teachings, the Holy See has the nature of a moral person, and is endowed as such by divine law.

In this dissertation, I consider the Vatican's quest for concordat partners and its anticommunist campaign as instances of "diplomacy." I use the term "diplomacy" to signal a pre-determined political program for interaction with state and non-state actors, which had certain precise aims and was pursued primarily by specially trained officials. Vatican diplomacy was as much about the art of restraining power as it was about creating power -- that is, about creating opportunities for the Vatican to influence political, economic and social domains. As will be emphasized, however, the Vatican's diplomacy often evolved in counter-intuitive ways, and it did not spring, Athena-like, from the head of any single Vatican diplomat -- or much less, from the head of the Pope. Going against the grain of standard Vatican histories, my account considerably downplays the relative importance of the figure of the Pope in determining Vatican diplomacy, emphasizing instead how diplomatic practice emerged as a result of complex intra-institutional struggles. The historical evidence thus suggests the importance of structures and

social networks in shaping individual agency, in that they present individuals with a discursive context and a set of really existing limitations and opportunities.<sup>27</sup>

In the dissertation, I use the term "ideology" to refer to a relatively cohesive group of ideas that exist under particular conditions, include normative claims, and aim to have an effect on social practices. I argue that in the interwar years the Pope advanced an ideology that sought to both describe and proscribe the characteristics of the international state system, through the realization of a Christian polity.<sup>28</sup> In using the term "ideology," I am not making any claims about whether the Vatican's beliefs were true or false, nor do I conceive of the project of describing the Vatican's ideology as a critique in search of internal contradictions and inconsistencies.<sup>29</sup> I am however suggesting that the Vatican's ideology was grounded in language and in certain social forces, from which it drew both its strength and a measure of instability. Indeed, the Vatican's ideology developed in a hybrid space, which had formal independence from European states, but which at the same time depended on European (and increasingly, American) states for financial and political support. It was for this reason that throughout the period under analysis, the Vatican's ideology did not typically resist the guiding ideologies of the Vatican's partner states, but neither was it exclusively identified with what Louis Althusser has

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<sup>27</sup> More recently, versions of this long-standing Marxist position have been reworked and developed in new directions by, e.g., Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990). Older theorizations that have shaped my views in this dissertation include Georg Simmel, *On Individuality and Social Forms* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), and Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere* (Turin: Einaudi, 1975).

<sup>28</sup> This definition of "ideology" is borrowed from Rahel Jaeggi, "Rethinking Ideology," in *New Waves in Political Philosophy*, eds. Boudewijn de Bruin and Christopher F. Zurn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 63-86, here 64; and David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4. Unfortunately, I use the term without leaning on a strong theory of the role that ideology plays in social practices -- a theory which, as Samuel Moyn has recently argued, it is imperative to develop. Samuel Moyn, "Imaginary Intellectual History" (unpublished paper, 2012), presented at *The Concept of Ideology Revisited: Origins, Theories, Lived Experience*, Princeton University, April 28, 2012.

<sup>29</sup> If anything, Theodore Adorno's claim that in ideologies, "truth and untruth are always intertwined," is closer to my intuition. In this dissertation, my aim will not be to defend this or another position, but rather to provide a strictly descriptive account. Theodore Adorno, "Beitrag zur Ideologienlehre," in *Soziologische Schriften*, vol. I (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1972), 465.

called the "ideological state apparatus" -- a phrase he used to refer to that intermediary space between the state and the individual which transmits the values of the state.<sup>30</sup> Rather -- to use Antonio Gramsci's terms -- the Vatican's ideology simultaneously embodied both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic tendencies, as it sought to differentiate itself from partner states by attempting to mold them in its image.<sup>31</sup>

## 5. Chapter Outline

The dissertation is organized chronologically, and divided into three parts: I. Towards the New Papal Diplomacy (Chapters One through Three); II. Launching the Anti-Communist Campaign (Chapters Four through Six); and III. Reconstructing Christian Europe (Chapters Seven through Nine).

Part I of the dissertation, "Towards the New Papal Diplomacy," traces the origins of how the Vatican began to work closely with European states after World War I. Chapter One, "The Failed Pursuit of Statehood," explores the Vatican's unsuccessful attempt to regain the Papal States by engaging in several important state-building processes. These included the centralization of power in the person of the Pope, and the training of a new professional functionary class, which was well versed in both canon and civil law. Chapter Two, "Making Peace with the Nation-State," shows how the existence of this new functionary class -- coupled with the unique conditions presented by World War I -- led the Vatican take a new diplomatic course, which focused on establishing regimes of power sharing between Church and state, enshrined via treaty diplomacy. In the process, the Vatican partnered with many of the war's losers and presented itself as a useful ally in the fight against the "liberalistic" Versailles order

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<sup>30</sup> Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Toward an Investigation," in *On Ideology* (1970; London: Verso, 2008), 1-141.

<sup>31</sup> A more extensive discussion of Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony and civil society is provided in Chapter Three.

and the rise of destabilizing forms of left-wing radicalism. Chapter Three, "Civil Society Comes into View," explores how in parallel to treaty diplomacy, the Vatican signaled its willingness to partner with the state via the centralization and mobilization of Catholic associational life. Doing so demonstrated the Vatican's inclination to disown Christian Democratic political movements and partner with political forces deemed more malleable. The reinvention of Catholic associational life also provided the Vatican with a mobilized base that it used to pressure partner states, if and when it felt under threat. Finally, it exposed Vatican officials to a greater degree of exchange and dialogue with the Catholic laity (and with Catholic lay intellectuals in particular) than had been the case prior.

Part II of the dissertation, "Launching the Anticommunist Campaign," investigates how anticommunism became the centerpiece of the Vatican new diplomacy in the interwar years. Chapter Four, "The Origins of the Vatican Anticommunist Campaign," shows how the creation of Church-state partnerships made the Vatican more wealthy, powerful, and aware of global goings-on -- but also more paranoid and worried about losing its newfound position of influence. This, coupled with the perceived effects of the Great Depression and with Stalin's antireligious policies, led the Vatican to develop an increasingly hardline stance on the Soviet Union and international communism. As Chapter Five shows, the Vatican's hardline stance gradually morphed into a sophisticated, institutionalized, campaign that sought to marginalize the Soviet Union, and assist partner states in their battle against left-wing forces. Soon, the Vatican campaign began to cast the battle against the Soviet Union as an existential one, which must be waged, if necessary, through violence. This began to determine the actions of its participants in profound ways; hence, the chapter title, "An Iron Cage." Chapter Six -- "The Theoretical Underpinnings of Vatican Anticommunism" -- explores how the existence of the institutionalized anticommunist campaign not only constrained action: it also limited the Vatican's political ideology. It caused the Vatican to first forcibly silence a powerful theological

critique of Nazi-Fascism being developed within its walls, and then creatively repurpose this critique as a theoretical justification for its campaign against the Soviet Union.

Part III of the dissertation, "Reconstructing Christian Europe," covers the years between 1939 and 1958. Chapter Seven, "The Pursuit of Old Diplomacy and New Allies," discusses how the Vatican laid the foundations for an alliance with the United States during World War II, as it belatedly began a secret disavowal of its previous allegiance with authoritarian leaders, once it had come to the conclusion that these leaders would either lose the war or fail to maintain Church-state partnerships intact. Chapter Eight, "Redefining Democracy," demonstrates how the Vatican definitively cast its lot with the United States and with Christian Democratic powers in 1944, as its interwar theology began to incorporate the language of democracy. Finally, Chapter Nine shows how the Vatican successfully recreated its Church-state partnerships in several countries in Western Europe in the years immediately following the war, all the while reinvigorating its Manichean campaign against the Soviet Union and accepting the loss of Eastern Europe. Thus, the chapter traces "How the Vatican Helped Forge the Cold War West" -- and how it came to accept a new notion of the "West" in the process. However, as the dissertation's conclusion explores, the new situation was unsustainable. By the 1950s, the partnership of Church and state in Western Europe was unable to withstand internal and external shocks, and began to come undone. So did the Vatican-U.S. alliance. But as the Vatican retreated from the European continent and turned its attention elsewhere, many of its interwar gains -- at the level of both institutions and ideas -- would survive.



**Part I**

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**Towards the New Papal Diplomacy**

## Chapter One

### *The Failed Pursuit of Statehood, 1870-1914*

*Sovereignty is contagious: once any community becomes a state, neighboring communities respond in kind.*  
--Nicholas J. Onuf<sup>1</sup>

*Once none had the state, then some had it, and finally all had it.*  
-- Ernest Gellner<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

In the course of Italy's wars of unification between 1859 and 1870, the papacy lost control of the near entirety of the Papal States -- a vast swath of territory in central Italy it had controlled for centuries. Following this event, the papacy's leading diplomatic goal became to regain its lost state. Between c.1860 and 1905, the papacy pursued this goal by rhetorically affirming the inerrancy of its ruler (the Pope), the divinely inspired and "perfect" nature of the papal state, and the utter indivisibility of sovereignty. Faced with the failure of this strategy, from c.1905, the Vatican began to pursue the goal of regaining the Papal States in a new way: through the tools of law, as employed by a new class of functionaries trained in both canon and civil law, and in active dialogue with the wider world. Initially, legal instruments were used to further buttress the notion that the Pope was the infallible ruler of the universal Catholic Church and as such entitled to territories of his own. By World War I, the new functionaries pushed the Vatican to

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<sup>1</sup> Nicholas J. Onuf, "Sovereignty: Outline of a Conceptual History," *Alternatives* 16, 4 (1991): 425-46, here 430. As cited in David Armitage, "The Contagion of Sovereignty: Declarations of Independence since 1776," *South African Historical Journal* 52, 1 (2005): 1-18, here 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2006), 5.

abandon its old dream of restoring the Papal States and instead begin pursuing a new form of diplomacy, which depended on the cultivation of strategic alliances with European state leaders.

The Vatican was by no means the only state reinventing its theoretical bases and practical *modus operandi* in the years between c.1860 and 1914. This arc of time was in fact characterized by the decline of confederal empires amidst prolonged civil wars, and the birth of a new kind of strongly centralized and territorially cohesive nation-state.<sup>3</sup> Insofar as these new nation-states depended on the control of well-defined land and populations, they were characterized by great concern with the drawing of boundaries, both between states, and within them. As one scholar has astutely noted, it is unsurprising that this historical era was accordingly characterized by so many "questions" regarding matters both geographical and socio-political: consider the Transylvanian Question, the Polish Question, the Eastern Question, the Macedonian Question, the Social Question and the Woman Question.<sup>4</sup> All of these questions interrogated really existing and metaphorical boundaries, and offered rival answers concerning the definition of sovereign statehood and citizenship.

It was within this crowded field of questions and divergent answers that the papacy provided its own response to the so-called Roman Question. This question broadly asked what role religion should play within newly constituted nation-states, and more narrowly interrogated whether the Pope had a right to control a state and wield political influence. It became central throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, as the pan-European *Kulturkampf* pitted

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<sup>3</sup> Many scholars have suggested that Eric Hobsbawm's notion of a "long nineteenth century," stretching from 1789 to 1914, does not pay sufficient attention to the important transformations underway between 1860 and 1914. See, *inter alia*, Charles Maier, "Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era," *The American Historical Review* 105,3 (June 2000): 807-831, and Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, "World History in a Global Age," *American Historical Review* 100 (October 1995): 1034-60. Eric Hobsbawm defended the notion of a long nineteenth century (1789-1914) and a short twentieth century (1914-1991), in *The Age of Revolution: Europe, 1789-1848* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962); *The Age of Capital: 1848-1875* (New York: Scribner, 1975); *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987); and *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Holly Case, *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during World War II* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 11.

Catholic groups against anti-clerical factions eager to reverse Church privileges dating from the Restoration years. In Germany, France, Italy and elsewhere, lands belonging to the Catholic Church and its religious congregations were seized, and Catholicism's place in public education was sharply limited.<sup>5</sup> But rather than by extreme acts of violence and non-interaction between opposed groups, the culture wars were characterized by a constant exchange, which was at times antagonistic, and at times mutually accommodating.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, it was in the papacy's attempt to dialogue about the Roman Question -- on the pages of newspapers and pamphlets, and on the floors of parliaments and piazzas -- that its position regarding the right to reclaim the Papal States, and defend Catholicism's centrality in European affairs, gradually emerged.

Following definitions of state building provided by historical sociologists, this chapter will argue that the papacy's initial attempt to answer the Roman Question by regaining continuous territory and increasing its independent authority can be usefully understood as an

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<sup>5</sup> For a useful overview of the culture wars, see the introductory chapters in Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). On the history of the term *Kulturkampf*, see Jörg Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-Sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, eds. Otto Bruner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1992), VII, 679-774. On France's exile of religious congregations and on the Laws of Association (1901) and the Act of Separation (December 9, 1905), see, *inter alia*, Patrick Cabanel and Jean-Dominique Durand, eds., *Le Grand exil des congrégations religieuses françaises, 1901-1914* (Paris: Cerf, 2005), and Joseph F. Byrnes, *Catholic and French Forever: Religious and National Identity in Modern France* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), esp. chapters four and five. On the Italian state's legislation against the Catholic Church, see, *inter alia*, Carlo M. Fiorentino, *Chiesa e stato a Roma negli anni della destra storica, 1870-1876: Il trasferimento della capitale e la soppressione delle corporazioni religiose* (Rome: Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano, 1996); Manuel Borutta, *Antikatholizismus: Deutschland und Italien im Zeitalter der europäischen Kulturkämpfe* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010); and Luciano Pazzaglia, ed., *Chiesa e prospettive educative in Italia tra Restaurazione e Unificazione* (Brescia: La Scuola, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> For recent attempts to recast the culture wars as sites of dialogue, see Oliver Zimmer, "Beneath the 'Culture War': Corpus Christi Processions and Mutual Accommodation in the Second German Empire," *The Journal of Modern History* 82 (June 2010): 288-334; Michael B. Gross, *The War Against Catholicism: Liberalism and the Anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004); Rebecca Ayako Bennette, *Fighting for the Soul of Germany: The Catholic Struggle for Inclusion after Unification* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2012); David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in a Nineteenth-Century German Village* (New York: Random House, 1995); Sarah Ann Curtis, *Educating the Faithful: Religion, Schooling, and Society in Nineteenth-Century France* (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000); Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (New York: Viking, 1999); and Raymond Jonas, *France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart: An Epic Tale for Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

exercise in state building.<sup>7</sup> Though scholars have written a great deal on the state-building practices pursued in the years between c.1860 and 1914 by countries such as Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Hungary, Romania, the United States, Japan, and others, none, to my knowledge, have applied a similar analytic framework to the Vatican.<sup>8</sup> Instead, scholars of European and American history, with only a few recent exceptions, have cast the Vatican as a relic of a bygone age, which gradually receded more and more from view during this vibrant period in history.<sup>9</sup> Church historians, on the other hand, have remained trapped in a

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<sup>7</sup> For sociological definitions of state building highlighting territorial control, the centralization of power, the creation of bureaucratic autonomy, and the integration of citizenry, see Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making," *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 3-84; J.P. Nettl, "The State as a Conceptual Variable," *World Politics* 20 (1968): 559-592; Cyril Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization: A Study in Comparative History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966); and Joseph Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970; 2005). Newer attempts to rethink state building, which highlight similar trends, include Michael Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, c.1550-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Berit Bliesemann de Guevara, ed., *Statebuilding and State-Formation: The Political Sociology of Intervention* (London: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Recent and classic works on a wide range of forces in state making in late nineteenth-century Europe include, *inter alia*, Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Case, *op.cit.*; Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Isabel Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); Lucy Riall, *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Mary Vincent, *Spain, 1833-2002: People and State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Paul Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism and Antisemitism, 1890-1944* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); István Deák, *Assimilation and Nationalism in East Central Europe during the Last Century of Habsburg Rule* (Pittsburg, PA: University of Pittsburgh, 1983); Cyril Black and L. Carl Brown, eds., *Modernization in the Middle East: The Ottoman Empire and its Afro-Asian Successors* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1992); and Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976). For a failed nineteenth-century movement to unite the lands surrounding the Adriatic sea, see Dominique Kirchner Reill, *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation: Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg Dalmatia, Trieste and Venice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012). For the birth of a late nineteenth-century movement to found a state for the Jewish people, see Gideon Shimoni, *The Zionist Ideology* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1995). For an overview of how the state took shape in the United States after the American Civil War, see Megan Kate Nelson, *Ruin Nation: Destruction and the American Civil War* (Atlanta: University of Georgia Press, 2012). On the state-building reforms of the Meiji Restoration, see Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

<sup>9</sup> A few recent works that attempt to connect nineteenth-century Vatican history to key historiographical questions like the rise of global capitalism, and the creation of transnational "imagined communities," include Vincent Viaene, *Belgium and the Holy See from Gregory XVI to Pius IX (1831-1859): Catholic Revival, Society and Politics in 19th-Century Europe* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001); Peter D'Agostino, *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004); John Pollard, *Money and the Rise of the*

historiographical ghetto, focusing their attention rather narrowly on the presumed progressive or regressive nature of individual Popes, rather than investigating the structural changes and constant dialogue with the wider world that characterized the late nineteenth-century Vatican.<sup>10</sup> As will be argued below, the turn to state building was a constant feature following the seizure of the Papal States, until c.1914. It was a rejoinder to the rise of new nation-states across Europe, and the question of what role -- if any -- religion should play therein. Paradoxically, the Vatican's state building emerged precisely in reaction to the papacy's loss of statehood.

### **1. Restoring a Deposed Leader: The Centralization of Power**

The Vatican's first response to the loss of the Papal States was to defend the absolute inerrancy of its ruler, and centralize power in the person of the Pope to a degree unheard of prior. Analogous contemporary processes were underway in Italy and Germany, as both newborn countries sought to bring about the shift from a system of strong regional loyalties to a unitary system, characterized by a central governing structure.<sup>11</sup> In the nineteenth century, the rhetorical and practical augmentation of the Pope's powers was accomplished through an official

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*Modern Papacy: Financing the Vatican, 1850-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); and John McGreevy, "American Politics, Global Catholicism" (unpublished paper, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes, 1830-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Frank J. Coppa, *The Modern Papacy, 1798-1995* (London: Addison Wesley Longman, 1998); Derek J. Holmes, *The Triumph of the Holy See: A Short History of the Papacy in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Burns & Oates, 1978); and David Kertzer, *Prisoner of the Vatican: The Pope's Secret Plot to Capture Rome from the New Italian State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> See Daniel Ziblatt, *Structuring the State: The Formation of Italy and Germany and the Puzzle of Federalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), especially chapters five through seven; and Mario Isnenghi and Eva Cecchinato, eds., *l'Italia: unità e disunità nel Risorgimento* (Turin: UTET, 2008). Foundational neo-Marxist and institutionalist works also emphasize that the formation of national states in early modern Europe (1517-1789) came about through a process of political and administration centralization. See Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London: Vergo, 1979); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, 3 vols. (New York: Academic Press, 1976-87); Ernst Barker, *The Development of Public Services in Western Europe, 1660-1930* (Hamden, Conn: Anchon, 1966); Charles Tilly, *The Formation of National States in Europe*; Id., *Coercion, Capital and European States* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990); and Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978).

declaration of papal infallibility, and through a wide-scale media campaign, which empowered a certain part of the Catholic world keen on celebrating the Pope as the leader of the Catholic world. This "Ultramontanist" faction had arisen in France in the early nineteenth century, and held that the leader of the Church lay *ultra montes*, or beyond the Alps, rather than within any given national territory. Ultramontanists strongly opposed movements such as Gallicanism in France, Febronianism in Germany, or Josephinism in Austria, all of which sought to subsume religious authority under national authority and oppose or temper the primacy of the Roman Pontiff. In one of the founding texts of the movement, the French diplomat and theorist Joseph De Maistre had argued that the Pope must be venerated for he was a divine ruler and the only true safeguard of social stability.<sup>12</sup> Picking up on this idea, other Ultramontanists had argued that the Pope was the best defense against the secular, anti-clerical, tendencies pervading nineteenth-century society. Their extreme exaltation of the Roman Pontiff led them to elaborate extensively upon the monarchical character of the Pope and his rights as King.<sup>13</sup> The defense of the Pope as King was not an accidental move in an age of constitutional revolution, and was in certain ways analogous to the attempt of defenders of the Bourbon dynasty in France to resist constitutionalism up until the revolution of 1830.<sup>14</sup> This would gradually develop into a fully-

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<sup>12</sup> See Joseph de Maistre, *Du Pape* (Lyon: Rusand, 1819).

<sup>13</sup> On Ultramontanist ecclesiology in the nineteenth century, see Maurice Nédoncelle, ed., *L'ecclésiologie au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 1960); Richard F. Costigan, *Rohrbacher and the Ecclesiology of Ultramontanism* (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1980); and *L'Ecclesiologia dal Vaticano I al Vaticano II* (Brescia: La scuola, 1973). On the activism of the Ultramontanist faction, see, *inter alia*, Stephen Schloesser, "Vivo ergo cogito. Modernism as Temporalization and Its Discontents," in *The Reception of Pragmatism in France*, 21-59; Darrin M. MacMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Chadwick, *A History of the Popes*, 1-94; T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981); and Anton Van de Sande, *La Curie romaine au début de la Restauration. Le problème de la continuité dans la politique de restauration du Saint-Siège en Italie, 1814-1817* (Rome: Studien van hette Nederlands Instituut te Rome, 1979), 30ff. For an attempt to show how the Ultramontanist label could accommodate a variety of diverging viewpoints, see the analyses of six leading nineteenth-century Ultramontane bishops, in Jeffrey von Arx, S.J., ed., *Varieties of Ultramontanism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> On the French case, see Pamela Pilbeam, "The Growth of Liberalism and the Crisis of the Bourbon Restoration, 1827-1830," *The Historical Journal* 25, 2 (June 1982): 351-366.

fledged theory defending the notion that the Pope was a king endowed with extensive temporal powers, and as such best positioned to lead all Catholic and non-Catholic nations.

Pope Pius IX, who ruled from 1846 to 1878, was the first pontiff to officially enshrine Ultramontanist views as Church doctrine. Taking advantage of increased donations from the faithful and inventions like the telegraph, the steam ship and mass printing technologies, Pius IX actively supported the expansion of a Catholic journalism toeing a strong Ultramontanist line.<sup>15</sup> The Pope first helped the Jesuit journal *Civiltà Cattolica* expand its scope, and then, shortly after the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy, helped give rise to the Vatican's daily newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. These and other media perpetuated the image of a sovereign pontiff, who despite his loss of land maintained all of the trappings of an independent, absolute, monarch.<sup>16</sup> The Pope also encouraged this image to be kept alive through religious services, where chants invoking the glory of “the Pope-King” were frequent.<sup>17</sup>

The first key site empowering the Ultramontanist view of the papacy was the First Vatican Council, convened in 1864. The first of its kind since the Council of Trent, the First Vatican Council brought together over seven hundred prelates from across Europe, North America and Latin America, tasked with issuing a set of binding statements on the nature of the Catholic Church and its internal leadership structure. Around Christmas of 1869 (just a few months prior to the seizure of Rome), the Ultramontanist faction present at the council set the tone of the event. Thanks to its well-organized tactics, it added the doctrine of papal infallibility

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<sup>15</sup> Technology was being put to similar uses in countries like Italy and Germany. See, e.g., James M. Brophy, *Capitalism, Politics and Railroads in Prussia, 1830-1870* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998); and Albert Schram, *Railways and the Formation of the Italian State in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Riall, *Garibaldi*, 378-9; Clark, “The New Catholicism and the European Culture Wars,” in *Culture Wars*, 11-19; and Pollard, *Money and Rise of the Modern Papacy*, 46, and passim.

<sup>17</sup> Gail Hamilton, “The Pope and Italy,” *The North American Review* 150, 399 (February 1890): 177-188, here, 179.



to the agenda. Soon, the doctrine of papal infallibility won the majority of council votes, and was promptly enshrined as Church dogma.<sup>18</sup>

As outlined in the First Vatican Council, the dogma of papal infallibility defended the absolute certainty of all statements the Pope made *ex cathedra*, on matters of doctrine. The dogma further declared the "primacy of the Roman pontiff, on which the unity, strength and stability of the entire Church rests." Clergy and faithful "of every rite and rank" were henceforth called upon to heed the Pope on all matters of jurisdiction. The text further specified that the Pope and the Pope alone was allowed to have "direct and free relations with the clergy and laity of the entire Church," and that "no one is permitted to interfere" in these relations.<sup>19</sup> In other words, the doctrine of papal infallibility enshrined the Pope as the undisputed head of the Catholic Church, and announced that the Pope ruled, in last instance, alone, and by definition justly. The entire Catholic world must stand or fall with him.

Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of papal infallibility on July 18, 1870, exactly one day before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War. Planning for war had caused France to withdraw its troops from Rome, thus enabling the breach of Porta Pia by Italian troops (September 20, 1870), and abruptly bringing to a halt the First Vatican Council. The preliminary finding of "papal infallibility" thus took on an even greater meaning, and was used to send a clear message to the Pope's rival state-makers in Europe. In an age characterized by liberal nationalist attempts to whittle away clerical influence, the Roman Pontiff in person had responded with a loud and spectacular claim to extensive, and non-derogable, power. Militating

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<sup>18</sup> On Ultramontanist pressure tactics at the First Vatican Council, see Richard F. Costigan, *The Consensus of the Church and Papal Infallibility: A Study in the Background of Vatican I* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005); August Bernhard Hasler, *How the Pope Became Infallible: Pius IX and the Politics of Persuasion* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1981); and Emiliana P. Noether, "Vatican Council I: Its Political and Religious Setting," *The Journal of Modern History* 40, 2 (June 1968): 218-233.

<sup>19</sup> The full text of the First Vatican Council is reprinted in Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: From Nicaea I to Vatican II* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990).

against parliamentarianism, the First Vatican Council erected an unimpeachable, absolute monarch as the symbol of Catholic loyalty. In an age when states were demanding the exclusive loyalty of their subjects, the Pope rebutted by suggesting the omnipotence of his own central government and *his* control over millions of Catholics worldwide.

In addition to broadcasting the Pope's *desiderata* regarding how he should be treated by the outside world, the First Vatican Council also enabled the Pope to tidy up his own house. It forced nearly all minority bishops who had opposed the doctrine of papal infallibility to accept it, under penalty of excommunication.<sup>20</sup> In the process, the Pope cast aspersion on those clerics who sought to reconcile Catholicism with most forms of Enlightenment, liberal, neo-Kantian, and historicist thought.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the First Vatican Council enabled the Pope to tighten the ranks, and begin consolidating a single shared epistemology that aggrandized him. The Pope's profession of infallibility and single-handed rule was thus an invented tradition, which attempted to strengthen the bonds of a community cutting across national borders, and owing its loyalty to a single, infallible, leader.<sup>22</sup>

## **2. The Papal States are Dead; Long Live the Papal States!**

As of September 1870, the Pope no longer ruled a state, since the Papal States had been seized by Italian troops. In the years between 1860 and 1890, the papacy responded to the disruptive

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<sup>20</sup> For a discussion of the majority of bishops who accepted the dogma, and the minority of bishops who were excommunicated, see Robert McClory, *Power and the Papacy: The People and Politics Behind the Doctrine of Infallibility* (Liguori, Mo.: Triumph, 1997).

<sup>21</sup> On the Catholic engagement with Kant and neo-Kantianism, see Joseph Fitzer, ed., *Romance and the Rock: Nineteenth-Century Catholics on Faith and Reason* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989); and Gerald A. McCool, *From Unity to Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of Thomism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1992), 87-111. On the Catholic engagement with historicist hermeneutics and pragmatist philosophy, see *The Reception of Pragmatism in France*. On the rise of liberalistic Catholicism, over and against papal censure, see *Libéralisme chrétien et catholicisme libéral en Espagne, France et Italie* (Aix-en-Provence: University of Provence, 1989).

<sup>22</sup> The references here are of course to Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 2006).

state making of its rivals by not only declaring the Pope King, but also by providing its own, self-legitimizing, definition of the contested legal-political term, "sovereignty." In the latter half of the nineteenth century, investigating the problem of sovereignty had become a central preoccupation for the emerging field of international law. The questions up for debate included: Who (or what) was the locus of sovereignty? What was sovereignty's origin, and what was its purpose? Was sovereignty a spiritual or a temporal attribute? Was it possible to divide sovereignty, or was it advisable to limit it?<sup>23</sup> If the word "sovereignty" had originally referred to the condition, typically possessed by a monarch, of supreme dominion, authority or rule, by the late nineteenth century, the term signaled both the right of territorially bounded states to be independent within their own boundaries and free from incursion, as well as the right of "the people," rather than the king, to possess supreme ruling power.<sup>24</sup>

Starting from the 1860s, the papacy and its defenders picked up the word "sovereignty" to defend the supposed continued permanence of the Papal States. The redeployment of the term began in Pius IX's sweeping Syllabus of Errors of 1864, and was developed by Pope Leo XIII in a series of encyclicals of the 1880s. Soon, "sovereignty" also became a keyword in press organs defending the restoration of the Papal States. In the English, French and Italian versions of these discussions, the word *sovereignty*, *souveraineté* or *souvanità* was employed repeatedly. Papal documents addressing the problem of sovereignty typically rendered the term in Latin as

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<sup>23</sup> For a taste of how eighteenth and nineteenth-century state-makers debated the problem of sovereignty, see David Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 1-145; and Case, *op.cit.*, 7-11, and *passim*.

<sup>24</sup> For an overview of the history of the term, see James Crawford, "Sovereignty as a Legal Value," in *The Cambridge Companion to International Law*, eds. Crawford and Koskenniemi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 117-134; and, "Sovereignty, n." *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989; online version March 2012). <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/185343>>; accessed 31 May 2012. For a taste of the ongoing debate regarding whether the Peace of Westphalia (1648) inaugurated the definition of sovereignty as power *over a certain territory*, see, e.g., Osiender, *op.cit.*; and Stéphane Beaulac, "The Westphalian Model in International Law: Challenging the Myth," *Australian Journal of Legal History* 7 (2004): 181-213. For a discussion of how the term was used by American and French revolutionaries, see See Armitage, *op. cit.*

*potestas, imperium* or *principatus*.<sup>25</sup> The key features of the emergent Vatican doctrine of sovereignty included the notion that the Vatican was a sovereign state power because sovereignty was, first, indivisible and limitless; second, construed in both territorial and political terms; and, third, a legal-political concept that found its origin and purpose in God.<sup>26</sup>

The abstract claim that sovereignty was indivisible was used in practice by defenders of the Vatican to argue that the Pope maintained exclusive sovereignty over the city of Rome, and, on some counts, vast swaths of the Italian peninsula. This was for instance articulated in 1901-2, when Pope Leo XIII (Pius IX's successor), "reaffirmed the impossibility of two sovereigns living in Rome and expressed his belief that God would eventually bring to an end the unholy revolt against his kingdom."<sup>27</sup> The Italian state and the Pope could not share Rome; Rome was and remained the Pope's alone. Furthermore, the claim that the Vatican had undivided territorial sovereignty was used to defend the notion that the Pope was still the sovereign ruler of the (former) Papal States. Reasons of historic right were marshaled, including appeal to Scriptures, or emphasis on the fact that the Pope had been the leader of roughly the same territories for centuries and therefore could not be deprived of them on a whim.<sup>28</sup> Other defenders of this

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<sup>25</sup> For the Latin rendering of "sovereignty" as *potestas, imperium* and *principatus*, see, e.g., paragraphs 29 and 34 of *Immortale Dei*, as reprinted in Latin in *Documenta Pontificia* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1935), 12, 14. Late nineteenth century English-Latin and French-Latin dictionaries also converged on defining these three Latin words as synonyms of *sovereignty* and *souveraineté*. See, e.g., "Sovereignty," in Charlton Thomas Lewis, ed., *An Elementary Latin Dictionary* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1899); and "Souveraineté," in Emile Chatelain, ed., *Lexique Latin-Française* (Paris: Hachette et Cie, 1882).

<sup>26</sup> These threefold definition of sovereignty is laid out in Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei* (November 1, 1885), §3; §12; §17; §18; §31; §35; §45.

<sup>27</sup> Kertzer, *Prisoner of the Vatican*, 272-85, 291.

<sup>28</sup> Consider the following articulation of the latter argument for historic right: "The habitual dimensions of the Papal territory have varied comparatively little since the eighth century; so that it would seem their measure was pretty nearly determined by the same special Providence to which the sovereignty itself is attributed." Edmund J. O'Reilly, "The Relations of the Church to Society," *The Irish Monthly* 5 (1877): 107-113, here, 113. The scriptural passages cited to justify the territorial sovereignty of the Pope included Matthew 16:17-19 ("Thou art Peter, and upon this rock...", "the keys of the kingdom of heaven"); Matthew 28:18 ("all power in heaven and on earth..."); John 2:13ff; Luke 22:3; John 20:23; and Matthew 18:14. For defenses of this sort, see, *inter alia*, Charles Augustus Briggs, "The Real and Ideal in the Papacy," *The North American Review* 184.609 (15 February 1907): 347-363, here, 349.

position held that the Pope still had undivided territorial sovereignty because Italian troops had not invaded the papal palace, the ultimate symbol of papal power.<sup>29</sup>

Defenders of the Pope appealed to the supposed indivisibility of sovereignty to argue strongly against the separation of Church and state -- particularly as found in countries such as the United States. In truth, they asserted, the state has the *duty* to promote the one true religion, Catholicism.<sup>30</sup> In a specular fashion, Catholic heads of state, they argued, had the duty to promote the Pope's rights -- and thus boycott all relations with the Italian state. Indeed, as Leo XIII, influentially argued, God, "the sovereign Ruler of all," endowed the "Church with civil sovereignty, as the surest safeguard of her independence." Sovereignty was created by God, and embodied by the Catholic Church; it was an absurd error to posit that it resided in "the people, without any reference to God."<sup>31</sup>

Popes and Catholic theorists also defended the notion of the Vatican as a sovereign state power by reviving a sixteenth-century theory of the Church as a perfect society. According to this theory first proposed by Robert Bellarmine, the Church was a "perfect society," or *societas perfecta*, insofar as it is a body sufficient within itself to deliver the ends for which it was created. As such, the Church has superior ends: the salvation of souls. In the hands of late nineteenth-century theorists, the notion of the Church as a *societas perfecta* was extended to

<sup>29</sup> See, e.g., Georges Flaischlen, "La situation juridique du Pape," *Revue de Droit international* 6 (2nd series), 85.

<sup>30</sup> When Popes famously condemned "Americanism," they were, among other things, taking a position against those clerics in the United States who had accepted the separation of Church and state and promoted various forms of ecumenism. The clearest articulation of this condemnation can be found in Leo XIII's encyclical, *Testem Benevolentiae Nostrae* (1899). Both Father Salvatore Maria Brandi (who became an editor and writer for the Jesuit *Civiltà Cattolica*) and the Ultramontane Cardinal Camillo Mazzella contributed extensively to drafting this condemnation, after having lived in the United States for several years. See, e.g., Cardinal Mazzella, *De religione et ecclesia: praelectiones scholastico-dogmaticae* (Prati: Giachetti, filii et soc., 1905). For a discussion of Father Brandi and Cardinal Mazzella's reflections on their time in the United States, see Albert Thomas Howard, *God in the Atlantic: America, Europe and the Religious Divide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 67-85, and Gerald McKeivitt, *Brokers of Culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848-1919* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 80-90, 100-5, 203-5, 266-7, 315-7.

<sup>31</sup> Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, §3; §12; §31.

argue that the Vatican was an ideal sovereign state due to its “most perfect” internal system of government and code of laws. Furthermore, the *societas perfecta* of the Vatican was superior to all other political entities and for this reason its sovereignty was absolute. Civil governments should try their best to emulate the Church’s “perfect” internal governance and “perfect” moral foundations -- indeed, they had much to learn from the institution, precisely in matters of state. As it was re-appropriated in the second half of the nineteenth century, this ecclesiology taught that thanks to his ability to understand Christ's teachings, the Pope possessed the indirect power to dictate over a range of inter and intra-state matters, in virtue of his "superiority."<sup>32</sup>

But by the end of the nineteenth century, despite its retrenched defense of the Church as a "perfect state" endowed with an infallible ruler and entitled to state sovereignty, the Vatican had failed to attain its leading goal: the restoration of the Papal States. It had also been excluded in humiliating ways from the new European order, as it was barred from several high-profile international congresses and as its well-meaning overtures on matters like slavery and worker's rights were all but ignored by state leaders. Far seemed the days of the Congress of Vienna, when following Napoleon's rampage through Europe the Great Powers had handed the Pope a crucial role in legitimizing the restoration of monarchies keen on curbing the spread of French revolutionary ideas.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> One of the most influential texts reviving perfect society ecclesiology in this sense was Cardinal Felice Cavagnis, *Institutiones iuris publici ecclesiastici* (Rome: Societatis catholicae instructivae, 1882-3). Also see Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*. On the revival of perfect-society ecclesiology in the late nineteenth century, see Daniele Menozzi, “La chiesa e la storia: una dimensione della cristianità da Leone XIII al Vaticano II,” *Cristianesimo nella storia* 5 (January 1984): 69-106; Giovanni Miccoli, “Chiesa e società in Italia tra Ottocento e Novecento: il mito della ‘cristianità’,” *Chiese nelle società: verso un superamento della cristianità* (Turin: Marietti, 1980), 155-221; Eugene Cardinale, *The Holy See and the International Order* (Gerrards Cross: Smythe, 1976); and Joseph Robert Giandurco, *The Holy See as a Juridical Subject ‘sui iuris’ in International Law* (Rome: Pontificiam Universitatem S. Thomae in Urbe, 1994).

<sup>33</sup> On the Vatican's failure to gain an ear in the international state system, see Jean-Marc Ticchi, *Aux frontières de la paix. Bons offices, médiations, arbitrages du Saint-Siège (1878-1922)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2002); Vincent Viaene, "Introduction: Reality and Image in the Pontificate of Leo XII"; Philippe Delisle, "La campagne antiesclavagiste de Lavigerie et Léon XIII devant l'opinion missionnaire française"; and Hans de Valk, "A Diplomatic Disaster: The Exclusion of the Holy See from the 1899 Hague Peace Conference," all in *The Papacy and the New World Order: Vatican Diplomacy, Catholic Opinion and International Politics at the Time of Leo XIII, 1878-1903*, ed. Vincent Viaene (Bruxelles: Institut historique belge de Rome, 2005), 9-30, 295-413, 435-453. Contemporary accounts of

It was only in 1903, with the election of Pope Pius X to the Throne of St. Peter, that the Vatican's prospects for restoring some measure of influence began improving. This Pope is best known for launching a far-reaching campaign to enforce neo-Scholastic teachings and fight socialism, liberalism, and religious pluralism, through manifold encyclicals and the creation of a secret surveillance organization, known as *La Sapinière*.<sup>34</sup> He is also sung by friends and vilified by enemies for lifting the ban imposed by Pius IX on Catholic political action, and simultaneously throwing his weight behind conservative Ultramontanist civil society movements that had arisen on the Italian peninsula and elsewhere to defend the Pope's prerogatives. Continuing the legacy of Vatican I, Pius X also increased the Vatican's control of local churches by mandating what amounted to a series of geopolitical reforms, implemented on a global scale.<sup>35</sup> But perhaps Pius X's most lasting legacy was one that scholars have by and large overlooked. In the years between 1903 and 1914, Pius X encouraged the development of a new class of functionaries within the Vatican. These men were responsible for having the Vatican abandon its insistent attempt to regain the Papal States. Instead, they would eventually encourage the Vatican to use the tools of law to craft a new mode of papal diplomacy.

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how the papacy's exclusion from late-nineteenth century international congresses complicated its quest for statehood include Franz Despagnet, *Cours de Droit international public*, 4th ed (Paris: Recueil Sirey, 1910), §153; and A. Pearce Higgins, "The Papacy and International Law," *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation* 9.2 (1908): 252-264, here, 260.

<sup>34</sup> Pius X's signature encyclical in the battle against these ideologies was *Pascendi dominici gregis* (1907). On Pius X's campaign, see, *inter alia*, Giovanni Vian, *Il modernismo: la Chiesa cattolica in conflitto con la modernità* (Rome: Carocci, 2012); Hubert Wolf and Juth Schepers, eds., *In wilder zügelloser Jagd nach Neuem': 100 Jahre Modernismus und Antimodernismus in der katholischen Kirche* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2009); Émile Poulat, *Intégrisme et catholicisme intégral: un réseau secret international antimoderniste: La Sapinière, 1909-1921* (Paris: Casterman, 1969); and Giovanni Sale, *La civiltà cattolica' nella crisi modernista (1900-1907): fra transigentismo politico e integralismo dottrinale* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2001).

<sup>35</sup> On Pius X's centralizing reforms, see Giovanni Vian, *La riforma della Chiesa per la restaurazione cristiana della società. Le visite apostoliche delle diocesi e dei seminari d'Italia promosse durante il pontificato di Pio X (1903-1914)* (Rome: Herder, 1998); and the contemporary, Charles Daniel, Paul-Marie Baumgarten, and Antoine De Waal, *Le chef suprême, l'organisation et l'Administration de l'Eglise. L'Eglise catholique à la fin du XIXe siècle* (Paris, Plon, 1900).

### 3. The New Code of Canon Law

The new class of workers began emerging after 1904, once Pius X announced his intention to reform the Code of Canon Law. Part and parcel of the broader project to Romanize, centralize, and systematize the governing structure of the Vatican, the reform aimed to fit all of the laws of the Church into a single volume.<sup>36</sup> It was a daunting task, insofar as the codification of a formal legal structure guiding the Church and its faithful had begun in the thirteenth century and had been poorly organized since. Materials were collected in dozens of volumes arranged chronologically, rather than by subject. And in place of an abstract articulation of a set of rules, the laws in these volumes were explained via long and detailed cases and situations.

Like Europe's nineteenth-century codes of law, the reform of the Code of Canon Law spoke to the Vatican's ambition to use law as a tool in state building. And like the papacy's other state-building projects, it was both proactive and reactive. As Pius X announced in 1904, the new Code of Canon Law should take European nineteenth-century civil codes as its model. It should be written *ex novo*, and its laws, referred to as "codes," should be stated in analytical and abstract terms, rather than fleshed out through case studies. Finally, like its European models, the Code should be arranged by subject rather than chronologically, and it should borrow its over-arching organizational categories ("persons," "things," and "actions" or "procedures") from Justinian's sixth-century codification of Roman law, the *Corpus Juris Civilis*.

In addition to fulfilling broader state-building aims, the reform of the Code of Canon Law also constituted a direct response to contingent European developments. In 1903-4, France announced its intention to mandate the separation of Church and state, and send most religious orders into exile. The Pope was so incensed by what he called the *evento nefasto* that he asked many members of the Code of Canon Law commission to draw up a legal response, which

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<sup>36</sup> Pius X announced his intention to reform the Code of Canon Law through a *motu proprio* entitled *Arduum sane munus* (March 19, 1904).



effectively attempted to show the illegality, and hence, illegitimacy, of the French attack on the Church. By doing so, Pius X imbued work on the Code with new, urgent, meaning.<sup>37</sup> He also delayed it somewhat -- indeed, all told, the Code took a total of thirteen years of hard work. On May 27, 1917, the Code was complete, and presented to the public; it entered into force approximately one year later, on May 19, 1918. As will be investigated in the following chapter, the new Code of Canon Law would play a crucial role in positioning the Vatican as a prominent voice for peace in the years after World War I.

The new Code of Canon Law provided a neat summary of the Vatican's nineteenth-century state-building strategies. It enshrined perfect-society ecclesiology, and emphasized the papacy's right and duty to possess sovereignty. Though its 2,414 laws filled five volumes in place of the single volume Pius X had originally mandated, the new Code represented an impressive synthesis of centuries of ecclesiastical law in the service of a new political-theological project. As a contemporary American jurist noted, the Code was "certainly one of the greatest literary juridical achievements of the twentieth century," by virtue of its concision and modernity.<sup>38</sup>

Each of the five volumes of the Code drove home the point that the Vatican, led by the Pope, stood at the head of the Catholic world in both temporal and spiritual matters. The first volume, Book I (cc. 1-86), enshrined general norms, explaining for instance that where religious law conflicts with secular law, the former should be heeded. Book II, "On Persons" (cc.87-725), posited the ability of the papacy to regulate the conduct of clerics, religious and lay persons. Book III, "On Things," explained what it meant to be a practicing Catholic before the law, by

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<sup>37</sup> The booklet, titled *La séparation de l'Église et de l'État en France*, was authored by Pietro Gasparri and Eugenio Pacelli, among others, and circulated internally in late 1905. See Carlo Fantappiè and Romeo Astorri, "Pietro Gasparri," *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol.52 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1999): 500-3.

<sup>38</sup> Charles P. Sherman, "A Brief History of Imperial Roman Canon Law," *California Law Review* 7, 2 (January 1919): 93-104. For similar contemporary praise, see Reginald B. Fellows, "The New Code of Roman Canon Law," *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law* 1, 3 (1919), 241ff; and Charles Augustine, *A Commentary on the New Canon Law* (London and St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1919).

focusing on the administration of Sacraments (cc.731-1153), and the duty to worship God in a particular, centrally mandated, way, for instance via the veneration of what the Roman Church declared to be sacred times and places (cc.1154-1321). Book III of the Code also defended the primacy of the ecclesiastical magisterium within the Catholic world -- that is, the historical-legal right of the Pope and the Roman Curia to legislate on behalf of Catholics at large. It urged Catholics to recognize the central Church, led by the Supreme Pontiff, as an institution created by Christ and entitled to both territorial and political sovereignty (cc.1322-1551). Book IV, "On Processes," concerned the judicial system internal to the Church, to which lay Catholics must also answer, for instance in matters pertaining to family law. This book also laid out rules preventing local churches from superseding the central Church, discussing at length matters like the beatification and canonization of saints (cc.1552-2141). Finally, Book V, "On Crimes and Penalties," promised internal accountability, by outlining the penal law of the central Church itself (cc.2195-2414).<sup>39</sup>

As only a handful of scholars have noted, the monopoly of jurisdiction the Code created was a first in Church history. It had the effect of universalizing Vatican law, and of reinforcing disciplinary and administrative uniformity. It powerfully linked Catholic laypeople and clergy members more closely to the institution of the Vatican, and helped the Vatican extend its influence across national boundaries.<sup>40</sup> As such, the new Code of Canon Law was part of the Vatican's response to the burgeoning of nation-states eager to confine religion to private affairs, and at best to civil law.

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<sup>39</sup> The full text of the Code of Canon Law is reprinted in Edward N. Peters, ed., *1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001).

<sup>40</sup> To my knowledge, the only scholar to pay due attention to the content of the Code is Carlo Fantappiè. His various works on the subject include *Chiesa romana e modernità giuridica* (Milan: Giuffrè, 2008); and "Alle origini della codificazione pio-benedettina. Nuovi sviluppi delle teorie canonistiche sotto il pontificato di Leone XIII," *Quaderni fiorentini per la storia del pensiero giuridico moderno*, 25 (1996): 346-407; and "Gl'inizi della codificazione pio-benedettina alla luce di nuovi documenti," *Il diritto ecclesiastico* CXIII (2002): 16-82.

In addition to being in line with the older project of increasing ties to the Vatican on all levels, the reform of the Code spoke to the new importance that Popes assigned to law as an instrument of state building. Since approximately 1860, the study of non-canon law had attained a more central place in the curriculum of the Pope's most famous universities, and it was from this new breed of students that Pius X drew when putting together the commission of experts to reform the Code. All of these men were jurists rather than theologians, and they were familiar with the emergent discipline of international law.

To be sure, the Vatican was both leading and following other nation-states in its late nineteenth-century turn to law. Many newly formed or newly reconstituted states were turning to law as never before to centralize authority and increase their legitimacy, both within national borders, between them, and beyond, to justify imperial practices, including slaughter and the seizure of land. And many individuals, like the Vatican's new class of workers, placed great hopes in law's possibility to unite the world, and "gently civilize" it through a shared set of principles.<sup>41</sup>

#### **4. The Rise of New Functionaries**

The jurists who drew up the new Code of Canon Law were part of a new group of Vatican employees that emerged in the late nineteenth century, which I will be referring to as "new functionaries." The distinctive feature of the new functionaries was not their shared social class, though it is true that many of them hailed from aristocratic sectors of society that had

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<sup>41</sup> For the reinvention of laws of war, citizenship and statehood in the process of late nineteenth-century state building, see, *inter alia*, Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law, 1870-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Anthony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); David Kennedy, *International Law and the Nineteenth Century: History of an Illusion* (Bridgeport, Conn.: Law Review Association of the Quinnipiac College School of Law, 1997); Nathaniel Berman, *Passion and Ambivalence: Colonialism, Nationalism and International Law* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2012); Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 91-197; and Jennifer Pitts, "Boundaries of Victorian International Law," in *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought*, ed. Duncan Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 67-89.

historically been closely bound to the Pope. Rather, what bound the new functionaries together was generational: all had come of age soon after the Italian wars of unification and the dissolution of the Papal States, and that had been trained in the Pope's most prestigious institutions of higher learning during a crucial period of curricular reform. By virtue of their quite similar education and early career training, the new functionaries had acquired what might be called a shared cultural praxis, which sought to use law as a transformative instrument in global affairs, and -- most immediately -- a way to restore the papacy to primacy. New functionaries matter, it will be argued, because they helped bring about the Vatican's rise to prominence in European affairs after 1917-8.

Most of the new functionaries were trained at the prestigious Pontifical Academy of Ecclesiastical Nobles, which increasingly became known as the breeding ground for this new class of employees.<sup>42</sup> The Academy stood at the forefront of a series of reforms that enabled the emergence of new functionaries, insofar as it increasingly stressed diplomacy and law above theology, and knowledge of the secular world, as opposed to principled ignorance of it. During the 1870s, the Academy carried out a far-reaching curricular reform, which brought the Academy to gradually shift its curricular emphasis away from the art of defensive *apologia*, and towards fields like canon law, civil law, international law, and the legal and diplomatic history of Church-state relations.<sup>43</sup> So as to guarantee that promising diplomats-to-be gain employment in the Vatican, from the 1870s the Academy also included a mandatory internship in a relevant

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<sup>42</sup> See Claude Prudhomme, "L'Académie pontificale ecclésiastique et le service du Saint-Siège, XIX-XXe siècle," *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome* 116 (2004): 61-89. To my knowledge, no monograph on this important educational institution exists. For a broad contextualization, see Maria Pia Donato, "Accademie e accademismi in una capitale particolare. Il caso di Roma, secoli XVIII-XIX," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée* 111, 1 (1999): 415-30. For contemporary accounts, see Ferdinando Procaccini di Montescaglioso, *La Pontificia accademia dei nobili ecclesiastici: memoria storica* (Rome: A. Befani, 1889); and Adolfo Giobbio, *Lezioni di diplomazia ecclesiastica dettate nella Pontificia Accademia dei nobili ecclesiastici* (Rome: Tipografia vaticana, 1899-1904). On the recruit of these men, see David Alvarez, "The Professionalization of the Papal Diplomatic Service, 1909-1967," *The Catholic Historical Review* 75, 2 (April 1989): 233-248, here 240.

<sup>43</sup> It would be interesting to see how this shift mirrored the emergent language of international law, with itself straddled apologetic and utopian argumentative strategies. On this, see Martti Koskeniemi, *From Apology to Utopia: The Structure of International Legal Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006; 1989).

Vatican office as part of its four-year course of study.<sup>44</sup> Typically, the brightest students at the Academy would be recruited directly by the Vatican, working their way up from less prestigious jobs within the organization's diplomatic branches, and gradually earning a higher salary, thanks to their seniority and the prestige of the post.<sup>45</sup> Many of them entered the organization as "Minutanti" -- a rather menial job, consisting of the writing up the minutes of meetings.<sup>46</sup> As one new *minutante* noted, "If Christ was a carpenter, I suppose I can be an 'office boy.'"<sup>47</sup> If they performed their jobs with distinction, and displayed character traits like loyalty, obedience, and assiduity, these men were then given the possibility to rise in the ranks; many of them, in fact (including the "office boy") came to occupy prominent positions in the Vatican hierarchy.

Perhaps the most influential among the new functionaries was Cardinal Pietro Gasparri (1852-1934), whom Pius X had placed at the head of the commission of experts charged with revising the Code of Canon Law in 1904. Providing a quick sketch of Pietro Gasparri's education and career gives a sense of some of the leading characteristics of this class. On September 18, 1870, the young Gasparri left his native province of Macerata and traveled to Rome -- a mere two days before the breach of Porta Pia. The event would profoundly shape him and influence his decision to make the besieged capital of the Catholic Church his home. Through his studies at prestigious clerical universities in Rome, the young Gasparri -- described by contemporaries

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<sup>44</sup> Prudhomme, op.cit.

<sup>45</sup> Further research has to be conducted to glean the numbers of new functionaries who were hired by the Vatican every year, and the details of their remuneration as Vatican bureaucrats.

<sup>46</sup> Prudhomme, 241-2.

<sup>47</sup> Antonio Fappani, ed., *Giovanni Battista Montini Giovane, 1897-1944: Documenti inediti e testimonianze* (Turin: Marietti, 1979), 193. As cited in Richard J. Wolff, "Giovanni Battista Montini and Italian Politics, 1897-1933: The Early Life of Pope Paul VI," *The Catholic Historical Review* 71, 2 (April 1985): 228-247.

Giovanni Battista Montini was given the honor of access to the Pontifical Academy of Ecclesiastical Nobles in virtue of his family's prominence, and the direct intervention of then Vatican Secretary of State, Pietro Gasparri. When he however protested that he would rather study philosophy and literature than diplomacy, the Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo had supposedly responded, "What good is a degree in literature? Forget it, forget it. What matters is talent and you are talented." Ibid.

as keenly intelligent and sharp-tongued -- acquired degrees in philosophy (1872), theology (1876) and civil and canon law (1879).<sup>48</sup>

Gasparri was particularly devoted to his legal studies, graduating with highest honors from the prestigious Pontifical Academy of Ecclesiastical Nobles, also known as the Apollinaire. At the time of Gasparri's attendance, the Academy was emerging as the most highly respected site of higher learning for men who had just completed their theological training as secular priests, and sought a career in the Holy See's diplomatic corps. As mentioned above, during the time of Gasparri's training, the Academy was carrying out an important reform, which many of Gasparri's professors personally supported. As Gasparri's professors explained, the reform broadly sought to make more apparent the relevance of the Academy's teachings to contemporary socio-political transformations.<sup>49</sup>

During his early employment, Gasparri developed his own understanding of the Academy's emphasis on the real-world importance of law. As substitute professor of Church history, and as professor of canon law at the Institut catholique in Paris, Gasparri taught courses on the nature of the Church as *societas iuridice perfecta* and on Church-state relations. He also began developing an extensive analysis of an old tool of Vatican diplomacy, the concordat, and fleshed out many of his ideas in a series of influential legal tracts.<sup>50</sup> The need to maintain the

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<sup>48</sup> Fantappiè and Astorri, op. cit. As a fellow cleric and friend described Gasparri, "Mi attirava...quel suo fare bonario e accogliente; quel parlare alla buona; quel mettersi a discutere come un compagno, quel suo fondo rustico e montanaro; quell'arguzia che gli faceva fiorire così spesso sulle labbra il sorriso, la barzellata, il motto di spirito pronto e frizzante; tutto ciò me lo rendeva caro e simpatico." See Domenico Tardini's private diary, as reprinted in Carlo Felice Casula, *Domenico Tardini, 1888-1961: l'azione della Santa Sede nella crisi fra le due guerre* (Rome: Edizioni Studium, 1988).

<sup>49</sup> For instance, one of the most influential professors during this time at the Academy was Father Antonio Burri, who taught international law, and authored the landmark *Le teorie politiche di san Tommaso e il moderno diritto* (1884). For Burri's influence on Gasparri, see Fantappiè and Astorri, op. cit. For more information on Burri, see Antonio Piolanti, *La Pontificia Università Lateranense: Profilo della sua storia, dei suoi maestri e dei suoi discepoli* (Rome: Pontificia Università Lateranense, 1963), 242ff.

<sup>50</sup> Gasparri's most important works of these years include *Tractatus canonicus de matrimonio* (Paris: Delhomme & Briguet, 1892); *Tractatus canonicus de sacra ordinatione* (Paris: Delhomme & Briguet, 1893-4); *De la valeur des ordinations anglicanes* (Paris: F. Levé, 1895); and *Tractatus canonicus de sanctissima eucharistia* (Paris: Delhomme & Briguet, 1897), all of which were republished on multiple occasions.

Church's dialogue with the modern world was driven home by Gasparri's time in Paris between 1880 and 1897, when he witnessed the centralization of power of the French Third Republic, and the aftershocks of the Boulanger and Dreyfus affairs, in which French Catholics were directly involved.<sup>51</sup> Gasparri also became increasingly well versed in how the tools of law could help heal aspects of the Church-state conflict. He put this into practice between 1898 and 1901, as he was invited by Leo XIII and Pius X to travel widely to help quell a series of legal-diplomatic controversies that risked endangering the Church's status in Great Britain, the United States, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Syria and Palestine.<sup>52</sup> These travels gave Gasparri a sense of the scope of global Catholicism and of the challenges the Vatican would face in attempting to assert its influence far and wide.

Gasparri was called back to Rome in 1904 and appointed Secretary of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs. The Sacred Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs was a branch of the Curia that had been constituted in 1793 to respond to the problems generated for the Church by the French Revolution, and the Secretary of the Congregation had functions roughly equivalent to those of a Foreign Affairs Minister.<sup>53</sup> Per Pius X's request, Gasparri promptly began work on his crowning accomplishment, the new Code of Canon Law. The cleric

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<sup>51</sup> On Gasparri's time at the Institut, see Yves Marchasson, "Le renouveau de l'enseignement du droit canonique en France. L'oeuvre de P. Gasparri à l'Institut catholique de Paris," *Revue de l'Institut catholique de Paris* 14 (1984): 57-74. Notes of Gasparri's lectures on these subjects can be consulted at the Institut catholique of Paris (Henceforth ICP), Paris, P16, inventory # 119036. On Catholic involvement in the Dreyfus affair, see Vicki Caron, "Catholic Political Mobilization and Anti-Semitic Violence in *fin-de-siècle* France: The Case of the Union Nationale," *The Journal of Modern History* 81, 2 (June 2009): 294-346; and Ruth Harris, "The Assumptionists and the Dreyfus Affair," *Past and Present* 194, 1 (February 2007): 175-211.

<sup>52</sup> On Gasparri's time in Latin America, see José María Vargas, "La reorganización de la Iglesia ante el Estado liberal en Ecuador," *Historia general de la Iglesia en America Latina*, vol.8: *Perú, Bolivia y Ecuador*, ed. Enrique Dussel (Salamanca: Cehila, Ediciones Sígueme, 1987), 343-9. On Gasparri's time in Syria and Palestine, see Joseph N. Hajjar, *Le Vatican, La France et le catholicisme oriental (1878-1914)* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979), 286ff. For Gasparri's diplomacy with Great Britain and the United States, see Fantappiè and Astorri, *op. cit.*

<sup>53</sup> See Nicholas Hilling, *Procedure at the Roman Curia: A Concise and Practical Handbook* (New York: J.F. Wagner, 1907), 94-7; Lajos Pasztor, "La Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari tra il 1814 e il 1850," *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 6 (1968): 191-318.

and jurist was the most important figure responsible for the document's form and content.<sup>54</sup> To assist him in his task, Gasparri chose a limited number of close collaborators, who were new functionaries as he. They included two men who would soon help the Vatican redefine its role in international affairs. Their names were Giacomo Della Chiesa (1854-1922) and Eugenio Pacelli (1876-1958), and like Gasparri, both men had a keen interest in law as a tool of diplomacy. Also like him, they were both attuned to the modern world, yet unflinchingly loyal to the Pope.

Giacomo Della Chiesa and Eugenio Pacelli had attained their worldly sensibilities thanks, in part, to their early upbringing. Both men hailed from urban, aristocratic, families -- the former, in Genoa, the latter, in Rome. Both had pursued their early studies at public institutions, precisely in the post-1870 years of rampant anti-clericalism. Della Chiesa had obtained a doctorate in law at Genoa's Royal University, which had banned theology and other religious subjects precisely during the years of his studies (1872-5). Pacelli's early education was also in a public institution (the Ennio Quirino Visconti high school), where he had faced a great deal of anti-papal, anti-Catholic, vitriol.<sup>55</sup> Following these early studies, both Della Chiesa and Pacelli earned degrees at the Pontifical Academy of Ecclesiastical Nobles, where they, like Gasparri, had dedicated themselves to the study of law. Recently ordained and with a doctorate in theology in hand, Della Chiesa obtained his doctorate in law from the Academy in 1880; Pacelli's *summa cum laude* doctorate in canon and civil law was awarded in 1901.

Both men, like Gasparri, considered the Academy their true Alma Mater.<sup>56</sup> Pacelli, some twenty years younger than both Della Chiesa and Gasparri, benefitted from a second important reform of the institution, carried out between 1898 and 1903, which had the twofold aim of further professionalizing the papal bureaucracy, and expanding its knowledge base so as to keep

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<sup>54</sup> Concurring on this point are Fantappiè, *op.cit.*; Leone Fiorelli, *Il Cardinale Pietro Gasparri* (Rome: Università Laterana, 1960); and Giovanni Spadolini, *Il cardinale Gasparri e la questione romana* (Firenze: F. Le Monnier, 1972).

<sup>55</sup> Frank J. Coppa, *The Policies and Politics of Pope Pius XII: Between Diplomacy and Morality* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 19.

<sup>56</sup> John Pollard, *The Unknown Pope: Benedict XV (1914-1922) and the Pursuit of Peace* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999), 7.



it more in tune with the modern world. The reform called for making Church-state relations central to nearly every course of study, by mandating detailed studies of Church diplomacy, and the sophisticated study of international law. New courses focused on matters like the problem of sovereignty, the definition of statehood, political economy, the history of socialism, the rise of industrialization, and the characteristics of the global financial market. To facilitate Vatican communication with the outside world, the reform also increased the language training required of future papal diplomats. In addition to fluency in French, students now also had to demonstrate proficiency in German and English.<sup>57</sup>

The reform made legal training an even more central feature of the Academy. Following the fusion of the Academy's faculty of law (founded in 1853), with Rome's newborn Academy of Historical-Juridical Conferences, or *Accademia di conferenze storico-giuridiche* (est.1878), the Academy began offering a joint degree in canon and civil law, *in utroque iure* (literally, "in one and the other law"). "The Church absolutely needs men fully trained in the two laws for the defense of its rights," an 1898 document produced by the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for Education announced. According to the Congregation, by perfecting their knowledge of canon and civil law, the Academy's new functionaries would better face the Church's "enemies" and bring an end to "the incessant conflicts" pitting the Vatican against secular states.<sup>58</sup>

In the words of one of the Academy's leading professors, henceforth the Academy would teach that "the Church is a *sui generis* State," endowed with "an international legal personality," and as such, entitled by law to a range of rights which other states would do well to enforce.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Prudhomme, *op.cit.*

<sup>58</sup> "En plus de profonds théologiens, l'Église a absolument besoin d'hommes pleinement versés dans les deux lois pour la défense de ses droits et de sa puissance divine, dans les contestations publiques et privées de ses membres et avec ses ennemis, dans les conflict incessants des deux pouvoirs." Archives of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Faculty of Law* (July 1898), 20. As cited in Philippe Chenaux, *Pie XII: Diplomate et pasteur* (Paris: Cerf, 2003), 45.

<sup>59</sup> "Conchiudendo, teniamo a confermare che la Chiesa sia uno Stato *sui generis* [...] Alla Chiesa compete una personalità giuridica internazionale *iure suo*." Giobbio, *op. cit.*, 36-7.

The notion of the Vatican as a *sui generis* state would be carried forth in the words and deeds of both Della Chiesa and Pacelli, who both excelled at the Pontifical Academy, and were promptly funneled into first menial, and then quite prestigious, Vatican positions. Some within the Vatican resented this; as a 1903 article written by a bitter Vatican insider noted, the Apollinaire was birthing "a close *camarilla* of ambitious spirits, bent on controlling the Vatican," and remaking it in their own image.<sup>60</sup>

Within one year of completing his doctoral studies, Della Chiesa was appointed Professor of Diplomatic Style at the Apollinaire and clerk at the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical affairs, the rough equivalent of the Vatican foreign ministry. In 1901, the same year he completed his doctorate, Pacelli was admitted as a clerk and copyist to the same Congregation. From these starting positions, Della Chiesa, and, even more spectacularly, Pacelli, rose in the ranks. Della Chiesa became the assistant to the nuncio in Madrid (1883), arranged the visit of the German Emperor William II to the Vatican (in 1887), and traveled to Vienna on diplomatic mission (in 1888 and 1889). In 1901, Della Chiesa was appointed papal Under-Secretary of State.<sup>61</sup> Along with the Secretary for the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, Pietro Gasparri, the Under-Secretary was the most important person in the Vatican after the Secretary of State himself, who conducted the routine affairs of papal diplomacy.<sup>62</sup>

Like Gasparri, Eugenio Pacelli pursued a double career as legal scholar and diplomat. In 1901, he began teaching canon, civil and common law at the Pontifical Academy; within two

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<sup>60</sup> *L'Italia* (July 28, 1903), as summarized by Francis Augustus MacNutt, *A Papal Chamberlain: The Personal Chronicle of Francis Augustus MacNutt* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936), 245, who further notes that the article must have been written by an insider due to the abundance of references to particular people and places. Francis MacNutt began serving the Pope in 1898 and remained active until his death in 1927.

<sup>61</sup> Pollard, *The Unknown Pope*, 8-9.

<sup>62</sup> On the competence and development of the Secretariat of State (which was a part of the Roman Curia since the fifteenth century), see Hilling, *op. cit.*, 110-3; Robert A. Graham, *Vatican Diplomacy: A Study of Church and State on the International Plane* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 127-43.

years, he had become professor of ecclesiastical diplomacy and attaché at the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs. While here, per the Pope's request, Pacelli drafted several influential legal treatises, including one declaring the illegitimacy of the French abrogation of the 1801 concordat and another outlawing the long-standing power of Catholic monarchs to veto the election of a candidate for the papacy. He also took several trips abroad, at one point turning turned down, with regret, an offer to teach Roman Law at the National Pontifical Catholic University of America, in Washington, D.C.<sup>63</sup>

Interestingly, in addition to their similar education and career paths, Della Chiesa and Pacelli also shared certain important personality features. Both were obedient and loyal to ruling doctrines, as Della Chiesa announced his reverent implementation of the anti-modernist campaign under Pius X, and as a youthful Pacelli cast himself as a "faithful admirer and convinced disciple of the doctrine of saint Thomas Aquinas."<sup>64</sup> Both had a practical, and penetrating, intelligence. Both were extraordinarily hard workers. And both were prudent and scrupulous in their painstaking observation of protocol. As a Vatican employee who knew Della Chiesa well wrote of him in his private memoirs (published posthumously),

Frankly, I must say that he impressed me as a meticulous, accomplished bureaucrat (...) He possessed a vast store of carefully sorted information upon which to draw; he was accurate and very precise, acquainted with all the rules and traditions of his chancellery and not ignorant of those of other governments. In matters of protocol -- etiquette, precedence, etc. -- he was as infallible as a man could possibly be. Of brilliancy or originality, I never perceived a trace, but since an exhibition of such traits was not required during his years of subordinate service, it was proof of the greatest wisdom and tact on his part to dissemble any such he may have possessed.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Coppa, *The Policies and Politics of Pope Pius XII*, 24-6.

<sup>64</sup> Della Chiesa to the editor of *La Fiaccola*, 20 October 1907. As cited in Pollard, *The Unknown Pope*, 44, f.n.68; Pacelli to Otto von Ritter, ambassador of Bavaria to the Holy See, 3 November 1915. AES, Baviera 1915-6, 21. As cited in Chenaux, *Pie XII*, 37.

<sup>65</sup> MacNutt, op.cit., 312.

"Meticulous," "careful," "accurate," and "precise" -- strikingly, many of these adjectives were used by contemporary observers in reference to Pacelli as well.<sup>66</sup> And as this rather caustic description of Della Chiesa demonstrates, they cannot be dismissed as banal, laudatory, remarks, for in truth, such observations cut both ways. Intelligent yet unoriginal, careful with punctilious; Della Chiesa was an "accomplished bureaucrat" -- perhaps nothing more, and certainly nothing less.

Pacelli, Della Chiesa and Gasparri were new functionaries who together stood at the head of the reform of the Code of Canon Law, and together possessed several important shared characteristics. All had come of age at a time when it was all but impossible to ignore the risk run by the Catholic Church of falling into oblivion. All had received extensive training in law at Rome's most prestigious and cutting-edge university. In their early employment at the Vatican, all used their training in law to help solve pressing diplomatic problems. Finally, the three men relied on skills and hard work to rise in the ranks. And rise they would: in 1914, Della Chiesa, at the age of fifty, became Pope; and was very nearly followed by Gasparri in 1922, who instead preserved his title as Secretary of State. In 1939, following Gasparri's death, Pacelli would ascend the Throne of St. Peter.

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<sup>66</sup> See the first-hand testimonies provided by François Charles-Roux, *Huit ans au Vatican, 1932-1940* (Paris: Flammarion, 1947); Ernesto Bonaiuti, *Pio XII* (Rome: Universale di Roma, 1946); Georges Goyau, *Sa Sainteté le pape Pie XII* (Paris: Plon, 1939); Otto Walter, *Pie XII. Sa vie, sa personnalité* (Mulhouse: Éditions Salvator, 1950); Carlo Respighi, "I primi anni giovanili di Sua Santità Pio XII," *Capranicense* (June-September 1939): 15; Monsignor Marco Martini, "Eugenio Pacelli, alunno capranicense," *Capranicense* (March 1939): 29-30. His diligence and meticulousness have also been commented upon extensively by more recent texts, including the various articles in Andrea Riccardi, ed., *Pio XII* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1984); Riccardi, ed., *Le chiese di Pio XII* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1986); Sergio Pagano, Marcel Chappin and Giovanni Cocco, eds., *I 'fogli di udienza' del cardinale Eugenio Pacelli* (Vatican City: Secret Vatican Archive, 2010); Coppa, op. cit.; Chenu, op.cit.; Wolf, op. cit.; Fattorini, op.cit.; and Robert Ventresca, *Soldier of Christ: The Life of Pius XII* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013).

## Conclusion

Trained by a self-consciously professionalizing Vatican in the early 1900s, Gasparri, Della Chiesa and Pacelli shared much with the networks of experts who helped consolidate states in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in North and South America, on the European continent, and in various countries in the Middle East and East Asia.<sup>67</sup> Like them, the Vatican's new functionaries increasingly ascended the diplomatic ladder because of their merits; they were selected on the basis of traits like efficiency, regularity, and order; and they were similarly conversant with a "bureaucratic mode of knowledge production," which depended on teamwork and subservience to a higher ordering power.<sup>68</sup> Most importantly, as will be shown, the Vatican's new functionaries served to strengthen the Vatican through the tools of law.

By the eve of the Great War, the Vatican had centralized power in the person of the Pope, who was enshrined as the absolute, infallible, monarch, of Catholics worldwide. The religious institution had also put forward its own definition of sovereign statehood, presenting itself as a perfect state, endowed with divine purpose. But despite these state-building attempts, the papacy had not regained the Papal States. During World War I, the Vatican's new functionaries

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<sup>67</sup> In these same years, Max Weber provided the first and still classic account of the rise of "rationalized" bureaucracies. See "Bureaucracy," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. H.H. Gerth and C.Wright Mills (London: Routledge, 1991), 106-265. Accounts of how the rise of bureaucracies facilitated the consolidation of states in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century include Daniel Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Bernard S. Silberman, *Cages of Reason: The Rise of the Rational State in France, Japan, the United States and Great Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Corrado Cavallo, *La nascita dello stato burocratico moderno: concetti di sovranità e democrazia* (Rome: Aracne, 2007); Richard Sennett, *The Culture of the New Capitalism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); and Paul G. Lauren, *Diplomats and Bureaucrats: The First Institutional Responses to Twentieth-Century Diplomacy in France and Germany* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977).

<sup>68</sup> On the history of the "bureaucratic mode of knowledge production," see, most recently, Iver B. Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats: Inside a European Foreign Ministry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), chapters 1-3.

would suggest a change of course and help put it into practice. How they did so is the subject of the following chapter.

## Chapter Two

### *Making Peace with the Nation-State: Concordat Diplomacy, 1915-1933*

*The Vatican is a part of every nation; at the same time, it is above all nations.*  
-- Pope Pius XI, 1922<sup>1</sup>

*The Church itself becomes an integral part of the state when a political group [...] joins with the Church to better maintain its monopoly.*  
-- Antonio Gramsci, 1930-2<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

On the eve of the First World War, the Vatican wielded almost no influence in European affairs. As a result of the Italian wars of unification and the *Kulturkampf*, it had lost its dominion over the Papal States, its status as a sovereign state actor, and its partnership with many European powers. Furthermore, its attempt to regain its lost statehood had borne little fruit. In the immediate aftermath of the Great War, however, the Vatican began to regain much of the influence it had lost, and by 1933, it had established formal diplomatic relations with over two dozen countries, regained political and territorial sovereignty, and emerged as a central player on the European continent. How and why did the Vatican fight for influence in Europe during and in the immediate aftermath of World War I, and how did it at least partially succeed in gaining it? This chapter suggests some answers to the question.

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<sup>1</sup> Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* (23 December 1922), §46. Unless otherwise noted, all citations in English are drawn from the Holy See's official translation of the encyclical. *Encyclicals--Pius XI--The Holy See -The Holy Father*, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_23121922\\_ubi-arcano-dei-consilio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_23121922_ubi-arcano-dei-consilio_en.html)>. Last accessed 2 July 2012.

<sup>2</sup> "...la Chiesa stessa può diventare Stato...quando la Chiesa è diventata una parte integrante dello stato, della società politica monopolizzata da un determinato gruppo privilegiato che si aggrega alla Chiesa per sostenere meglio il suo monopolio col sostegno di quella zona di società civile rappresentata dalla Chiesa." Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, ed. Valentino Gerratana, vol.2, Quaderno 6: 1930-2 (Turin: Einaudi, 1975), §81.

After World War I, the Vatican pioneered a new mode of diplomacy that aimed at the creation of joint regimes of rule. I argue that the Vatican partially succeeded in creating these joint regimes of rule through a form of diplomacy spearheaded by new functionaries, based on the conclusion of binding treaties known as concordats. Concordat diplomacy began in Eastern Europe, in countries like Poland, Latvia and Lithuania, and then spread west to Germany, Austria, and Italy. Its primary purpose was to legally enshrine a regime of Church-state collaboration. In just eleven years, the Vatican concluded eleven concordats, the vast majority of which were signed with politicians opposed to the Versailles settlement, and whose countries had recently either stifled revolutionary uprisings, or directly waged war with Red Army forces.

The concordats concluded in the 1920s and early 1930s increased the identification of individual European states with Catholicism and in some cases went so far as to affirm that Catholicism was the state religion. Concordats gave the Vatican leadership over national Catholic Churches, local clergy, and Catholic movements, thus accelerating a centralization process that had begun in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Additionally, concordats made Catholic instruction compulsory in public schools, and allowed the Vatican to appoint teachers and determine curricula. In some cases, the Vatican was even given these privileges at the university level and in disciplines which did not clearly fall within its purview, like history, philosophy, pedagogy, sociology and politics. Concordats also gave Vatican-supervised Catholic movements freedom to organize and freedom of the press. As the subsequent chapter will explore in more detail, these rights were quite important, as in certain countries -- like Italy and Germany -- these Catholic movements were the only legal manifestations of civil society, other than the organizations created by the state. Finally, concordats greatly increased the Vatican's wealth by exempting Church properties from taxation and in some cases promising extensive support, in the form of clergy pensions and state donations to maintain old churches, hospitals and schools, and help build new ones. In exchange for the many privileges granted to the



Vatican, concordats typically asserted that the clergy must pledge its loyalty to constituted state powers, and purge whoever in its ranks was deemed politically problematic.

As this chapter will show, the expansion of concordat diplomacy facilitated the rise of the Vatican's influence in European affairs in a number of different domains. Europe's politicians increasingly involved the Vatican in legitimacy-seeking rituals, and they, as well as a growing number of diplomats, lawyers and opinion-makers, celebrated the Vatican's spectacular rise in power. After decades of neglect, the Vatican was also asked to join numerous so-called international (European-dominated) organizations, including those closely affiliated with the League of Nations. In the process, the Vatican was able to disseminate its theocentric vision of international affairs, which depended on the construction of more religiously homogeneous states, and helped undermine the League's minority rights provisions.

I unfold my argument regarding the resurgence of the Vatican in the immediate aftermath of World War I in four stages. In the first, I show how the Pope entered the contest for influence at the height of the Great War, by presenting a peace platform that rivaled those put forward by his leading competitors, Wilson and Lenin. Then, I show how the Pope's failure to gain a seat at the Paris Peace Conference pushed the new functionaries to translate his rhetorical recommendations into a precise political program, which sought to create Church-state duopolies capable of militating against the Versailles settlement and the minority rights regime. In section three, I show that the Vatican's treaty diplomacy was surprisingly successful, and that from the early 1920s it was increasingly presented as a way to protect Europe against the Soviet Union and the spread of international communism. Section four takes stock of the effects of the Vatican's treaty diplomacy, arguing that it greatly increased the Vatican's status in European politics and international affairs, all the while foregrounding an influential and increasingly broad-based vision of peace. In conclusion, I suggest that the Vatican's rise in influence in Europe and its creation of greater union between Church and state was incomplete without the restructuring of Catholic associational life, which is the subject of the following chapter.

### 1. The Pope's Vision for Europe: The Peace Platform of 1917

The origins of the Vatican's postwar concordat diplomacy lie in the Vatican's failure to regain statehood, and in the Pope's decision to enter the contest between Wilson and Lenin, and disseminate an attractive vision of peace at the height of war. As Arno Mayer famously showed, Wilson had set the wheel in motion in 1916, by urging his advisor, Edward M. House, to travel to Europe to work out the first, rather vague, peace proposal of the conflict.<sup>3</sup> In a speech of April 1917 -- issued after the February deposition of the Tsar, but before the Bolshevik revolution of October 1917 -- Lenin gave his response to Wilson and to pro-war socialist movements, via a speech that affirmed that only the end of capitalism and imperialism (and capitalism *qua* imperialism) would bring world peace.<sup>4</sup>

But Wilson and Lenin were not the only two leaders using peace platforms as a way to jockey for leadership of the postwar world: the reigning Pope, Benedict XV, took advantage of the opportunity as well. Benedict's peace plan was issued to the public on August 15, 1917, and it proposed that the Vatican mediate peace negotiations, and help implement four measures to prevent future wars. These measures included: the self-determination of select European states (Serbia, Montenegro, Romania and Poland); the preservation of the German Empire (including its colonies); the legal codification of greater union between Church and state across Europe; and the creation of international arbitration courts to regulate future disputes, impose freedom

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<sup>3</sup> See the magisterial Arno Mayer, *Wilson vs. Lenin: Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917-1918* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1964).

<sup>4</sup> Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "Speech on the Proposal to Call an International Socialist Conference," April 25, 1917. Lenin's speech elaborated upon ideas famously articulated in his *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, first published in 1916. Reprinted in Id., *Collected Works*, vol.24 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1964), 247-251; and Id., *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism: A Popular Outline* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1965).

of the seas and oversee a general limitation on armaments.<sup>5</sup> Though the Pope's plan did not use the term, it effectively redefined the concept of self-determination, recasting Bolshevik calls for the independence of colonial territories as applicable exclusively to a limited number of European states.<sup>6</sup> On the Pope's plan, these select states would contain Russia -- a country which, it was feared, was well-poised to expand its "hegemony" and gain "absolute control in Europe and in the Orient."<sup>7</sup>

The papal peace plan immediately became an important contribution to the ongoing debate surrounding the causes of war and the conditions for peace.<sup>8</sup> "Just as the Dome of St. Peter dominates its surroundings," a Vatican representative boasted, the Pope's message "overshadows [other] confused peace efforts."<sup>9</sup> By late August of 1917, the plan had been endorsed by neutral countries like Spain, and by the Central Powers, including the Emperor Karl I of Austria; the Chancellor of the German Empire, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg; the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II; the King of Bavaria, Ludwig II; and the German Catholic politician

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<sup>5</sup> Benedict's peace platform is analyzed in Humphrey Johnson, *Vatican Diplomacy in the World War* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1933), 25-9; and Angelo Martini, S.J., "La nota di Benedetto XV alle potenze belligeranti nell'agosto 1917," in *Benedetto XV, i cattolici e la prima guerra mondiale*, ed. Giuseppe Rossini (Rome: Edizioni Cinque Lune, 1963), 365-87.

<sup>6</sup> See Lenin, "Theses on the Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination," March 1916. As reprinted in Id., *Collected Works*, vol. 22, 143-156. On Lenin's arguments regarding self-determination, see Jeremy Smith, *The Bolsheviks and the National Question, 1917-1923* (New York: Macmillan, 1999), 3-22.

<sup>7</sup> As the Vatican nuncio in Munich reassured the Austrian Emperor, the Vatican peace plan would provide "Garanzie per la esclusione di ogni egemonia ed imperialismo [...] particolarmente [della] Russia, la quale, se ottenesse quanto le è stato promesso dai suoi Alleati, avrebbe un assoluto predominio in Europa e nell'Oriente" ("Guarantees for the exclusion of every hegemony and imperialism [...] particularly, Russia's, which, if it were to obtain what it has been promised by its Allies, would have absolute control in Europe and in the Orient.") Telegraph of Monsignor Giuseppe Aversa, nuncio in Munich, to the Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Gasparri, Munich, 15 January 1917. *Actes de Benoît XV: encycliques, motu proprio, breves, allocutions, actes des dicastères, etc.* (Paris: Maison de la Bonne presse, 1926), n.p. As cited in Martini, "La nota di Benedetto XV," 367.

<sup>8</sup> Mayer, *Wilson vs. Lenin*, 232.

<sup>9</sup> The Bern representative, Monsignor Marchetti-Selvaggiani, is cited in Philipp Scheidemann, *Papst, Kaiser und Sozialdemokratie in ihren Friedensbemühungen im Sommer 1917* (Berlin: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaft, 1921), 21. As cited in Mayer, 232.

and leader of the Center party, Matthias Erzberger, who introduced Benedict's proposals for discussion in the Reichstag.<sup>10</sup>

The fact that Pope Benedict XV had used his peace plan to position himself as a potential leader of the postwar order was not lost upon the Wilson administration. Even more worrisome, there were only two important respects in which the papal peace plan clearly clashed with Wilson's: the Pope's defense of the German Empire, and his strong endorsement of a theocentric international order. The Russian ambassador to the United States noted that he was "very much disturbed over the Pope's peace overture," and that the fate of the Allied cause could "depend upon [the President's] answer."<sup>11</sup> Justifiably worried that the Pope had stolen the President's fire, Wilson's advisors promptly urged the American president to seize the "opportunity to take the peace negotiations out of the hands of the Pope and hold them in [his] own."<sup>12</sup>

On August 23, 1917, Wilson issued what his chief advisor immediately dubbed "the most interesting document in the world": the President's reply to Benedict.<sup>13</sup> The letter applauded the proposals, but advised the Pope to abandon naïve hope in the good will of the Central Powers. When in January of 1918, Wilson issued his first concrete set of peace aims in the form of a speech delivered before of joint session of Congress, many wondered whether the Pope's peace

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<sup>10</sup> On the Central Powers' endorsements of the plan, see the telegraphs of the Chancellor of the German Empire, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, and of the Emperor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Karl I, to the Pope, dated September 28, 1917. As reprinted in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. Supplement* (henceforth *FRUS*), *The World War, 1917* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1917), 217-220. For Matthias Erzberger's decision to bring the papal peace plan before the Reichstag, see chapter three, "Im Vatican," of Erzberger's memoirs, *Erlebnisse im Weltkrieg* (1920; Bremen: Dogma, 2012), 41-9; and Charles Seymour, ed., *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, vol. 3 (New York: Houghton Mifflin company, 1926), 150-1. On Spain's endorsement of the plan, and its attempt to convince the United States government of its validity, see the letter of Spanish Ambassador Juan Riaño to the U.S. Secretary of State, Washington, December 27, 1916. As reprinted in *FRUS, Supplement, The World War, 1916* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1916), 118.

<sup>11</sup> Letter of Colonel House to President Woodrow Wilson, Magnolia, Massachusetts, August 19, 1917. As reprinted in Seymour, ed., *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, vol. 3, 157-8.

<sup>12</sup> Letter of House to Wilson, Magnolia, Massachusetts, August 17, 1917. As reprinted in *The Intimate Papers*, vol. 3, 156.

<sup>13</sup> Letter of House to Wilson, August 23, 1917. *Ibid.*, 163.

statement was one reason Wilson concretized his vision so quickly.<sup>14</sup> The Fourteen Points followed the Pope in calling for the creation of a supranational organization to regulate disputes, and enforce disarmament. They similarly redefined the Bolshevik principle of self-determination to suit particularistic ends. But in place of endorsing an international order that took its cues from the Vatican (or much less from Lenin), Wilson called for the spread of democracy, particularly in the former lands of the Russian and German empires.<sup>15</sup> Taking stock of the import and radical contingency of the Wilson proposal, a flippant contemporary observer noted, “Now it’s Wilson who is becoming Pope by drawing moral lessons for the belligerent powers [...] Long live Pope Wilson!”<sup>16</sup>

The Vatican reaction to Wilson's new peace platform was immediate, and acerbic. A prominent Vatican jurist Eugenio Pacelli (future Pope Pius XII) noted that Wilson's plan was masquerading as legitimate by imitating key features of Benedict's plan. In a letter to the Pope's Secretary of State, Pietro Gasparri, Pacelli further argued that the Fourteen Points had been drafted by Freemasons, who opposed Catholicism and "supplied the United States with one of the cornerstones of its Government, namely the democratic spirit." If the Allies won the war, Wilson would surely "Americanize the whole world, making it Freemason so as to liberate it

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<sup>14</sup> See Enrico Serra, "La nota del primo agosto 1917 e il governo italiano: qualche osservazione," in *Benedetto XV e la Pace, 1914-1918*, ed. Giorgio Rumi (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1990), 61ff; John Pollard, *The Unknown Pope: Benedict XV (1914-1922) and the Pursuit of Peace* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999), 128; and Mayer, *Wilson vs. Lenin*, 354ff.

<sup>15</sup> For more on Wilson's use of the language of self-determination, see Trygve Throntveit, "The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination," *Diplomatic History* 35, 3 (June 2011): 445-81; Michla Pomerance, "The United States and Self-Determination: Perspectives on the Wilsonian Conception," *American Journal of International Law* 70 (1976): 1-27; and Betty Miller Unterberger, "The United States and National Self-Determination: A Wilsonian Perspective," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26 (1996): 926-941.

<sup>16</sup> "Maintenant c'est Wilson qui devient pape, et qui fait la morale aux belligérants, en nous appuyant de son crédit politique, financier, militaire. Vive le pape Wilson!" Letter of Alfred Loisy to Alfred Fawkes, circa October 1917, as cited in Alfred Fawkes, "The Papacy and the Modern State," *Harvard Theological Review* 11, 4 (October 1918): 376-394, 376.

from its servitude to the Kaiser, the Pope, and the priesthood."<sup>17</sup> Many Vatican officials agreed with Pacelli, and promptly deemed Wilson's Fourteen Points a conniving attempt to prevent the Vatican from gaining any position of global influence. Vatican worries about an "Americanized" Europe increased as Lenin declared neutrality and retreated into purely Russian matters, with the March 1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and as Germany and Austria-Hungary signed an armistice with the Allies which neatly summarized the Wilsonian platform. For the Vatican in 1918, the Wilsonian threat loomed large; larger still than the threat emanating from Russia, whose recent revolutions were seen as both as an opportunity for the Catholic re-conquest of a historically Orthodox nation, and as an abortive, and surely short-lived, imitation of the French Revolution.<sup>18</sup>

To avert Wilson's triumph over Europe and increase the Vatican's own bargaining power, the Vatican waged a diplomatic campaign to gain a seat at the Paris Peace Conference between November of 1918 and January of 1919. Building a case about the Vatican as a legitimate political actor, its advocates pointed to the sensibility of the papal peace plan, and to the Vatican's new Code of Canon Law, which had been recently revised to bring it in line with the

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<sup>17</sup> "La Frammassoneria ha fornito agli Stati Uniti la pietra fondamentale del suo Governo, cioè lo spirito democratico, il quale nel campo politico non riconosce alcuna autorità, se non quella derivata dalla volontà del popolo. Tutti si sono uniti per combattere la Germania, il rappresentante principale della Monarchia di diritto divino, antidemocratico; [...] Si ritorna [...] sul dovere di americanizzare tutto il mondo, facendolo frammassone per liberarlo dalla servitù del Kaiser, del Pontefice e dei preti." Letter of Eugenio Pacelli to Pietro Gasparri, Munich, December 20, 1918. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City (henceforth ASV), Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari (henceforth AES) Baviera, 3° periodo, 1918-1921, pos.67, ff.15-18. In his letter, Pacelli referenced the work of the German Father Hermann Gruber, S.J., a Jesuit whom Pacelli describes as "uno dei migliori conoscitori della Massoneria internazionale" (*one of the most knowledgeable scholars of international Freemasonry*). The letter amply paraphrases Gruber's findings with the evident aim of buttressing Pacelli's own case through appeal to accepted experts in the field. For a contemporary account of the writings of Father Hermann Gruber, see "Gruber, Pater Hermann," in *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*, ed. Albert Gallatin Mackey, vol. 3 (Chicago: The Masonic History Company, 1921), 1254-5.

<sup>18</sup> The vast secondary source literature on the Vatican's views towards the Soviet Union concurs with this interpretation. See, *inter alia*, Antoine Wenger, *Rome et Moscou: 1900-1950* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1987); Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917-1979*, trans. Sandra Smith (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981); Giorgio Petracchi, "I Gesuiti e il comunismo tra le due guerre," in *Chiesa cattolica e il totalitarismo*, ed. Vincenzo Ferrone (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 2004), 123-153; Philippe Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe (1917-1989), De Lénine à Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Cerf, 2009); Laura Pettinaroli *La politique russe du Saint-Siège (1905-1939)*, (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Lyon, 2008); and Elisa Cacelli, "La rivoluzione bolscevica e il comunismo sovietico nella stampa cattolica italiana (1917-1921)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pisa, 2007).

codes of laws of modern European states. Vatican diplomats in the United States further claimed to support Wilson's Fourteen Points and the League of Nations, all the while suggesting that Benedict's peace message had been the leading source of inspiration for the American President. Finally, in a bid to downplay the Vatican's allegiance to the Central Powers, leading Archbishops informed Allied officials that the Vatican had remained neutral during the war, and that over the course of its history it had amply demonstrated its credentials as a voice of peace and order.<sup>19</sup>

However, Vatican efforts to gain entry to the Versailles Peace Conference would be for naught, as Italy had long since convinced the Allies to exclude the Vatican, fearing that the theocracy would attempt to regain the lands it had lost during the Italian wars of unification.<sup>20</sup> The fact that the Vatican had competed with Wilson via its peace platform likely hardened the resolve of Great Britain, France, and the United States to comply with what had been Italy's condition for joining their side. Of course, the Vatican was not the only aspiring power snubbed at the Paris peace conference, where crucial decisions were made by first five, and then three, major players: the British and French prime ministers, Lloyd George and Georges Clemenceau, and the American president Woodrow Wilson. The resultant Paris peace treaty reflected the

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<sup>19</sup> For high-ranking Catholics espousing this view, see, e.g., James Cardinal Gibbons, "The War Policy of the Pope," *America* (February 23, 1918): 487-8; Archbishop Whiteside of Liverpool, *Pastoral Letter* (November 25, 1919); and Umberto Benigni, "Il Papa e il congresso di pace," *Nuova Antologia* (March 1, 1916). Also see "Papal White Book Soon," *The New York Times* (February 2, 1918); and "Pope Works on White Book," *The New York Times* (February 10, 1918). Many Catholic scholars of the 1920s and 1930s also emphasized Benedict XV's influence on Wilson. See, e.g., Florence A. Wilson, *The Origins of the League Covenant: Documentary History of its Drafting* (London: Leonard and Virginia Woolf, 1928), 129; and John Eppstein, *The Catholic Tradition of the Law of Nations* (London: Catholic Council for International Relations/Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1932), 311ff. The lobbying efforts of American clerics like James Cardinal Gibbons are discussed in Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., "Roosevelt and the American Catholic Hierarchy," in *FDR, the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church in America, 1933-1945*, eds. David B. Woolner and Richard G. Kurial (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 11-45, here, 12-4.

<sup>20</sup> Italy's opposition to Vatican participation, which was signed onto by the Allies in a secret clause of the 1915 Treaty of London, was further exacerbated by a scandal whereby an influential Vatican official communicating secret information to Austria during the war was discovered and arrested by Italian authorities. On this episode, see Paloscia Annibale, *Benedetto fra le spie: negli anni della grande guerra un intrigo tra Italia e Vaticano* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 2007).

Allied victory, for though it granted a select number of European countries independence and created three international arbitration organs (the Permanent Court of International Justice, the International Labor Organization and the League of Nations), it also harshly penalized the Central Powers, seizing Germany's colonies and demanding \$33 billion in reparations. Additionally, the League covenant and the subsequent Minority Protection Treaties enshrined the principle of the separation of Church and state, as well as that of religious liberty, which directly countered the notion of a world of religiously homogeneous nation-states.<sup>21</sup> Lenin promptly criticized the settlement on the grounds that it reflected imperial, capitalist, interests; in response, he helped the Communist International, or Comintern, get off the ground, to rival the purported universalism of the League of Nations.<sup>22</sup> The Pope's protest was just as quick as Lenin's, as was the decision to turn the Versailles failure into an opportunity to win over those who had been excluded from the conference.

In his objection to the Paris peace treaty, the Pope noted that the settlement was overly punitive, for Christian charity "demands that we treat our enemies with kindness."<sup>23</sup> The Vatican's semi-official *Civiltà Cattolica* more bluntly proclaimed that Versailles' articles were

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<sup>21</sup> The deeply religious Woodrow Wilson personally pushed for these measures, which he considered the hallmark of U.S. liberty. See John Milton Cooper, *Reconsidering Woodrow Wilson: Progressivism, Internationalism, War and Peace* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 239; and Anna Su, "Removing the 'Fertile Sources of War': Woodrow Wilson and the International Law of Religious Freedom" (unpublished paper, 2011). For a broader look at Wilson's religiosity, see Andrew Preston, "Woodrow Wilson and the Second Crusade," in *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 2012), 233-291. On Japan's attempt to include a prohibition of racial discrimination, along with the prohibition of religious discrimination, see Naoko Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919* (London: Routledge, 1998).

<sup>22</sup> For a searing critique of the Versailles settlement, see Vladimir I. Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder* (1920; Maryland: Wildside Press, 2008), 71-2. For an introduction to the origins of the Comintern, see Kevin McDermott, *The Comintern: A History of International Communism from Lenin to Stalin* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> Benedict XV, *Pacem, Dei Munus Pulcherrimum* (March 23, 1920), §9. Unless otherwise noted, all English-language citations are drawn from the Holy See's official translation. *Encyclicals--Benedict XV--The Holy See -The Holy Father*, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xv/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xv\\_enc\\_23051920\\_pacem-dei-munus-pulcherrimum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xv/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xv_enc_23051920_pacem-dei-munus-pulcherrimum_en.html)>. Last accessed 1 July 2012.



misnamed "articles of peace"; in truth, they would foster future war.<sup>24</sup> Pacelli, similarly, predicted that the victory of Wilson would cause a wave of unrest to sweep Europe. "An insolvent Germany," would be unable to pay its debts, and European nations ("particularly France and Italy") would find themselves "gravely exposed and menaced" by forces of revolution.<sup>25</sup> In 1920, Benedict echoed these fears and repeated the core theocentric claims of the papal peace plan in a sharply worded criticism of the Versailles settlement, couched within a circular letter to the faithful. Announcing that the Vatican alone was best positioned to council "Heads of State and princes," and "bring concord between civilized nations," the Pope suggested that without the Vatican's assistance, Europe would fall back into a state of barbarism, war and unrest.<sup>26</sup>

## **2. The Vatican Counter-Settlement to Versailles**

The highly undemocratic drafting of the Paris Peace Treaties would stand to benefit the Vatican, despite initial appearances to the contrary. Indeed, the Versailles settlement pushed the Pope to translate his peace platform from a series of rhetorical claims into a practical legal-political program. Arguably, this program can be read as the Vatican's counter-settlement to Versailles. Like Versailles, the Vatican's counter-settlement depended on the signature of a series of Vatican-directed bilateral (peace) treaties with many of Europe's new and newly reconstituted states. The Vatican's programmatic treaties inaugurated a new era of Church-state collaboration, which began in East Central Europe, and quickly spread west. Known in Church parlance as

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<sup>24</sup> "La guerra sociale dopo la pace di Versailles," *La Civiltà Cattolica* (August 30, 1919).

<sup>25</sup> "Non solo la Germania stessa, divenendo insolubile, non pagherà le indennità di guerra, non solo la pace non potrà essere ristabilita nel mondo, ma anche le altre Nazioni europee, e soprattutto l'Italia e la Francia, si troveranno gravemente esposte e minacciate dal contagio bolscevico." Pacelli to Gasparri, "Il significato, i prodromi ed i moniti della seconda rivoluzione in Monaco," Munich, March 3, 1919. ASV, AES, Baviera (3° periodo), 1918-1920, pos.67, fasc.43, ff.7-11. For similar sentiments, see Pacelli to Gasparri, telegraph, Munich, April 12, 1919. *Ibid.*, ff.42.

<sup>26</sup> Benedict XV, *Pacem, Dei Munus Pulcherrimum*, §16.

concordats, these treaties militated against the separation of Church and state that the Pope worried would be advocated by liberal internationalism, and actualized by the League of Nations. Concordats allowed the Pope to pursue his own Catholic international, and build a bloc of European states more tightly bound to the Vatican, in both legal and cultural terms.

Concordats were old instruments of Vatican diplomacy put to new ends in the immediate aftermath of the war. Between 1122 and 1916, concordats had been treaties used primarily to settle ongoing disputes between Church and state.<sup>27</sup> Legally speaking, they were valid only before ecclesiastical law, which defined them as privileges granted by the Church in virtue of the superiority of her aims. But in 1916, Eugenio Pacelli -- fresh from his legal studies -- had influentially argued that concordats should be defined not as privileges, but as bilateral treaties, to which two sovereign entities, the Vatican and the signatory state, were party. He further contended that in legal terms, concordats were valid not only before canon law, but before civil and international law as well. Finally, he recommended that rather than being used to simply settle Church-state disputes, concordats had the power to encode a new relationship between the Vatican and the European continent as a whole.<sup>28</sup>

In the final years of the Great War -- as part and parcel of the Vatican bid for influence in Europe -- Pope Benedict XV boldly accepted Pacelli's redefinition of the concordat, and charged two new functionaries (Eugenio Pacelli himself, and Achille Ratti, future Pope Pius XI) with the task of spreading this new legal instrument. The turn to concordat diplomacy was intimately connected to the Vatican's interest in using the tools of law to assert influence in European affairs, a shift that had begun in the early part of the twentieth century (as Vatican universities

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<sup>27</sup> For instance, the investiture strife was settled by the first Concordat in Church history, the 1122 Concordat of Worms; the violent persecution of the Church in Poland was settled by the Concordat of Poland (ratified in 1289), the Concordat with Sardinia cleared up a debate surrounding ecclesiastical nominations (in 1727), and the Concordat of 1801 temporarily settled the tormented relations between the French state and the Catholic Church.

<sup>28</sup> ASV, AES, Stati Ecclesiastici 157, Voto di Mgr. Pacelli. Pacelli's February 1916 *votum* is reprinted and discussed in Romeo Astorri, "Diritto comune e normativa concordataria. Uno scritto inedito di mons. Pacelli sulla 'decadenza' degli accordi tra Chiesa e Stato," *Storia contemporanea* 4, 22 (1991): 685-701.

expanded their training in non-canon law), and continued in the early part of the twentieth century, when newly minted lawyer-diplomats, like Eugenio Pacelli, reformed and modernized the Vatican's core code of laws.<sup>29</sup> Convinced of law's potentially transformative capacities, Benedict welcomed the redefinition of the concordat, and asked Pacelli to attempt to sell the new legal instrument to Berlin and Munich, while Ratti was sent first to Warsaw, and then from there to Riga and Kaunas. Both men were asked to keep an eye on the spread of U.S. and Soviet-influenced movements, and encouraged to couple a politically motivated humanitarianism with concordat diplomacy, to buttress the notion of the Vatican as a legitimate, and wealthy, ally, in the struggle against outside influence and internal unrest.

The mission of spreading Vatican influence through new instruments was an exciting one, as Achille Ratti could not help expressing to a friend soon after his arrival to Poland. "Few things," he noted, "would be capable of inspiring in me a more lively and deep interest than the resurrection and progressive reconstruction of this great state."<sup>30</sup> To underline his quest to "resurrect and reconstruct" Poland, Ratti took the suggestive title of Archbishop of Lepanto, to signal the purported rebirth of Catholicism following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire at Lepanto in 1571. Ratti thus began working tirelessly to restore Poland's Catholic identity, and guard it against modern-day infidels. The Vatican diplomat pushed Poland's leaders to sign a concordat with the Vatican, which would show the world that the new Poland was bound to the Pope, rather than to Wilson, or other (non-Vatican) outside powers. He encouraged the founding of Catholic organizations and press organs tightly bound to the Pope, and set up a

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<sup>29</sup> On the Vatican's growing interest in the tools of law, see my previous chapter, and Carlo Fantappiè, *Chiesa romana e modernità giuridica* (Milan: Giuffrè, 2008). Evidently, the Vatican's turn towards international law has its parallel in the actions of European state leaders; for an introduction, see Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law, 1870-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> Letter of Achille Ratti to William Warner Bishop, Librarian of the University of Michigan, Warsaw, 12 June 1919. As cited in Oscar Halecki, "The Place of Czestochowa in Poland's Millenium," *The Catholic Historical Review* 52, 4 (January 1967): 506. Ratti's faith in Poland's total rebirth were echoed by the Milanese hierarchy, with which he was in close relations. See Giorgio Rumi, "La nuova Polonia nell'opinione ambrosiana del primo dopoguerra," in *'Polonia restituta': L'Italia e la ricostituzione della Polonia, 1918-1921* (Milan: Centro di studi sull'Europa orientale, 1992), 91-103.

Vatican relief organization, which rivaled Herbert Hoover's onsite branch of the American Relief Administration.<sup>31</sup>

Additionally, Achille Ratti joined with the Polish Prime Minister, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, in opposition to the Minority Rights Treaty being imposed on Poland. The Vatican position was that fostering (non-Catholic) minority rights would breed conflict, and Paderewski agreed, arguing via a memorandum presented to the League of Nations that "Poland has already experienced the nefarious consequences which may result from the protection exercised by foreign Powers over ethnical and religious minorities." If the League insisted on applying minority rights provisions again, this would "fatally provoke excitement against the minorities and would become the cause of incessant unrest."<sup>32</sup>

The fact that the Polish Minority Rights Treat -- also tellingly known as the "Little Treaty of Versailles" -- contained provisions protecting the Jewish minority was particularly displeasing to Polish and Vatican authorities, who worried that Poland's identity as a Catholic nation would thus be diminished.<sup>33</sup> The issued was a charged one, not least because in these same years, the Vatican was working with Polish diplomats to create a Catholic bloc of states at the League (composed of Brazil, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal) to protest Britain's Balfour Declaration,

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<sup>31</sup> See letter of Achille Ratti to Herbert Hoover, Rome, May 15, 1922. ASV, AES, Pontificia Commissione Pro Russia (henceforth Pont. Comm. Pro Russia), Sc.73, fasc.334, p.72.

<sup>32</sup> "Memorandum of M. Paderewski," in "The Council of Four: minutes of meetings, May 24 to June 28, 1919." As reprinted in *FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference*, vol.6 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 535.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. For a broader discussion, see Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study of the Policies of the Great Powers and the Poles, 1918-1919*, trans. Alison Borch-Johansen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1979), 217ff; Ezra Mendelson, *The Jews of East Central Europe Between the World Wars* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983); and Celia Stopnicka Heller, *On the Edge of Destruction: Jews of Poland Between the Two World Wars* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993). For a helpful overview of the treatment of Jews in the region in the forty-odd years prior to 1914, see Kenneth B. Moss, "Review Article: At Home in Late Imperial Russian Modernity -- Except When They Weren't: New Histories of Russian and East European Jews, 1881-1914," *The Journal of Modern History* 84, 2 (June 2012): 401-452.

which favored "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."<sup>34</sup> Leaning a similar logic as that used to protest the Minority Treaties, Benedict's Secretary of State argued that the Declaration was to be shunned, because it was an attempt to "subordinate the indigenous population for the advantage of other nationalities."<sup>35</sup> As an article in a prominent Catholic newspaper elaborated, fostering religious homogeneity would breed peace, while the empowerment of (non-Catholic) minorities could only lead to future conflict. Because of "the homogeneity of the whole Moslem body," it would be a grave mistake to declare Palestine a Jewish national home, and thereby destroy Palestine's purportedly religiously homogeneous character.<sup>36</sup>

Given the collaborations between Vatican and Polish diplomats abroad, it was no surprise that the Vatican's activism in favor of the Catholic majority in Poland was widely celebrated. The Polish populace (whose popular Catholic piety had received a considerable boost during the Great War) hailed Ratti's presence, as did Poland's new Chief of State, Marshal Józef Piłsudski, a recent convert to Catholicism, who had redecorated both his office and his political rhetoric with an abundance of Catholic references. The Polish ruler appreciated Ratti's presence because it gave him a measure of needed legitimacy, locked as he was in a struggle for power with competing political factions, and sorely in need of popular support. To show his will to work alongside Ratti, Piłsudski promptly announced that his country would fight the "French

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<sup>34</sup> Poland and Brazil were the most vocal members of the "Catholic bloc" cultivated by Benedict. On this episode, see Andrej Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: The Struggle for the Holy Land* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 41-2; and Adriano Ercole Ciani, "The Vatican, American Catholics and the Struggle for Palestine, 1917-1958: A Study of Cold War Roman Catholic Transnationalism" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Western Ontario, 2011), 38-9.

<sup>35</sup> Aide-Memoire to the League of Nations, 4 June 1922, Archives of the Catholic University of America (henceforth ACUA), National Catholic Welfare Conference (henceforth NCWC), Office of the General Secretary, Box 18, File 44. As cited in Ciani, 38.

<sup>36</sup> "Editorial," *Commonweal* 13 (November 5, 1930), 2f. As cited in Esther Yolles Feldblum, *The American Catholic Press and a Jewish State, 1917-1959* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1977), 43.

model" of separation of Church and state.<sup>37</sup> The Polish leader also invited Ratti to march alongside the head of state and Prime Minister Paderewski when the Second Polish Republic celebrated the convocation of its first parliament in Warsaw's St. John Cathedral. Finally, Pilsudski encouraged local municipal leaders to welcome Ratti throughout his travels with ranks of horses, flag waving, triumphal arches, decorated with the Vatican's colors.<sup>38</sup>

Still, the idea of concluding a concordat with the Vatican was controversial, particularly amongst opposition groups who resented Pilsudski's rule. It was only in May of 1920 when exogenous circumstances pushed Poland's politicians to agree with Ratti's request, and, in the process, help crucially reorient the Vatican against Lenin. For if the pursuit of concordat diplomacy initially took shape in part as a reply to the Versailles order, by 1920 concordat diplomacy would be seen as a powerful instrument to contain the Soviet Union, and protect the Vatican -- and Europe as a whole -- against the threat of communist revolution.

### **3. Building a *Cordon Sanitaire* around the Soviet Union**

The fact that the Vatican's bid for influence in Europe became bound up with its re-orientation against international communism took place within a highly specific context: that of continued war. In February of 1919, Poland's Chief of State had gone to war against Bolshevik Russia, in a bid to settle the vaguely defined Polish-Russian frontiers discussed in the Treaty of Versailles. The Polish army had attacked Western Ukraine, to which the Red Army responded by pushing Polish forces all the way back to the Polish capital of Warsaw. As Poland's recently attained

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<sup>37</sup> Neal Pease, *Rome's Most Faithful Daughter: The Catholic Church and Independent Poland, 1914-1939* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009), 35ff.

<sup>38</sup> The scene is described by Ratti in his letters to Gasparri of August 20, 1918, December 7, 1918 and January 8, 1919. ASV, Nunz. Varsarvia, b.192. His letters were also summarized and published in the *Osservatore Romano* (December 1, 1918). As cited in Roberto Morozzo della Rocca, "Achille Ratti e la Polonia (1918-1921)," in *Achille Ratti, Pape Pie XI: Actes du colloque organisée par l'École française de Rome* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1996), 97.

independence seemed once again in danger, and a Soviet take-over imminent, many of Warsaw's inhabitants had fled. The Vatican nuncio Achille Ratti, however, stayed onsite, and boldly decided to (figuratively) hold the fort during the Soviet onslaught. Finally, in mid-August, the Red Army retreated from Warsaw and the city was reclaimed, thanks to a joint attack by Polish and French forces.

Ratti's stubborn decision to stay in Warsaw during the Soviet attack benefitted both the Vatican and the Polish government. It allowed the Polish government to maintain the fiction of an independent victory, and proclaim that it had been directly blessed by divine forces. As the state-supported myth had it, Warsaw had been saved precisely because of Ratti's "calm and trusting presence in the capital," and his invocation of the protection of the Virgin Mary, "Queen of Poland." The act would also benefit the Vatican, as it proved that Catholicism and Polish nationalism could stand united against what now was presented as the most immediate threat to Poland's survival: Bolshevism. As Pietro Gasparri triumphantly reported, Ratti's gesture had "encouraged the resistance of the good people" of Poland, while simultaneously showing the Vatican's loyalty to the newly independent state.<sup>39</sup>

Matters moved quickly thereafter. In October of 1920, shortly after the armistice, Ratti succeeded in making the concordat a central component of Poland's new constitution. Issued in March of 1921 (immediately after the Peace of Riga, signed between Poland and Soviet Russia), the constitution gave a kind of slap in the face to the League's minorities regime, by dodging the principle of freedom of conscience, and affirming instead that "Roman Catholicism took first place" among all faiths in Poland. In line with this, the constitution further promised to settle Church-state relations through a concordat with the Vatican. Negotiations regarding the articles of the concordat began immediately, and despite troubled communications due to the Upper Silesian territorial settlement, in February of 1925, Poland's concordat was ratified. A

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<sup>39</sup> "Quel buon popolo fu altresì molto riconoscente al Nunzio Pontificio che, con la Sua calma e fiduciosa presenza nella capitale minacciata, aveva incoraggiato alla resistenza." Gasparri, "Memorie: Polonia," n.d. ASV, AES Stati Ecclesiastici, pos.515 P.O., fasc.530, ff.30-31.

triumphant Ratti declared himself pleased with "every comma" of the landmark legal treaty he had worked so hard to conclude.<sup>40</sup>

The Polish concordat was a groundbreaking text, which broadcast a new model for Church-state collaboration in domains as varied as education, politics, and organizational life. The treaty began by recognizing the Holy See as a sovereign actor, and promised that the Polish state would honor the Vatican by mandating obligatory religious education in all public schools, at both the primary and the university level, to be taught by individuals directly nominated by the Church. The Polish state would also allow Catholic associations of laypeople to operate and publish freely -- a promise that effectively led to the exponential growth of a new Catholic movement controlled by the Vatican (known as Catholic Action), which would strengthen Poland's nascent Christian Democratic movement.<sup>41</sup> Finally, the concordat promised to exempt Church properties from taxation, protect them from expropriation, and grant the Church full freedom in administering its own finances. In exchange, the Vatican promised that Polish clergy would swear an oath of loyalty to the Republic, and give the state the ability to veto politically problematic bishops-to-be. Further strengthening the Vatican's legitimation of the new Polish state, the concordat promised that Polish Catholic Churches would recite a prayer for the Polish republic and for its President during mass every Sunday, and on national holidays. Finally, ecclesiastical lines were made to coincide with political lines, as diocesan limits were redrawn to make them neatly correspond to (and thus reinforce) the new boundaries of the independent state, settled at the Peace of Riga.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the Polish concordat forcefully declared the Vatican a

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<sup>40</sup> Ratti's comment is recalled in the memoirs of Stanisław Grabski, *Pamiętniki* vol.2 (Warsaw: Cztelnik, 1989), 233, 238. As cited in Pease, *Rome's Most Faithful Daughter*, 68.

<sup>41</sup> See Piotr Kosicki, "Between the Catechism and Revolution: Poland, France and the Story of Catholicism and Socialism in Europe, 1878-1958" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2011), esp. 71-126.

<sup>42</sup> For the full text of the 1925 Polish concordat, see Paul Parsy, *Les Concordats récents (1914-1935)* (Paris: Imprimerie Georges Subervie, 1936), 23-30.



force in political, economic and social life, and -- implicitly -- against those liberal forces advocating the separation of Church and state.

As left-wing unrest spread in Europe and the Wilsonian moment faded as the United States retreated into isolationism,<sup>43</sup> the Pope and many of Europe's leaders became increasingly worried about the purportedly contagious nature of the Russian Revolution.<sup>44</sup> Soon, many of the former imperial states in Eastern Europe that positioned themselves against the Soviet Union, and waged territorial battles of their own against it, showed themselves receptive to negotiating concordats with the Vatican.<sup>45</sup> Between 1922 and 1927, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Yugoslavia negotiated, and -- in all cases save Yugoslavia -- ratified concordats with the Vatican. These states effectively became a kind of "Catholic bloc" which created a *cordon sanitaire* around the Soviet Union. So successful was the Vatican's scramble for European Europe that even the Soviet Union briefly entertained the idea of signing a concordat with the Vatican, so as to limit its growing power. Though the Vatican initially showed its willingness to dialogue with the Bolsheviks, negotiations eventually broke down, largely due to internal opposition from both sides.<sup>46</sup> Thus despite Soviet attempts, Russia had been effectively cut off from Western Europe by a wave of concordat diplomacy.

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<sup>43</sup> The term is borrowed from Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>44</sup> For a broad overview of growing fears regarding the Russian revolution's impact, see Anthony Read, *1919: The World on Fire and the Battle with Bolshevism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008); for a narrower look at the issue of communism-as-contagion, see Klaus Theweleit, "Contamination of the Body's Peripheral Areas," in *Male Fantasies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 385ff.

<sup>45</sup> For an overview of the Latvian-Soviet, Lithuanian-Soviet and Romanian-Hungarian (Red Army) Wars, see Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 57-73. For a highly partisan first-hand account of the Latvian-Soviet war, and how it motivated the concordat reaction, see General Fürst Awaloff, *Im Kampf gegen den Bolschewismus. Erinnerungen von General Fürst Awaloff, Oberbefehlshaber der Deutsch-Russischen Westarmee im Baltikum* (Glückstadt: J.J. Augustin, 1925).

<sup>46</sup> On the failed negotiations with the Soviets, see Winfried Becker, "Diplomats and Missionaries: The Role Played by the German Embassies in Moscow and Rome in the Relations between Russia and the Vatican from 1921 to 1929," *The Catholic Historical Review* 92, 1 (January 2006): 25-45. The negotiations are also discussed in Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917-1979*; and Chenuaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe*.

In form and content, the Vatican's concordats with Latvia, Lithuania and Romania mirrored the Polish concordat, and similarly expanded the Vatican's influence in old and new domains. The Latvian concordat, for instance, used the same wording to recognize the juridical personality and sovereignty of the Holy See. It outlined the Vatican's right to found confessional schools and Catholic associations, and receive funding from the state for a Cathedral. In exchange, the concordat gave the Latvian state the right to approve the Archbishop of Riga, and promised that clergy would swear an oath of loyalty to the Republic.<sup>47</sup> The Lithuanian and Romanian concordats expanded the Church's influence in domains like education and property ownership, and similarly granted the state freedom to control clerics deemed politically out of line.<sup>48</sup> All of these agreements also militated against the League's imposition of minority rights - - ironically, even in those territories where Catholicism was itself a minority religion. As a perceptive contemporary observer noted, the Catholic Church was in other words acting just like the League of Nations, and making "foreign interventions in favor of a minority."<sup>49</sup>

From its development in eastern territories, concordat diplomacy spread west, where it too was used to enshrine a new form of Church-state collaboration, and guard against communist revolution. Indeed, the second round of concordat diplomacy was carried out in states recently rocked by left-wing uprisings (like Germany, Austria and Italy), and run by anti-

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<sup>47</sup> For the text of the Concordat, see Parsy, *Les Concordats récents*, 37ff. On the negotiations of the Latvian Concordat, see Alexey A. Komarov, "Il Concordato del Vaticano con la Lettonia nel 1922 e gli interessi della politica sovietica," in *Santa Sede e Russia da Leone XIII a Pio XI*, ed. Massimiliano Valente (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006), 252-62; and Janis Rutkis, *Latvia: Country and People* (Stockholm: Latvian National Foundation, 1967), 62off.

<sup>48</sup> On the Lithuanian agreement, see Alfonsas Eidintas, Vytautas Zalys and Edvardas Tuskenis, *Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918-1940* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 144ff; Alfred Erich Senn, *The Great Powers: Lithuania and the Vilna Question, 1920-1928* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966), 142ff; and Juozas Prunskis, *Comparative Law, Ecclesiastical and Civil, in the Lithuanian Concordat: A Study with Historical Notes* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1945). On the Romanian agreement, see Mózes Nóda, "The Historical, Political and Ecclesiastical Background of the 1927 Concordat between the Vatican and Romania," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 9, 27 (Winter 2010): 281-301; and Lavinia Stan and Lucian Turcescu, *Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Romania* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 8ff.

<sup>49</sup> C.A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 157.

communist leaders who hoped to diminish the threat of communist revolution by supporting the expansion of Vatican influence. Eugenio Pacelli -- who had authored the legal reinvention of the concordat in 1916 -- was the father of concordat diplomacy in the west. Like Ratti, Pacelli began by presenting concordat diplomacy as an alternative to the Wilsonian peace, and took the symbolic name of the Archbishop of Sardi, a reference to one of the seven hundred Christian dioceses in modern-day Turkey rebuilt following the Ottoman (read, Allied) invasion of 1306. Pacelli, like Ratti, positioned himself against Wilson by working in territories targeted by American efforts, and delivering rival aid parcels displaying the coat of arms of the Pontiff and the legend, "The Holy Father offers his blessing."<sup>50</sup>

The short-lived Bavarian Soviet Republic, in existence between April 6 and May 3, 1919, marked an important shift for Pacelli, who would henceforth present concordat diplomacy as a strategy to curb communist internationalism. Using language typical of many of the circles in which he moved, Pacelli declared the new Bavarian government the work of doubly foreign forces: a "harsh Russian-Judaic-Revolutionary tyranny."<sup>51</sup> "The healthy part of the German people," he noted, erecting himself as its representative, "is currently desperately fighting to liberate its society from the damaging poison of Bolshevism."<sup>52</sup> With surprising synchronicity,

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<sup>50</sup> John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York: Viking, 1999), 71-2. On the United States' activism in Germany after the war, see Erika Kuhlman, *Reconstructing Patriarchy after the Great War: Women, Gender and Postwar Reconciliation between Nations* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008); Louis Paul Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany* (New York: Macmillan, 1960); and Charles E. Strickland, "American Aid to Germany, 1919 to 1921," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 45, 4 (summer 1962): 256-270. For a contemporary account, see Sidney Brooks, *American Aid to Germany, 1918-1925* ([1925]; New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943).

<sup>51</sup> "L'avvenimento si è svolto all'eco del cannone, che da ieri rimbomba quasi ininterrottamente a Monaco, nella lotta fratricida impegnata fra l'Armata Rossa della Repubblica dei Consigli e l'Armata Bianca lottante per la liberazione della capitale della Baviera dalla durissima tirannia russo-giudaico-rivoluzionaria." Letter of Pacelli to Gasparri, Munich, April 30, 1919. ASV, AES, Baviera (3° periodo), 1918-1920, pos.67, fasc.42, ff42-45.

<sup>52</sup> "Tutta la parte sana del popolo tedesco lotta disperatamente per liberare l'organismo sociale dal veleno dissolutore del bolscevismo." Letter of Pacelli to Gasparri, "Il significato, i prodromi ed i moniti della seconda rivoluzione in Monaco," Munich, March 3, 1919. *Ibid.*, pos.67, fasc.43, ff.7-11. For contrasting accounts of Pacelli's view of the leaders of the Republic, see Emma Fattorini, *Germania e Santa Sede: le nunziature di Pacelli fra la Grande guerra e la Repubblica di Weimar* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1992); Stewart A. Stehlin, *Weimar and the Vatican, 1919-1933: German-Vatican Diplomatic*

the Vatican nuncio in Hungary similarly commented that the Hungarian revolution of 1919 was a "Judeo-Communist" plot carried out by "a small minority of delinquents."<sup>53</sup>

Like Ratti, Pacelli chose to remain (briefly) onsite, and face the revolutionaries head-on. He played up for effect the presence of gunshot marks on the Vatican nunciature, and his refusal to hand over his automobile to revolutionaries, as proof of his personal bravery and of the Vatican's opposition to revolution writ large.<sup>54</sup> In fact, that "bravery" was quite relative: Pacelli avoided nearly all of Germany's unrest by retreating to the idyllic shores of Lake Constance, in Switzerland, and following the brief attempted car theft, the nuncio took an overnight stay at the hospital, to cure a strong attack of nerves and indigestion.<sup>55</sup> Still, his purported resistance to revolution came in handy by the spring of 1919, as the monarchist Bavarian People's Party was swept into power following the bloody defeat of the Republic in May. Concealing the violence, Pacelli declared that the end of the Bavarian Soviet Republic was "magnificent," and that none could contain their "emotion and applause" as "the red flag was lowered on all public buildings."<sup>56</sup> Far from hailing the rise of the monarchist party, Wilson's diplomats in Europe, on the other hand, worried that the Bavarian People's Party would attempt to stir unrest in German

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*Relations in the Interwar Years* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983); and Karl Dienst, ed., *Die Kirchen und die Weimarer Republik* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1994).

<sup>53</sup> "Il regime boscevico ha inaugurato colà il regno del terrore. Una piccola minoranza di delinquenti, che si è impadronito del potere e dispone della forza, tiranneggia a suo piacimento l'intera popolazione [...] Le disposizioni più severe ha emanato il Governo giudeo-comunista contro chiunque osi manifestare opinioni a lui contrarie." Letter from Nunzio Teodoro to Gasparri, Vienna, 15 April 1919. ASV, AES Austria Ungheria (3° periodo), 1918-1920, pos.1340, fasc.532, ff.92-94. On the usage of the "Judeo-Bolshevik" slur in Hungary, see Paul Hanebrink, "Transnational Culture War: Christianity, Nation and the Judeo-Bolshevik Myth in Hungary, 1890-1920," *The Journal of Modern History* 80, 1 (March 2008): 55-80.

<sup>54</sup> Letter of Pacelli to Gasparri, Munich, April 30, 1919. ASV, AES, Baviera (3° periodo), 1918-1920, pos.62, fasc.40, ff.42-45.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> "Lo spettacolo nella mattina del primo maggio fu magnifico. Fra gli applausi generali comparvero le prime truppe del Governo. Alla Residenza fu abbassata la bandiera rossa ed issata fra la commozione e gli applausi di un immenso pubblico la bandiera celeste e bianca della Baviera. Ugualmente fu fatto su tutti i pubblici edifici." Letter of Pacelli to Gasparri, May 6, 1919. . ASV, AES, Baviera (3° periodo), 1918-1920, pos.67, fasc.43, ff.44-52.

Bohemia and Slovakia, and bring back the "king, as in the 'good old days.'"<sup>57</sup> In a striking parallel to events in Poland following the Red Army's retreat from Warsaw, the Bavarian People's Party showed its distaste for liberal and communist internationalism by immediately seeking the Vatican's favor, in its own bid for legitimacy. It loudly protested the terms of the Wilsonian peace Germany signed on June 28, 1919. It made a show of resisting anti-clerical measures in domains like education, divorce, and abortion, and of cultivating ties with top-ranking clerics. And by January of 1925, it had concluded a concordat with the Vatican.<sup>58</sup>

The Bavarian agreement seemed to suggest that Vatican influence would only grow with the westward movement of concordat diplomacy. Indeed, the concordat recognized the Holy See as a sovereign actor, and allotted considerable funds for churches, clergy pensions, and "spiritual services," to be offered in state-run institutions, like prisons and hospitals. It also made religious instruction, taught by Church-vetted clerics, mandatory in public schools, and expanded clerical influence at the university level, in disciplines like history, philosophy, pedagogy, sociology and politics.<sup>59</sup>

In a sign of the Vatican's growing influence in European affairs, the Prussian government began concordat negotiations shortly thereafter, following its brutal crushing of the Spartacist uprising in Berlin, and its murder of the German-Polish revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg, who

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<sup>57</sup> American ambassador to Prague Richard Crane, to Secretary of State Robert Lansing, October 8, 1919; September 22, 1920. *Records of the U.S. Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Czechoslovakia, 1910-1944*, Microfilm (Washington, D.C., 1982), no.77; no.298. As cited in Michael Cude, "Wilsonian Perspectives on Czechoslovakism and the Slovak Question in the Founding of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-1921," *Graduate Organization for the Study of Europe and Central Asia Conference*, University of Pittsburg, February 24-6, 2012.

<sup>58</sup> On the Bavarian People's party (*Bayerische Volkspartei*), see Klaus Schönhoven, *Die Bayerische Volkspartei, 1924-1932* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1972); Claudia Friemberger, *Sebastian Schlittenbauer und die Anfänge der Bayerischen Volkspartei* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 1998); and Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 536ff. On these and similar debates, see Atina Grossman, *Reforming Sex: The German Movement for Birth Control and Abortion Reform, 1920-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Larry Eugene Jones, "Catholic Conservatives in the Weimar Republic: The Politics of the Rhenish-Westphalian Aristocracy, 1918-1933," *German History* 18, 1 (2000): 60-85; and Willem Melching, "'A New Morality': Left-Wing Intellectuals on Sexuality in Weimar Germany," *Journal of Contemporary History* 25, 1 (January 1990): 69-85.

<sup>59</sup> For the full text of the Concordat, see Parsy, *Les Concordats récents*, 83-6.

had recently criticized the Catholic Church's support for capitalism and imperialism.<sup>60</sup> In 1929, the Prussian concordat was signed. In the same year, Eugenio Pacelli's brother, Francesco, working in partnership with the Vatican Secretary of State, concluded the sweeping Lateran Agreements in Italy.

The victories of concordat diplomacy in the East shaped the Vatican's negotiations with the Italian state, most notably in the Vatican's decision to pair its long-standing demand for the restoration of territorial and political sovereignty with the demand for a far-reaching concordat that aimed to greatly increase the status of the Vatican in Italy.<sup>61</sup> In addition to extensive privileges in realms like education and the organization of civil society, the agreement proclaimed Catholicism as Italy's state religion, and granted the Vatican territorial sovereignty and a guaranteed income. And like the concordats with East Central European countries, the Lateran Agreements rested on an alliance between the Church and the Fascist party, forged in opposition to the rise of "Bolshevik" influence in Italy, and Europe as a whole.

Achille Ratti, who in 1921 was appointed Archbishop of Milan, sowed the seeds for the alliance. When Ratti arrived in Milan, the city was just emerging from two years of worker unrest, marked by strikes and factory occupations. Anti-clerical tensions were rife, and the socialist mayor of the city refused to attend Ratti's inaugural ceremony at the Duomo.<sup>62</sup> The contrast with the Vatican diplomat's recent experience in Warsaw was stark: now, rather than being called upon to legitimate the new government, Ratti was being ignored to achieve the same end.

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<sup>60</sup> Rosa Luxemburg, *Kościół a socjalizm* ["The Church and Socialism"] (1905; Moscow: Wydawnictwo biura wykonawczego K.P.R.P.w Rosji, 1920).

<sup>61</sup> On the insertion of the concordat demand, see Adrian Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy, 1919-1929* (London: Routledge, 2004), 347-8; and Pietro Scoppola, *La chiesa e il fascismo: documenti e interpretazioni* (Bari: Laterza, 1971), 122-44.

<sup>62</sup> Eliana Versace, "Ninety Years Ago, Achille Ratti was Nominated Archbishop of Milan," *L'Osservatore Romano*, English-language edition (June 14, 2011).

Ratti chose to respond to the affront by actively campaigning against a series of measures under discussion in the socialist-dominated city council.<sup>63</sup> In the process, he made contact with two groups: the Christian Democratic Popular Party and the Fascists. The former had earned a mixed reputation in Vatican headquarters and an even more tepid welcome amidst Milanese clergy, who disapproved of its calls to separate Church and state and its pledge to work independently from the Vatican hierarchy.<sup>64</sup> The violently anti-socialist *Fasci di combattimento*, on the other hand, which had been founded in Milan in March of 1919, appeared more promising to Ratti. The party had picked up thirty-five seats in parliament in the May 1921 elections, with the party's leader, Benito Mussolini deputy from Milan. By the time Ratti arrived in the city, the erstwhile socialist had distanced himself from the cavalier atheism of his youth, and begun cultivating relations with high-profile Milanese clerics.<sup>65</sup> Much to Ratti's liking, Mussolini began speaking out against Woodrow Wilson's activism in postwar Europe, and campaigning for state funding for religious schools. And in a truly daring gamble, the Fascist leader -- well before being handed leadership of the Italian state -- had pretended to be able to help solve the Roman Question himself. Thus, Mussolini, as deputy from Milan, pursued talks to this end with no less than the Vatican Secretary of State, Pietro Gasparri, who made clear to

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<sup>63</sup> This episode is recounted in René Fontenelle, *Sa sainteté Pie XI* (Paris: Editions Spes, 1939), 58-63.

<sup>64</sup> Milanese clerics such as Fathers Gemelli and Olgiati expressed their frustration at the party's refusal to openly champion the papacy and the conservative function of Catholic social doctrine. On the reaction of the Vatican and the clergy to the party, see, *inter alia*, John Molony, *The Emergence of Political Catholicism in Italy: Partito Popolare, 1919-1926* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977), 108ff; Alexander J. De Grand, *Italian Fascism: Its Origins and Development* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 23-4; Richard A. Webster, *The Cross and the Fasces: Christian Democracy and Fascism in Italy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 54ff; Gabriele De Rosa, *Il partito popolare italiano* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1966), 21-2; Giorgio Vecchio, *I cattolici milanesi e la politica. L'esperienza del Partito popolare (1919-1926)* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1982); and Tiziana Di Maio, "Between the Crisis of the Liberal State, Fascism, and a Democratic Perspective: The Popular Party in Italy," in *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918-1945*, eds. Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wahnout (London: Routledge, 2004), 111-122. A concise summary of Luigi Sturzo's views on democracy and Church-state relations is provided in a famous speech he delivered in Milan on November 17, 1918. Idem, "I problemi del dopoguerra," in *Il partito popolare italiano*, vol.1 (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1956), 13-23.

<sup>65</sup> In 1910, Mussolini had penned a pornographic anti-clerical novel, entitled *L'amante del Cardinale: Claudia Particella, romanzo storico* (translated as *The Cardinal's Mistress*), which was published in installments on the pages of the socialist newspaper *Il Popolo*.

Mussolini that he was no friend either of the ruling Liberal government, or the Christian Democratic Popular Party.<sup>66</sup> Soon, the Vatican's official and semi-official publications began publishing articles openly sympathetic to the Fascist party.<sup>67</sup>

Ratti doubtless perceived the shift, and it was perhaps because for this reason that during his time as Archbishop, he appointed a Fascist supporter as one of his closest collaborators, and affirmed in an interview to the press that Mussolini was "a formidable man," and that "the future is his."<sup>68</sup> Overruling local clergy members who disliked the Fascists' violent tactics, Ratti issued two directives: the first permitted Mussolini's followers to attend mass throughout Lombardy in their "battle garb," in their eponymous black shirts; the second allowed them to bring their banners into Milan's Duomo during the June 1921 commemoration of victory in the Great War.<sup>69</sup> As in Poland, Ratti was engaging in highly performative acts that aimed to strengthen the partnership between the Vatican and one of several new political forces seeking legitimacy from the Church.

Ratti's time in Milan was called to an abrupt halt when on January 22, 1922, Benedict XV died, and in February, Ratti was elected Pope, taking the name Pius XI. By late October of 1922, Mussolini had convinced King Victor Emanuel III to allow him to take the lead of the Kingdom of Italy. Once in power, Mussolini continued to seek the Vatican's favor, as Bavarian and Polish politicians had done, so as to gain legitimacy and help undermine rival political factions.

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<sup>66</sup> Giovanni Spadolini, ed., *Il Cardinale Gasparri e la Questione Romana con brani delle memorie inedite* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1973), 53.

<sup>67</sup> See Albert C. O'Brien, "L'Osservatore Romano and Fascism: The Beginning of a New Era in Church-State Relations, October 1922-July 1923," *Church and State* 13 (autumn 1971): 445-63; and Jan Nelis, "The Clerical Response to a Totalitarian Political Religion: *La Civiltà Cattolica* and Italian Fascism," *Journal of Contemporary History* 46, 2 (April 2011): 245-270.

<sup>68</sup> The January 1922 interview with a French journalist for *L'Illustration* is cited in Emma Fattorini, *Hitler, Mussolini and the Vatican: Pope Pius XI and the Speech that Was Never Made* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 29. Ratti's collaborator in Milan, Carlo Caccia-Dominioni, remained convinced of the possibility of reconciling the Vatican political project with the Fascist one for many years.

<sup>69</sup> For a discussion of these events, see John Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929-1932: A Study in Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 23ff.



Asserting that it would be an "absurd error to ignore this two-thousand-year old moral power, whose influence is ever growing, and reaches four hundred million people,"<sup>70</sup> Mussolini immediately fought for a series of laws smiled upon by the Pope. He restored the crucifix in schools and public institutions, introduced religious teaching in primary schools, raised clergy stipends, and saved the Vatican's Bank of Rome from defaulting on its debts. Additionally, he banned Freemasonry, curbed the ability of (American) Protestants to proselytize in Italy, and promised to heed Vatican fears regarding Rotary International -- all the while quietly cultivating relations with the United States. He also took a strong and decisive stance against communist internationalism.<sup>71</sup> Finally, as early as 1922, Mussolini showed his willingness to continue to dialogue with Vatican authorities to reach a timely solution to the Roman Question. Ratti was just as eager to finalize an agreement with Fascist leaders, for bringing concordat diplomacy to Italy was a natural and necessary move for an institution based on Italian soil, and composed of largely Italian top-ranking personnel. Indeed, without influence in Italy, concordat diplomacy would have appeared a thin, and impartially realized, international strategy.<sup>72</sup>

On February 11, 1929, the Vatican Secretary of State Gasparri and Mussolini signed the Lateran Agreements, which were composed of three interlinked agreements, including a concordat, which was valid "according to the general rules of international law."<sup>73</sup> The first of the three texts announced that, "The Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Religion is the only State religion." The statement was in continuation with that outlined in Poland's religiously infused

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<sup>70</sup> In an interview with the *Echo de Paris* in April of 1923, Mussolini affirmed, in regards to the Holy See, "Quelle erreur absurde que de vouloir ignorer une semblable puissance morale, vieille de deux mille ans et dont l'influence, toujours grandissante, agit sur 400 millions d'âmes!" *Echo de Paris* (April 5, 1923).

<sup>71</sup> The moves were not very costly for Mussolini and were welcomed by the Church hierarchy. See Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, 417. The paradoxes of the United States' relations with Italy are discussed, among others, by Ira Katznelson, in *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, forthcoming).

<sup>72</sup> On the importance of Italy in the Vatican imaginary, see Manlio Graziano, *Identité catholique et identité italienne: l'Italie, laboratoire de l'Eglise* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007); and Andrea Riccardi, *Roma, città sacra? Dalla Conciliazione all'operazione Sturzo* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1979).

<sup>73</sup> For the full English-language text of the agreement, see *The Treaty of the Lateran*, ed. Benedict Williamson (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1929).

and anti-minority rights constitution of 1921. By announcing Catholicism as the only state religion and refusing to grant pre-existent guarantees to Italy's religious minorities, the treaty effectively repudiated the principle of freedom of conscience, and inaugurated a period of repression of non-Catholic faiths on Italian territory -- one in which Protestant, and even more so, Jewish communities, would suffer immensely. (Though against Vatican wishes, a mild Fascist bill protecting religious minorities was passed on June 24, 1929, following protests spurred by the signature of the Lateran Agreements, it did little to help these groups.<sup>74</sup>) From prison, Antonio Gramsci lamented that the Agreements had provided "public recognition to a caste of citizens of a series of political privileges," including of course that group's claim to priority over all other faiths.<sup>75</sup>

In addition to declaring Catholicism the state religion and undoing Italy's minority rights provisions, the Lateran Agreements also granted the Pope a small sliver of approximately 108 acres of land in Rome, henceforth known as Vatican City State. As Francesco Pacelli's diaries reveal, the denomination of "state" was one for which the Vatican fought quite hard, so that it could claim a greater share of influence in European affairs.<sup>76</sup> (Given the centrality of acquiring statehood to Vatican foreign policy since 1870, the insistence was hardly surprising.) Though Vatican City was declared "neutral territory," Italy promised to provide it with basic resources, such as water, railroad, telephone and post services. Further, via a financial convention, the Vatican was encouraged to develop its new state extensively, and become an important player in emerging European and American finance markets. The convention promised that the Italian

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<sup>74</sup> On the legal restrictions imposed on Jews in Italy in the period between 1929 and the Race Laws, see Olindo De Napoli, *La prova della razza: cultura giuridica e razzismo in Italia negli anni Trenta* (Florence: Le Monnier, 2009); and Renzo De Felice, *The Jews in Fascist Italy: A History*, trans. Robert L. Miller (New York: Enigma Books, 2001), 69-99. On the repression of Protestant churches in Italy, see Giorgio Spini, *Italia di Mussolini e protestanti* (Turin: Claudiana, 2007).

<sup>75</sup> For Gramsci's criticism that the pacts amounted to "il riconoscimento pubblico a una casta di cittadini dello stesso Stato di determinati privilegi politici," see id., *Quaderni del carcere*, Quaderno 16. As reprinted in Antonio Gramsci, *Il Vaticano e l'Italia*, ed. Angelo D'Orsi (Rome: Riuniti, 2011), 73.

<sup>76</sup> Francesco Pacelli, *Diario della Conciliazione con verbali e appendice di documenti*, ed. M. Maccarrone (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1959), 21.

state would provide the Vatican with two forms of compensation for the damages it had suffered: a cash payment of 750 million lire and investments in Italian government stock worth one billion lire. After many years of uncertainty and near-exclusive dependence on the fluctuating donations of the faithful, the Vatican had become financially secure; with the hefty income of up to 87 million lire per year and the freedom to invest in companies both at home and abroad, it "would never be poor again."<sup>77</sup> The financial convention also gave Pius XI the necessary funds to visually demonstrate the prominence the new city-state of the Vatican, which he did by demolishing the area's small rustic houses, and constructing in their place large neo-classical buildings, and broad, triumphal, avenues.<sup>78</sup>

The third component of the Lateran Agreements was the concordat, which gave the Vatican extensive powers in domains like education, family law, and the preservation of Catholic youth organizations. Announcing that Christian doctrine was "the foundation and crown of public education," the concordat made religious education in primary and secondary schools compulsory, and empowered the Church to vet teachers of religious subjects. Expanding the Church's influence to family law, the concordat recognized the Church's position of marriage as a sacrament, and made canon-law marriage equivalent to civil marriage. Ecclesiastical authorities were controversially given full jurisdiction and exclusive competence over marriage, which would be regulated by the Vatican's Sacra Rota tribunal.<sup>79</sup> The concordat also gave the

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<sup>77</sup> John Pollard, *Money and the Rise of the Modern Papacy: Financing the Vatican, 1850-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 148.

<sup>78</sup> Though many scholars have been drawn to the analysis of Fascist architecture and urban planning, none have as yet written an urban history of Vatican City. For preliminary analyses, see Aristotle Kallis, "'Reconciliation' or 'Conquest'? The Opening of the Via della Conciliazione and the Fascist Vision for the 'Third Rome,'" in *Rome: Continuing Encounters between Past and Present*, eds. Dorigen Caldwell and Lesley Caldwell (Farham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 129-53; Id., "The 'Third Rome' of Fascism: Demolition and the Search for a New Urban Syntax," *The Journal of Modern History* 84, 1 (March 2012): 40-79; Piero Ostilo Rossi, *Roma: Guida all'architettura moderna, 1909-2000*, 2nd ed. (Bari: Laterza, 2003), 12-5, 39-41, 150-4. For contemporary accounts, see Giulio Tardini, *Basilica Vaticana e Borghi* (Rome: Istituto Grafico Tiberino, 1936), and Leone Castelli, *Quel tanto di territorio': ricordi di lavori ed opere eseguiti nel Vaticano durante il Pontificato di Pio XI (1922-1939)* (Rome: Edizione Fuori Commercio, 1940).

Vatican a great deal of power in civil society, by allowing the largest Catholic lay organization, Catholic Action (which would serve as an important site of political socialization for many of Christian Democracy's leaders), to operate freely. In keeping with Rome's dual identity as the seat of Christendom and of the Fascist regime, the concordat affirmed that the Italian state would protect "the sacred character of the Eternal City," and "prevent in Rome anything that might clash with that character." Finally, in line with preceding concordats, the Italian state gained something in exchange, such as the clergy's "oath of fealty to the Head of State," and the right to veto clerics deemed politically suspect.

The Lateran Agreements considerably expanded the Vatican's influence both in Italy and abroad. On par with the agreements in East Central Europe, they recognized the Vatican's sovereignty, empowered the Vatican with control of the Catholicism as a whole, militated against the theory and practice of minority rights, and tightly bound the Vatican (and local Catholic Churches) to the anti-communist statesmen of the moment, who used it to destroy rival political factions -- including, in Italy's case, Catholic ones.<sup>80</sup> With concordat diplomacy in general and the Lateran Pacts in particular, the Vatican had strengthened its international status in Europe, and its claims to independent political power. And with every new agreement, the Vatican was becoming staunchly more anti-communist itself, both in response to the rise of religious persecution in the Soviet Union, and in a bid to show its utility to concordat partners. On the heels of the Lateran Agreements, the Vatican and the Fascist state signed a secret joint surveillance pact regarding communist propaganda, and the Pope began to issue his first

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<sup>79</sup> On the concordat's transformation of family law, see David Albornoz Pavisic, *I diritti nativi della Chiesa nel Codice di diritto canonico e nel diritto concordatario vigente* (Rome: LAS, 2008); Arturo Carlo Jemolo, *Lezioni di diritto ecclesiastico* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1962), 457ff; and Alessandro Albisetti, "Il matrimonio dei culti acattolici," in *Tra diritto ecclesiastico e canonico*, ed. Albisetti (Milan: A. Giuffrè, 2009), 341-354.

<sup>80</sup> For a summary of Catholic opposition to the agreement, and the way in which it confirmed the Pope's vote of no confidence vis-à-vis Christian Democrats, see, *inter alia*, Robert Wolff, *Between Pope and Duce: Catholic Students in Fascist Italy* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), 92ff. Alcide De Gasperi, the future leader of Italy's Christian Democratic party, bitterly criticized the agreement in a series of letters of 1929-1930, later published as Id., *Lettere sul concordato* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1970).

thunderous condemnations of Soviet affairs from the pulpit of St. Peter's, effectively launching a militant Vatican anti-communist propaganda campaign, which would blossom in the 1930s and 1940s, and employ many of Christian Democracy's future leaders.<sup>81</sup>

Concordat diplomacy continued apace after the conclusion of the Lateran Agreements. In 1932, Pacelli signed a concordat with Baden, and in 1933, he helped conclude two additional agreements: one with Austria, and the other, controversially, with the Third Reich. As in all preceding concordats, these agreements mandated the greater interdependence of Church and state, expanding the Vatican's influence in exchange for an *imprimatur* of legitimacy to the ruling political factions. Vatican officials thus did not consider these agreements "pacts with the devil," as some scholars have suggested; rather, they were part and parcel of the larger project of spreading Vatican influence in Europe.<sup>82</sup>

In sum, by 1933, the Vatican had used concordat diplomacy to greatly expand its influence within individual nation-states and in Europe as a whole. Concordats enshrined a regime of co-dependence between Church and state, handed the Vatican leadership over national Catholic Churches and Catholicism as such, and increased the Vatican's power over domains like education, civil society, and family law. Additionally, concordats militated against two rival worldviews, in the process of instantiating themselves: the Versailles settlement, which included the principle of religious freedom, and the communist settlement, in which religion played little role. Further, as they were realized on the ground, concordat states actually formed a kind of *cordon sanitaire* surrounding the Soviet Union. They were states that had recently emerged from either war with the Soviet Union, or from a sharp contrast with socialist or communist forces. Their politicians were strongly anti-communist themselves, and eager to use concordat diplomacy as a means to buttress their own power and diminish that of rival factions.

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<sup>81</sup> See Chapters Four through Six in this dissertation.

<sup>82</sup> The most recent articulation of this view is found in Wolf, *Pope and Devil*. For a cogent reply, see Larry Eugene Jones, "Franz von Papen, Catholic Conservatives, and the Establishment of the Third Reich, 1933-1934," *The Journal of Modern History* 83, 2 (June 2011): 272-318. The Austrian and German concordats of 1933 will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

#### 4. The Consolidation of the Church-State Bind

The bid of the Vatican's new functionaries to expand Vatican influence in Europe through legal instruments was thus surprisingly successful. Between 1922 and 1933, the Vatican concluded a total of eleven concordats, in addition to several less binding agreements, known as *modus vivendi*. All of these agreements had the effect of militating against the separation of Church and state, creating regimes in which influence was shared between the two powers. The speed and frequency with which concordats were concluded was nothing short of spectacular. In eleven years, the Vatican's bureaucrats concluded so many concordats that they represented over 25% of the total concluded over nine centuries of Church history. Furthermore, the Vatican's failure rate was very low: only in two cases -- the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia -- were concordats unsuccessful, either due to insurmountable opposition within the Vatican on the advisability of the negotiations, as was the case with the Soviet Union, or due to parliamentary opposition to the ratification of the concordat, which blocked progress in Yugoslavia.

The Vatican's expansion of influence through legal means -- before and after concordats -- was just as impressive. As we have seen, states that hoped to win the Vatican's favor independently implemented a large number of laws which were in line with Church priorities, including measures outlawing divorce and Freemasonry, and severely curbing the rights of other religious groups. Furthermore, concordats themselves did not remain a dead letter, and were implemented either partially or completely in all of the countries with which they were signed. Indeed, the only states that dared violate limited sections of the concordat -- like Italy and Germany -- paid the consequences, in the form of large-scale name and shame campaigns pursued in the court of international opinion. On two occasions, Italy bent to the pressure; after two attempts to limit concordat gains (in 1931 and 1938), it promptly reverted to the original terms of the agreement. Though an emboldened Germany refused to do the same, it nonetheless

tried to patch up relations with the Vatican during World War II, for instance by giving the Pope extensive guarantees regarding the future of Rome and Vatican City.

Furthermore, that the Vatican's struggle for influence after World War I was successful is also demonstrated by the fact that the theocracy was increasingly invited to participate in "international society," and hailed as a prominent European power by observers of various political stripes. In the 1920s, the Vatican for instance played a leading role in helping settle a territorial dispute between the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Haiti, via a Treaty of Arbitration.<sup>83</sup> The Vatican also joined the International Labor Organization thanks to the urgings of the ILO's first director, Albert Thomas, and took part in some of the most important conferences of the decade, including those that sought to further disarmament and limit the possibility of war.<sup>84</sup> Even unsympathetic observers increasingly took stock of the growing centrality of the Vatican. As noted above, in 1924 Antonio Gramsci for instance asserted that the Vatican had shown itself to be "without doubt the vastest and most powerful private organization ever to exist [and] one of the most effective political forces in history."<sup>85</sup>

By virtue of its concordat diplomacy, the Vatican also became of interest to prominent legal scholars of the interwar years. Figures as unrelated as J.T. Delos and Carl Schmitt for instance discussed the Vatican as an entity endowed with a new measure of influence in European legal and political affairs.<sup>86</sup> Bringing the Vatican into debates about ethnic and

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<sup>83</sup> "Treaty of Arbitration between the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Haiti," *FRUS*, 1920, vol.1, 309-10.

<sup>84</sup> Liliosa Azara, "The United States, the Vatican and the League of Nations: The Disarmament Conference of 1932," in *Pius XI and America*, ed. Alberto Melloni (forthcoming); and Charles Gallagher, S.J., "The Fruits of Perseverance: The Roman Catholic Church, the ILO and the Search for Social Justice," unpublished paper presented at *Christian Democrat Internationalism in Europe*, Rome, September 27, 2012.

<sup>85</sup> "Il Vaticano è senza dubbio la più vasta e potente organizzazione privata che sia mai esistita. Ha, per certi aspetti, il carattere di uno Stato ed è riconosciuto come tale da un certo numero di governi [...] [É] una delle forze politiche più efficienti della storia moderna." Giovanni Masci [Antonio Gramsci], "Il Vaticano," *Correspondance Internationale* (March 12, 1924). As cited in Antonio Gramsci, *La costruzione del Partito comunista (1923-1926)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1974), 523-5.

religious homogeneity under the state, the French international lawyer Robert Redslob defended the idea that international law could revitalize itself by heeding the example of the "co-existence of Church and state" in Europe, which showed how the intermingling of religious and national identities could strengthen states.<sup>87</sup> On the other side of the Atlantic, American lawyers similarly noted the "unquestioned significance" of the Vatican's concordat diplomacy, and its re-establishment of a "proper regard for religious authority" in Europe as a whole.<sup>88</sup>

Finally, the Vatican's growing post-World War I influence is demonstrated by the expansion of its diplomatic relations with European and non-European states. If in 1913, there were only fourteen nations represented at the Vatican and five papal nuncios abroad, by 1922, twenty-five nations were represented there and twenty-five nuncios were abroad.<sup>89</sup> And as will be seen, its relations with states continued to grow throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

## Conclusion

World War I had created the opportunity for the Vatican to establish its influence in European affairs, and in the process transform itself into a new kind of political actor. Pope Benedict XV's

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<sup>86</sup> J. T. Delos, "Le Traité du Latran et la situation juridique nouvelle de la Papauté," in *Revue générale de droit international public* (1929); Carl Schmitt, *Römischer Katholizismus und politische Form* (1923; Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2008).

<sup>87</sup> "La loyauté civique, tout en ayant elle aussi une trame idéale, est viable aux côtés d'une allégeance ethnique. Ce n'est point là, par ailleurs, le seul exemple d'un parallélisme entre des sentiments de convergence dissemblables. [Par exemple, il y a aussi] la coexistence de l'État et de l'Église. Le catholique a deux patries, l'une d'elles est mondiale." Robert Redslob, *Le Principe des nationalités* (Paris: Librairie du Recueil Sirey, 1930), 239-40. On Robert Redslob's attempt to revitalize international law in this direction, see Nathaniel Berman, "'But the Alternative is Despair': European Nationalism and the Modernist Renewal of International Law," *Harvard Law Review* 106, 8 (June 1993): 1792-1903, especially 1808-1821.

<sup>88</sup> Joseph P. Bartilucci, "Six Years of Fascist Legislation," *American Bar Association Journal* 15, 8 (August 1929): 473-5, 473.

<sup>89</sup> Raymond Buell, "The Vatican and the World," *Current History* 16 (New York, 1922), 980. This growth was in part due to the spectacular expansion of the Vatican's diplomatic apparatus, and partly due, of course, to the coming into being of many new nation-states after World War I.



1917 peace platform marked the point of departure, and concordat diplomacy its actualization. Throughout, the Vatican had couched its novel political project -- the construction of Church-state duopolies -- as an alternative to liberal and communist internationalism.

In the years after World War I, the Vatican thus drafted and pursued a rhetorical and legal-diplomatic strategy that began to restore it a great degree of influence in European affairs. Through concordat diplomacy, the Vatican reconfigured Church-state relations by enshrining a regime of collaboration. Additionally, concordat diplomacy allowed the Vatican to erect itself as the leader of the Catholic world, and it increased its ability to shape public and private life, in domains as varied as education and family law. The Vatican's enterprise matters because it contributed to the rise of a religious third-way politics that was conditionally aligned with Europe's new right-wing political factions, and opposed to liberalism and communism. Additionally, the Vatican's actions furthered ideals of religious homogeneity under the state, over and against the League regime of minority rights protections, and communist attempts to diminish the power of religion in public and private affairs.

Finally, concordat diplomacy matters because it gave the Vatican the freedom to lead (and in some cases, create and expand) the organs of Catholic associational life, which were open to children and adults, and men and women, from a range of social classes. Indeed, the pursuit of concordats and the expansion of Vatican influence through Catholic associational life went hand in hand. Both projects showed that the Vatican could work with European states, all the while maintaining (and broadcasting) its new position of power in European affairs.

## Chapter Three

### *Civil Society Comes Into View, 1922-1933*

*The problem: [...] the existence of the masses, [and] the creation of the sober, moral, decency that we had, and lost in the war. [...] The method: only the "club" in the American sense [...] Other means I do not know, as authoritarian means [...] have completely failed -- except in the form of the Church.*  
-- Max Weber, 1918<sup>1</sup>

*The teachings and ministry of the Church aim to [...] call back civil society to ways conformable to the spirit of Christ, which at one time all followed.*  
-- Pope Pius XI, 1923<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

The Vatican did not signal its decision to make peace with the nation-state through concordat diplomacy alone. It also did so through the centralization and mobilization of Catholic associational life. Doing so allowed the Vatican to show its willingness to disown Christian Democratic political movements in order to partner with emerging forces more willing to accept the joint sovereignty model. The expansion of the Vatican in the realm of associational life would also show the Vatican's power in social affairs, and provide it with bargaining power in its

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<sup>1</sup> "Solange so massive technische und ökonomische Probleme den Kopf gefangennehmen, wie das jetzt der Fall ist und sein wird -- es handelt sich um die nackte Existenz der Massen --, kommt man zu den Kulturproblemen innerlich nicht recht. Auch von diesen steht die Arbeit an der Herstellung jener ganz nüchternen moralischen 'Anständigkeit,' die wir -- im grossen gesehen -- hatten, und die wir im Krieg *verloren* haben -- der schwerste Kriegsverlust -- durchaus obenan. Also ganz massive Erziehungsfragen. Mittel: nur das amerikanische Klubwesen, *einerlei* zu welchem Zweck: Ansätze dazu finden sich bei der 'Freideutschen Jugend.' Andere Mittel kenne ich nicht, da das Autoritäre -- dem ich ganz vorurteilslos gegenüberstehe -- jetzt völlig versagt, ausser in Form der *Kirche*." Letter of Max Weber to Friedrich Crusius, Frankfurt, 24 November 1918. As reprinted in *Max Weber: Werk und Person*, ed. Eduard Baumgarten (Tübingen: Paul Siebeck, 1964), 536-7.

<sup>2</sup> Pius XI, *Rerum Omnium Perturbationem* (January 26, 1923), §1. All citations in English are drawn from the Holy See's official translation of the encyclical. *Encyclicals--Pius XI--The Holy See -The Holy Father*, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_26011923\\_rerum-omnium-perturbationem\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_26011923_rerum-omnium-perturbationem_en.html)>. Last accessed 2 July 2012.

relations with its European allies. Thus, the Vatican's cotemporaneous pursuit of concordat diplomacy and associational culture went hand in hand: the first provided the Vatican with the sanction of Europe's politicians and the promise of protection against liberal and communist internationalism; the second, a way to pressure European citizens -- and European states -- to grant the Vatican influence. Without the Vatican's integration of associational culture, its expansion of its influence in Europe and its creation of defensive strategies for maintaining that influence would have been incomplete.

In the years following World War I, the Vatican sought to respond to new forms of civil religiosity by centralizing a vast array of European Catholic organizations. During the *fin-de-siècle*, the rise in literacy rates and new communication and transportation technologies had facilitated the burgeoning of new forms of civil religiosity across Europe and the Americas.<sup>3</sup> However, as new scholarship has shown, many of these movements had been aligned with emergent bourgeois nationalist states against the Vatican. For instance, during the Risorgimento many Catholic movements and symbolic repertoires (e.g., the idea of martyrdom) played a crucial role in shaping ideas of nationality, as new varieties of civil religion challenged the more traditional Catholic forms with which the Vatican was familiar.<sup>4</sup> Similar movements sprung up during the Great War. For though World War I interrupted the culture wars that had pitted anti-clerical factions against the Catholic Church for the better part of forty years, it

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of the explosion of civil society activism in the late nineteenth century, which however ignores the important question of hegemony, see Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), chs.1-2. Also see the classic Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

<sup>4</sup> See Simon Levis Sullam, "'Dio e il Popolo': la rivoluzione religiosa di Giuseppe Mazzini," Enrico Francia, "'Il nuovo Cesare è la patria': clero e religione nel lungo Quarantotto italiano," and Daniele Menozzi, "I gesuiti, Pio IX e la nazione italiana," all in *Storia D'Italia: Il Risorgimento*, eds. Alberto Mario Banti and Paul Ginsborg, vol. 22 of *Storia d'Italia: annali* (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1007), 401-422; 423-51; 451-181; Lucy Riall, "Martyr Cults in Nineteenth-Century Italy," *Journal of Modern History* 82, 2 (2010): 255-87; Roberto Balzani, "Alla ricerca della morte 'utile': il sacrificio patriottico nel Risorgimento," in *La morte per la patria: la celebrazione dei caduti dal Risorgimento alla Repubblica*, eds. Oliver Janz and Lutz Klinkhammer (Rome: Donzelli, 2008), 3-22; Giovanni Vian, "Chiesa, cattolici e costruzione dello Stato," in *Fare l'Italia: unità e disunità nel Risorgimento* (Turin: UTET, 2008), 233-45. For a useful overview, see Maurizio Isabella, "Review Article: Rethinking Italy's Nation-Building 150 Afterwards: The New Risorgimento Historiography," *Past and Present* 217, 1 (2012): 247-68.

simultaneously spawned a new kind of civil religion that risked undermining the Vatican's central authority. From the earliest weeks of war, lay Catholics and clergy members signed up to defend their nation-states, and normally anti-clerical state leaders welcomed their assistance. Soon, the Central Powers invoked God against the Allies, and the Allies did likewise, summoning a rhetorical *union sacrée*, based on a shared *foi patriotique*. Hybrid nationalist-religious frameworks imbued events with meaning, as armies of dead and wounded were beatified as martyrs and endowed with Christ's power to save humanity through self-immolation. Poets sang of the war as cleansing the continent of sin; mothers, with state support, did the same. Young women and men were venerated as saints possessing miraculous powers to end the fighting and alleviate pain.<sup>5</sup>

The Vatican's centralization of Catholic associational life after World War I not only constituted a reply to the civil religiosity that had sprung up independent of the Pope over the previous fifty years; it also sought to provide an alternative to those associations which -- it was thought -- directly sought to undermine the Pope's authority. These included a variety of socialist organizations, as well as the Communist International, or Comintern (founded in 1919), and the network of organizations active after World War I, keen on exporting the so-called

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<sup>5</sup> The notion of a "union sacrée" based on a shared "foi patriotique" was initially proposed by the French President Raymond Poincaré in a message of August 1914 to the French national assembly. Recent scholarship on the fusion of religiosity and patriotism during the war includes James F. Byrnes, *Catholic and French Forever: Religious and National Identity in Modern France* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), part III; Stephen Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism: Mystic Modernism in Postwar Paris, 1919-1933* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), esp. ch.2; Annette Becker, *War and Faith: Religious Imagination in France, 1914-1930* (New York: Berg, 1998); James F. McMillan, "French Catholics, *Rumeurs Infames* and the *Union Sacrée*, 1914-1918," in *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War*, eds. Frans Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin Coetzee (New York: Berghahn Books, 1995), 113-32; Raymond Jonas, *The Tragic Tale of Claire Ferchaud and the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Claudia Schlager, *Kult und Krieg: Herz Jesu, Sacré Coeur, Christus Rex im deutsch-französischen Vergleich, 1914-1925* (Tübingen: Tübingen Vereinigung für Volkskunde, 2011); Carlo Staccioli, *L'anima religiosa della Grande Guerra: testimonianze popolari tra fede e superstizione* (Rome: Aracne, 2009); Sergio Luzzatto, *Padre Pio: Miracles and Politics in a Secular Age*, trans. Frederika Randall (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010); and Suzanne Evans, *Mothers of Heroes, Mothers of Martyrs: World War I and the Politics of Grief* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007).

American way of life, via Protestant missionary activity, Freemasonry, or Rotary International.<sup>6</sup> Worrisome as well were Christian Democratic organizations, which sought to exercise their independence from the Pope and which in countries like Italy and Germany risked undermining the Vatican's concordat negotiations with rival political factions.

For the sake of clarity and to signal in summary form some of my core theses about the function of the Vatican's associational culture, I will refer to the Vatican's attempt to seize control of Catholic associational life as the struggle for "civil society." I use the term civil society to signal a cultural space that is formally independent from the state, and which constitutes a way to maintain social order without the use of force. Following Antonio Gramsci, I suggest that within civil society, groups exercise hegemony -- i.e., they take part in dynamic process that aim to build consent, by representing their narrow interests as universal ones, and attempting to exclude threatening visions and discourses.<sup>7</sup> As compared to others groups, the Vatican's capture of civil society built on religiosity, rather than what Gramsci and others understood as organized professional or class interests. I argue that since the Vatican did not have access after 1870 to an army with any real power, the capture of civil society became an all the more important undertaking, which showed European states the Vatican's potential influence over

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<sup>6</sup> On the spread of Protestant missionary activity in Europe after the Great War, see R. Laurence Moore, "American Religion as Cultural Imperialism," in *The American Century in Europe*, eds. R. Laurence Moore and Maurizio Vadagna (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 151-71. On Freemasonry, see *Freemasonry on Both Sides of the Atlantic: Essays Concerning the Craft in the British Isles, Europe, the United States, and Mexico*, eds. R. William Weisberger, Wallace McLeod and S. Brent Morris (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). On Rotary International, see Victoria De Grazia, "The Service Ethic: How Bourgeois Men Made Peace with Babbitry," in *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 15-74.

<sup>7</sup> See Antonio Gramsci, *Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura* (Turin: Einaudi, 1949); and of course *Quaderni del carcere*, ed. Valentino Gerratana, 4 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1975). A selection of Gramsci's texts on civil society and hegemony have been reprinted in English, in *The Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings, 1916-1935*, ed. David Forgacs (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 189-222; and *Civil Society Reader*, eds. Virginia A. Hodgkinson and Michael W. Foley (Hanover: University Press of New England for Tufts University, 2003), 190-203. Of course, neither the term hegemony (perhaps first used by Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*) nor the phrase "civil society" is exclusive to Gramsci. On how the Fascist regime built an (imperfect) "culture of consent" through similar instruments in these same years, see Victoria De Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

public opinion. Further, though Catholic civil society structures could, at times, curb the secular state, they more often worked in partnership with it; in this way, they did not represent the critical challenge to sovereign power that scholars have recently argued is typical of civil society structures.<sup>8</sup>

The period immediately following World War I marked the first concerted Vatican effort to capture civil society, and make it impermeable to potentially dangerous influences. Small wonder that the first Pope to strongly encourage the move was Achille Ratti, the father of concordat diplomacy in Eastern Europe, who in 1922 had left his post as Archbishop of Milan to become Pope Pius XI. By this point, concordat diplomacy was well on its ways towards helping the Vatican reconfigure Church-state relations in Europe and forge connections with the anti-communist and anti-liberal leaders of many of these states. But as early objectors to concordat diplomacy noted, concordats risked making the Vatican overly dependent on the maintenance in power of rulers of the moment, binding them closely to the whims of human politics, and potentially compromising the institution's universalist message. Unhappy with the concordat turn, a prominent Vatican official noted in a 1921 letter to a fellow cleric that "a prevalence of too much politics, worldly diplomacy and intrigue" was "hardly in keeping with the lofty ideals of our mission, nor profitable to the best interests of God and his Church." Indeed, "at a time when the world has lost its bearings," he concluded, "we should not drift ourselves, or appear to juggle with principles."<sup>9</sup>

Even supporters of concordat diplomacy agreed that the Vatican's over-dependence on cultivating closed-door agreements with politicians might, in the long run, jeopardize its

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<sup>8</sup> The notion of civil society as that which can challenge the state is articulated by Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992). For recent attempts to apply this model of civil society to the color revolutions, see Valerie Bunch and Sharon Wolchik, *Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Postcommunist Countries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), and Andrew Wilson, *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> Merry Del Val to Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, November 1921. As cited in Gerald Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870 to 1965* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1982), 219.

relations with the citizens of those states, and with a powerfully resurgent transnational associational culture. As Achille Ratti personally informed the Vatican Secretary of State Gasparri in 1921, "In many countries there are marvelous [Catholic] works and associations, regarding science, instruction, the social question, charity, press and propaganda." The Vatican would do well to attempt to "unite these various organizations," into a global force capable of "promoting mutually favorable international actions, wherever the community of Catholic interests requires them." It was urgent for the Vatican to act, for "any observer" saw clearly that the postwar order was not simply a world of states; it was also characterized by the remarkable "growth of the movement across the whole world of a push towards universal union." If the Vatican ignored the rise of what I am here calling civil society, it risked being left behind the times. Thus, Ratti concluded, cultivating and uniting Catholic civil society constituted "clearly a highly worthy and necessary goal."<sup>10</sup> The insight was very Wilsonian; after all, in these same years the American president was encouraging several organizations in his own country to work together, and take advantage of new technologies to travel widely and spread a supposedly unique American culture of freedom, prosperity and democratic values.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the Vatican increasingly realized that turning to civil society -- and cultivating a transnational community of its own -- was a necessary move.

During the early years of Pius XI's papacy, the awareness of the need to discipline Catholic lay organizations took the name "Catholic Action." Prior to Pius XI, the phrase Catholic

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<sup>10</sup> "Chiunque consideri attentamente il movimento che ogni giorno più si va intensificando nel mondo intero a favore d'una unione universale, non può dubitare un istante che i cattolici, essi pure, abbiano interesse di valersi di questa incomparabile forza. La religione e la morale fanno sì ch'essi si sentano strettamente uniti in seno alla loro Chiesa una e universale; ma tuttavia, quantunque esistano in molti paesi opere e associazioni meravigliose nei riguardi della scienza e dell'insegnamento, delle questioni sociali propriamente dette, della carità sociale, della stampa e della propaganda, esse sono in massima parte, disgiunte e separate. Creare un'unione delle diverse organizzazioni [...] nell'intento di promuovere di comune accordo un'azione internazionale, ove la comunità degli interessi cattolici lo richieda, appare fine sì elevato e d'una evidenza tale che s'impone senz'altro nei tempi che corrono." Letter of Achille Ratti, Archbishop of Milan, to Pietro Gasparri, "Regolamento provvisorio dell'Ufficio centrale," 1 March 1921. ASV, AES Stati Ecclesiastici (quarto periodo), 1922-1934, pos.293 P.O., fasc.19, ff.17.

<sup>11</sup> Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 236, 238, 298, and passim.

action (and "the action of Catholics") had been used rather loosely to refer to Catholic lay activism on the Italian peninsula, and from 1904-5, Pius X had begun using the phrase as shorthand for four pre-existing lay organizations in Italy, whose strong Ultramontanist stood in sharp contrast to the Christian Democratic movements which were taking shape, and viewed as suspect by large swaths of Vatican officialdom. Indeed, Pius X had turned to these organizations in the same year he was under pressure to lift the *non expedit* ban, which allowed Catholics to participate in electoral politics.<sup>12</sup>

In 1922, Pius XI further extended Pius X's early attempts to exert Vatican control over Catholic lay activism, and during the years between 1922 and 1939, the integration of civil society into Catholic Action became a privileged strategy. In 1922, Pius XI encouraged Vatican officials to draft the statutes of the new "Catholic Action," which would henceforth apply to only six organizations (three male, and three female), all of which would have clerics, rather than laypeople, in the highest positions of leadership. Its six organizations aimed to follow children, youth, and adults "from the cradle to the grave," by providing them with a range of after-school and after-work activities capable of communicating the Vatican's hegemonic project. Increasingly, Catholic Action helped the Vatican cultivate a loyal body of subjects, which was committed to a project of total Catholic reconquest of society, via the creation of a greater union between Church and state.

The Vatican's activism in civil society, for all its universalist claims, crucially never sought to overturn or eliminate other states.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Catholic Action had a direct stake in protecting the status quo. This was because Catholic Action enjoyed early success in the 1920s and 1930s precisely thanks to its protection by individual concordats. These concordats enabled the organization to maintain sites of association, publish an impressive number of pamphlets

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<sup>12</sup> For Pope Pius X's first extended discussion of Catholic action, see *Il fermo proposito* (June 11, 1905), §2; §8; §11-2.

<sup>13</sup> In this sense, Catholic Action mirrored many American transnational civil society organizations, which were also very respectful and protective of the state system. I thank Victoria De Grazia for this insight.



and newspapers, and hold public, and quite visible, demonstrations. Just as concordats granted the Vatican extensive privileges in exchange for support of the constituted political forces, Catholic Action was allowed to grow on the condition that it not undermine the ruling political class. Thus, though its universalist ambitions sometimes brought it into conflict with ruling forces, Catholic Action could only succeed in virtue of concordat diplomacy, and was able to stay afloat by fighting to protect concordat gains. This meant that the line between the state's imposition of hegemony via civil society and the Vatican's parallel project was in some cases difficult to perceive. After all, the state had sought the Vatican's allegiance not least because it was aware of its command of a portion of civil society. As Gramsci had himself noted in the 1930s, as he tried to work out the transformations in Italian society from prison, it seemed that the Fascists had "joined with the Church to better maintain their monopoly [on power], through the support of that sector of civil society represented by the Church."<sup>14</sup> But a condition of that allegiance had precisely been that the Vatican's civil society structures not undermine the core ideological and institutional commitments of the state.

In this chapter, I limit myself to providing some essential background on Catholic Action. To that end, I will perform a close reading of Pius XI's first text presenting Vatican-led lay associations as capable of protecting the world against liberal democracies and international communism, all the while strengthening Vatican claims to influence in the European state system. Then, I analyze the contents of the Vatican's new statutes regulating Catholic civil society, which invented Catholic Action as an intellectual construct and really existing social force. Following this, I focus on the Pope's creation of the Feast of Christ the King, and how this Feast sought to translate a certain theory of civil society into practice. Finally, I highlight the internationalization of Catholic Action in the 1920s and early 1930s, to show how the expansion

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<sup>14</sup> "...la Chiesa è diventata una parte integrante dello stato, della società politica monopolizzata da un determinato gruppo privilegiato che si aggrega alla Chiesa per sostenere meglio il suo monopolio col sostegno di quella zona di società civile rappresentata dalla Chiesa)." Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, vol.2, Quaderno 6 (1930-2), §81. Gramsci's passage applies exclusively to Italy, but I think his insight has broad relevance for every state with which the Vatican concluded a concordat.

of Catholic civil society both strengthened Vatican relations with European allies and pressured them into expanding the Vatican's influence at home and abroad.

### 1. The Origins of Catholic Action

The birth of Catholic Action in the early 1920s was announced in three important documents issued by the Vatican. The first two were encyclicals, or circular letters to the faithful. The third was the text of the 1923 statutes of Catholic Action, which outlined the precise form that the new organization would take. Together, these three texts presented the notion that the conquest of civil society through Catholic Action would be a powerful way to expand Vatican influence, make the Vatican attractive to European states, and centralize authority, by casting a Vatican-mandated Catholic Action as the only valid form of Catholic associational life.

Pius XI issued his first defense of Catholic Action in his very first encyclical, published a scant two months after Mussolini's seizure of power, in December of 1922. To date, scholars who have analyzed *Ubi arcano* have noted that the text aims to underscore the antithesis between secularism and the Catholic Church, and provide a series of practical recommendations for bringing Catholicism into daily life.<sup>15</sup> Others have emphasized how the text displays Pius XI's presumed sympathies with authoritarianism writ large, and with the Fascist state in particular.<sup>16</sup> Though both of these interpretations are plausible, the first is overly vague, and the second overly narrow. Both miss the central point of the encyclical, which was to announce to Mussolini

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<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., Carlo Falconi, *I Papi del ventesimo secolo* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1967), 219; Idem, *Le silence de Pie XII, 1939-1945* (Munich: Éditions du Rocher, 1965), 8; Roger Aubert, "L'insegnamento dottrinale di Pio XI," in *Pio XI nel trentesimo della morte (1939-1969): raccolta di studi e di memorie*, ed. Carlo Colombo et al. (Milan: Opera diocesana per la preservazione e diffusione della fede, 1969), 224ff.

<sup>16</sup> See, e.g., Fabrice Bouthillon, *La naissance de la mardité: une théologie politique à l'âge totalitaire* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2001), 49ff; Gerd-Rainer Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology: The First Wave (1924-1959)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 56-8; Oscar L. Arnal, *Ambivalent Alliance: The Catholic Church and Action Française, 1899-1939* (Pittsburg, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985), 118-120; and Alan Paul Fimister, *Robert Schuman: Neo-Scholastic Humanism and the Reunification of Europe* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008), 116-7.

and other European powers that the Vatican's civil society could be a useful tool in the fight against Wilsonian and Leninist settlements. Indeed, Pius XI's encyclical, *Ubi arcano Dei consilio*, was a weapon of statesmanship explicitly directed to both the city of Rome and the world (*urbi et orbi*). It suggested that the United States and the Soviet Union were the cause of continued social and political strife in the aftermath of war. Instead of turning to either of these powers, Pius suggested, European states must turn to the Vatican. Further, true peace depended on the double restoration of the Vatican in European society via concordat diplomacy and through a powerfully centralized Catholic civil society.

Imitating similar statements issued by Pope Benedict, the encyclical began by denouncing Versailles' failure to bring about "true peace," by pointing to the presumed postwar proliferation of obscene and lawless behavior, the high frequency of "famine and epidemics," and, worst of all, the rise of a "restless spirit of revolt" (i.e., left-wing revolution) which continually kept alive the "threat of war." If the world order was not reoriented, this state of affairs, the text warned, would lead society to "lapse back slowly but surely into a state of barbarism."<sup>17</sup>

The encyclical then outlined its simple solution to this chaotic state of affairs: the recognition of the Vatican as a privileged partner of European states. As the text argued, the Vatican was the sole institution up to the task because of its divine constitution, its national and supranational identity, and its unique ability to protect civilization writ large. "There exists an institution," the encyclical proclaimed, "able to safeguard the sanctity of the law of nations [...]" Such an institution is the Church of Christ and [it] is divinely commissioned to lead mankind." Celebrating the Vatican's new acceptance of a legal regime of shared sovereignty (inaugurated by concordat diplomacy), the text further asserted: "This institution is a part of every nation; at the

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<sup>17</sup> Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* (23 December 1922), §7; §10-15. All citations in English are drawn from the Holy See's official translation of the encyclical. *Encyclicals--Pius XI--The Holy See -The Holy Father*, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_23121922\\_ubi-arcano-dei-consilio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_23121922_ubi-arcano-dei-consilio_en.html)>. Last accessed 2 July 2012.

same time, it is above all nations."<sup>18</sup> Picking up on the language of international relations, the Pope thus announced the Vatican to be the only entity capable of protecting the "law of nations" -- that is, that psychodiplomatic construct presumably held together by a system of rationally derived rules, established by the "civilized nations" of the world.<sup>19</sup>

The Vatican was ideally suited to the task of partnering with European states and salvaging "civilization" because it was an absolute monarchy, capable of countering destabilizing Wilsonian-inspired democracies. As the encyclical suggested, only "kings" and "kingdoms," which the text mentioned on twenty-four occasions, were capable of bringing about peace; parliamentary deputies and democracies were not. "Contests between political parties beget threats of popular action and, at times, eventuate in open rebellion," the encyclical noted, showing how Wilsonian democracy could actually result in left-wing unrest. Thus, "our modern democratic states" were the ones "most exposed to the danger of being overthrown by one faction or another."<sup>20</sup> Democracy was unstable, dangerous, and divisive, and an important reason for the bankruptcy of the Wilsonian Versailles settlement. Only absolute monarchies in general -- and the Vatican in particular -- could remedy the damage done.

The encyclical went out to specify that the monarchic institution of the Vatican could solve the problem of postwar disorder only with support from the wider world. As Pius XI announced in 1922, the Vatican must be recognized as a legitimate player in international affairs by being encouraged to pursue concordat diplomacy, and -- despite its failure to take part in the

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., §46.

<sup>19</sup> This definition of the "law of nations" is drawn from Sir William Blackstone, "Of Offenses against the Law of Nations," in *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1765-1769), book 4, ch. 5. The word "psychodiplomatic" is borrowed from Arno Mayer, *Wilson vs. Lenin*, 368. On the implications of issuing universalistic and self-aggrandizing pronouncements on behalf of "civilized nations" (also referred to in interwar documents as "the society of nations" and "all civilized peoples"), see Mark Mazower, "The End of Civilization and the Rise of Human Rights: The Mid-Twentieth-Century Disjuncture," in *Human Rights and the Twentieth Century*, ed. Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 29-45; and Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

<sup>20</sup> Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano*, §12; §48.

Paris Peace Conference -- by being invited to play an active role in the League of Nations.<sup>21</sup> Without the Vatican's assistance, the text proclaimed, "no merely human institution of today can be successful in devising a set of international laws which will be in harmony with world conditions." In a playful turn of phrase, the text noted that only men of "the Middle Ages were in possession of that true League of Nations, Christianity." Second, the encyclical affirmed, the Vatican could guarantee "true peace" only if it was granted the freedom to integrate and organize civil society. Of late, the text explained, the Vatican had become "intensely interested" in "that whole group of movements, organizations, and works [...] which passes under the name of 'Catholic Action.'" Making reference to Luigi Sturzo and the claims to independence of Christian Democracy, the encyclical asked priests around the world to emphasize the importance of the laity's partnership with the ecclesiastical hierarchy, over and against divisive Christian democratic movements that had encouraged lay independence from the hierarchy. "Tell your faithful children of the laity," the encyclical urged its clerical readers, "that when they are united with their pastors and their bishops, [Catholics] participate in the work of the apostolate" and as such become "more than ever a 'chosen generation, a Kingly priesthood,' a holy nation." The Vatican had the right and duty to control lay Catholics because they were by definition "subjects" of the Pope-king, and "those who are subjects," the encyclical explained, have the "duty to obey."<sup>22</sup>

Speaking in one breath to state leaders, clergymen, and lay Catholics the world around, *Ubi arcano Dei* proclaimed that the Pope had a solution to the Versailles settlement and to the proliferation of left-wing unrest. This solution was the Vatican itself; an institution which not only contained significant legal-practical expertise, but also mobilized large numbers of individuals around the world.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., §13; §29; §30; §46; §48; §67-7. In fact, the Vatican would be let in through the back door, so to speak, as it joined organizations like the ILO. For a broader discussion, see section four of Chapter Two.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., §45; §48; §54; §58.

## 2. Centralizing Catholic Associations and Purging Democratic Forces

In December of 1922, as *Ubi arcano Dei* was being issued to the public, the Vatican initiated its practical reinvention of Catholic lay activism on the Italian peninsula through the rewriting of Catholic Action's core statutes. The statutes aimed to put the Vatican at the head of Catholic civil society, and counter alternative forms of civil religiosity. But the reform also had a secondary aim: to show Mussolini the Pope's willingness to partner with the Fascist movement and distance the Vatican from the Italian Christian Democratic (Popular) Party, by diminishing its power in civil society.

Working with Pietro Gasparri's assistance, Pius XI began by creating a Catholic Action national executive body, the Central Committee (*Giunta Centrale*), to which a series of top-ranking Vatican officials were promptly appointed. Pius XI gave Monsignor Giuseppe Pizzardo, a new functionary who had served in the Vatican Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs and in its Secretariat of State, the leading position, as General Ecclesiastical Assistant.<sup>23</sup> Neither he nor any of the other officials the Pope chose for the Central Committee had sympathy for the Italian Popular Party, nor did any of the lay Catholics the Pope appointed as national body presidents. Most, like Ratti, nursed a general suspicion not only about the Italian Christian Democratic movement, but also about democracy writ large.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> For more on Giuseppe Pizzardo's background and contribution to Catholic Action, see Giuliana Chamedes, "Il Cardinal Pizzardo e l'internazionalizzazione dell'Azione Cattolica," in *Gouvernement pontifical sous Pie XI*, ed. Laura Pettinaroli (Rome: École française de Rome, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> In addition to Pizzardo, other Central Committee members suspicious of the PPI included the Secretary-General under Pizzardo, Monsignor Fernando Roveda, and lay presidents Luigi Civardi, Maria Rimoldi, and Armida Barelli. One of the first actions taken by the newly constituted Central Committee was to compile an extensive report on how Catholic activism was being undermined by the existence of the Popular Party. See Mario Casella, "Per una storia dei rapporti tra Azione Cattolica e fascismo nell'età di Pio XI. Indagine nell'Archivio dell'Azione Cattolica Italia," in *Chiesa, Azione cattolica e fascismo nell'Italia settentrionale durante il pontificato di Pio XI*, ed. Paolo Pecorari (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1979), 1200-26, and Francesco Traniello, *Religione cattolica e stato nazionale, dal Risorgimento al secondo dopoguerra* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007), 230ff.

On September 1923, Pius XI issued Catholic Action's new statutes -- perhaps, not incidentally, soon after Mussolini rescued the Vatican's Bank of Rome from financial difficulties. From this point on, "Catholic Action" became the name for the only accepted form of Catholic lay activism on the Italian peninsula. This "Catholic Action," the reform announced, should not entangle itself with politics, in the sense that it should not serve as the backbone of any specific (read, Christian Democratic) political party. It should be bound tightly to the Pope and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and it should be required as mandatory of all lay Catholics, regardless of age, sex, or social class.<sup>25</sup>

The 1923 statutes announced that henceforth, "Catholic Action" would refer exclusively to six major organizations placed under the direct oversight of a Vatican-appointed cleric.<sup>26</sup> The first was a youth organization, which would concern itself primarily with socialization to the faith. The second was an organization for university students, which would busy itself with drafting theoretical alternatives to leading rival worldviews. The third branch of Catholic Action, an adult organization, would be concerned with protecting Vatican gains and expanding the reach of Catholic worldviews in the workplace, in state legislation, and in family life. Each of the three branches would have independent male and female groups.<sup>27</sup>

To ensure that Catholic Action's activities conformed with papal priorities, the reform placed a Vatican official at the pinnacle of the structure, as the leader of Central Committee. The statute specified in articles 7 through 17 and 37 through 40 that the Central Committee would be the "directive and coordinating organ of all action," and be recognized as the "representative of

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<sup>25</sup> See "Statuto dell'Azione Cattolica Italiana del 1923," article 6, as reprinted in *Gli Statuti dell'Azione Cattolica Italiana*, ed. Ernesto Preziosi (Rome: AVE, 2003), 137-51, here 138.

<sup>26</sup> The three male organizations were the Federazione Italiana degli Uomini Cattolici, the Società della Gioventù Cattolica Italia and the Federazione Universitaria Cattolica Italiana, while the three female organizations were the Unione fra le Donne Cattoliche d'Italia, the Gioventù Femminile Cattolica Italiana, and the Universitarie Cattoliche Italiane.

<sup>27</sup> "[I] problemi che toccano i cattolici appartenenti a più organizzazioni [sono] il decoro del culto, manifestazioni religiose pubbliche, difesa della scuola cristiana, propagazione della fede, difesa della pubblica moralità, osservanza del precetto festivo, lotta contro la bestemmia e il turpiloquio, ecc." *Ibid.*, 144.

the collective of organized Italian Catholics." In addition to providing Catholic Action with its "rules," and "monitoring the functioning of all institutions," the Central Committee would also make sure that local clerics were implementing the organization, by "promoting Catholic Action where and when necessary."<sup>28</sup> To be an active member of Catholic Action, individuals would have to purchase a membership card, at a price to be established by the Central Committee.<sup>29</sup>

In explaining the 1923 statutes, Pius XI innovatively defined Catholic Action as the "collaboration of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy." The phrase was a nod to an increasingly popular ecclesiology, according to which the Church was a community of faithful, in which clergy and laypeople had shared roles in the dissemination of the faith.<sup>30</sup> However, despite the claims of interwar theologians and current-day scholars keen on establishing a straight line to Vatican II, Catholic Action did not defend the equality of the laity and the hierarchy.<sup>31</sup> Rather, the 1923 statutes and the speeches and texts explaining them made clear the subordinate nature of the laity to the hierarchy. As Pietro Gasparri explained shortly before the statutes were published, the reform would make the laity the "practical executors" of the

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<sup>28</sup> "La Giunta Centrale è l'organo direttivo e coordinatore di tutta l'azione: essa ne esamina i problemi generali, ne studia le soluzioni e impartisce le norme alle organizzazioni, affinché provvedano alla loro attuazione; invigila sul funzionamento di tutte le istituzioni, che operano nell'orbita dell'Azione Cattolica, cura il coordinamento della loro operosità per il migliore raggiungimento dei fini comuni; promuove l'Azione Cattolica dove e come occorra; rappresenta la collettività dei cattolici italiani organizzati." Ibid., 138. The Central Committee is discussed in articles 7 through 17, pp.138-143.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., arts. 6 and 16, pp. 138, 143.

<sup>30</sup> The German Catholic theologian Karl Adam was central to reviving the ecclesiology emphasizing the communitarian nature of the Church. See idem, *Das Wesen des Katholizismus* (Düsseldorf: L.Schwann, 1924). In the same vein, see Sidoine Hurtevent, *L'unité de l'Eglise du Christ* (Paris: Bonne presse, 1930); Yves Congar, *Chrétiens désunis. Principes d'un 'oecuménisme' catholique* (Paris: Cerf, 1937); and J. A. Möhler, *L'unité dans l'Eglise ou le principe du Catholicisme d'après l'esprit des Pères des trois premiers siècles de l'Église* (Paris: Cerf, 1938).

<sup>31</sup> Theologians claiming that Catholic Action embodied the "communitarian" vision of the Church included Paul Dabin, *L'Action Catholique. Essai de synthèse* (Paris: Imp. La Démocratie, 1930); Idem, *L'Apostolat laïque* (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1931); Josef Will, *Die Katholische Aktion. Biblische und dogmatische Grundlagen* (München: Verlag der Salesianer, 1931); and Rudolf Graber, *Die dogmatischen Grundlagen der katholischen Aktion* (Augsburg: Haas und Grabherr, 1932). Though neither the Pope himself nor Vatican theologians explicitly defended this view, which theoretically stood in sharp contrast to perfect-society ecclesiology, many scholars today align themselves with this position.



hierarchy's directives, thus making the laity "entirely dependent on the ecclesiastical hierarchy."<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the 1923 statutes specified that the Ecclesiastical Assistant was the most important member of the Central Committee, insofar as he was the Pope's official liaison, and his spokesperson for all matters concerning the organization. As such, he had final say regarding the priorities of all Catholic Action organizations across the peninsula. As the organization's first Ecclesiastical Assistant personally clarified, "The Ecclesiastical Assistant is and must be the soul of the organization, the driving force behind its good initiatives, the source of zealousness and the shaper of consciences."<sup>33</sup> If lay Catholic members of the organization ever tried to operate independently from the hierarchy and from the Ecclesiastical Assistant, Monsignor Pizzardo threatened, they would shrivel up, like a plant ripped from its roots.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to binding the laity tightly to the Church hierarchy, and through them to Vatican power, the 1923 statutes also tried to discourage Catholics from activism with the Italian Popular Party. In July of 1923 --well aware of Mussolini's dislike of the Italian Popular Party, and worried that it was effectively diminishing the central hierarchy's power - Pius XI asked Luigi Sturzo to step down from his leadership position, and subsequently repeatedly highlighted the "non-party" affiliation of Catholic Action.<sup>35</sup> The two actions together effectively spelled the

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<sup>32</sup> "[L'Azione Cattolica sarebbe] esecutrice nell'ordine pratico [delle direttive della gerarchia]... [e] del tutto dipendente dall'Autorità ecclesiastica." Letter of Pietro Gasparri to the Bishops of Italy, 2 October 1922. As reprinted in *Pio XI e l'azione cattolica: documenti relativi a 'l'Azione cattolica'*, ed. Alfredo Maria Cavagna (Rome: Via dei Cestari, 1929), 333ff.

<sup>33</sup> "...nell'esercizio della sua normale funzione di Assistente è e dev'essere in realtà l'*anima* della sua associazione, il propulsore delle buone iniziative, la fonte dello zelo, il formatore delle coscienze." Giuseppe Pizzardo, "L'Azione Cattolica e le sue direttive: Discorso di Sua Eccellenza Mons. Pizzardo," *Bu* (1 October 1930), 680.

<sup>34</sup> Mons. Giuseppe Pizzardo, *L'Azione Cattolica: Discorso al Congresso dell'Unione Internazionale delle Leghe Femminili*, Rome, 22 May 1930 (Rome: Giunta Centrale dell'Azione Cattolica Italiana, 1930), 8.

<sup>35</sup> The measures were most likely also influenced by the recent rise in tensions between Ultramontanist Catholic organizations in Milan privileging "religious, moral and cultural" matters, and those busy with "party politics" -- that is, with campaigning for the Italian Popular Party. Milan, where the Pope maintained his most active contacts, was the site of some of the most bitter debates between PPI partisans and their Ultramontanist opponents. In July of 1922, a Catholic commentator noted that, "Catholic organizations have in many places been ignored and devalued because their members have passed to political party activity, have become members of a political party [...] have lost interest in their former

death of Italy's first Christian Democratic experiment, as Catholics and non-Catholics of the time were quick to conclude.<sup>36</sup>

As Secretary of State Pietro Gasparri noted in a speech clarifying the content of the reforms, Catholic Action would become "not political, but religious."<sup>37</sup> And approximately one month after announcing the new statutes, Pius XI further clarified in a speech to Catholic Action members that because party politics was divisive and unproductive, the new Catholic Action "does not do politics" in the traditional sense of the term. This did not mean, however, that the Catholic laity should not be concerned with political matters. To the contrary, Catholic Action must do "everything that is necessary to do politics well, that is, it must educate and prepare youth." This education should concern both "spiritual and material realities," and be "moral, intellectual, cultural, and social." Catholic Action, if properly understood, would effectively prepare Catholics to act on their manifold "political rights and duties." Making himself more explicit, the Pope asserted: "Yes, we want to resolve all of the problems in life, those of private life and those of public life, those of civic life and those of political life." In virtue of their "faithful observation of the laws of God," Catholic Action's members would thus be capable of not only "solv[ing] political problems," but doing so "in the best possible way."<sup>38</sup> To do so, they would pledge their allegiance to the Fascist state -- not to Christian Democracy.

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activities, and have placed in second or last place religious, moral, cultural and educational matters." (*Le organizzazioni cattoliche si sono trovate in parecchi luoghi trascurate, svalutate, perché i loro soci, passati al partito politico, si sono disinteressati alle antiche attività...[e] hanno messo in seconda o in ultima linea la formazione religiosa, morale e culturale.*) Ulisse Pucci, "L'organizzazione cattolica e il partito politico in Italia," *Vita e Pensiero* (July 1922): 419-20. On the contrast between PPI and Ultramontanist groups in Milan, see Giorgio Vecchio, *I cattolici milanesi e la politica: l'esperienza del Partito popolare, 1919-1926* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1982), 326ff.

<sup>36</sup> For more on the Popular Party reaction to these measures, and the institutional Church's response, see Agostino Giovagnoli, *La cultura democristiana. Tra Chiesa cattolica e identità italiana* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1991), esp.32ff.

<sup>37</sup> "[l'Azione Cattolica sarà] non politica, ma religiosa." Letter of Pietro Gasparri to the Bishops of Italy, 333.

<sup>38</sup> "Noi non facciamo della politica. No. Noi vogliamo innanzi tutto fare quello che devesi, far cioè la formazione e la preparazione della gioventù, formazione e preparazione religiosa innanzi tutto e poi morale, intellettuale, culturale e sociale...Ma non oltre. Se qualcuno dicesse: ma noi non siamo anche

Indeed, though party politics was not permissible, Catholic Action's active, engaged, analysis of "all of the problems in life," including political ones, was requisite. The Pope made the same point on a later occasion, clarifying that though Catholic Action "does not engage in party politics, it wants to prepare citizens to do good politics, great politics."<sup>39</sup> Pius XI explained that the apparent paradox fades away if one refers to the original, etymological, sense of the term "politics." Referencing Thomas Aquinas (who, following Cicero, had translated Aristototele's *polis* as *societas civilis*), the Pope suggested that only a "civil society" could guarantee the virtue of its citizens, by encouraging them to live in line with Christ's precepts.<sup>40</sup> By working in close collaboration with the Vatican, Catholic Action would therefore do good politics, for civil society etymologically signaled "politics" as such -- something that was not the case for "political parties." Indeed, Catholic Action would ensure the virtue of citizens without actively campaigning for the Catholic political party that had, from the start, been a source of distress for the Vatican.<sup>41</sup>

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cittadini, non abbiamo noi anche dei diritti e dei doveri pubblici, politici? Noi risponderemo: certissimo...Sì, noi vogliamo risolvere della vita tutti i problemi, quella della vita privata e quelli della vita pubblica, quelli della vita civile e quelli della vita politica. Appunto per questo abbiamo bisogno che le anime siano preparate e formate nella dottrina cattolica, nella dottrina [della] Chiesa." Pius XI, speech to the Gioventù Cattolica, Rome, October 19, 1923. As reprinted in *Pio XI e l'Azione Cattolica*, 83-5.

<sup>39</sup> "L'Azione cattolica, pur non facendo politica di partito, vuol preparare a fare della buona politica, della grande politica; essa vuole preparare politicamente le coscienze dei cittadini e formarle, anche in questo campo, cristianamente e cattolicamente." Pius XI, speech at the National Congress of the Federation of Catholic Men, 30 October 1926. As reprinted in *Civiltà Cattolica* (20 November 1926): 367-8.

<sup>40</sup> "C'è tutto un volume sul destino di certe parole che spesso, vengono a significare il contrario di quanto vorrebbero e dovrebbero dire. Politica è una di queste parole. Etimologicamente: *polis*, la città, la repubblica – non la forma di un governo ma la cosa pubblica, l'insieme delle cose pubbliche – la *polis* greca, la *civiltà* latina, i *cives*, i cittadini, cioè corpi e anime e tutto; ciò che è essenziale alla loro vita e ai loro beni. Politica vuol significare dunque qualche cosa di benefico a tutti; le sollecitudini e le cure del bene comune a tutti; ed ecco invece, in pratica, sta a significare correnti parziali, interessi dei partiti: precisamente il contrario di ciò che deve essere e voler dire." Pius XI, as reprinted in *La parola del papa su l'Azione Cattolica*, ed. Alfredo Maria Cavagna (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1937) 138ff.

<sup>41</sup> I concur here with Liliana Ferrari's counterfactual claim that Pius XI would likely have distanced himself from the Popular Party regardless of Mussolini's pressures. Idem, *L'Azione cattolica dalle origini al pontificato di Paolo VI* (Brescia: Queriniana, 1982); and *Una storia dell'Azione Cattolica. Gli ordinamenti statutari da Pio IX a Pio XII* (Genoa: Marietti, 1989).

Thus, the 1923 statutes distanced Catholic civil society from the Italian Popular Party, encouraged them to take part in the "good politics," and laid the bases for a Catholic culture bound to the Vatican, which would follow individuals "from the cradle to the grave." The theoretical justification for this particular form of Catholic civil society was provided in 1925, through an encyclical entitled *Quas primas*. The encyclical provided the rationale of the new Vatican strategy of mass mobilization that had been adumbrated in *Ubi arcano* and implemented in the 1923 Catholic Action statutes. This new strategy sought to actively engage the Catholic laity with the Pope through the construction of a community based on shared and meaning-laden rituals of belonging. Additionally, *Quas primas* offered a far-reaching indictment of the Locarno Treaties (signed two months before the encyclical was issued), and recast the Vatican counter-settlement.

Echoing *Ubi arcano*, *Quas primas* began by emphasizing that no true peace would be possible without the restoration of the Kingdom of Christ, as mediated by the Vatican and its concordat diplomacy. Just as Wilson's Versailles settlement had failed, so too the Locarno spirit was bound to dissipate into thin air on account of its denial of the social and political role the Vatican was entitled to play in society. "As long as individuals and states refuse to submit to the rule of Savior," the encyclical noted, "there [will] be no really hopeful prospect of a lasting peace among nations."<sup>42</sup> Indeed, "While nations insult the beloved name of our Redeemer by suppressing all mention of it in their conferences and parliaments," Catholics, led by the Pope, "must all the more loudly proclaim his kingly dignity and power, all the more universally affirm

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<sup>42</sup> Pius XI, *Quas primas* (11 December 1925), §1. Unless otherwise noted, the translation is drawn from the official Holy See website, *Encyclicals-Pius XI-The Holy See-The Holy Father*, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_11121925\\_quas-primas\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_11121925_quas-primas_en.html)>. Last accessed 5 July 2012.

his rights."<sup>43</sup> This was primarily because, "the Church has the right from Christ himself, to teach mankind, to make laws, to govern peoples, in all that pertains to their eternal salvation."<sup>44</sup>

The encyclical further clarified that the Vatican as an institution both embodied the Kingdom of Christ, and had as its duty to expand this kingdom throughout the world. "In view of the common teaching of the sacred books," the encyclical argued, "the Catholic Church is the kingdom of Christ on earth, destined to be spread among all men and all nations."<sup>45</sup> Indeed, the Vatican's "empire" should include "not only Catholic nations" and "not only baptized persons." Rather, "the empire of our Redeemer embraces all men," insofar as "the whole of mankind is subject to the power of Jesus Christ."<sup>46</sup>

Unlike *Ubi arcano*, *Quas primas* did not leave its prescriptions to rest merely on paper. Instead, it took measures to ensure that Catholics and secular state leaders not forget the important lessons communicated by the encyclical, regarding the imperial mission of the Vatican to spread Catholic teachings to Catholic and non-Catholic nations alike. To do so, the encyclical invented a mandatory annual festival to remind the laity of the Pope's temporal powers. Entitled the Feast of Christ the King, the festival was henceforth held on the last Sunday before All Saints' Day, one of the oldest and most important festivals of the Western Church. *Quas primas* carefully specified that the new Feast of Christ the King should always be held on a Sunday, so that working people could take part in it as well.

The institutionalization of the Feast of Christ the King was part of a new Vatican strategy of mass mobilization, which encouraged the Catholic laity to join Catholic Action, and in the process, join the Vatican in its mission to grow Catholicism's presence "in private and in public

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., §25.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., §24.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., §12.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., §18. The encyclical borrows some of its wording on the empire of Christ from Leo XIII's encyclical *Annum Sanctum* (25 May 1899).

life." As the encyclical noted, festivals were rich pedagogical tools, more poignant even than written texts. "People are instructed in the truths of the faith [...] far more effectively by the annual celebration of our sacred mysteries," the text asserted, "than by any official pronouncement of the teaching of the Church." This was because official Vatican pronouncements, including encyclicals, "usually reach only a few and the more learned among the faithful; festivals reach them all." Furthermore, "the Church's teaching affects the mind primarily; its feasts affect both mind and heart." Finally, unlike official pronouncements, which spoke "but once," festivals "speak every year - in fact, forever." Through repetitive, communal, and emotionally engaging celebrations, festivals were capable of doing more work than dry, official, pronouncements ever could.<sup>47</sup>

In sum, *Quas primas* argued that the Catholic laity was bound by definition to the Pope; a connection to be reinforced annually, through a series of performative and highly visible rituals. In this way, *Quas primas* outlined the integral link between concordat diplomacy and the Vatican's integration of civil society, through Catholic Action. It also added a novel definition of civil society, which was presented as a pedagogical tool (to teach lay Catholics about Vatican-approved theology and the papacy's prerogatives), and as a way to speak to people's " hearts," rather than just to their "minds." As such, the cultivation of civil society represented a way to guarantee the loyalty of individuals "forever," for it bound them through social and emotional ties to the Vatican and to one another.

Finally, *Quas primas* provided its endorsement of concordat diplomacy, and of the project of establishing regimes in which Church and state ruled jointly. The encyclical forcefully made the case that all nations, Catholic or not, were obliged to recognize the Pope's sovereignty and allow him to expand the reach of Catholic Action far and wide. As the text noted, "Nations will be reminded by the annual celebration of this feast that not only private individuals but also

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., §21.

rulers and princes are bound to give public honor and obedience to Christ." By encouraging Catholics to gather and show their demographic strength, the Feast of Christ the King would create an annual spectacle that state leaders could not ignore. It would call upon all states to encourage concordat diplomacy and the activities of the Catholic laity. Any state that did not "take account of the commandments of God and of Christian principles" risked losing the loyalty of its Catholic citizens, and of Catholics worldwide.<sup>48</sup>

It was no accident that in explaining the bold expansionistic nature of the Vatican project, the encyclical made great use of the word "empire," which was repeated on no fewer than ten occasions. And "empire" and imperial expansion had of course also been the theme of the 1925 Holy Year, which had as one of its most prominent components a Missionary Exhibition, modeled on the world's fair.<sup>49</sup> To be sure, the Pope's turn to imperial expansion (as a rhetorical move and as a real-world project) was likely influenced by his immediate historical context. Indeed, his call for a Vatican empire coincided with a moment in which the question of empire was very much in the air, both due to the relative decline in influence of certain European empires (like the British, which was struggling with anti-imperialist movements in India, Egypt, and parts of Africa), and the growth in "empire talk" closer to home. Between 1923 and 1925, the Fascist regime made abundantly clear that the expansion of Italy's empire would be the centerpiece of its foreign policy. As the *Duce's* navy minister put it, just as the Pope could not be expected to remain a prisoner of the Vatican, Italy could not "remain a prisoner of the Mediterranean."<sup>50</sup> From 1923, Italian military forces began to regain Libya; and by 1924, Italian

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, §31-2.

<sup>49</sup> As *Quas primas* summarized, the Missionary Exhibition displayed for all to see "the increasing zeal of the Church for the spread of the kingdom of her Spouse to the most distant regions of the earth." And in addition to showing "how many countries have been won to the Catholic name through the unremitting labor and self-sacrifice of missionaries," the Exhibition also displayed "the vastness of the regions which have yet to be subjected to the sweet and saving yoke of our King." *Quas primas*, §3.

<sup>50</sup> *Atti parlamentari* (Rome: Istituto poligrafico e zecca dello Stato, 1848--) (henceforth AP), Senato, 1924, vol.1, 915-16 (20 December 1924) and AP, Camera, 1925, 3:3151, 3171 (30 March 1925); Thaon di Revel to

troops had occupied the island of Corfu. Journals like *L'Impero* had begun publication both in Italy and overseas, in an effort to generate enthusiasm for the imperial cause. Mussolini had also made plain his ambitions to launch new wars of occupation, following his successful seizure of the Dodecanese islands in the aftermath of World War I.<sup>51</sup> And mere months before Pius XI issued *Quas primas*, Mussolini had cultivated ties with Yugoslavia, concluded a pact enabling the *pénétration pacifique* of Albania, and negotiated an agreement with Great Britain, which recognized Italy's right to grow its empire.<sup>52</sup> With the creation of the dictatorship in 1925, Mussolini (like the Pope) increasingly invoked the need of "Fascistizing" youth, precisely so as to "create the great elites that in turn establish empires."<sup>53</sup>

The encyclical *Quas primas* proclaimed the legitimacy and necessity of a Vatican empire in precisely the same years that Mussolini began calling for the expansion of Italian territories. And like Mussolini (and, in many senses, anticipating him), the Vatican yoked its expansionist ambitions with the attempt to integrate civil society and grow a loyal, missionary, movement. But unlike Mussolini and all other secular state rulers, the Pope had a considerable advantage in his quest to spread the kingdom of Christ on earth. After all, the Church's peculiar form of imperialism did not depend on the exclusive control of territories. As was the case with

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Mussolini, 28 March 1925. As cited in MacGregor Knox, *Common Destiny: Dictatorship, Foreign Policy and War in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 119.

<sup>51</sup> Mussolini's 1925 directive on Ethiopia mentioned in the *Gazzera* notes, 11 June 1929; Benito Mussolini, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Edoardo and Duilio Susmei (Florence: La Fenice, 1951-1980) (henceforth, OO), vol.39, 465; *I documenti diplomatici italiani* (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1952--) (henceforth DDI), 7/10/38. As cited in Knox, *Common Destiny*, 128. On Mussolini's seizure of the Dodecanese islands and his plans regarding Turkey, see, *inter alia*, Nicholas Doumanis, "The Italian Empire and *brava gente*: Oral History and the Dodecanese Islands," in *Italian Fascism: History, Memory and Representation*, eds. R.J.B. Bosworth and Patrizia Dogliani (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 161-178.

<sup>52</sup> Aristotle A. Kallis, *Fascist Ideology: Territory and Expansionism in Italy and Germany, 1922-1945*, esp. 27-138.

<sup>53</sup> OO 21:362-63 (22 June 1925). As cited in Knox, *op.cit.*, 67-8.



concordat diplomacy, Catholic missionary activity could coexist with the imperialist agendas of state powers -- and indeed, mutually fortify it.<sup>54</sup>

## Conclusion

As will be shown in subsequent chapters, the Feast of Christ the King would soon be used to mobilize Catholic organizations around the world to join the Vatican's new European allies and the Pope in their joint struggle against the Soviet Union. The Feast of Christ the King became strongly identified as *the* festival of Catholic Action -- one that was tightly organized by its members, and one with which Catholic Action was being celebrated.<sup>55</sup> And Catholic Action militants increasingly identified themselves as soldiers fighting for the re-establishment of the kingdom of God -- and thus of Vatican influence -- on earth.<sup>56</sup>

The ambitions outlined in *Quas primas* to turn Catholic Action in a global arm of the Vatican were also realized through the active attempt to internationalize the Italian model of Catholic Action created by the 1923 statutes. The General-Secretary of the Italian organization, Giuseppe Pizzardo, was put in charge of convincing local clergy and Vatican officials around the world to follow the Italian lead, and establish the six organizations under the direction of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and bound to the Pope. In addition to pursuing this agenda by holding

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<sup>54</sup> See, *inter alia*, J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Luigi Ganapini, *Il nazionalismo cattolico. I cattolici e la politica estera in Italia dal 1871 al 1914* (Bari: Laterza, 1970); Claude Prudhomme, *Missions Chrétiennes et colonisation, XVI-XXe siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 2005), esp.67-131; and Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997). The Church's public support for the invasion of Ethiopia and Albania is well known. See Lucia Ceci, *Il papa non deve parlare*; and MacGregor Knox, *Mussolini Unleashed, 1939-1941: Politics and Strategy in Fascist Italy's Last War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 11ff.

<sup>55</sup> John Pollard, "'The Participation of the Laity in the Apostolate of the Hierarchy': Pius XI's Attempt to Impose the Italian Model of Catholic Action on the World-Wide Church in the 1930s," unpublished talk, 11 February 2010, Catholic University of Leuven, 4.

<sup>56</sup> On this, see Fulvio De Giorgi, "Linguaggi militari e mobilitazione cattolica nell'Italia fascista," *Contemporanea: Rivista di storia dell'800 e del '900* 2 (April 2002): 253-286.

private meetings and writing copious letters to Vatican nuncios abroad, Pizzardo also began teaching courses at Rome's colleges and seminaries regarding the viability and importance of exporting the Italian model of Catholic Action. And as more and more Catholic Action organizations started getting off the ground, Pizzardo increasingly sought the assistance of loyal members of the Catholic laity, to translate key texts and in some cases even produce their own material.<sup>57</sup>

Throughout the latter half of the 1920s, Pizzardo and his assistants crisscrossed the European continent, checking on the implementation of the Italian model of Catholic Action in countries like Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Poland, Ireland, England, the Netherlands and Belgium. Throughout, they tried to ensure that Catholic Action stay closely tied to the hierarchy, and that it severed all ties with Christian Democratic parties and liberal or "Bolshevistik" political movements. In countries like England and Germany, they successfully convinced clerics that had been strong supporters of Christian Democracy to shift their energies to Catholic Action instead.<sup>58</sup> Their actions also spawned counter-movements among the Catholic laity, which either flatly refused to submit to the Vatican's oversight, or sought to gently push the institution to take on a more active concerns with matters traditionally left to socialist and communist parties, such as the mobilization of the working class.<sup>59</sup>

By c.1930, Pizzardo and his assistants had succeeded in expanding Catholic Action to a great number of countries. France and Poland had integrated the Italian model of Catholic

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<sup>57</sup> Christine de Hemptinne and Henry Aloysius Johnston, *The Peace of Christ through the Reign of Christ* (Melbourne: Australian Catholic Truth Society, 1937); and de Hemptinne, *Curso de Acción Católica* (Lima: CIP, 1935).

<sup>58</sup> See, e.g., Kester Aspden, *Fortress Church: The English Church, Roman Catholic Bishops and Politics, 1903-1963* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2002), 154-7, and fns. 63 and 64; and Hans Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 261-2.

<sup>59</sup> The push-pull attempt to preserve a more egalitarian, worker-friendly, spirit was most present in the youth Catholic Action branches in France and Belgium. On the influence of Joseph Cardijn's controversial youth movement in France and Belgium, see Susan Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth: Communists and Catholics in Interwar France* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), and Emmanuel Gerard and Gerd-Rainer Horn, "Introduction," in *Left Catholicism, 1943-1955: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation*, eds. Gerard and Horn (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), 7-45.

Action, and Germany, Belgium, Hungary, Croatia, Luxembourg, Britain, Portugal, Austria, Australia, Canada, the United States, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina were *en route* to the same goal.<sup>60</sup> Local branches of Catholic Action were also increasingly making transnational connections, by taking part in research and study trips to check on partner organizations, and by including extensive coverage of Catholic Action's international activism in their newspapers and magazines. Starting from the 1930s, Pizzardo's assistants began to make more frequent travels to countries like Brazil, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. They also traveled to Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon and India, where they pursued active connections with local figures bent on implementing the Italian model of Catholic Action. Catholics based in Morocco, the Belgian Congo, and China, also began implementing Catholic Action organizations, on the Italian model.<sup>61</sup>

In addition to gathering lay Catholics around the image of the Vatican as a powerful entity endowed with loyal global subjects, the internationalization of Catholic Action also put pressure on local state leaders to expand the Vatican's influence. This was clearly the case in Italy, where Mussolini recognized that a mobilized group, composed of intellectuals and workers, men and women, children and adults, was more difficult to ignore than the pleas of the

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<sup>60</sup> See ASV, AES, IV, France 728(1), 275-278, 1930-1934, Azione Cattolica; ASV, AdRP, Warsaw, 236, 280, Poland, Azione Cattolica; Scott Mainwaring, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil, 1916-1985* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 61-2; Roberto De Mattei, "In Defense of Catholic Action," in *The Crusader of the 20th Century: Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1998), 69-102; Michael Burdick, *For God and the Fatherland: Religion and Politics in Argentina* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 31-4; Conway, *Catholic Politics in Europe*, 41-6; Katherine Massam, "Faith in the Public Realm: Spirituality and Catholic Action," in *Sacred Threads: Catholic Spirituality in Australia, 1922-1962* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1996), 192-243; and "Catholic Action," in John Frederick Schwaller, *The History of the Catholic Church in Latin America: From Conquest to Revolution and Beyond* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 207-212; Sandra Prlenda, "Young, Religious and Radical: The Croat Catholic Youth Organizations, 1922-1945," in *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe*, eds. John Lampe and Mark Mazower (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 82-110; Antonio Matós Ferreira, "Ação Católica Portuguesa," in *Dicionário de história de Portugal*, ed. Joel Serrão (Porto: Livraria Figueirinhas, 1981), vol.7, 25-31; Laura Gellott, "Defending Catholic Interests in the Christian State: The Role of Catholic Action in Austria, 1933-1938," *The Catholic Historical Review*, 74.4 (October 1988): 571-89.

<sup>61</sup> See Chamedes, op.cit.; Jan De Maeyer and Jan Roobrouck, "De l'entre-deux guerres à l'entre-deux-Papes? Quelques propos sur la politique du Saint-Siège sous le pontificat de Pie XI (1922-1939)," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclesiastique* (2009): 6-8; and Pollard, "The Participation of the Laity," esp.11ff.

Pope and his clerical assistants. Following Fascist reprisals on Catholic organizations after the attempt on Mussolini's life (November 1926),<sup>62</sup> the 1927 founding of rival civil society organs for Fascist youth (the Opera Nazionale Ballila), and Mussolini's ban on all non-Fascist youth organizations (in April of 1928), Pius XI became increasingly worried that the *Duce* would fail to protect Catholic Action in the concordat.<sup>63</sup> Perhaps in response to Fascist pressure tactics, Pius XI penned three well-publicized letters to Cardinals in Belgium, Germany and Spain, between August of 1928 and November of 1929. The letters aimed to both show the Pope's resolution with regard to Catholic Action, and the extent to which the organization did not threaten Mussolini's power. First, Pius XI announced in clear terms his plan to maintain Catholic Action as the centerpiece of his pontificate, and expand its influence internationally. Second, he stressed that Catholic Action was "apolitical," in the sense that it nursed no sympathies for Catholic political parties.<sup>64</sup> So too, a text specially commissioned by the Pope to the French Catholic intellectual Jacques Maritain, *La primauté du spirituel* -- amply disseminated in the Italian Catholic press -- emphasized the Vatican scarce support for political movements that risked undermining the constituted powers.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> "Sembra che una oscura minaccia (minaccia confermata da tutta una nube di sospetti, ingerenze e difficoltà) si libra e stia sospesa sulle organizzazioni ed opere, massime giovanili, di 'Azione cattolica', la pupilla degli occhi Nostri [...] Sembra che un vero dualismo di poteri e di funzioni continui a fare alla periferia esecutori e spesso arbitri di ordini, peraltro buoni e provvidi, degli uomini che sotto nuove insegne e nuovi nomi rimangono sempre gli stessi settari di ieri, sempre gli stessi nemici della società e della religione.." Pius XI, Allocution to the Secret Consistory, Vatican City, December 20, 1926. As reprinted in *Pio XI e l'Azione Cattolica*, 61-3.

<sup>63</sup> The 1926 repression of Catholic Action organizations and the reaction to it is discussed in Sale, *La Chiesa di Mussolini*, 174-82. The 1927 upsurge in Catholic Action in reaction to Mussolini's attempt to grow a Fascist youth culture is noted by Francesco Malgeri, "Introduzione," in *Gli statuti dell'Azione cattolica italiana*, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Letter of Pius XI to Cardinal van Roey, archbishop of Malines-Mechelen and primate of Belgium, August 1928; Letter of Pius XI to Cardinal Bertram, Prince-Bishop of Breslau, December 1928; and Letter of Pius XI to Cardinal Segura, Archbishop of Toledo and primate of Spain, November 1929. These three papal letters would be promptly incorporated into Catholic Action manuals.

<sup>65</sup> Thus, I suggest that Maritain's *La primauté du spirituel* was not simply taking a position on Action Française, as scholars have noted at length, but rather discussing the identity of Catholic Action as well. For discussion of Maritain's text in Italy, see "Il primato spirituale e la polemica sull'Action Française," *Civiltà Cattolica*, iv (1927): 235-41; and the introduction to the Italian translation, issued in the same year

When Catholic Action was at last enshrined in article 43 of the concordat with Italy, the Vatican won a major victory. The article asserted that Catholic Action would "go about its activities regarding the dissemination and actualization of Catholic principles outside of the bounds of any political party, and under the immediate dependence of the Church hierarchy."<sup>66</sup> The formulation reflected, *in nuce*, the central tenets of *Ubi arcano dei, Quas primas*, and the 1923 statutory reforms. Catholic Action, it asserted, was dedicated to the "dissemination and actualization of Catholic principles" writ large. It must do so, as Pius XI had taken pains to highlight, "under the immediate dependence of the Church hierarchy." Furthermore, it would avoid forming "any political party" in the process -- something the Pope was quite apprehensive about for his own reasons. Broadly speaking, it seemed, Pius XI's decision to integrate civil society with Catholic Action had proved a resounding success: it had increased the Vatican's power, and in the process provided the Vatican with new channels of communication and new ways to pressure state leaders to act in accordance with its wishes.

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as the original French: Jacques Maritain, *Primato dello spirituale*, ed. Giampietro Dore (Rome: Cardinal Ferrari, 1927).

<sup>66</sup> Article 43 read: "[L'Azione cattolica svolge la sua] attività al di fuori di ogni partito politico e sotto l'immediata dipendenza della gerarchia della Chiesa per la diffusione e l'attuazione dei principii cattolici." The full Italian-language text is reprinted in *Trattato e concordato fra la Santa Sede e l'Italia, ed allegati e disposizioni relative* (Rome: Istituto poligrafico dello stato, 1929).

## **Part II**

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### **Launching the Anticommunist Campaign**

## Chapter Four

### *The Origins of the Vatican Anticommunist Campaign, 1929-1933*

*The Holy Father implores all nations [...] to unite in a single front against these evil phalanges, which are the enemies of God and also of humankind.*

Pius XI, 1932<sup>1</sup>

*False optimism is not necessary for war; its opposite, false pessimism, can also cause war.*

-- Stephen Van Evera, 1999<sup>2</sup>

*Je me crois en enfer, donc j'y suis.*

-- Arthur Rimbaud, 1873<sup>3</sup>

## Introduction

The Vatican's successful bid to reconfigure Church-state relations in the fifteen years following World War I, coupled with the fading of the Wilsonian moment and the rise in power of the Soviet Union after the Great Depression, inaugurated a new phase in the expansion of Vatican influence, which lasted from approximately 1934 through 1958. This phase was characterized by the Vatican's attempt to use its interwar gains to influence the foreign policy of its partner states

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<sup>1</sup> "Il Santo Padre quindi scongiura tutte le nazioni, a deporre ogni basso egoismo, e a volere unire tutte le forze in un unico fronte contro le malvage falangi, nemiche di Dio non meno che del genere umano." Pius XI, *Caritate Christi* (3 May 1932). This summary of the Encyclical can be found in "La nuova Enciclica del S. Padre Pio XI sulle presenti angustie del genere umano." Rome, 3 May 1932. ASV, Segr di Stato, 1932, rubr.1, fasc.2, ff.37-39.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 15. For similar insights, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976); Jack S. Levy, "Misperception and the Causes of War," *World Politics* 36 (October 1983): 76-89; and the post-revolutionist Cold War historiography, e.g., John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-7* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Denna Frank Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1961); and Dana H. Allin, *Cold War Illusions: America, Europe and Soviet Power, 1969-1989* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Rimbaud, "Nuit de l'Enfer," *Une Saison en Enfer* (1873; Paris: Le Temps des Cerises, 2011).

so as to marginalize the Soviet Union from the community of nations. Starting from the 1930s, a sector of Vatican opinion began to cast the Soviet Union no longer as one threat among many, but rather as the leading threat. As these Vatican diplomats argued, the Soviet Union had to be stopped immediately because it was capable of undoing the Vatican's interwar gains and destroying Catholicism entirely.

During the period between 1934 and 1958, the Vatican tried to have the Soviet Union excluded from the international state system through traditional diplomatic channels and the launching of a multi-media campaign, which began to disseminate a new and more systematic form of Catholic anticommunism. Starting from the 1930s, this Catholic anticommunism can properly be called a political ideology, in that it was a coherent system of beliefs that made normative claims and had practical consequences. It drew on long-standing motifs from the Catholic counterrevolutionary tradition, as had the Vatican's rhetoric against unrest and revolution, which had been mobilized against left-wing movements since 1917. But in the 1930s, the Vatican's anticommunist rhetoric added several components: it stressed as never before the international nature of the communist threat; it highlighted the notion that communism got wrong the relationship between the state and its citizens; and it offered a positive alternative, in the form of a corporatist Europe characterized by the merging of Church and state, the expansion of Catholic civil society, the protection of private property, and the close collaboration between employers and employed.

As will be argued, the Vatican's political ideology did not simply initiate a war of words. Indeed, in several instances the Vatican's anticommunist political rhetoric was mobilized in the course of armed conflicts, such as the Spanish Civil War and World War II. This chapter, as well as Chapters Five and Six, will argue that it was precisely for this reason that the anticommunist campaign consolidated the Vatican's interwar gains and brought the Vatican into an ever-closer partnership with countries like Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Dollfuss' Austria, as well as



with right-wing religious-political movements like the *Nacionalistas* in Spain and the *Fédération nationale catholique* in France.

### 1. New Functionaries Face the Limits of Concordat Diplomacy

During the same period that new functionaries were positioning themselves against left-wing unrest in Poland, Germany and elsewhere, other Vatican officials were working to conclude a concordat or *modus vivendi* with Russia's new leaders. Vatican-Soviet diplomatic talks began in earnest in 1921 and continued until 1928. As in Poland and Germany, negotiations were accompanied by large-scale relief efforts, which sought to show Vatican goodwill towards the Russian people and put on display its wealth and power.<sup>4</sup> Soviet leaders, eager to gain *de jure* recognition of the new country through the conclusion of an international agreement with the Vatican, initially promised to conclude a generous deal and allow the Vatican to set up schools, provide religious instruction, and implement other features of the concordat model.<sup>5</sup> Thus, against the prevailing opinion in the scholarship, Vatican-Soviet negotiations were part and parcel of the broader history of concordat diplomacy.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See Giorgio Petracchi, "La missione pontificia di soccorso alla Russia (1921-3)," in *Santa Sede e Russia da Leone XIII a Pio XI: Atti del Simposio organizzato dal Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche e dall'Istituto di Storia Universale dell'Accademia delle Scienze di Mosca* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002), 122-73.

<sup>5</sup> For the Soviet side of the story, see Jurij E. Karlov, "Il potere sovietico e il Vaticano (1917-1924)," and E.S. Tokareva, "Le relazioni tra l'URSS e il Vaticano: dalle trattative alla rottura (1922-9)," in *Ibid.*, 97-121; 199-261.

<sup>6</sup> Along these lines, see Laura Pettinaroli, "Pio XI e Michel d'Herbigny: analisi di una relazione al vertice della Chiesa alla luce del materiale delle udienze pontificie (1923-1939)," in *Pius XI : Keywords. International Conference Milan 2009*, eds. Alberto Guasco and Raffaella Perin (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2010), 279-297; Laurent Koelliker, "La perception de la Russie par le Pape Benoît XV: aspects politiques, diplomatiques et religieux," and Piero Doria, "La documentazione vaticana sui rapporti Santa Sede-Russia," in *Santa Sede Russia da Leone XIII a Pio XI: Atti del secondo Simposio organizzato dal Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche e dall'Istituto di Storia Universale dell'Accademia Russa delle Scienze*, ed. Massimiliano Valente (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006), 17-49; 50-99.

But diplomatic negotiations dragged on, and following an initial period when they seemed to be going well, from 1924, relations began to deteriorate, particularly once they were shifted to Berlin and put in the hands of Eugenio Pacelli. Though Pacelli felt it was his duty to carry forth concordat diplomacy, he also had just made a name for himself standing against the forces of revolution in Germany. This evidently made him -- and Vatican negotiations as a whole -- somewhat suspect in Soviet eyes. In September of 1926, the Soviets accused the Vatican's most powerful cleric in Russia, Michel D'Herbigny, of being a spy. They prohibited him from building a Catholic seminary to train priests onsite and forced him to leave the country. One of the young clerics accompanying him, Joseph Henri Ledit, bitterly commented in his diary that, "all hope of remaining in Russia has, for now, vanished." The grand plan to conclude an agreement with the Soviet Union and restore Catholicism had not been realized, at least for the moment. "It's with regret," the young man confessed, "that I leave this vast country, where there would be so much work to do to expand God's glory."<sup>7</sup>

Eugenio Pacelli promptly took the expulsion of the Vatican mission from the Soviet Union as a sign of the uselessness of talks. He informed Pietro Gasparri that though he was trying to follow the Vatican's suggestions to "not break ties with the Soviet Union," he confessed that he found meeting his Soviet interlocutors "unpleasant" and "almost repugnant." "It would be a vain illusion to hope to reach an agreement with the present government of Moscow," Pacelli concluded.<sup>8</sup> Upon being asked to comment on Pacelli's report, the Vatican diplomat

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<sup>7</sup> "Sembra proprio che la mia speranza di restare in Russia sia, per ora, svanita. Lascio con rammarico questo immenso Paese dove ci sarebbe tanto da fare alla maggior gloria di Dio." Joseph Henri Ledit, *Diario di una spedizione in Russia* (1926), Archivio del Pontificio Istituto Orientale. As reprinted in Vincenzo Poggi, *Per la storia del Pontificio Istituto Orientale: Saggi sull'istituzione, i suoi uomini e l'Oriente Cristiano* (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 2000), 286ff.

<sup>8</sup> "...mi domandai se valesse più in alcun modo la pena di incontrarmi col Sign.Cicerin, cosa tanto più sgradevole e vorrei dire quasi ripugnante [...] Quantunque scarsissima fiducia possa aversi nelle buone parole del Signor Cicerin anche perché pur volendo ammettere (cosa più che dubbia) che egli personalmente sia in realtà alquanto ben disposto riuscirebbe poi a lui stesso difficile di vincere la resistenza dei radicali fanatici dittatori di Mosca; nondimeno in considerazione della di lui ripetuta domanda e del desiderio della Santa Sede di 'non rompere questo tenue filo col Governo Russo' (cifrato 36) ho cercato di preparare un progetto di Nota [...] Sarebbe vana illusione lo sperare di giungere ad un

recently expelled from the Soviet Union "concurred with the judgment of the Berlin nuncio," and informed the Pope that, "Any relation and appearance of negotiations with [the Soviets] was very dangerous, and left little hope of bearing fruit."<sup>9</sup>

In the meanwhile, Stalin, who had emerged as the Soviet Union's leader following a prolonged succession crisis, expanded a state-led campaign against Christian religions. He implemented legislation that prohibited Christian evangelism and prevented religious groups from distributing literature and raising funds. He also encouraged schools and universities to introduce anti-religious materials and fire academics known to hold religious beliefs. Local authorities took it upon themselves to close churches and organize anti-religious festivals on religious holidays. Stalin also enshrined a new Soviet calendar, which forced individuals to work on Sundays, effectively shifting the job of enforcing the state-led anti-religious campaign to the backs of individual employers.<sup>10</sup>

Heeding pressure from clerics like Pacelli, the Pope promptly responded to Stalin's anti-religious campaign by calling off Vatican-Soviet negotiations and by protesting Soviet actions within its borders. Through a letter published in the *Osservatore Romano* in early 1930, the Pope announced that any hope of concluding a Vatican agreement with the Soviet Union had

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accordo col presente Governo di Mosca, il quale altro non vuole se non la distruzione di ogni credenza religiosa in quell'infelice ed oppresso Paese." Pacelli to Gasparri, Berlin, 14 June 1927. ASV, AES Pro Russia (quarto periodo), 1924-1941, sc.13, fasc.83, ff.11-2. For the expression of similar sentiments by Pacelli, see, e.g., D'Herbigny, "Voto del relatore," 30 November 1927; and Pacelli to Cardinal Luigi Sincero, President of the Pro Russia Commission, Rorschach, 11 November 1927. *Ibid.*, ff.34-5.

<sup>9</sup> "Condivido totalmente il parere del Nunzio in Germania parere che, se non sbaglio, sarebbe comune a tutti che hanno visto da vicino i Sovieti ed osservato le loro intenzioni intorno alla religione [...] Ogni relazione ed apparenza di trattative con tali è molto pericolosa e lascia poca speranza di ottenere frutti positivi." Michel D'Herbigny, "Voto del relatore sulla lettera di Sua Ecc. Rev.ma Mons. Eugenio Pacelli," 14 June 1927. *Ibid.*, ff.14.

<sup>10</sup> On Stalin's policies towards religious groups, see Daniel Peris, *Storming the Heavens: The Soviet League of the Militant Godless* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); John Anderson, "The Council for Religious Affairs and the Shaping of Soviet Religious Policy," *Soviet Studies*, 43.4 (1991): 689-710; Philip Walters, "Introduction," in *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*, ed. Sabrina Petra Ramet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 21, 43, 50-4, 112, 128. For the continuation of this campaign, see Victoria Smolkin-Rothrock, "'A Sacred Space is Never Empty': Soviet Atheism, 1954-1971 (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2010).

become impossible, given Stalin's nationwide anti-religious campaign. This campaign, the Pope announced, aimed to encourage young people in the Soviet Union to "destroy and defile religious buildings and symbols" and "contaminate their souls with all manner of vice."<sup>11</sup> Pius XI's words focused on how it was because of the Soviet Union's practices within its boundaries that the Vatican must suspend its dealings with the country, and meekly asked European state leaders to pressure the Soviet Union to allow its citizens to practice their religion.<sup>12</sup>

Only the perceived effects of the Depression, the rise of religious persecution in Catholic strongholds like Mexico and Spain, and the coming to power of a *cadre* of solidly anticommunist Vatican functionaries, would transform the Vatican's rather limited protest of Soviet practices within its borders into a large-scale campaign protesting communism as a growing, transnational, threat to "Christian Europe." The key figure bringing about the shift was Eugenio Pacelli, who in early February of 1930 succeeded the elderly Pietro Gasparri as Secretary of State.<sup>13</sup> As will be analyzed in what follows, the Vatican's global campaign against the Soviet Union was adumbrated in a series of documents issued between 1931 and 1932, and put into effect between 1933 and 1934. From this point onward, diminishing the power of the Soviet Union in the international state system became the centerpiece of the Vatican's diplomacy -- something that, to my knowledge, scholars of Vatican-Soviet relations have failed to note.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> "Gi organizzatori delle campagne d'ateismo e del 'fronte antireligioso' vogliono soprattutto pervertire la gioventù, abusare della sua ingenuità e della sua ignoranza, ed in luogo di impartirle istruzione, scienza e civiltà, [...] l'organizzano nella 'Lega dei senza-Dio militanti,' [...] in cui i figli sono istigati a [...] distruggere e insozzare gli edifici e gli emblemi religiosi e soprattutto a contaminare le loro anime con tutti i vizi [...]" Lettera all'Em. Signor Cardinal Basilio Pompilj, *Osservatore romano* (9 February 1930). For drafts of the letter, see "Progetto di lettera del Santo Padre all'Emmo Signor Cardinal Vicario." Early 1930. ASV, AES *Pro Russia* (quarto periodo), 1924-1941, Sc.13, fasc.84, ff.44-45.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, no archival documents clearly explain why Pius XI substituted the elderly Gasparri with Pacelli, and a great deal of speculation surrounds the matter in the historiography. Minimally, it is plausible to assert that Pius XI was impressed by Pacelli's successful dissemination of concordat diplomacy, his language skills, and his tact in dealing with a wide range of political figures.

<sup>14</sup> See Antoine Wenger, *Rome et Moscou: 1900-1950* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1987); Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917-1979*, trans. Sandra Smith (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981).

Indeed, if several scholars have asserted a change of course in Vatican-Soviet relations from c.1930, they have by and large tended to miss the global nature and implications of the Vatican's counterattack against the Soviet Union. Furthermore, most scholars have narrowly argued that it was as a result of Stalin's anti-religious campaign -- rather than as a result of internal personnel changes and global political-economic developments -- that the Vatican turned against the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup>

## **2. Shifting the Blame: Pius XI Responds to the Global Economic Crisis**

The unprecedented five-year economic crisis known as the Great Depression hit Europe hardest between 1930 and 1931. Unemployment in many countries soared above 25%, as standards of living dropped and markets froze. Extremist parties of the left and right gained followers by the day, and many worried that the so-called "crisis of civilization" inaugurated by the Great War was coming to a head.<sup>16</sup> Though the Vatican was more insulated from the crisis than most European states, it too suffered as a result of the Depression. As a result of the Lateran Agreements, the Vatican had become a major investor in European stocks, and in 1930-1, it suffered a decrease in its earnings, due to stock depreciation. Additionally, the Vatican felt the effects of the economic crisis due to a visible decline in annual contributions to the Church, particularly from the two countries that had recently become its biggest donors: Germany and the United States.

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<sup>15</sup> This argument is made, for instance, by Philippe Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe (1917-1989), De Lénine à Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 86ff; as well as by E.S. Tokareva, "Le relazioni tra l'URSS e il Vaticano: dalle trattative alla rottura (1922-9)," *op.cit.*, 199-261. To be sure, Stalin did increase anti-Vatican propaganda from 1930, in reaction to Pius XI's denunciations of Soviet policy. See Tokareva, 260-1.

<sup>16</sup> See Renato Moro, *La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica, 1929-1937* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979); and Hilaire Beloc, *The Crisis of Civilization* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1937).

Global economic matters promptly became the Pope's preferred topic of conversation. With no hint of irony, he declared the Great Depression, "the greatest human calamity since the Flood."<sup>17</sup> Distressed by the Vatican's initial decline in income, registered from late 1930, the Pope allowed his leading financial advisor to redirect investments and engage in ethically questionable arbitrage schemes, which for instance had as their purpose, as the advisor explained, "to profit from the greater depression of the New York market in comparison with the London one."<sup>18</sup> The Pope also mandated a general reduction in wages for all Vatican employees and temporarily halted the rebuilding of Vatican City.

However, despite Pius XI's worries, the Vatican ultimately weathered the crisis better than many of its neighboring European states, and this gave it a preferred vantage point on the causes and consequence of the Depression.<sup>19</sup> Soon, the Pope decided that the Vatican should make its analysis of the Depression public, and entrusted a handful of experts with preparing an encyclical to this end.<sup>20</sup> The text provided a much more concrete assessment of international affairs than was habitual in encyclicals. From spring of 1931, the Vatican's daily newspaper, the *Osservatore romano*, began foreshadowing its contents, via extended analyses of how the depression had been caused by liberal democracies, and had led to the rise of communism and communist-inspired "anti-religious organizations" across Western Europe.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> As cited in Pollard, *Money and the Rise of the Modern Papacy*, 150; 157. Also see Domenico Tardini (1888-1961): *l'azione della Santa Sede nella crisi fra le due guerre*, ed. Carlo Casula Tardini (Rome: Studium, 1988); and Emma Fattorini, *Pio XI, Hitler e Mussolini: la solitudine di un papa* (Turin: Einaudi, 2007), passim.

<sup>18</sup> The citation is drawn from Bernardino Nogara's explanation of his arbitrage operations to the Pope. Nogara Archives, Nogara's diary, entry for 15 February 1932. As cited in Pollard, op.cit., 165. For a discussion of the Vatican's investment strategy in this period, see *ibid.*, 161-5.

<sup>19</sup> Pollard, op. cit. 162.

<sup>20</sup> Bernard Passelecq and Bernard Suchecky, *L'Encyclique cachée de Pie XI: une occasion manquée de l'Eglise face à l'antisémitisme* (Paris: Editions La Découverte, 1995), 50.

<sup>21</sup> "I 'besbosniki' in Germnia," *Osservatore romano* (11 April 1931). The article and others like it are analyzed at length in ASV, *AES Pro Russia* (quarto periodo), 1924-1935, Sc. 4, fasc.27, ff.27. In private audiences, Pius XI increasingly began making the same point. "È soprattutto il progresso dell'ideologia bolscevica in ambienti intellettuali ed universitari che, fra le loro altre propagande, costituisce un grave

In May of 1931, the specially commissioned encyclical providing the Vatican's response to the global crisis was released on the fortieth anniversary of Leo XIII's great encyclical on the social question, *Rerum Novarum*. The landmark text, entitled *Quadragesimo Anno*, and tellingly subtitled "the reconstruction of the social order," argued strongly that the multi-year economic crisis had been brought about by two states: the United States and the Soviet Union, the first responsible for causing the crisis and the second responsible for prolonging and exacerbating it. The Soviet Union, the encyclical suggested, was unquestionably the worst of the two, for it was actively trying to launch a global revolution, destroy religion, and subsume all things under the state. In place of the Soviet Union's transnational and destabilizing project, the Vatican had its own answer: the creation of a Europe characterized by ever-stronger partnerships between Church and state, which would solve the social question by binding employers more tightly to employees via corporative economic structures.

*Quadragesimo Anno* began by suggesting that an unnamed country (the United States) had caused the "shipwreck" of the Great Depression. The United States was to blame for encouraging a form of monopoly capitalism, based on liberal democratic thinking, which instantiated the wrong relationship between the state and its citizens. Its liberal democratic "individualism" denied the existence of a shared, public, good, and had turned greed into a virtue, allowing for the proliferation of unethical financial speculation, and for the abdication of personal moral responsibility. American-style liberalism "had proved that it was utterly unable to solve the social problem." Indeed, market-driven, free competition, "clearly cannot direct economic life - a truth which the outcome of the application in practice of the tenets of this evil individualistic spirit has more than sufficiently demonstrated."<sup>22</sup> Pius XI, as had popes before

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pericolo." D'Herbigny summarizing the Pope's position, preparatory notes, and "Ex audientia Ssmi" notes, 8 May 1931. Ibid., ff.28.

<sup>22</sup> Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (May 15, 1931), §88. All citations are drawn from the official English-language translation of the encyclical, available online at *Encyclicals -- Pius XI -- The Holy See -- The Holy Father*. <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_19310515\\_quadragesimo-anno\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno_en.html)>. Last accessed July 16, 2012.

him, thus condemned American-style liberalism both as a political doctrine, characterized by a preference for republican institutions and democracy, and as an economic doctrine, committed to *laissez-faire* principles.<sup>23</sup>

However, the encyclical specified, the multi-year economic crisis had also tragically led to the growth the Soviet Union, which was expounding an even more nefarious ideology than American-style liberalism. Communism was dangerous because its penchant for "collectivism" subsumed all things in the state, rejected the place of religion in state affairs, and advocated "unrelenting class warfare and absolute extermination of private ownership." Just as "the right ordering of economic life cannot be left to a free competition of forces," the encyclical noted, so also "the unity of human society cannot be founded on an opposition of classes." Indeed the Soviet solution was "a remedy far worse than the evil itself," and would "plung[e] human society into great dangers."<sup>24</sup>

To demonstrate the growth of Soviet influence, the encyclical tellingly focused on the increased prevalence of communist forces in civil society. "Alas," Pius XI lamented, "socialist and communist organizations [had recently] surpassed in number" their "Catholic" equivalents. Indeed, the Soviet Union was particularly active among youth, seeking to steer away young people from groups like Catholic Action, and, "under the guise of affection," attempting "to attract children of tender age, and win them to itself." Thus, the "widespread propagation of the [communist] doctrine" was growing daily, "not secretly or by hidden methods," but rather, "publicly, openly and employing every and all means." But despite this state of affairs, many continued to "make light of these impending dangers."<sup>25</sup>

If the United States and the Soviet Union had gotten the proper relationship between the

<sup>23</sup> The point is extrapolated on the basis of indications provided in Michael Novak, *Catholic Social Thought and Liberal Institutions: Freedom with Justice* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1989), 23-4.

<sup>24</sup> *Quadragesimo Anno*, §10; §46; §88; §112.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, §36; §62; §112; §121; §143-4; §147.



state and its citizens entirely wrong, the Vatican could get it right. In line with the Vatican's diplomatic priorities since World War I, the encyclical asserted that the partnership between European states and the Vatican would be the best way to solve the crisis. It proposed to empower intermediary corporate interests, organized by employment sector, as a way to counter the twin evils of liberalism's excessive individualism and communism's overblown and state-directed communitarianism. Indeed, the Vatican understood that the economy should be founded on good moral precepts, like "social justice," "social charity" and "the common good," not on individualism and greed. And instead of fomenting class warfare, the Vatican encouraged cooperation between employers and workers, in "guilds or associations," which would maintain class differences, but instantiate more just relations in the workforce.<sup>26</sup>

To provide a living example of this successful Church-state partnership around corporative interests, the encyclical pointed to the Italian state. Happily, the encyclical noted, Italy had partially implemented the Vatican's recommendations. As the Italian case demonstrated, there were several "obvious advantages" of the corporatist model. These included the fact that "various classes work together peacefully," and that socialist and communist organizations were "repressed."<sup>27</sup> Unsurprisingly, many state corporatists in Italy, Austria and Portugal immediately took up *Quadragesimo Anno* as the flag for their cause.<sup>28</sup> (However, careful readers of the text would have noticed that alongside his celebration of Italy, the Pope

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., §81-3; §88. For an internal argument about *Quadragesimo Anno*'s contribution to Catholic social teachings in economic matters (which overlooks its political message), see Michael J. Schuck, *That They Be One: The Social Teachings of the Papal Encyclicals* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1991), 45-117; and Christine Firer Hinze, "Quadragesimo Anno," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 151-75.

<sup>27</sup> *Quadragesimo Anno*, §95.

<sup>28</sup> For the notion that *Quadragesimo Anno* marked the Vatican's choice to ally with the Fascist state, see, e.g., Paul Misner, "Catholic Labor and Catholic Action: The Italian Context of *Quadragesimo Anno*," *Catholic Historical Review* 90.4 (October 2004): 650-74; Enzo Collotti, *Fascismo e politica di potenza: politica estera, 1922-1939* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 2000), 287ff; and Antonio Occhiuzzo, *Intellettuai cattolici, fascismo, organizzazione del lavoro e psicotechnica in Italia, 1918-1940* (Soveria Mannelli: Calabria letteraria, 1987). Though this argument certainly has merit, it overlooks the full importance of *Quadragesimo Anno*, which sought to use Church-state alliances to justify a campaign against the Soviet Union.

had also issued a warning: corporatism should be societal rather than of the state, and Italy should not "subordinate to the State all its reciprocally coordinated social elements."<sup>29</sup>)

To summarize: *Quadragesimo Anno* marked a watershed for the Vatican. With this text, the Vatican stressed that Soviet-style communism, masquerading as a remedy, was attempting to take advantage of the global instability in order to overturn the constituted order as such. Indeed, communism, the encyclical suggested, was the leading global rival of the Vatican, as the Soviet Union sought to crowd out Catholic Action's presence in civil society, and as offer its own, erroneous, solution to the proper relationship between the state and its citizens. In response to this state of affairs, the encyclical sought to orient Vatican partners against the Soviet Union, and adumbrated the new ideological precepts undergirding this shift.

*Quadragesimo Anno* also represented a watershed for the Vatican because it marked its shift from words to action. Shortly after issuing the encyclical, the Pope encouraged its prompt translation into Russian, and began providing secret financial support to organizations of Catholic Russian exiles seeking to translate the encyclical's precepts into action. These groups, as one of their proponents noted, would be dedicated to "organizing Russian émigré workers, to warn them against Bolshevik propaganda, and create unions founded on Christian principles." The groups "will become indispensable for the social reconstruction of the Soviet Union," lest "the situation in Russia improve."<sup>30</sup> One organization founder noted that because Russian exiles had seen Soviet power "from close up," they were all the more capable of seeing "in Christianity

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<sup>29</sup> Giuseppe Bottai, "Ancora dello stato corporativo," *Critica fascista*, June 15, 1928. As defined by Charles Maier, societal corporatism "grows stalagmite-like from the basis of civil society," as interests come together in "mutually advantageous bargains, sometimes precisely to keep the state at bay." State corporatism, on the other hand, is imposed from the top down, "in circumstances where economic groups are too diffuse or weak to negotiate their own order." See his *Recasting Bourgeois Europe*, xii; and *In Search of Stability: Explorations in Historical Political Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 80.

<sup>30</sup> "Le but de tous ces efforts est donc d'organiser les ouvriers russes émigrés pour les prémunir contre la propagande bolchéviste e pour constituer sur la base chrétienne les cadres des syndicats qui, dans l'éventualité d'une amélioration de la situation en Russie, seraient indispensables à la reconstruction sociale de ce pays." Letter from Father Arnou to Pacelli, on typeface of International Labor Office, League of Nations, Geneva, 6 July 1932. ASV, AES Pro Russia (quarto periodo) 1924-1935, sc.4, fasc.29, ff.22-23.

the supreme means to counter Satanism [and] the [Soviet Union's] Godless militants."<sup>31</sup> Soon, Russian émigré organizations inspired by *Quadragesimo Anno* were active in France, Yugoslavia, and Switzerland, where they worked in tandem with the Vatican representative at the International Labor Office, to pressure the League of Nations to create a corporatist union against communist influence.<sup>32</sup>

### 3. Misreading Contemporary Politics: The "Triangle of Suffering"

If the Great Depression had encouraged the Vatican to begin to take on its global role as never before, developments in Spain and Mexico between 1931 and 1932 would further radicalize the Vatican against the Soviet Union, and transform its strong rhetorical claims and secret funding of small groups into a large-scale, public, foreign policy campaign. Though in fact political developments in Spain and Mexico were not directly tied to the Soviet Union, several important members of the Vatican hierarchy misinterpreted them in this way, due to pre-existing biases, the Vatican's increased connections with starkly anticommunist political forces, and the rather primitive nature of the Vatican's information gathering capacities.

As Secretary of State and head of the Vatican's foreign policy wing, from 1931 Pacelli encouraged the creation of an internal international press bulletin, run by a member of Catholic

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<sup>31</sup> "Ayant vu de près et ressenti sur eux-mêmes la portée de ces forces à la tête desquelles se trouvent les militants des Sans-Dieu, les réfugiés russes voient dans le Christianisme le moyen suprême, et le refuge le plus sûr contre le satanisme, hostile à toute religion et surtout agressif vis-à-vis de ceux qui restent fidèles à notre Seigneur." B. Nicolski to d'Herbigny, Geneva, 11 June 1932. *Ibid.*, ff.26-27.

<sup>32</sup> The organization of Russian exiles, known as the Bureau des Travailleurs Chrétiens Russes, was founded by a Russian Catholic exile B. Nikolski between 1931 and 1932. Nikolski was also responsible for translating *Quadragesimo Anno* into Russian, per the advice of the Vatican representative at the ILO, Father André Arnou. In July of 1932, Pius XI decided to help fund the organization, which by July of 1933, had begun lobbying the League of Nations to form a union against communism (in tandem with the Pro Deo organization), and numbered 3,000 members, living in France, Yugoslavia and Switzerland. For a summary of the Bureau's activities and relations with the Vatican, see Lodygensky and Nicolski to d'Herbigny, Geneva, 10 July 1933. ASV, AES Pro Russia (quarto periodo) 1924-1935, sc.4, fasc.29, ff.50-2; and "Exposé du Dr G. Lodygensky à la XIe Conférence de l'Entente internationale Anticommuniste," *Ibid.*, 1921-1944, pos. sc.37, fasc.215, ff.21-2.

Action, and circulated amongst all Vatican personnel and Catholic dailies in Italy. Due to lack of funds and the inexistence of a trained body of Catholic journalists abroad, the bulletin drew its information regarding international goings-on from reports passed to it directly by the Secretary of State. Concealing the extremely limited nature of its sources of information, the bulletin feigned the existence of international press correspondents -- news from Germany, for instance, was signed "Renano," news from Vienna and Budapest written up by "Danubiano," news from Spain delivered by "Cid," and news from Russia and Eastern Europe brought courtesy of "Verax and Viator."<sup>33</sup> Soon, this international bulletin not only became the basis for international news reporting in Catholic newspapers outside of Italy, but it was also drawn on heavily in broadcasts of Vatican Radio, which was founded on February 12, 1931, and promptly entrusted to the Secretary General of the Jesuit order since 1915, Wladimir Ledóchowski (1866-1942), the son of an aristocratic Polish father and a countess of Swiss heritage.<sup>34</sup> By the spring of 1931, the Vatican's internal press bulletin and Vatican Radio had begun actively reporting. The two Catholic countries on which they chose to initially focus their attention -- Mexico and Spain, both lamentably outside of the concordat circuit -- would become the Vatican's first "martyrs" in its anticommunist crusade.

In April of 1931, Spain was preparing to take part in municipal elections, following the king's decision to distance himself from the authoritarian Primo De Rivera, who had won

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<sup>33</sup> The press bulletin was run by the Catholic Action member Federico Alessandrini, per the direct request of Vatican officials. Alessandrini described its rather odd *modus operandi* in his memoirs. See Federico Alessandrini, "Memoriale," *Studium* 81.6 (November-December 1985): 739-56, here 744. For an overview, see Francesco Malgeri, "Alessandrini," in *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico: Aggiornamento, 1980-1995*, eds. Francesco Traniello and Giorgio Campanini (Turin: Marietti, 1997), 225-230.

<sup>34</sup> Ledóchowski was born in the now Austrian town of Loosdorf, and returned to Poland with his family when he was seventeen years old. For more about the Superior General, see Giuliano Cassiani Ingoni, *Padre Wlodimiro Ledóchowski, XXVI Generale della Compagnia di Gesù, 1866-1942* (Rome: La Civiltà Cattolica, 1945), 224. On Vatican Radio, see R.A. Graham, "La radio vaticana tra Londra e Berlino," *Civiltà Cattolica* 127 (1976): 132-50; Fernando Bea, *Ottant'anni della radio del papa* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011); Marilyn Mateski, *Vatican Radio: Propagation by the Airwaves* (Wesport, Conn.: Praeger, 1995); and Alberto Monticone, *Il fascismo al microfono: Radio e politica in Italia, 1924-1945* (Rome: Studium, 1978), 277-301.

Catholic sympathies and ruled the country with an iron fist since 1923. The Vatican nuncio in Spain -- a new functionary trained at the Pontifical Academy of Ecclesiastical Nobles -- promptly informed Pacelli that many high-ranking Spanish clerics were deeply worried about the imminent elections. They were convinced, Federico Tedeschini noted, that if Republican parties won the day, Spain would return “to the epoch of the persecution of the Church, despite all of the Church’s hard-won gains in legal and practical matters.”<sup>35</sup> Pacelli, who controlled the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, internalized the view of leading members of the Spanish hierarchy almost instantly. Following the victory of anti-monarchical parties at the polls and the proclamation of the Spanish Republic on April 15, 1931, Eugenio Pacelli noted in an official foreign policy briefing (prepared for the Congregation and the Pope) that now that Spain was a Republic, the “Catholic religion will be faced with grave problems and will be hard pressed to preserve its privileged position.”<sup>36</sup>

Pacelli's control of the Congregation put him in the important position of controlling the Vatican response to events in Spain. As other scholars have shown, if the Congregation for Ecclesiastical Affairs had previously existed as a site for debate amongst high-ranking clerics on foreign policy matters, after 1930 it became a place where decisions previously taken by Pacelli were simply confirmed, if discussed at all.<sup>37</sup> Further, only in approximately 6% of cases did Pius

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<sup>35</sup> According to Tedeschini, the clergy were convinced they were about to “retrocedere... all’epoca della persecuzione della Chiesa in tutto ciò che essa ha potuto faticosamente raggiungere di meglio tanto nei principii legali, quanto nella vita pratica.” Letter from Nunzio Tedeschini to Pacelli, Madrid, 27 March 1931. ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931, pos.781 P.O., fasc.116, ff.67-68.

<sup>36</sup> "Questa Santa Congregazione prevedendo, per notizie avute da diverse parti, che dopo il Governo del Generale De Rivera la religione cattolica si sarebbe trovata di fronte a gravi problemi..." Eugenio Pacelli, “Sacra Congregazione degli AES: Spagna,” 23 April 1931. ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931-1934, pos.784 P.O., fasc.118, ff94.

<sup>37</sup> The Cardinals of the congregation were not called upon to weigh in on some of the most controversial decisions within the institution, such as the Church’s policy towards the newly appointed Reich chancellor of Germany, Adolf Hitler, or the position the Church should take following Kristallnacht.

XI intervene to modify decisions of the Congregation under Pacelli's leadership, while when Gasparri was head of the Congregation, Pius XI had modified 38% of the decisions.<sup>38</sup>

Soon, Pacelli used his control of the Congregation to make himself the loudspeaker of an even more inflammatory view popular among Spanish clergy.<sup>39</sup> According to this view, the elections and the proclamation of the newborn Spanish Republic were part of a sinister Bolshevik plot to conquer Spain and make it communist. Rather than simply lamenting the presumed outcome of the April 1931 elections, many members of Spain's clergy and members of the Jesuit order had since April 15th argued that the Spanish elections were an illegitimate, revolutionary act, brought about by covert Russian intervention in Spanish affairs. Thus, Spanish clerics had begun using the phrase "the revolution" as shorthand for the purported Russian involvement in the democratically administered and full legitimate April 1931 elections. As the Archbishop of Toledo wrote in a personal letter to Pacelli on April 17, 1931, the "present

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<sup>38</sup> Roberto Regoli, "Il ruolo della Sacra Congregazione degli AES durante il pontificato di Pio XI," *Convegno internazionale: la sollecitudine ecclesiale di Pio XI alla luce delle nuove fonti archivistiche*, Vatican City, 27 February 2009.

<sup>39</sup> As Frances Lannon also argues, Catholics declared war on the Republic from the moment it was proclaimed. See Frances Lannon, "The Church's Crusade Against the Republic," in *Revolution and War in Spain, 1931-9*, ed. Paul Preston (London: Routledge, 1984), 35-59. For an argument about how Catholicism became the most powerful weapon of Spanish right-wing forces during the Second Republic, see Mary Vincent, *Catholicism in the Second Spanish Republic: Religion and Politics in Salamanca, 1930-1936* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1996); Julián Casanova, "Order and Religion," in *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, trans. Martin Douch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). For a discussion of how many Spanish Catholics mobilized against the Republic, see Federico M. Requena, *Católicos, devociones, y sociedad durante la dictadura de Primo de Rivera y la Segunda República: La Obra del Amor Misericordioso en España (1922-1936)* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2008); Eduardo González-Calleja, *Contrarrevolucionarios: radicalización violenta de las derechas durante la Segunda República, 1931-1936* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2011); Vicente Cárcel Ortí, ed., *La II República y la Guerra Civil en el Archivo Secreto Vaticano* (Madrid: Biblioteca de los autores cristianos, 2011); Antonio Manuel Moral Roncal, *La cuestión religiosa en la Segunda República Española: Iglesia y carlismo* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2009); Luis Cano, *Reinaré en España: la mentalidad católica a la llegada de la Segunda República* (Madrid: Ediciones Encuentro, 2009); Julio de la Cueva and Feliciano Montero, eds., *Laicismo y catolicismo: el conflicto político-religioso en la Segunda República* (Alcalá: Universidad de Alcalá, 2009); José Ramón Hernández Figueiredo, *Destrucción del patrimonio religioso en la Segunda República, 1931-1936: a la luz de los informes inéditos del Archivo Secreto Vaticano* (Madrid: Biblioteca de autores cristianos, 2009); Paulino Castañeda Delgado and Josemaría García de Lomas Mier, eds., *La Iglesia y la II República* (Córdoba: Publicaciones Obra Social y Cultural CajaSur, 2009); and Feliciano Montero, ed., *La Acción Católica en la II República* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 2008).

revolution is a great catastrophe [...] promoted by Russian Bolshevism." <sup>40</sup> "Given the orientation and shape of the Revolution," a powerful Spanish Jesuit noted in a letter hand-delivered to Pacelli, "the real danger in Spain is the victory of Communism."<sup>41</sup> Similarly, another Jesuit writing directly to the Vatican Secretary of State affirmed with certainty that if "the current sacrilegious politicians stay in power," Spain would likely morph into "a Bolshevik Russia"— an outcome Spain's ruling politicians were supposedly "in a rush to bring about."<sup>42</sup> Indeed, as the Vatican nuncio Tedeschini informed Pacelli, it was common knowledge (that is, common hearsay amongst members of the Spanish hierarchy) that Spain's new republican ministers received extensive secret "funding from Russia."<sup>43</sup>

Even if any hard and fast evidence regarding Soviet involvement was sorely wanting, Eugenio Pacelli quickly grew convinced that the Soviet Union was indeed playing an active role in Spanish developments. <sup>44</sup> In a report penned on April 23rd for the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, he asserted that there was without question extensive "Russian involvement" in Spanish affairs. He also predicted that soon the Spanish Republic

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<sup>40</sup> "Los que vivimos intesamente esta vida nacional, sabemos que la actual revolución, promovida por [...] el Bolchevisquismo ruso y que ha utilizada los elementos sociales y politicos menos estimables de España, no responde ni con mucho a la mayoría verdadera de la nación, ni exterioriza la voluntad nacional [...] La verdadera España en estos momentos está consternada y se considera victima de una gran catástrofe." Letter from Cardinal Segura y Saenza, Archbishop of Toledo, to Pacelli, 17 April 1931. ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931-1934, pos.784 P.O., fasc.119, ff.5, pp.2-3.

<sup>41</sup> "El mayor peligro de España, dada la orientación y la fisonomia de la Revolución, seria el predominio del Comunismo." Otaño, S.J. "La situacion de España," April-May 1931. Ibid., fasc.122, ff.22-40. Otaño's report was sent to Pacelli by Father Rosa of *Civiltà Cattolica*.

<sup>42</sup> "Nella più grande rovina delle cose religiose, morali e sociali che si sta compiendo, che reterà delle cose ecclesiastiche nessuno può prevedere; con poco però che durino nel potere gli attuali sacrilegi detentori, non può umanamente sperarsi altro che uno stato più caotico di quello della Russia bolscevica. Hanno fretta per portarci a tale stato, e quando si potrà e vorrà lottare sarà troppo tardi." Letter from Vidal to Pacelli, Rome, 19 May 1931. ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931, pos.781 P.O., fasc.116, ff.5.

<sup>43</sup> Spain's new ministers "[sono] particolarmente aiutati [...] dai sussidii di Russia [...] Il Signore abbia pietà della Nazione ritenuta tradizionalmente cattolica per eccellenza." Letter from Tedeschini to Pacelli, Madrid, 18 April 1931. Ibid., ff.69-78.

<sup>44</sup> See Roberto Ceamanos Llorens, *El discurso bolchevique: El Parti Communiste Français y la Segunda República española (1931-1936)* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2010) and Nicolás Salas, *La otra memoria histórica: 500 testimonios gráficos y documentales de la represión marxista en España, 1931-1939* (Córdoba: Almuzara, 2006).

would begin acting more and more like the Soviet Union, and launch an all-out campaign against religion.<sup>45</sup> Soon, similar interpretations of the Spanish Republic found their way onto the pages of the Vatican international press bulletin, and into news reports aired over Vatican Radio.<sup>46</sup> The view was also repeated by Pacelli's colleagues at the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, who for instance announced that the declaration of the Republic in Spain was part of an elaborate plot developed by “the Russo-German Jew calling himself Leon Trotsky.” Aiming to “overthrow all Christian Churches in the world,” the report noted that Trotsky had supposedly used “his Agents to pull down the [Spanish] King,” and was now well on the way towards having the new Spanish Republic “cripple the Church, ruin the Aristocracy,” and “corrupt the Army,” thus paving the way for “Red Soviet Dictatorship and Atheistical Inquisition, as in Russia.”<sup>47</sup>

When in December of 1931, the Spanish government passed a new constitution calling for freedom of religion, the separation of Church and state, and the dissolution of the Jesuit order, the Spanish clergy in general -- and, of course, the Jesuit order in particular -- interpreted this as proof positive of Soviet involvement. So did Pacelli, who in these months increasingly began predicting an imminent communist seizure of power in Spain.<sup>48</sup> He urged the Pope to issue an official denunciation of the Republic's Soviet-style efforts to “de-Christianize Spain.” The Vatican must take a stand, he recommended, through an encyclical, which would speak out

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<sup>45</sup> Eugenio Pacelli, “Sacra Congregazione degli AES: Spagna,” 23 April 1931. ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931-1934, pos.784 P.O., fasc.119, p.1.

<sup>46</sup> See, e.g., “Bollettino n.1: Notiziario Sovietico,” 20 May 1933. ASV, AES *Pontificia Commissione Pro Russia*, 1932-1935, pos.Sc.3a, fasc.21, ff.21-22.

<sup>47</sup> “Memo as to the Russo-Jew Plan to overthrow the Catholic Church in Spain” (May 1931). ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931-1934, pos.784 P.O., fasc.122, ff.68-73. The heavily underlined report prepared by a Vatican correspondent in the UK was sent to Cardinal Frühwirth, one of the most vocal members of the AES Congregation, who in turn delivered it to Pacelli.

<sup>48</sup> See, e.g., Dr. Fr. Stegmüller, “L'Action sociale en Espagne” (fall 1931). ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931-1934, pos.784 P.O., fasc.123, ff.31; Tedeschini to Pacelli, Telegram, 14 October 1931; and Trindede Coelho, the Vatican Representative in Portugal, to Pacelli, 5 November 1931, both *ibid.*, fasc.118, ff.72.



against the “secret, persistent, revolutionary forces, motivated by their hatred of Jesus Christ and his Church,” at work in Spain.<sup>49</sup> As he pressured Pius XI to take action on this skewed interpretation of Spanish developments, Pacelli also urged the Vatican nuncio in Spain to launch “energetic and well-motivated protests” against the government. “Both Spanish public opinion and international opinion,” Pacelli noted, must get “a good idea of the gravity of the facts committed against the rights of the Church.”<sup>50</sup>

By late 1931, Eugenio Pacelli had used his position as Secretary of State and head of the Vatican's foreign policy branch to disseminate a narrow interpretation of political events in Spain. This interpretation pinned rising anti-clerical measures on subversive Bolshevik agents, who were supposedly seeking to use Spain as the base of their operations. Faced with the failure of concordat diplomacy in the Soviet Union (for which he was in no small measure personally responsible), and in regular contact with starkly anti-communist Spanish Jesuits, Pacelli began to see the work of Bolsheviks everywhere. Accordingly, he swiftly undertook a secret campaign to prevent the Soviet Union from joining the League of Nations by pressuring Italian and German diplomats to call for its exclusion.<sup>51</sup>

Pacelli was not the only Vatican official convinced of the need to halt an expansionistic and dangerous Soviet Union. From c.1930, clerics in Central America and the United States were in the process of building a similar argument regarding political developments in Mexico. The leading artifice of this argument was the American Jesuit Edmund A. Walsh. Like Pacelli,

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<sup>49</sup> From as early as October 1931, Pacelli urged Pius XI to issue an Encyclical denouncing the “illegitimate actions” of the supposedly illegitimate government. “Si vuole la scristianizzazione della Spagna [...] È lecito concludere che la lotta mossa alla Chiesa nella Spagna provenga [...] dall’opera nascosta, ma pertinace, di forze sovvertitrici, mosse dall’odio contro Gesù Cristo e la Sua Chiesa, non diversamente da quanto avviene nella Russia.” The words are cited from an early draft of the Encyclical: “Sommario,” October 1931. ASV, AES Spagna (quarto periodo), 1931-1933, pos.833 P.O., fasc.208, ff.31.

<sup>50</sup> “Santo Padre desidera che Vostra Eccellenza faccia protesta energica e motivata la quale dia anche alla pubblica opinione spagnuola e internazionale una giusta idea della gravità dei fatti commessi contro i diritti della Chiesa.” Pacelli to Tedeschini, telegram, 20 June 1931. Ibid., 1931-4, pos.784 P.O., fasc.118, ff.22.

<sup>51</sup> See, e.g., Pacelli, Udienze notes for 21 January 1931. ASV, AES, Stati Ecclesiastici, 1930-1938, pos.430a P.O., fasc.341, ff.22.

Walsh had a personal, career-related, bone to pick with the Soviets and with Mexico's leftist rulers. Indeed, Walsh had been personally responsible for the flop of the Vatican relief mission in the Soviet Union, and the failure to conclude a lasting Vatican-Mexican alliance. An enterprising Jesuit from Boston with a keen interest in growing the Vatican's stature in foreign policy circles, Walsh had raised considerable funds to establish the School of Foreign Service for Georgetown University, in Washington, D.C., in 1919. Following his failed trip to Russia between 1922 and 1923, he had developed strong ties with American politicians and become the leading Catholic voice in the American anticommunist movement.<sup>52</sup>

Father Walsh had also grown increasingly interested in Mexican affairs. In the early 1920s, he had taken part in an American Catholic protest of the anti-clerical provisions of the 1917 Mexican constitution.<sup>53</sup> In Mexico, the protest of these provisions led many Catholic peasants in the western parts of Mexico to take up arms; from 1926, these peasants called themselves "Cristeros," invoking the glory of "Christ the King" in their opposition to the central government. Soon, through Walsh's personal enterprise and the successful lobbying undertaken by key members of the American Catholic hierarchy, the White House and the State Department agreed to join Walsh in informal, secret negotiations with the Mexican government, to settle the conflict. This eventually led to the conclusion of the 1929 *modus vivendi* between the Vatican and the Mexican government, which brought the bloody Cristero War to a halt, and committed the Mexican government to recognizing the Church and its spiritual rights, restoring churches and seminaries, and providing amnesty to the Cristeros.<sup>54</sup> The Vatican appointed Archbishop

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<sup>52</sup> Larry Ceplair, *Anticommunism in Twentieth-Century America: A Critical History* (New York: Praeger, 2011), 35. For a recent biography of Edmund A. Walsh, see Patrick McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War: Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., and the Politics of American Anticommunism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005).

<sup>53</sup> See Marcelo Villegas, *Why Reds Rule Mexico: The Red Threat in the Mexican Maze* (New York City: Inter-American Publishing Syndicate, 1928); and Francis McCullagh, *Red Mexico: A Reign of Terror in America* (New York: L. Carrier & Co., 1928).

<sup>54</sup> See Douglas J. Slawson, "The National Catholic Welfare Conference and the Church-State Conflict in Mexico, 1925 - 1929," *Americas* 47 (July 1990): 55 - 93; L. Ethan Ellis, "Dwight Morrow and the Church-

Leopoldo Ruiz y Flóres as Apostolic Delegate to Mexico, to regulate future relations between the two states, and announced that, "a continuation of the mutual good will and cooperation which have effected the settlement will mean an era of peace and prosperity for the Mexican nation."<sup>55</sup>

But the 1929 Vatican-Mexican settlement soon proved evanescent. In 1930, the truce between the Mexican government and the Cristeros was suspended, as local Mexican officials rounded up, tortured and murdered many Catholic peasants who had participated in the civil war. In response, remaining Cristeros rearmed in the countryside, giving the central government a new justification to curtail Catholic activities now deemed "anti-national." In 1931, Mexico's new Secretary of Public Education passed an education reform, which banned religious teachings in school and removed crucifixes from the classroom. In 1932, the Mexican central government officially repealed the 1929 *modus vivendi* with the Vatican. In its place, local officials passed new laws limiting the number of priests that could be active within any given territory and calling for the closure of large numbers of churches.<sup>56</sup>

Both Edmund Walsh and the Vatican Apostolic Delegate in Mexico City promptly began informing Pacelli that the latest measures were due to growing Soviet influence in the country. Ignoring the important fact that Mexico had broken off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1930, the two men argued that the failure of the *modus vivendi* was due to covert Russian influence in Mexican affairs.<sup>57</sup> The Vatican's Apostolic Delegate for instance informed

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State Controversy in Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 38 (November 1958): 482 - 505; and M. Elizabeth Ann Rice, O.P., *The Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and Mexico, As Affected by the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Mexico, 1925 - 1929* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1959).

<sup>55</sup> Statement of Cardinal Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, June 1929, as reprinted in Edward J. Hanna Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Cited in Richard Gribble, *The Archbishop for the People: The Life of Edward J. Hanna* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2006), 245.

<sup>56</sup> See John W. Sherman, *The Mexican Right: The End of Revolutionary Reform, 1929-1940* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1997), 34-7; and Adrian A. Bantjes, "Idolatry and Iconoclasm in Revolutionary Mexico: The De-Christianization Campaigns, 1929-1940," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 13, 1 (Winter 1997): 87-120.

<sup>57</sup> Daniela Spenser, *The Impossible Triangle: Mexico, Soviet Russia and the United States in the 1920s* (Durham: Duke University Press 1999), 165ff.

Pacelli that the Mexican Interior Ministry was still "sending many youth to Russia to study Bolshevism," and that a pending education reform was a plan to "implement communist education in [Mexican] schools." Because the "government exercises an absolute monopoly" over education, Ruiz y Flóres noted, it might well be able to "imbue the hearts of young people with Bolshevik principles and doctrines." The Mexican Archbishop and Vatican employee further asserted that since the mid 1920s, "there [had been] many Russians and foreigners in government ministries, charged with shaping employees in the principles of Bolshevism."<sup>58</sup>

Drawing on his personal experience, Walsh demonstrated through pamphlets and speeches directed at Vatican officials and at American citizens that Mexico's policies were planned by the Soviet Union. He founded a broad-based Catholic lobby effort to block the United States' diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union. Though the lobby failed to achieve its main goal, Roosevelt did force the Soviet Union to protect the religious rights of Americans in the Soviet Union -- something that Walsh and the Pope hailed as a major victory for Catholics everywhere, and the result of direct American Catholic pressure.<sup>59</sup>

Amidst the fever-pitched anticommunism that had taken the United States by storm since 1919, Walsh's message had a growing audience.<sup>60</sup> Following the failure of the *modus vivendi* with Mexico, Walsh received over thirty invitations to speak about Soviet influence in

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<sup>58</sup> "Il Governatore di Veracruz, Adalberto Tejeda, Ministro del Interno al tempo delle leggi di Calles contro la Chiesa [...] inviò [sic] parecchi giovani in Russia per studiare il Bolscevismo ed implantò [sic] nelle scuole l'educazione comunista [...] Senza dubbio il maggior danno del comunismo nel Messico si trova nelle scuole, sulle quali il Governo esercita un monopolio assoluto, e dove può informare i cuori dei fanciulli nei principi e dottrine comuniste [...] Nei dicasteri del Governo si trovano molti russi e stranieri incaricati di formare gli impiegati nei principi del Bolscevismo." Letter from Leopoldo Ruiz y Flóres, Archbishop of Morelia, Apostolic Delegate of Mexico, to Pacelli, San Antonio, Texas, 23 April 1936, ASV, AES Stati Ecclesiastici (quarto periodo), pos.474 P.O., fasc.482, ff.12-5.

<sup>59</sup> On Walsh's activities to block the U.S.' recognition of the Soviet Union, see McNamara, *op.cit.*, 74-84.

<sup>60</sup> On the rise of anti-communism in the United States, see M.J. Heale, *McCarthy's Americans: Red Scare Politics in State and Nation, 1935-1965* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998); Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: A History of American Anti-Communism* (New York: Free Press, 1995); Ceplair, *Anticommunism in Twentieth-Century America*, 19-53; Cyndy Herdershot, *Anticommunism and Popular Culture in Mid-Century America* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland, 2003); Melvyn Leffler, *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).

Mexico.<sup>61</sup> In December of 1931, Walsh delivered the keynote lecture at the American Historical Association, in which he lashed out against "Lenin's dream of universal empire," which supposedly remained the linchpin of the Soviet Union, despite Stalin's proclamations to the contrary. "The objectives of the Communist State are not confined to domestic prosperity and security, nor limited by national frontiers," Walsh asserted. "Their militant political philosophy leaps these traditional limits of sovereignty, since their claim is to rule mankind in the mass." For the Bolshevik, Walsh argued, "there is but one categorical imperative: *Thou shalt communize the world, or else destroy it.*" Thus, it was not only Mexico that was in danger; it was the world at large. Walsh concluded by informing secular and non-secular historians at the meeting that only one force would be capable of fending off the Soviet Union: the Vatican. "Before the Soviet government's [...] conspiracy to attack the entire world," he affirmed, "the Catholic Church will not recoil, nor retreat, nor compromise."<sup>62</sup>

Walsh was not operating on the margins of American society: he was a prominent diplomat with close ties to the U.S. government and the American intelligentsia, whose views helped foment Catholic anticommunism on many levels in the United States. In fact, the U.S. State Department had recently institutionalized anticommunism when it appointed the Irish Catholic Robert F. Kelley as the head of Eastern European Affairs, and backed Kelley's notion that the Bolsheviks had a hand in Mexican affairs and elsewhere. And this charismatic Catholic diplomat -- who likely was directly familiar with Walsh -- would leave a lasting impact on Washington's foreign policy establishment. He did so by helping convince young foreign service agents who would play a crucial role in the Cold War (e.g., George Kennan and Charles Bohlen) of the Soviet Union's expansionistic plans.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Laura Pettinaroli, "La politique russe du Saint-Siège (1905-1939)," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Lyon, 2008), 945.

<sup>62</sup> Edmund Walsh, SJ, "The Catholic Church in Present-Day Russia," speech delivered at the AHA annual meeting, Minneapolis, 29 December 1931. Stored in ARSI, Library, *Comunismo Varia* (I), ff.1-38.

<sup>63</sup> Leffler, *op.cit.*, 18ff.

By the end of 1931, the mistaken notion that Mexico and Spain were ripe for a Soviet take-over had found its way into the Vatican's foreign policy bulletins, Catholic Action journals, Pacelli's write-ups for the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, and the pronouncements of Pope Pius XI. In a landmark speech of December 24, 1931, Pius XI for instance noted in his annual Christmas sermon that a "terrible triangle of suffering" united the Soviet Union, Mexico and Spain. In all three countries, the Pope suggested, a clever minority of Bolshevik agents was attempting to spread communist revolution, over and against the wishes of the non-communist masses.<sup>64</sup>

From this point on the idea that Soviet agents were busily at work in Mexico, Spain, and further afield, became an insistent part of the Pope's official pronouncements. An encyclical published shortly after *Quadragesimo Anno* (written with Pacelli's substantial input) focused on the supposed Soviet attempt to spread "communistic propaganda" through the Mexican school system and among Mexico's lower classes.<sup>65</sup> The text highlighted how "the grievous condition of the Church in Mexico [...] differs but little" from "the one raging within the unhappy borders of Russia." Indeed, these disturbing similarities should awaken Catholics everywhere to the gravity of the Soviet danger. "May [we], from this iniquitous similarity of purpose, conceive fresh ardor to stem the torrent which is subverting all social order."<sup>66</sup> In a second encyclical, Pius XI echoed and expanded *Quadragesimo Anno*'s claim that the Soviet Union was taking advantage of the Great Depression to expand its global reach. Bolsheviks were "unfurling their impious and hateful flags," in the attempt to "unite the war against God with the war for daily bread, and employing any means possible to reach their diabolical aim." Under the guise of ameliorating

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<sup>64</sup> *L'Osservatore romano* (25 December 1931).

<sup>65</sup> Pius XI, *Acerba Animi* (29 September 1932), §9. All citations are drawn from the official English-language translation of the encyclical, available online at *Encyclicals -- Pius XI -- The Holy See -- The Holy Father*. < [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_29091932\\_acerba-animi\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_29091932_acerba-animi_en.html)>. Last accessed 3 August 2012. For the drafting of the Encyclical (and evidence of Pacelli's involvement), see ASV Messico, Pos.558 P.O., fasc.319, ff.3-90.

<sup>66</sup> Pius XI, *Acerba Animi*, §12.

society, these “demons” were in effect endangering “religion and social peace.” It was time, the 1932 encyclical concluded, for “all nations to abandon their base self-interests, and unite in a single front against these evil phalanges, which are enemies of God and of humankind.”<sup>67</sup>

The trouble was, however, that the Vatican's secret campaign to prevent the Soviet Union from joining the League of Nations did not seem to be succeeding, nor did the American Catholic lobby (spearheaded by Walsh) appear capable of blocking the United States' diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union. Given this, how, practically speaking, could the Vatican respond to the Soviet Union and place itself at the head of the "single front" of anti-Soviet states, as recommended by the 1932 encyclical?

#### **4. Launching the Anticommunist Campaign: Pacelli's 1932 Circular**

In April of 1932, Eugenio Pacelli provided his answer to the question. The Vatican, he recommended, must abandon its secret and disunited efforts to mobilize against the Soviet Union. Instead, the time had come for a large-scale campaign, which would present the Soviet Union as the leading threat to the European continent and the world at large. The campaign would pressure the Vatican's partner states to take vigorous action against the Soviet Union, and it would encourage non-partner states to do the same. It would also turn Catholic Action into a loudspeaker for the Vatican's new anticommunist political ideology, which would take the form of a sustained attack on communist ideas, and the provision of an alternative vision: a world of corporatist, peaceful, Church-state duopolies.

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<sup>67</sup> “I partiti sovversivi profittando dell’universale disagio, spiegano sempre più impudentemente le loro bandiere di empietà e di odio contro ogni religione, e tentando, non senza effetto, di congiungere la guerra contro Dio con la lotta per il pane quotidiano, lavorano con tutti i mezzi, per raggiungere il loro diabolico intento [...] Il Santo Padre quindi scongiura tutte le nazioni, a deporre ogni basso egoismo, e a volere unire tutte le forze in un unico fronte contro le malvage falangi, nemiche di Dio non meno che del genere umano.” Pius XI, *Caritate Christi* (3 May 1932). This summary of the Encyclical can be found in “La nuova Enciclica del S. Padre Pio XI sulle presenti angustie del genere umano.” Rome, 3 May 1932. ASV, Segr di Stato, 1932, rubr.1, fasc.2, ff.37-39.

Pacelli articulated his motivations and visions for the shift via a circular letter, which was distributed to Vatican officials in over forty-three countries.<sup>68</sup> The long letter began by making the Catholic hierarchy aware of the supposed threat posed by the Soviet Union to the Vatican. "Communist propaganda today represents a grave danger for the social order in general, and for the Catholic religion in particular," the letter began. Citing the Soviet Union's anti-religious legislation, Pacelli explained how communism was in its essence anti-Catholic. Indeed, the Soviet Union had supposedly targeted two "most Catholic nations," Mexico and Spain, in a bid to quickly destroy the Catholic Church and the Catholic faith. To date, the Soviets had been able to expand communism so successfully because they cleverly targeted individuals that drifted across national boundaries -- for instance, sailors, merchants, university students, soldiers, postal system workers, telegraph employees, train conductors and pilots. Further, Pacelli noted, Moscow had figured out how to pitch its message in a language that was appealing to groups of all social classes and nationalities. It did so not only through traditional press organs but also through a covert film and radio industry that spread communism through entertainment. Soviet agents had also proved masterful in setting up organizations that directly competed with Catholic Action. In this way, Pacelli noted, communism had become popular not only throughout Western, Central and Eastern Europe, but had also won followers as far afield as North and South America, Australia, China and India.

What could the Vatican do to respond to this threat? The first-order necessity, Pacelli explained, was to gather more information on the precise nature of communist tactics, and rank countries according to the degree to which they had already been penetrated by Soviet forces. To facilitate this, Pacelli included an extensive questionnaire he asked all readers to fill out and

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<sup>68</sup> The countries to which the circular was sent included Austria, Argentina, Albania, Australia, the Belgian Congo, Belgium, Brazil, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Haiti, Hungary, Indochina, Iraq, Iran, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Libya, the Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey, Venezuela and Yugoslavia. The highways and byways of Vatican information dissemination are outlined in Cardinal Pacelli's note accompanying the 14 April 1932 Circular letter. ASV, AES Stati Ecclesiastici (quarto periodo), 1932-1942, pos.474 P.O., fasc.475, ff28f.



send back as quickly as possible.<sup>69</sup> The second step was for the Vatican to turn communist tactics on their head by launching its own substantive anticommunist crusade. This crusade, Pacelli suggested, must operate on multiple fronts. Certainly, it must make use of traditional means used by the Church for centuries in its campaigns against its various enemies: "acts of reparation, pilgrimages, expiatory communions, prayers for the persecuted of Russia, Mexico and Spain, etc."<sup>70</sup> Additionally, the Vatican's new anticommunist campaign must also include a stronger Vatican presence in mass media, so as to provide a Catholic response to the Soviet presence in radio and film. Further, the Vatican anticommunist campaign must lean extensively on Catholic Action, which would be encouraged to militate actively against overt and covert communist groups. Finally and most urgently, the Vatican needed to use its newfound diplomatic prowess to influence partner and non-partner states to turn against the Soviet Union. Luckily, Pacelli noted, concordat partners like Italy and Germany seemed willing to heed the Vatican's advice. Perhaps due to his close ties to Edmund A. Walsh and members of the American hierarchy, the Vatican Secretary of State showered praise on the work of the United States' Fish Commission, which between 1930 and 1931 had accused several American citizens of harboring communist tendencies, highlighting in particular the purported link between

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<sup>69</sup> To paraphrase Pacelli's questions: 1. What are the political manifestations of the communist party in your country? Do communist parties seem to be plotting to take power through the ballots or by force? 2. Are there signs of secret communist activity, particularly in schools and ports? 3. What kinds of Soviet films, newspapers, flyers, and journals are distributed in your country? (Here, Pacelli noted that even films with apparently anodyne titles could be fronts for communist propaganda -- hence it was necessary to report all Russian production agencies whose films were being distributed); 4. What is the attitude of public opinion and the press towards communism? Are they sympathetic and curious, indifferent or critical?; 5. What is the attitude of the ruling government towards the communist party? Does the government conduct counter-propaganda against communism? Does this counter-propaganda highlight the need to protect religion and religious orders?; and finally, 6. Are Catholics in your country mobilized against communism? Is Catholic Action well-established in your country, for both youth and adults? Do these organizations understand that their task is to mobilize around issues of pressing social concern? Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> "...funzioni di riparazione, pellegrinaggi, comunioni espiatrici, preghiere per i perseguitati della Russia, del Messico e della Spagna, esercizi spirituali alle élites, ecc." Ibid.

communism and anti-Catholicism.<sup>71</sup> Pacelli suggested that this was simply the beginning of a wide effort to convince both state leaders and Catholic individuals that the Soviet Union represented the world's leading threat, and that it must be isolated and disempowered.

In this way, Pacelli's 1932 circular provided a new, authoritative interpretive framework for the Catholic world, according to which all present-day instances of instability and anti-clericalism could be traced to the Soviet Union. Second, the circular encouraged Vatican officials far and wide to help launch an anticommunist campaign that would seek to isolate the Soviet Union and curb the spread of communism. In the process, the circular announced a large-scale information-gathering mission, which sought to get a sense of the extent of communist penetration and glean which communist tactics appeared particularly effective.

The 1932 circular thus inaugurated a new moment in Vatican history. Alongside a diplomacy focused on the preservation of concordat gains, the Vatican would now also focus its diplomacy on naming, shaming, and weakening the Soviet Union on the international stage. As a priest who would emerge centrally in the Vatican anticommunist effort, Father Joseph Henri Ledit, would later comment, the 1932 call to unite against the Soviet Union represented a turning point in Vatican history. By drawing "a vivid picture of Godlessness throughout the world," the Vatican was for the first time laying out its strategy for countering the global forces of "organized militant atheism."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> The fervently anticommunist American politician, Hamilton Fish, put the committee together. The committee met from June of 1930 through January of 1931, and targeted in particular the ACLU and the communist presidential candidate William Z. Foster. For more on the commission and the man behind it, see Anthony Troncone, "Hamilton Fish Sr. and the Politics of American Nationalism, 1912-1945" (Ph.D. diss., Department of History, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1993).

<sup>72</sup> Father Ledit's memories of Ledóchowski. Undated manuscript, most likely written soon after Ledóchowski's death in 1942. JESCOM, Ledochowski, "Varia ad eius Vitam" n.1025/355.

## Conclusion

It took approximately a year and a half for the Vatican to translate its diplomatic program into practice. During this arc of time, Pacelli and his associates in the Secretariat of State compiled the responses to the 1932 circular regarding communist tactics and centers of activity, and replaced the chief proponent of the previous, conciliatory, attitude towards the former Russian Empire.<sup>73</sup> They also sought to convince politicians and members of the Catholic hierarchy and laity to come onboard with the new campaign.

One key platform for explaining the Vatican's new diplomatic turn against the Soviet Union was the exceptional Holy Year, inaugurated in April of 1933. Officially Holy Years were supposed to coincide with Jubilees, and since the last Holy Year had been held in 1925, the next one should have taken place in 1950. However, the Pope decided to anticipate the event by seventeen years for political reasons and because of the drop in contributions from the faithful. It was decided that hosting a massive pilgrimage event in Rome might not only help repair some of the losses, but also provide an opportunity to inform the faithful about the Vatican's new decision to turn forcefully against the Soviet Union.<sup>74</sup> In his official sermons and speeches delivered over the course of the Holy Year, Pacelli made the Soviet persecution of Catholic priests and congregations his main focus, while Pius XI highlighted how Mexico and Spain were infected by the Soviet contagion.<sup>75</sup> The Pope explained that the Jubilee had been exceptionally extended so as to bring about "the reparation of the whole Catholic world," which was under

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<sup>73</sup> Archival evidence indicates that the leading clerics responsible for D'Herbigny's downfall were Eugenio Pacelli, Donato Sbaretti, Nicola Canali and Lorenzo Lauri. For strong complaints about D'Herbigny issued by these clerics, see, inter alia, ASV, AES (quarto periodo) PCPR, pos.1, fasc.1, ff.30-35; ACS, MI, DGPS, DPP, fascicoli personali, b.386, fasc. D'Arbigny (*sic*) [D'Herbigny]; and Fiduciario #571 [Italo Tavolato], 12 May 1934. *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Pollard, *Money and the Rise of the Modern Papacy*, passim.

<sup>75</sup> The speeches are reprinted in *Il Messaggero*, 7 and 15 April 1933. As cited in R.J.B. Bosworth, "L'Anno Santo (Holy Year) in Fascist Italy 1933-4," *European History Quarterly* 40 (2010): 436-57, here 446.

threat because "the destructive efforts of Militant Atheists are on the rise." "These depraved men," the Pope warned pilgrims to Rome, "are endeavoring to destroy not only all religion but every vestige of civic culture and true refinement."<sup>76</sup>

The 1933 Holy Year was not only directed at the Catholic hierarchy and laity; it also sought to encourage European politicians to join the Vatican in its new turn against the Soviet Union. The necessity of a joint Italian-Vatican front against the forces of disorder was made quite explicit, as the Holy Year was made to coincide with the Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution, and as numerous Fascist and Vatican commentators celebrated in speeches and articles the coming together of these two powers against a single enemy.<sup>77</sup> The Holy Year may also have facilitated the Vatican's union with two strongly anticommunist politicians, as the institution concluded the last wave of concordat diplomacy.

The concordats with Austria and Germany were signed in June and July of 1933, respectively. Both were concluded with newly appointed authoritarian leaders, whose anticommunism was attractive to the Vatican. Austria's staunchly Catholic leader, Engelbert Dollfuss (1892-1934) had come to power in May of 1932, and had moved quickly to replace parliamentary government (which he considered susceptible to Marxist revolution) with an authoritarian system. Similarly, Germany's newly appointed Chancellor Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) claimed that the February 1933 Reichstag fire was evidence that communists were plotting revolution, and accordingly seized emergency measures to institute a dictatorship, harshly suppress the left, and suspend the right to assembly, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press. The Führer immediately recognized the importance of allying with the Vatican, and began pursuing concordat negotiations. In March, he promised that he would honor the Holy See's concordats with individual German states, maintain government support of Catholic schools,

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<sup>76</sup> AAS, 26:139 (1934). As cited by Ledóchowski, "On the need of vigorously opposing modern atheism: a letter addressed to the whole society," Rome, 27 April 1934. In *Selected writings of Father Ledóchowski* (Chicago: American Assistancy of the Society of Jesus, 1945), 601-6.

<sup>77</sup> This is the main claim made by R.J.B. Bosworth, op.cit.

and uphold religious education in public schools.<sup>78</sup> In an April 1933 meeting with top-ranking German Catholic clergy, he proclaimed, “I will protect the rights and freedom of the church and will not permit them to be touched. You need have no apprehensions concerning the freedom of the church.”<sup>79</sup> Soon, Pius XI was confiding to ambassadors his respect for Hitler's willingness to join forces with the Catholic Church in the fight against Bolshevism.<sup>80</sup> For that matter, Pius XI was not alone: the notion that Hitler could stem the Soviet tide (and that there was such a revolutionary tide to stem) was shared by numerous European leaders of the time.<sup>81</sup>

The swiftly concluded Austrian and German concordats, negotiated by Eugenio Pacelli, closely resembled in both form and content the concordats the Vatican had concluded in the preceding decade. Like the Italian concordat, the Austrian agreement for instance proclaimed the Roman Catholic Church as the favored religion of the state. It imposed strict penalties against all attacks on religion and the church, recognized the civil validity of religious marriages, and gave Roman Catholic clergy free access to public institutions, including orphanages, hospitals, prisons and other state institutions. Finally, the agreement increased the amount of religious instruction offered in public schools and promised state funds to confessional schools.

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<sup>78</sup> Reichstag speech, 23 March 1933. *Dokumente der deutschen Politik und Geschichte von 1848 bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. 4, ed. Johannes Hohfeld (Berlin: Herbert Wendler & Co, 1954), 30. As cited in Joseph A. Biesinger, “The Reich Concordat of 1933,” *Controversial Concordats: The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini and Hitler*, ed. Frank Coppa (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 126.

<sup>79</sup> Meeting of 26 April 1933. As cited in Ernst C. Helmreich, *The German Churches under Hitler* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979), 241.

<sup>80</sup> Charles-Roux to Bonnet, 7 March 1933. As cited in Chenaux, *Pie XII*, 185.

<sup>81</sup> For instance, Lord Halifax congratulated Hitler for “preventing the entry of communism into his own country,” and “bar[ring] its passage further West.” Record of a conversation between Lord Halifax and Hitler, 19 November 1937. *Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945*, Serie D (1937-1941), vols I-XIII, eds. J.S. Beddie et al. (Baden-Baden: Impr. Nationale, 1950-1970), I, no.31. As cited in Lorna Waddington, *Hitler's Crusade: Bolshevism and the Myth of the International Jewish Conspiracy* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 2.

<sup>82</sup> Within one year of its conclusion, Dollfuss proclaimed Austria a Catholic, corporatist, nation, inspired in both economic and political matters by the teachings of Pius XI.

The concordat with the German Reich was agreed upon after only four sessions – a speed unprecedented in Vatican history.<sup>83</sup> Though Pius XI grumbled that the matter had been a bit too quick, he posed no substantive resistance to Pacelli's *tour-de-force*.<sup>84</sup> Like others before it, this concordat guaranteed the right of the Church to teach and publicly defend Catholic principles. It authorized religious instruction in public schools and state support for Catholic schools, whose personnel would be chosen by the Church. Catholic parents were endowed with the right to demand the creation of confessional schools. Vatican organizations were endowed with freedom of action, on the condition that they remain “apolitical” -- that is, that they halt their support for the German Center Party.<sup>85</sup> In exchange for the rights granted by the state, the Vatican promised to have its bishops take an oath of loyalty to the Reich government. The Vatican further promised that religious instruction would encourage patriotism and loyalty to the state.<sup>86</sup> If Hitler celebrated the conclusion of the concordat for the prestige it gave the Nazi party, Pacelli,

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<sup>82</sup> The text of the Austrian concordat is reprinted in Paul Parsy, *Les Concordats récents (1914-1935)* (Paris: Imprimerie Georges Subervie, 1936).

<sup>83</sup> Biesinger, “The Reich Concordat of 1933,” 131.

<sup>84</sup> Emma Fattorini, Hubert Wolf, Frank Coppa, and others have arguably made a bit too much of Pius XI's supposed “resistance” to the concordat. Needless to say, if his resistance had been substantive, the treaty would have never been signed.

<sup>85</sup> Crucially, the concordat failed to outline which particular Catholic organizations would be protected, opening the way for the persecutions of Catholic Action that would soon follow.

<sup>86</sup> For more information on the concordat, see Konrad Repgen, “Hitlers Machtergreifung und der deutsche Katholizismus,” in *Katholische Kirche im Dritten Reich*, ed. Dieter Albrecht (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald, 1976), 1-34; Ludwig Volk, S.J., *Das Reichskonkordat vom 20. Juli 1933; von den Ansätzen in der Weimarer Republik bis zur Ratifizierung am 10. September 1933* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1972); idem, “Zur Kundgebung des deutschen Episkopats vom 28. März 1933,” *Stimmen der Zeit* 173 (1963-4): 431-56; Victor Conzemius, “German Catholics and the Nazi Regime in 1933,” *Irish Ecclesiastical Review* 108 (1967): 326-35.

on his part, highlighted how the 1933 concordat with the German Reich enshrined canon law and expanded the Vatican's power in German society.<sup>87</sup>

There was nothing inherently surprising about the Vatican's pursuit of concordat diplomacy with Germany and Austria, which were, after all, key European countries with which the Vatican had sought an alliance for decades. However, the speedy conclusion of the June-July concordats may also have demonstrated that the Vatican's anticommunist credentials made it more attractive to European states. Furthermore, it showed that anticommunism had become a contributing factor in shaping the Vatican's decision-making process regarding the selection of friends and foes. It would remain a central factor well into the 1950s, in large part due to the Vatican's decision to institutionalize anticommunism from the mid 1930s. How the Vatican did so -- and how its decision to do so fit within its continued attempt to expand its influence in Europe and beyond -- is analyzed in the following chapter.

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<sup>87</sup> See Guenter Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Hitler's Wars* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), 86, and Biesinger, *op.cit.*, 141.

## Chapter Five

### *An Iron Cage: Institutionalizing the Campaign, 1934-6*

*[They] today determine the lives of all individuals born into their mechanism [...] Fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage.*  
-- Max Weber, 1905<sup>1</sup>

*Institutions [are] the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction.*  
-- Douglass North, 1990<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

In 1934, the Vatican launched an ambitious campaign against the Soviet Union, which became the new focus of the Vatican's diplomatic apparatus. Following the circulation of Pacelli's circular in 1932, a series of key figures within the Vatican began to discuss how to implement the campaign. They agreed that the first priority was to found an institution expressly dedicated to battling communism.<sup>3</sup> This institution would be officially administered by members of the Jesuit order, maintain constant communication with the Vatican Secretary of State, and have Vatican City as its base of operations. It would engage in the double project of disseminating the

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<sup>1</sup> Having argued that "die Strukturen des Kapitalismus und der Bürokratie" trace their partial origins to religious asceticism, Weber notes: "Denn indem die Askese aus den Mönchszellen heraus in das Berufsleben übertragen wurde [...] half sie [...] jenen mächtigen Kosmos der modernen, [...] Wirtschaftsordnung erbauen, der heute den Lebensstil aller einzelnen, die in dies Triebwerk hineingeboren werden [...] bestimmt und vielleicht bestimmen wird [...] Aber aus dem Mantel liess das Verhängnis ein stahlhartes Gehäuse werden." Max Weber, *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus* (1905; Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 2004), 44; 204. Talcott Parson's influential translation of Max Weber first used the phrase "iron cage," which later translators have disputed, preferring to render "stahlhartes Gehäuse" as "shell as hard as steel." See, e.g., Peter Baehr, "The 'Iron Cage' and the 'Shell as Hard as Steel': Parsons, Weber and the Stahlhartes Gehäuse Metaphor in the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," *History and Theory* 40, 2 (May 2001): 153-169. I have nonetheless decided to preserve the term "iron cage" in the title of this chapter because I think it more succinctly communicates the core insight that institutions structure (and severely limit) agency.

<sup>2</sup> Douglass North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York: Cambridge, 1990), 3.

<sup>3</sup> The earliest planning document located is the letter of Joseph-Henri Ledit to Wladimir Ledóchowski, Rome (Pont. In. Orientalium Studiorum), 8 January 1933. Archivium Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome (henceforth ARSI), JESCOM 1038 (De comm. Atheo, 1933-1943), fasc. "Secretar. AntiCom. Rome."



Vatican's anticommunist ideology (through Catholic Action, mass media, exhibitions, and courses of study), and of pressuring concordat and non-concordat state partners to band together, in a bid to marginalize the Soviet Union from the international state system.

By no means a foregone conclusion, the Vatican's crusade against the Soviet Union was a heavily contingent development. As argued in the previous chapter, as a result of the Great Depression and the interpretation (and misinterpretation) of events in the Soviet Union, Spain, and Mexico, the Vatican began to feel that its newfound influence in European society was being challenged. Increasingly, the leading threat to the Vatican's prominence was deemed that state which in certain respects was similar to the Vatican, in that it was characterized by a strong ideological program and sought transnational influence through civil society and diplomacy. Events in 1933-4 would further convince many Vatican officials that it was both advantageous and necessary to take action and invest considerable funds and resources in the campaign by expanding its institutional apparatus.

To date, no scholars have analyzed in detail the nature of the Vatican's interwar crusade against the Soviet Union. To be sure, many scholars of the interwar papacy have included a cursory discussion of official encyclicals that sought to delegitimize communism on theological and theoretical grounds.<sup>4</sup> A handful of scholars interested in Catholic civil society between the wars have also spoken about Catholic Action's anticommunist campaigns.<sup>5</sup> However, even historians interested in interwar Vatican-Soviet relations have failed to discuss in great detail the activities the Vatican undertook against the Soviet Union in the 1930s.<sup>6</sup> By and large,

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<sup>4</sup> Thus for instance all recent works on the interwar Vatican contain a discussion of *Divini Redemptoris*, Pius XI's 1937 encyclical against communism, which will be discussed in the following chapter. See the cited works by Hubert Wolf, Emma Fattorini, and Fabrice Bouthillon.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Susan B. Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth: Communists and Catholics in Interwar France* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009); Renato Moro, *La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica, 1929-1937* (Bologna: Il mulino, 1979).

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917-1979*, trans. Sandra Smith (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981); Philippe Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe (1917-1989)* (Paris: Cerf, 2009).

scholars have taken Vatican anticommunism as a given and failed to analyze it as something that needed to be built, both from the ground up and from the top down. They have told a largely teleological story that highlights the "inevitability" of the epochal struggle between opposing worldviews, focusing primarily on the years after the Second World War.<sup>7</sup> In the process, they have exaggerated the correlation between a presumed growth in Soviet activity and the rise of Vatican anticommunism. In fact, the Soviet threat was invariably magnified, as we will see, by the Vatican's new anticommunist institutions, which tended to see Soviet influence everywhere - - a compliment Stalin couldn't resist but taking.<sup>8</sup>

### **1. The Communist International vs. the Catholic International**

If developments in the Soviet Union, Mexico and Spain between 1930 and 1932 had greatly worried the Vatican, its fears were exacerbated in 1933-4, as the United States and the League of Nations extended diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union, despite the Catholic hierarchy's substantial lobbying of American, German and Italian politicians.<sup>9</sup> The Vatican's conviction that

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<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002); Michael Phayer, *Pius XII, The Holocaust and the Cold War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the Age of the Cold War, 1945-1980* (Norwich: Michael Russell, 1992); Paul Philip Mariani, *Church Militant: Bishop Kung and Catholic Resistance in Communist Shanghai* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011); David Kertzer, *Comrades and Christians: Religion and Political Struggle in Communist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and Jonathan Luxmoore, *The Vatican and the Red Flag: The Struggle for the Soul of Eastern Europe* (London: G. Chapman, 1999).

<sup>8</sup> How fear, misinformation and manipulation can transform what are in reality complex and disparate threats into the perception of a single all-powerful enemy has been discussed by various scholars in reference to the rise of the Red Scare in the United States, and the war on a supposedly univocal "Al-Qaeda." See M.J. Heale, *McCarthy's Americans: Red Scare Politics in State and Nation, 1935-1965* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), xivff; Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004); and Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon, 2004).

<sup>9</sup> For more on these efforts, see Chapter Four.

it must respond robustly to the Soviet Union was also exacerbated by the decision of the Communist International, or Comintern, to adopt the bold new Popular Front strategy.

Though the establishment of the Comintern 1919 had originally been due to a rift with socialist parties (the majority of which favored either intervention in World War I or world peace), from early 1934, socialist and communist groups increasingly began joining forces, particularly in Western European countries (like France and Spain) characterized by the rise of radical, revolutionary, rightwing movements. It may well have been these on-the-ground collaborations that paved the way for an official change in policy in Moscow.<sup>10</sup> In May of 1934, the General Secretary of the Comintern announced that henceforth, "The wall between Communist workers and Social Democrats should be destroyed."<sup>11</sup> The shift was immediately echoed in an article in the Russian communist party newspaper *Pravda*, which explained that the Comintern would now encourage communist and socialist parties to join together in a shared struggle against fascism, and form a Popular or United Front. Western European socialist and communist parties thus began to conclude pacts of united action, and, with Russian assistance, hold events protesting fascism, broadly conceived. Popular Fronts mobilized quickly in light of elections slated to be held in late 1934 in both Spain and France. Many observers -- including key Vatican officials -- watched the developments with dismay, and concluded that the Comintern sought to bring about the Sovietization of the European continent.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Some for instance argue that it was the union of communist and socialist workers in France in the aftermath of the attempted right-wing *coup* of February of 1934 (known as the Stavinsky affair) that changed the Comintern's policy. See Matthew Woley, "Courting Disaster? The Communist International in the Third Period," in *In Search of Revolution: International Communist Parties in the Third Period*, ed. Matthew Worley (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 14.

<sup>11</sup> *Tsentralnyi partinii arkhiv* (Sofia), f. 146, op.2, a.c. 317, 1.II. As cited in William J. Chase, *Enemies within the Gates? The Comintern and the Stalinist Repression, 1934-1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 15.

<sup>12</sup> The official change in Comintern policy was enshrined at the Seventh Comintern Congress, held between July and August of 1935. On the Comintern's shift from the Third Period to the Popular Front strategy, see Chase, *op.cit.*, 14ff; "Comintern," in *A Dictionary of 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Communism*, eds. Silvio Pons and Robert Service (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); and Peter Huber, "The Central Bodies of the Comintern: Stalinization and Changing Social Composition," in *Bolshevism, Stalinism and*

The Vatican decided the time had come to step up its own commitment, articulated from 1932, to form an international Catholic front against the Soviet Union. No longer was it sufficient for the Pope and his Secretary of State to make strong rhetorical attacks on the Soviet Union and covertly support a scattered group of organizations countering Soviet influence in civil society and in government in Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Spain, Yugoslavia and the United States.<sup>13</sup> Rather, the time had come to make the Vatican itself a center of action, and take control of international anticommunism -- in much the same way that the Soviet Union, it was thought, had taken control of international communism. From early 1934, plans to found a Vatican institution expressly dedicated to battling the Soviet Union picked up speed. Through a series of letters, both the Vatican Secretary of State and the Secretary General of the Jesuit order sketched out the contours of the Vatican's new diplomatic program, and provided a quick illustration of the tasks with which the Vatican's new anticommunist center would be charged. Wladimir Ledóchowski, whom Pacelli had befriended during his time in Germany, was brought into the project thanks to the many good services he had performed over the previous decade, like translating papal encyclicals, raising considerable funds for the reconstruction of Vatican City and placing Jesuits with diplomatic competence at the Pope's service. Furthermore, Ledóchowski had some important personal characteristics he shared with new functionaries like Pacelli: loyalty, obedience, efficiency, meticulousness, industry, and a keen interest in contemporary politics.<sup>14</sup>

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*the Comintern: Perspectives on Stalinization, 1917-1953*, eds. Norman LaPorte, Kevin Morgan and Matthew Worley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 66-89.

<sup>13</sup> These organizations included the Centre International de Lutte Active Contre le Communisme / Geloof en Vrijheid (based in the Netherlands), Acciò Anticomunista (Spain), Antikomintern (Germany), Unitas (France), the International Center of Active Struggle Against Communism (Belgium) and three Swiss organizations -- the Bureau des Travailleurs Chrétiens Russes (active also in France and Yugoslavia), the Pro Deo organization, and the Entente Against the Third International. See Chapter Four.

<sup>14</sup> On the many services performed by Ledóchowski for the Pope, see Ingoni, *op.cit.*, 108- 23; and Giorgio Petracchi, "I gesuiti e il comunismo tra le due guerre," in *La Chiesa cattolica e il totalitarismo*, ed. Vincenzo Ferrone (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 2004), 123-4. On Ledóchowski's personality, see the contemporary reports of men who knew him well, including Ingoni, *op.cit.*, 129-30; Friedrich

In 1934, Ledóchowski informed all members of the Jesuit order of the imminent creation of the anticommunist institution. Following the style of Pacelli's 1932 circular (discussed in the previous chapter), Ledóchowski began his missive to the Jesuit order by highlighting the great threat posed by the Soviet Union. "Cleverly trained in Moscow," he noted, the Soviet Union's "depraved emissaries," were "powerfully organized," and "actively at work in various countries." Furthermore, the Soviet Union's men and women were having an impact not only where they were most visible, "in Europe and America, in India and in China." Indeed, Soviet propagandists were perverting minds even farther afield -- "in Japan and other very remote parts of Asia, in Egypt and the more populated seaboard of Africa." Echoing fears privately articulated by the Pope regarding the influence of communism among downtrodden African-Americans and imperial subjects, Ledóchowski argued that the Soviet Union was winning converts "even in the far removed and almost unknown Negro districts." In short, the Soviet model -- thanks to the hard and clever work of Soviet propagandists -- was wielding "mighty appeal to millions of human beings in all parts of the world."<sup>15</sup>

The Soviet Union's growing global presence was worrisome indeed, Ledóchowski noted, insofar as its leading aim was to destroy religion in general, and the Catholic Church in particular. Communism, he argued, "has declared open war against God Himself, Whom it considers as its personal enemy." Indeed, in its essence, "communism demands the abolition of all religious creeds and practices, and the institution of absolute atheism and unbelief." For this reason, it was easy for the Secretary General of the Jesuit order to conclude that because "the

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Muckermann, *Im Kampf zwischen zwei Epochen: Lebenserinnerungen* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald, 1973), 635-6; ARSI, Ledóchowsky 1025-15, fasc. "Testimonianze dagli Stati Uniti," sf.335, Lord, Daniel, S.J. St Louis, 29 September 1943; and ARSI, Ledochowsky, 1025/8, fasc.321. Letter of Father Paul de Chastoney, SJ, Sondico, 14 Feb 1943.

<sup>15</sup> Ledóchowski to "The Provincials of the American Assistancy and Canada," Rome, 17 April 1934. Stored in ARSI, JESCOM 1038 (De comm. Atheo, 1933-1943), fasc. "Defensio contra Comm." The original letter is in English. On the Pope's fears regarding Soviet influence among African-Americans and imperial subjects, see Depeche 356 de Fontenay, Rome, 8 Dec 1930, MFAE, vol.32, tome II. As cited in Bouthillon, *La naissance de la mardité*, 215.

Great and growing evil of our time is none other than Communism," it was necessary for the Vatican to mobilize against it. "Does it not look as if the present emergency entail[s] a fresh call to our zeal and generosity as soldiers of Christ and of His Church?" Indeed, did not communism represent "a call to take up arms against the great heresy of our time, more dangerous perhaps than any heresy of the past?"

In reply to this rhetorical question, Ledóchowski thus explained that the Jesuit order, with the assistance of the Secretary of State, would soon found a Secretariat on Atheism. The Secretariat on Atheism would constitute the first response (or "plan of concerted action") in the "momentous struggle" between the two great transnational forces of the twentieth century, Catholicism and communism, as embodied and defended by the Vatican and the Soviet Union.<sup>16</sup> The Secretariat, Ledóchowski further explained, would battle Soviet influence in the workplace, in the home and in government. It would do so by collecting information on the global expansion of the Soviet Union and by disseminating counter-propaganda to individuals of all ages and social classes. The use of the term "Secretariat," though not explained, was certainly not accidental. At a minimum, it was meant to signal the importance of this new anti-Soviet institution, which was now (rhetorically at least) on par with institutions like the Secretariats of War and State of secular governments, the Secretariat of the League of Nations, and, of course, the Soviet Union's Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

Though the announced Secretariat on Atheism won the approval of most members of the Vatican and the Jesuit order, certain individuals voiced their disapproval. For instance, the German Jesuit Gustav Gundlach, to whom Ledóchowski initially offered the leadership of the Secretariat, worried that launching a Vatican campaign against the Soviet Union might be interpreted as further proof of a Vatican alliance with the Nazi party. Hitler and the Nazis, he noted, might gain "moral sustenance" from "an undertaking of this sort, thus confusing

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<sup>16</sup> Ledóchowski, "To the Provincials of the American Assistancy and Canada."

Catholics in Germany and elsewhere weakening the moral influence of the Church.”<sup>17</sup> Other German Jesuits and Vatican officials voiced similar concerns.<sup>18</sup> As will be discussed in the following chapter, some of these figures would gradually be brought onboard with the Vatican’s new diplomatic program. Most would be ignored and intentionally circumvented.

## **2. The Secretariat in Action**

In spring of 1935, the Secretariat on Atheism entered into operation. Based within the limits of Vatican City, funded by the Vatican Secretariat of State, and headed by Joseph Henri Ledit, an enterprising young Jesuit who had traveled to the Soviet Union in the early 1920s, the institution soon became a branch of the Vatican’s foreign policy apparatus. Its creation enabled the Vatican to expand its surveillance of global communist forces and improve its response to the communist penetration of civil society and government structures. It raised the Vatican’s profile, transforming the Vatican into the leader of the battle against the Soviet Union. The Secretariat increasingly helped disseminate a Manichean political ideology, according to which Catholics and communists were archenemies and thus bound to a struggle to the death for survival. This dualistic notion of international politics would be employed to great effect during the Spanish Civil War, and it would soon be mobilized again during the Axis invasion of the USSR, and, in varying forms, throughout the Cold War years.

During its four years in existence, the Secretariat on Atheism would stand at the helm of numerous anti-Soviet undertakings, many of which were conceived directly in response to Comintern activities. Targeting Catholics, the public at large, and European and American politicians, the Secretariat on Atheism would raise awareness of the extent of the Soviet threat

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<sup>17</sup> Johannes Schwarte, *Gustav Gundlach, SJ (1892-1963): massgeblicher Repräsentant der katholischen Soziallehre während der Pontifikate Pius' XI und Pius' XII* (Munich: F. Schönigh, 1975), 29-32.

<sup>18</sup> Letter of Cardinal Faulhaber to Torregrossa, Munich, 5 March 1933. Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede, Rome (henceforth ACDF), R.V.1933, n.15, ff.41-2.

through a pioneering monthly journal translated into multiple languages. It would create and support anticommunist radio and film propaganda, and put together a series of traveling anticommunist exhibitions. It would organize conferences, seminars, and regular courses of study detailing the Vatican's theoretical and practical response to the Soviet Union and training priests to use the pulpit as a loudspeaker to denounce "the spread of atheism under communistic auspices." Additionally, it would encourage youth to shun communist teachings, using concordat victories to spread its particular brand of anticommunism to schools, colleges and universities. In doing so, it would also work in concert with Catholic Action organizations in Italy and elsewhere to make Vatican anticommunism a centerpiece of the education of Catholic youth in parishes, houses of retreat, and Catholic Action summer camps. Finally, the Secretariat would encourage Vatican officials and Catholic Action lobbies to exert direct pressure on government figures to take a stand against the Soviet Union.<sup>19</sup>

The Secretariat on Atheism's many activities consolidated the emergence of the Vatican as a new kind of transnational actor in the 1930s by actively working to present the Vatican as an institution capable of responding to the Soviet challenge.<sup>20</sup> As the programmatic first article of the Secretariat's journal, *Lettres de Rome*, announced, If "Moscow's Comintern is at the head of the Communist International," then "Rome is the center of the Catholic International!"<sup>21</sup> "Thus," Ledóchowski clarified, "shall center be opposed to center – the Roman to the

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<sup>19</sup> Ledóchowski to "The provincials of the American Assistancy and Canada: Directions to accompany letter on communism," Rome, 17 April 1934. ARSI, JESCOM 1038 (De comm. Atheo, 1933-1943), fasc. "Defensio contra Comm."

<sup>20</sup> On how internationalism and nationalism thrived on one another in this period, see, e.g., Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico and the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); and Martin H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann, "Introduction: The Mechanics of Internationalism," in *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society and Politics*, eds. Geyer and Paulmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 7ff.

<sup>21</sup> "Il n'est pas difficile, à Rome, d'entrer en rapports avec tout l'univers. Le Komintern de Moscou est à la tête de l'Internationale Communiste; ceux qui s'occupent de politique ou d'économie internationales se réunissent à Genève. Rome est le centre de l'Internationale catholique!" *Lettres de Rome*, vol.1, n.1 (May 1935), 1. JESCOM, the Private Library of Father Ledóchowski, *Lettres de Rome*.



Moscovite.”<sup>22</sup> As another article in the Secretariat's journal argued, the Secretariat on Atheism was a perfect match for the Comintern, in that it was dedicated to “fight[ing] against communism with the same efficacy that communism fights against Christian civilization.”<sup>23</sup> To be sure, this was because the Vatican was the only “dynamic and truly global organization,” endowed with both actions and ideas, which could compete with the Communist International.<sup>24</sup>

The posturing of Catholic unity against a supposedly unified communist enemy bolstered the illusion of two, strong, well-organized, forces -- in place of that messier reality of weak and fractured networks of shifting elements, many of which did not even recognize Moscow or Rome as their command post. Thus, the fiction of a single, unified, leftist movement, which took its cues from Stalin, helped feed the illusion of a single “Catholic International” led by the Pope and held together by the Secretariat on Atheism.

In fact, the message that the Vatican stood at the head of the “Catholic International” helped remind allies seeking to roll back concordat gains (such as Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy) of the crucial role played by the religious institution in keeping revolutionary forces at bay.

The centrality of maintaining concordat alliances was drive home by first issue of the Secretariat's journal. “We all know,” an anonymous writer for *Lettres de Rome* noted, “that in the mouth of a communist, the word Fascist refers to all governments that are not led by the Third International.”<sup>25</sup> Warning its readers from falling into the Comintern’s “Popular Front

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<sup>22</sup> Ledóchowski, “A Letter to the Fathers Who, in Their Respective Provinces, Direct and Promote the Fight against Atheism,” Rome, 28 October 1934. As translated and reprinted in *Selected Writings of Father Ledóchowski* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1945), 606-8.

<sup>23</sup> “Mais si l’on veut lutter vraiment contre le communisme avec la même efficacité que le communisme lutte contre la civilisation chrétienne, il est indispensable de la faire *avec la même cohésion, la même discipline universelle*.” “Unité révolutionnaire et unité chrétienne,” *Lettres de Rome* (July 1936): 139-142. Stored in JESCOM, the Private Library of Father Ledóchowski, *Lettres de Rome*.

<sup>24</sup> “En dehors de l’Eglise catholique, qui est au dessus de toutes les nations et de toutes les nationalités, l’Internationale Communiste semble être la seule organisation dynamique qui soit vraiment mondiale.” *Lettres de Rome*, vol.1, n.6 (October 1935): 4. Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> “On sait que dans la bouche d’un communiste, le mot de fasciste désigne tout gouvernement qui n’est pas dirigé par la III Internationale.” *Lettres de Rome*, vol.1, n.5 (September 1935): 1. This definition is repeatedly recalled: see for instance the October 1935 issue of *Lettres de Rome*, which affirms that “...pour

trap," the journalist concluded that to call oneself anti-Fascist was analogous to declaring oneself a communist.<sup>26</sup> The inverse, the journal implied, might also hold true: a Fascist was an anticommunist, and thus allied with the Vatican in the struggle against the Soviet Union.

Given the existence of paeans of this sort, it was unsurprising that both the Fascist regime in Italy and the Nazi regime in Germany immediately welcomed the Secretariat and encouraged the publication of its journal. The Fascist secret police provided the Secretariat's leader, Joseph Henri Ledit, with special permission to import over fifty banned publications so as to provide the most up-to-date coverage on communism's expansion.<sup>27</sup> In its first year of publication, the Secretariat's journal also appeased those who worried that the Vatican stood against the Nazi party, by clarifying that the journal's concern would exclusively be communism – other non-communist movements that perhaps sought to challenge Catholicism would be “left aside.”<sup>28</sup> Tellingly, this clarification was issued just a few weeks after the Secretariat began issuing its journal in a German-language edition -- and after Hitler justified the passage of the Nuremberg Laws as a means of safeguarding Germans against the pernicious influence of a subversive “Judeo-Bolshevism” [*Judäo-Bolschewismus*].<sup>29</sup> The Secretariat on Atheism would also give advice to the Fascist, Nazi, and Eastern European regimes regarding the organization

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un communiste, est ‘fasciste’ quiconque oppose le mouvement communiste. Et l’on est ‘fasciste’ dans la mesure où l’on oppose le communisme.” *Lettres de Rome*, vol.1, n.6 (October 1935): 1. Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> *Lettres de Rome*, vol.1, n.1 (May 1935): 14-5. Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Letter of Tacchi Venturi to Arturo Bocchini, dir. of Italy's national and secret police force, Rome, 10 December 1934. Archivio Centrale di Stato, Rome (henceforth ACS), Polizia di stato (henceforth PS), A1, 1937, b.37, fasc. “Ledit.”

<sup>28</sup> “Nos *Lettres* se spécialisent de plus en plus dans l’étude du communisme, laissant de côté les athées d’autres tendances.” In “Pour la paix, ou pour la... ‘lutte finale’?” *Lettres de Rome*, vol.1, n.7 (Nov 1935), p.1. Stored in JESCOM, the Private Library of Father Ledóchowski, *Lettres de Rome*.

<sup>29</sup> Hitler also referenced the Comintern congress of July-August 1935 as justification for the Nuremberg laws. See Lorna Waddington, *Hitler's Crusade: Bolshevism and the Myth of the International Jewish Conspiracy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007), 29.

of anticommunist exhibitions, and help mediate a three-way agreement between Italy, Germany and the Vatican, regarding the joint surveillance and jamming of signals of Radio Moscow.<sup>30</sup>

The Secretariat on Atheism not only strengthened concordat alliances with the Vatican's leading European partners; it also advertised the Vatican's anticommunist credentials to non-allied states, justifying the expansion of Vatican influence even further afield. It supported in various ways Eugenio Pacelli's unprecedented lobbying trips to Argentina (1934), France (1935) and the United States (1936), where the Vatican Secretary of State spoke out against the Soviet Union and sought to present the Vatican as the leading global force against it. For instance, the Secretariat helped Pacelli's speeches abroad be promptly broadcast over Vatican Radio, where they reached Catholic radio listeners around the world.<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, Pacelli's well-publicized attempts to sell Vatican anticommunism not only had an effect on local politicians, as noted by participants on the ground.<sup>32</sup> Even Hitler complained that Pacelli was attempting to deprive "National Socialism of the historic credit of having started the anti-Bolshevik campaign."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> On collaboration regarding blocking Soviet radio stations, see Letter of Cesare Orsenigo, Nunzio Apostolico of Berlin, to Eugenio Pacelli, Berlin, 29 January 1933. AES *Stati Ecclesiastici* (quarto periodo), 1932-1942, pos.474 P.O., fasc.477, ff.3f-5v; Pacelli to Father Filippo Soccorsi, SJ, Vatican, 24 April 1936. ASV, AES *Stati Ecclesiastici*, 1936-8, pos.533 P.O., fasc.556, ff.5; Circular 1478/36, from Pacelli, Vatican, 30 April 1936. *Ibid.*, ff.29-30; and ACS, MI DGPS, DPP, b.44, fasc.C11/48 Germania Polizia. See below for collaboration regarding anticommunist exhibitions.

<sup>31</sup> John Pollard, "Radio, cinema and television, from Pius XI to John XXIII," *The Papacy since 1500: From Italian Prince to Universal Pastor*, eds. James Corkery and Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 185; Marilyn J. Matelski, *Vatican Radio: Propaganda by the Airwaves* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), xviii; Fernando Bea, 'Qui, Radio Vaticana'. *Mezzo secolo della radio del papa* (Vatican City: Edizioni Radio Vaticana, 1981), 96-7.

<sup>32</sup> See Cordell Hull to Myron Taylor, Roosevelt's personal representative to the pope, Washington, 22 May 1940. Taylor Papers, box 10, FDR Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York (henceforth FDRL); and Arnaldo Cortesi, "Pacelli Reported Seeking Aid of U.S. in Anti-Red Drive," *New York Times* (2 October 1936): 1.

<sup>33</sup> See a poorly referenced 1936 clipping from the Nazi newspaper *Angriff*, in Powers, *Not Without Honor*, 450, fn.30. For an early articulation of the ambitions of the Nazi media empire, see Joseph Goebbels' two speeches on the tasks of the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda (March 15 and March 25, 1933), as reprinted in *Goebbels-Reden*, ed. Helmut Heiber (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1971), 90-107. For a broad discussion, see David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2002).

The Secretariat on Atheism showed particular interest in cultivating North and South American audiences -- most likely due to the considerable income these regions generated for the Vatican, and because anticommunist movements in these regions were already active. The Secretariat encouraged local clergy in North and South America to start anticommunist radio broadcasts of their own, following the lead of Berlin bishops who had used radio "in the battle against Bolshevism" from circa 1931, and of Fathers Charles Coughlin and Edmund Walsh, who throughout the early 1930s hosted "radio broadcast conferences on Bolshevism" in the United States, which comfortably reached over ten million listeners.<sup>34</sup> The Secretariat also encouraged local Catholic organizations in the United States (including the United States' Catholic War Veterans, Father Pro Clubs, and Pro Deo organizations) to unite their disparate efforts and create single-topic campaigns maligning the Soviet Union.<sup>35</sup> Though Fascist officials were happy about the spread of anticommunism, they also worried about the budding relationship between the Vatican and the United States. "Yesterday an American car manufacturer gave the Pope a magnificent motor vehicle," a paranoid Fascist secret police officer noted, adding that clearly a highly suspect Vatican-U.S. alliance was in the making, as even the sisters of a prominent prelate had begun, "parading around in a luxurious Cadillacu [*sic*], which is also an American gift."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> On Monsignor Schreiber's radio broadcasts against communism, see D'Herbigny, preparatory notes, and "Ex audientia Ssmi" notes, 8 May 1931. ASV, AES Pro Russia (quarto periodo), 1924-1935, pos. Scatola 4, fasc.27, ff.28. Also see Laura Pettinaroli, "La politique russe du Saint-Siège (1905-1939)," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Lyon, 2008), 936. On Father Walsh, see Draft of Letter from D'Herbigny to Goyau, eventually sent on 26 August 1932. ASV, AES Pro Russia (quarto periodo), 1921-1944, pos. Scatola 37, fasc.215, ff.79-82. On Coughlin, see Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin and the Great Depression* (New York: Vintage, 1983) and Charles Gallagher, SJ, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 49-71.

<sup>35</sup> Powers, *Not Without Honor*, 133-4. On November 23, 1927, the Jesuit Father Michele Agostino Pro had been killed in Mexico; his final words, according to the Jesuit papers that spread his legend, were "Viva Cristo Rey!" Father Ledóchowski had quickly ordered Jesuits to honor "this glorious death." Ingoni, 221.

<sup>36</sup> "Ieri una Casa di Automobili americana ha fatto dono al Papa di una magnifica vettura, che Pio XI si è affrettato ad accettare, ricambiando la cortesia con...L'Apostolica Benedizione! [...] Intanto le sorelle di Mons Pizzardo marciano in una lussuosa auto Cadillacu [*sic*] (pure americana) regalata al prelado." Fascist secret police report on Pizzardo, Rome, 14 November 1929. ACS, MI, DGPS, DPP, Fascicoli personali, Serie B, b.19, fasc. "Pizzardo monsignore," f.139.

In 1937, the Secretariat on Atheism began publishing its leading journal not only in French and German, but also in English and Spanish.<sup>37</sup> To ensure that the new policy actually lead to an increase in readership, Pacelli promptly mandated that the journal be required reading for all Vatican personnel, and that it be made available in all Catholic Action centers.<sup>38</sup> He personally urged that clergy in the Americas actively expand Catholic Action as an anticommunist measure, noting for instance to Mexican clergy that, "Catholic Action is not a pious confraternity that recites a few prayers; it is a project of consciousness-formation [concerning] the entirety of human being!" As such, Catholic Action would be able to train a generation of anticommunists, and thus was of vital importance.<sup>39</sup> As further proof of its commitment to the Americas, the Secretariat also expanded the journal's news coverage considerably, including extensive analyses charting the purported growth of Soviet-led communist movements in countries like Cuba, Mexico, El Salvador, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and of course Canada and the United States.<sup>40</sup>

By 1936, according to a Jesuit who may well also have had careerist reasons to inflate the good news, the Secretariat's work in the Western hemisphere "had already penetrated in the highest governmental spheres," where it "exercised an extraordinary influence."<sup>41</sup> The same point was made by the Jesuit's Secretary General, who in an internal letter claimed that the

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<sup>37</sup> ARSI, JESCOM 1038 (De comm. Atheo, 1933-1943), fasc. "Defensio contra Comm."

<sup>38</sup> Fernando Cento, Nunzio in Venezuela, to Pacelli, 30 June 1936. Letter of ASV, AES Stati Ecclesiastici, 1936-8, pos.533 P.O., fasc.556, ff.92.

<sup>39</sup> "L'Azione Cattolica [...] non è una pia confraternita per recitare qualche preghiera, ma è formazione di coscienze perché tutto l'uomo e tutta la vita si ispirino ai dettami del Vangelo." Pacelli, "Messico: Commissione Messicana diretta dal Vescovo di Chiapas," 14 December 1936, ASV, AES Messico (4° periodo), 1936, pos.590, fasc.388, ff.13-16.

<sup>40</sup> See, e.g., "Le plus grand péril," *Lettres de Rome* (July 1936): 129; and "Pourquoi les catholiques rejettent le bolchevisme," *Lettres de Rome* (June 1936): 1.

<sup>41</sup> "*Lettres de Rome* qui n'ont qu'un an d'existence ont pénétré déjà dans les plus hautes sphères des Gouvernements et de l'Eglise et y exercent une influence extraordinaire." Letter of P. Lambert, Provincial of Paris, to four unspecified Jesuit Provincials, Rome, 9 February 1936. ARSI, JESCOM 1038 (De comm. Atheo, 1933-1943), fasc. "Defensio contra Comm."

globe's "leaders and rulers" were growing increasingly convinced that communism posed a threat and that they must unite with the Vatican "to ward off this calamity."<sup>42</sup> But even as the Vatican continued to claim leadership of a global anticommunist campaign, its anticommunist practices became increasingly imbricated in political movements which either overtly sympathized with Nazi-Fascist parties, or agreed that Germany and Italy posed a much less worrisome threat to the Church's survival than did the Soviet Union.

### **3. An Imbricated Anticommunism**

The birth of an imbricated anticommunism took place in the radicalized political climate of the Popular Front years, as personnel in the Secretariat on Atheism began to more actively reflect on the art of propaganda -- that is, how they might reach the minds of the masses through the use of traditional and non-traditional media. In particular, the Secretariat's officials became interested in how entertainment media (rather than news media) could mold minds, in much the same way that Cinecittà or the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda, for instance, seemed capable of packaging precise political messages within pleasing envelopes. The Secretariat translated this awareness into practice as it launched an ambitious anticommunist book prize and hosted the first of three high-profile anticommunist exhibitions.

To be sure, the papacy had long been interested in propaganda -- indeed, the word itself had been coined during the reign of Pope Gregory XV, who in 1622 had established the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda of the Faith, to spread Catholicism to the non-Catholic world. With the rise of industrialization and literacy rates, propaganda had taken on a new meaning for states eager to communicate their views to citizens -- something the Vatican understood well, as in 1861, it chose to found its own newspaper (*L'Osservatore romano*) and grow a distinct

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<sup>42</sup> Ledóchowski, "On furthering the fight against atheism: a letter addressed to the whole society," 19 June 1936. In *Selected writings of Father Ledochowski*, 608-14.

Catholic journalism, starting from the late nineteenth century. The Great War marked a second important shift, as governments professionalized and institutionalized propaganda bodies. President Wilson's Committee on Public Information, for instance, famously aimed to use the latest developments in the science of public opinion (as well as extensive news management and censorship) to sway Americans in favor of U.S. intervention in the war, and to disseminate a carefully crafted image of the United States abroad.<sup>43</sup> Lenin promptly followed suit, launching an extensive propaganda campaign both at home and in the wider world.<sup>44</sup> So too Mussolini and Hitler constructed media empires capable of disseminating their political ideologies far and wide.<sup>45</sup> For the first time, new entertainment media -- like film -- were being marshaled in support of official government positions. Though it took the Vatican a bit of time to catch up, not least because of its long-standing suspicions regarding the supposed corrupting influence of film and other media, Pius XI helped pioneer the Vatican's embrace of new media as vital instruments in the propaganda war against the Soviet Union.

In the same years that he rolled back the Vatican's prohibition on film and encouraged the founding of Catholic film and censorship companies, the Pope also turned his attention to literature.<sup>46</sup> In the early 1930s, the former librarian -- whose love of classic novels like

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<sup>43</sup> For an introduction, see Susan A. Brewer, "Crusade for Democracy: Over There in the Great War," in *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 46-87.

<sup>44</sup> For an overview, see Philip Taylor, "The Bolshevik Revolution and the War of Ideologies (1917-1939)," in *Readings in Propaganda and Persuasion: New and Classic Essays*, eds. Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell (London: Sage Publications, 2006); and Alexander Guchkov, "The Third International and Colonial Propaganda," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 10, 30 (April 1932): 509-24.

<sup>45</sup> For a comparative look at the Nazi and Fascist media empire, see Clemens Zimmermann, *Medien im Nationalsozialismus: Deutschland 1933-1945, Italien 1922-1943, Spanien 1936-1951* (Wien: Böhlau, 2007); Benjamin Martin, *A New Order for European Culture: The German-Italian Axis and the Reordering of International Cultural Exchange, 1936-1943* (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 2006); and Aristotle Kallis, *Fascist Ideology: Territory and Expansionism in Italy and Germany, 1922-1945* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>46</sup> Pius XI's landmark text on cinema, which was greatly influenced by the work of enterprising American Catholics, is *Vigilanti Cura* (29 June 1936), in which the Pope declared: "The motion picture should not be simply a means of diversion, a light relaxation to occupy an idle hour. With its magnificent power, it can and must be a bearer of light and a positive guide to what is good." On Pius XI's embrace of cinema,

Alessandro Manzoni's *I promessi sposi* was well known -- proposed that the Secretariat back a worldwide competition for the best religiously themed anticommunist novel.<sup>47</sup> The competition would encourage writers from all over to the world to produce Catholic anticommunist literature and thus (it was hoped) help create a new literary genre: the Catholic anticommunist novel. As one of the competition proponents affirmed, "An international competition on this theme would surely result in a flowering of compositions, which -- even if they are not all given a prize -- would appear in nearly all countries." Accordingly, novels submitted "in any language" would be encouraged. Even though the Vatican already knew that it would be unable to find prize administrators competent in every language, it was nonetheless decided that the priority was to increase the production of Catholic anticommunist literature -- whether or not there would be personnel capable of reading it.<sup>48</sup>

The anticommunist novel prize proposed by the Pope sought to convince the educated classes of the wisdom of Catholic anticommunism through non-traditional means. As Vatican bureaucrats reasoned, literature was uniquely able to communicate moral lessons because it appealed "to both reason and emotion." "A novel -- well-connected to reality -- seems a useful way, to better instruct the public at large and public opinion on the errors and horrors of

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and on its effect on the wider Catholic world, see Gaye Ortiz, "The Catholic Church and its Attitude to Film as an Arbiter of Cultural Meaning," in *Mediating Religion: Studies in Media, Religion and Culture*, ed. Sophia Marriage (London: Continuum Books, 2003), 179-200; Harvey O'Brien, "Church and State and Film," in *The Real Ireland: The Evolution of Ireland in Documentary Film* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 61-3; Daniela Gennari, *Postwar Italian Cinema: American Intervention, Vatican Interests* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 22ff; Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 301; and Gregory D. Black, *The Catholic Crusade against the Movies, 1940-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>47</sup> For Domenico Tardini's reports of Ratti's love of the great Milanese novelist Alessandro Manzoni (and the Milanese poet Carlo Porta), see *Domenico Tardini, 1888-1961: l'azione della Santa Sede nella crisi fra le due guerre*, ed. Carlo Felice Casula (Rome: Edizioni Studium, 1988), 89.

<sup>48</sup> "Un concours -- internationale -- sur ce theme provoquerait sans doute une floraison de compositions qui, même non primées, paraîtraient un peu en tout pays." Letter from D'Herbigny to Monsieur Georges Goyau, Vatican, 11 July 1932. ASV, AES Pro Russia 1921-1944 (quarto periodo), pos. Scatola 37, fasc.215, ff.73.



Bolshevism,” they noted.<sup>49</sup> Of course, the idea of using emotions to impart lasting lessons was perfectly in line with the Vatican's new mass mobilization strategy, as explicitly theorized in *Quas Primas* and by the new science of public opinion management.<sup>50</sup> The notion was echoed by one of the future prize coordinators, who noted that the idea of using literature "as a weapon in the fight against Bolshevism" was both "quite new" and "charming." "It denotes a comprehension, which delights me, of the role that literature and novels play in contemporary life," and particularly "of the profound influence novels can have on ideas and mores."<sup>51</sup>

So as to confer legitimacy on the project, it was decided that the prize should be openly administered by respected members of Paris' Académie française. The Vatican proposed to provide covert funding and contribute the entirety of the prize money. It also promised to provide the funds and personnel needed to print, distribute, and where necessary translate the winning novels. In exchange, Vatican officials would withhold veto powers, in case any of the Académie's proposed winning novels ran counter to the theory and practice of Vatican anticommunism.

Creating a Catholic anticommunist literary culture out of thin air was no easy feat, even in an age of emergent "authoritarian fictions," to use Susan Suleiman's term.<sup>52</sup> A close glance at the political leanings of those who administered the Pope's anticommunist prize and those awarded prizes demonstrates the extent to which the Vatican was willing to lean on extreme right-wing groups in order to advance its own, increasingly imbricated, anticommunist

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<sup>49</sup> "Il semble utile, pour instruire mieux le grand public et l'opinion générale, que, sous forme de roman – mais bien appuyé sur la réalité – les erreurs et les horreurs du Bolchévisme soient mises en lumière." Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> On *Quas Primas*, see chapter three. The most influential 1920s studies on the art of propaganda include Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Brace and Co., 1922) and Edward L. Bernays, *Propaganda* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1928).

<sup>51</sup> "L'idée elle-même me séduit. Je la trouve tout-à-fait moderne. Elle dénote une compréhension, qui m'enchant, du rôle que la littérature, que le roman joue dans la vie contemporaine, de l'action profonde qu'il peut exercer sur les idées et les moeurs. C'est une arme dont on n'a pas encore fait usage dans la lutte contre le bolchevisme." Letter from Reynold de Cressier to Bordeaux, Fribourg (Switzerland), 19 January 1933. ASV, AES Pro Russia 1921-1944 (4<sup>o</sup> periodo), pos. Scatola 37, fasc.216, ff.50-1.

<sup>52</sup> Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions: The Ideological Novel as a Literary Genre* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

campaign. For instance, the two main administrators of the prize on the French side were Georges Goyau, a publicist known for his sympathies with the radical right-wing anti-Semitic and monarchist movement, Action Française,<sup>53</sup> and Henry Bordeaux, a prolific novelist outspoken in his support for Mussolini and his aversion to parliamentary democracy.<sup>54</sup> Of the over five hundred manuscripts submitted, those that received positive evaluations from the jury members (who shared Goyau and Bordeaux's politics) were by and large written by Russian exiles who resided in Germany, Austria, France and Switzerland, and voiced sympathies with extreme right-wing movements.

The first-place novel was awarded in late 1935 and read in full by the Pope. He deemed it "a persuasive and impressive [...] collection of snapshots of a fierce tragedy."<sup>55</sup>

The novel represented the second major work by Alja Rachmanova (1898-1991), a Russian exile living in Vienna who had struggled as a small shop owner before turning to writing.<sup>56</sup> Her first significant piece of writing published in Western Europe was a memoir of her experiences as a student in Russia during the revolution; her second, the novel submitted for the Vatican

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<sup>53</sup> Goyau's many works include *L'Église libre dans l'Europe libre* (Paris: Perrin, 1920), *La pensée religieuse de Joseph de Maistre* (Paris: Perrin, 1921), *Orientations catholiques* (Paris: Perrin et Cie, 1925), and *Dieu chez les Soviets* (Paris: Flammarion, 1929). He was a close friend of Cardinal Baudrillart and in regular correspondence with both Charles Maurras and General Castelnau. See Letter from Castelnau to Goyau, Paris 19 July 1921. Archives de l'Académie française (henceforth AAF), Fonds Goyau, 7 AP 5, correspondance Gen. Castelnau; "Vous êtes la gloire des catholiques français et vous l'êtes avec une belle modestie!" Undated business card-letter from Baudrillart to Goyau. Ibid., 7 AP 1, correspondance Mgr Baudrillart; and Letter from Castelnau to Goyau, Paris 19 July 1921. Ibid., 7 AP 5, correspondance Gen. Castelnau. Despite the Vatican's 1926 reprimand of Action Française (which it was feared would lessen allegiance to the Pope and interfere with the Vatican's conclusion of an agreement with Republican France), members of the organization continued to enjoy special status throughout the interwar years.

<sup>54</sup> Letter of Henri Bordeaux to Goyau, Paris, 17 September 1932. ASV, AES Pro Russia 1921-1944 (4° periodo), pos. Scatola 37, fasc.216, ff.18. On Bordeaux's respect for Mussolini (whom he had personally met), see AAF, Registre des procès-verbaux, 27 December 1934.

<sup>55</sup> "Sa Sainteté a reçu un exemplaire du livre dont Votre Eminence Révme s'est occupée. Le Saint Père l'a lu entièrement; il l'a jugé persuasif et impressionnant; les scènes qui s'y trouvent rapportées sont, en effet, des scènes vecues, et tout l'ouvrage est un recueil d'instantanées d'une féroce tragédie." Letter from d'Herbigny to Baudrillart, Rome, 14 Feb 1936. ASV, AES Pro Russia 1921-1944 (4° periodo), pos. Scatola 37, fasc.217, ff.6

<sup>56</sup> See Alja Rachmanova, "My Milkshop in Vienna," in *The Sea-Raiders*, ed. Edward Keble Chatterton, (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1936), 296ff; *The Producer*, vol.19 (Cooperative Press Agency, 1935), 192.

competition, which was issued by a Berlin-based publishing house known for showcasing pro-Nazi work.<sup>57</sup> Entitled *The Factory of New Men*, Rachmanova's novel presents the Soviet Union as a land where women have lost their dignity, children their families, and individuals their rights. It profiles two heroic women in their attempts to preserve their Christian purity. Repeatedly, the duo is forced to confront cruel party *apparatchik* attempting to force young girls into prostitution. "I am suffocating in this atmosphere," one of the two women cries. Denouncing Soviet attitudes towards religion and female probity, she notes, "I want to keep my soul and body pure, especially because they ridicule these things; I want some religion, especially because they reject all religions." Highlighting the notion of communism as hyperbolic collectivism, she further laments, "Everything aims at extinguishing my individuality [but] I want to be myself, not a part of the mass, not a brick that is supposed to be part of the foundation of some future paradise."<sup>58</sup> Though the Soviet Union imagines itself a "factory of new men," Rachmanova's characters explain, it is in fact creating a cookie-cutter nightmare for all. But above the violence and moral destitution of the Soviet Union, religion triumphs; thus, in the words of one of the prize administrators, the novel "maintains the hope of redemption for the Russian people alive."<sup>59</sup>

With its lachrymose protagonists, heavy-handed moralizing, and starkly Manichean depiction of life in the Soviet Union as the struggle between good (Christianity) and evil

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<sup>57</sup> Idem, *Aube de vie, aube de mort. Journal d'une étudiante russe pendant la Révolution* (Paris: Plon, 1935); *Die Fabrik der Neuen Menchen* (Berlin: Deutsche Buchgemeinschaft, 1937). Rachmanova's memoirs were also published in German, under the title *Tragödie einer Liebe* (Salzburg: O. Müller, 1937). The Pope received Rachmanova's memoirs as a gift in 1937. ASV, Segr di Stato, 1937, Public.922.

<sup>58</sup> "Ich ersticke in dieser Atmosphäre [...] in der alles darauf ausgeht, alles Persönliche zu vernichten. Ich will nicht rauchen, weil alle rauchen, ich will meine Seele und meinen Körper rein erhalten, schon darum, weil alle diese Dinge verlachen; ich will irgendeine Religion haben, schon deshalb, weil alle sie verleugnen. Ich will ich sein, und kein Massenmensch, kein Ziegelstein, der das Fundament für das zukünftige Paradies bilden soll." The angelic Tamara, in *Die Fabrik*, 62.

<sup>59</sup> "Son roman n'est pas un roman de haine contre le bolchévisme. Il garde, il maintient l'espoir de la rédemption du peuple russe. Il y voudrait contribuer." Bordeaux, "Rapport du concours de romans sur le bolchévisme organisé par l'Académie d'Education et d'Entr'aide sociales," Paris, 28 November 1935. ASV, AES Pro Russia 1921-1944 (4<sup>o</sup> periodo), pos. Scatola 37, fasc.217, ff.9-17.

(communism), Rachmanova's novel hoped to impart a strong lesson to its readers -- and one with which the Vatican was fully onboard. So did the novel awarded second prize in the competition, which was penned by the well-known anti-liberal theorist Erik Maria Ritter von Kühnel-Leddihn (1909-1999). The Austrian writer used his novel to celebrate the emergent alliance between Germany and Italy against the Soviet Union. Combining the adventure novel, the political tract and the religious *apologia*, Kühnel-Leddihn's *Jesuiten, Spiesser und Bolschewicken* follows a German-Italian, lay-clerical, trio of muscular, handsome and clever men on their rambling adventures to show up (and in many cases, beat up) communists across Europe and North Africa.<sup>60</sup> The men hope to demonstrate that there is only one viable alternative to communism: a Catholic, anti-liberal, and authoritarian political system, which creates unity, without flattening out social distinctions. The use of violence is absolutely an acceptable means of spreading the message. The novel's hero, a German Catholic journalist, seizes opportune moments to show off his Jiu-Jitsu skills, while his Jesuit partner "packs a terribly strong punch," as all too many communist upstarts discover.<sup>61</sup> Written in 1933, this novel's celebration of violence, and of an Italian-German-Vatican alliance against communism, bore a clear message.

Kühnel-Leddihn's message regarding the tactics needed to battle the Soviet Union was repeated in various forms by other prize-winning novels. For instance, Pierre de Croidys' novel, *L'Empire des Sans-Dieu*, which won fourth place in the competition, similarly made clear its preferences for religious, proto-fascist, and anti-parliamentary, solutions to the communist problem. Though Académie française judges deemed its "literary value mediocre," they noted that the text's message was sound, and further that it "would make an excellent film."<sup>62</sup> By

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<sup>60</sup> Erik von Kühnel-Leddihn, *Jesuiten, Spiesser, Bolschewicken* (Salzburg: Salzburg Pustet, 1933).

<sup>61</sup> As Düring notes to his fiancée, "Ich kann Jiu-Jitsu und Pater Redel hat einen furchtbar schweren Schlag." Kühnel-Leddihn, *Jesuiten, Spiesser, Bolschewicken*, 81.

<sup>62</sup> "La valeur littéraire est médiocre, [mais] *L'Empire des sans-Dieu* de M. Pierre de Croidys ferait un film excellent." Bordeaux, "Rapport du concours de romans sur le bolchévisme organisé par l'Académie

interspersing tragic scenes of Bolshevik theft and contempt for basic morality with abundant theoretical debates between the novel's pro-communist and anticommunist protagonists (a schoolteacher and his wife and friends), De Croidys communicated the novel's central thesis loud and clear. Like von Kühnelt-Leddihn, he wore his political allegiances on his sleeve. As prize administrators doubtless knew, the Frenchman had participated actively in the rise of right-wing movements in alliance with fascist groups, like the Liges des Patriotes, and was in close correspondance with one of the movement's leaders, the French General Edouard de Castelnau.<sup>63</sup>

Thus, the Vatican's book prize not only showcased a new, aggressive, propaganda strategy, which used entertainment to sway people's emotions. It also awarded the translation in literary terms of Vatican anticommunism -- an anticommunism which in practice appeared increasingly imbricated with existing extreme right-wing political movements. That the Vatican's anticommunist book prize did so cannot simply be chalked up to circumstance or chance.

In private conversations, the Pope indeed did not hide his preferences for authoritarian, religiously imbued governments, which he deemed far superior to democracies. "I have stopped believing in democracy and in the effectiveness of democratic governments," book prize administrator Henri Bordeaux informed the Pope in 1932, in a private letter explaining how his personal biases would shape his literary judgments in the Vatican competition. Democracy and democratic governments, he noted, "both lead people slowly but surely to socialism and communism, in their search for equality!" In place of liberal democracy, what was needed was a

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d'Education et d'Entr'aide sociales," Paris, 28 November 1935. ASV, AES Pro Russia 1921-1944 (4° periodo), pos. Scatola 37, fasc.217, ff.9-17. The novel was subsequently published as follows: Pierre de Croidys, *L'Empire des sans-Dieu: roman de moeurs soviétiques* (Paris: Maison de la Bonne Press, 1936).

<sup>63</sup> On the Ligue des Patriotes and the Federation Nationale Catholique, see Véronique Auzépy-Chavagnac, *Jean de Fabrèges et la jeune droite catholique: aux sources de la révolution nationale* (Paris: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2002), 64ff; Eugen Weber, *Action Française: Royalism and Reaction in Twentieth Century France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), 155ff, 244ff; Zeev Sterhell, *Neither Right nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France*, trans. David Maisel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 102ff.

strong, nationalistic, government interested first and foremost in protecting "order and religious authority." Speaking directly to Pius XI's recommendations in *Quadragesimo Anno*, Bordeaux noted that authoritarian regimes should wield a strong hand, but not hold absolute powers; rather their powers should be "limited by corporations." Perhaps -- Bordeaux noted in closing -- some of these viewpoints could be encouraged by the competition announcement and play a mandated role in the selection process.<sup>64</sup>

In his note of response to the French writer and Fascist sympathizer, Pius XI expressed his "immense pleasure" with Bordeaux's recommendations, and agreed that what was needed was the restoration of "authority, order, and hierarchy," as based "on the principles of the Catholic Church." Lamentably, the liberal "individualists," partisans of democracy, still did not understand this. To be sure, Pius XI suggested, winning novels should showcase an ideology celebrating authority and the protection of religion. Differing from Bordeaux on only one small point, the Pope noted that it would be best for prize administrators not to explicitly encourage the production of works with strongly nationalistic motifs. The overarching reason for the Pope's veto was theoretical: "The idea of nationalism," he explained, "is opposed to the supra-nationalism of the Church." But the ban on hyper-nationalistic motifs was also due to recent political developments. Of late, the Pope noted, certain "Hitlerians" had failed to take sufficient notice of the anti-religious nature of hyper-nationalism, as had communists intent on fomenting nationalistic revolts, particularly among oppressed imperial subjects.<sup>65</sup> In short, the Pope

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<sup>64</sup> "J'ai cessé de croire à la Démocratie et à l'efficacité des gouvernements démocratiques. L'une et les autres conduisent lentement les peuples au socialisme et au communisme par la recherche de l'égalité! [...] Le mal n'est pas seulement en Russie où il est réalisé, il est partout menaçant aujourd'hui où l'on s'aperçoit l'autorité qui, seule, apporte l'ordre, autorité religieuse, familiale et nationale. Autorité d'allure non absolue mais contrôlée et spécialement par les compétences et les corporations." Letter of Henri Bordeaux to Georges Goyau (to be communicated to the Pope), Paris, 17 Sept 1932. ASV, AES Pro Russia 1921-1944 (4° periodo), pos. Scatola 37, fasc.216, ff.18.

<sup>65</sup> "Votre franc exposé Lui a beaucoup plu [...] l'Eglise est, moins encore que vous, portée à glorifier ou admettre une égalité qui détruirait ou saperait les hiérarchies, les mérites et l'autorité. Cela dit pour rassurer votre scrupule sur ce point, cher Monsieur. Autorité, ordre, hiérarchie – mais dans le devoir de conscience – n'auront jamais de base plus forte – parce que seule vraie – que dans les principes de l'Eglise Catholique et les applications qu'elle en fait, aujourd'hui comme toujours. Destructeurs, au contraire, des

suggested that it would be best for the book prize to reward anti-democratic, authoritarian, and religious political thinking, but be wary of lending support to extreme forms of nationalism that might be damaging to the Church.

The Pope's recommendations dated to 1932, but by the time the Vatican's anticommunist book prize was awarded in 1935, it had become increasingly difficult to keep Catholic anticommunism separate from the anticommunism of "Hitlerians" and Fascists. As Spain's rightwing forces prepared to declare war on the Republic and Mussolini and Hitler began to implement their expansionistic foreign policies, the Vatican's anticommunist crusade struggled to maintain its independence. Before early 1936, Mussolini and Hitler had turned their anticommunism on and off at will, depending on the political and economic expediencies of the moment.<sup>66</sup> But as Franco prepared his troops for a *coup d'état*, both leaders decided to launch an international anticommunist crusade, transforming a long-standing concern with rooting out the enemy within into a far-reaching campaign against Soviet influence across Europe and the Americas.<sup>67</sup> Standing against communism and with Franco, the leaders reasoned, would win

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fondements mêmes de toute autorité, ces individualistes qui, en répétant sans cesse le nom, la villipendent en pratique pour leurs petits intérêts personnels en inventant de jour en jour des calomnies toujours plus sottes, plus odieuses, plus contraires à la vérité, à l'évidence, au bon sens. [...] Peut-être êtes-vous, d'âme et de coeur, porté vers les conceptions monarchiques. Aucun obstacle n'en résulte aux yeux du Saint Père. Il croit, au contraire, que si la cause monarchique doit de fait disparaître définitivement en France, ce serait par l'action et la faute des mauvais serviteurs qui, en l'identifiant à leurs mesquineries personnelles, l'auraient rendue odieuse [...] Le communisme, en plusieurs pays [...] exploite les tendances de nationalisme forcené contre les 'Empires coloniaux'; ailleurs, par exemple chez les hitlériens et autres, l'idée de nation et de nationalisme est opposée au supra nationalisme de l'Eglise." Letter of d'Herbigny to Bordeaux (with copy to Goyau), Vatican, 29 Sept 1932. *Ibid.*, ff.24-28.

<sup>66</sup> This argument is made, among others, by R.J.B. Bosworth, *Mussolini* (London: Oxford University Press, 2002), 13ff, MacGregor Knox, *Common Destiny*, 55, 144; Alan Cassels, "Was There a Fascism Foreign Policy? Tradition and Novelty," *International History Review* 2 (1983): 255-68, here, 257; Philip V. Cannistraro and Edward D. Wynot, Jr., "On the Dynamics of Anti-Communism as a Function of Fascist Foreign Policy, 1933-1945," *Il Politico* 38 (1973); Giorgio Petracchi, *La Russia rivoluzionaria nella politica italiana. Le relazioni italo-sovietiche, 1917-25* (Rome: Laterza, 1982); Angelo D'Orsi, *La rivoluzione antibolscevica. Fascismo, classi, ideologie, 1917-22* (Milan: F. Angeli, 1985); and Pier Luigi Bassignana, *Fascisti nel paese dei Soviet* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2000).

<sup>67</sup> Waddington, *Hitler's Crusade*, 7, 29 and *passim*; Kurt Pätzold, "Antikommunismus und Antibolschewismus als Instrumente der Kriegsvorbereitung und Kriegspolitik," in *Der nationalsozialistische Krieg*, eds. Norbert Frei and Hermann Kling (Frankfurt: Campus, 1990), 122-45; Marla Stone, "The Changing Face of the Enemy in Fascist Italy," *Constellations* 15.3 (2008): 332-50, and

them a stronghold in the Mediterranean, and hence (it was hoped) mastery over the European continent.<sup>68</sup>

As Nazi and Fascist groups stepped up their own anticommunist campaigns from 1936, the Vatican tried in various ways to maintain its relevance. After all, if the Vatican lost its prominent role as leader of the global anticommunist campaign, its claims to international influence might also diminish, and its concordat diplomacy might accordingly be threatened. Thus, in May of 1936 -- on the eve of Franco's *coup* -- the Secretariat on Atheism decided to organize a large-scale anticommunist exhibition with the double aim of educating the masses about the Soviet threat and of showing Nazi and Fascist movements the distinctive (albeit, mutually compatible and thus useful) nature of Vatican anticommunism. In this way, the Secretariat's activities increasingly embodied Pius XI's early motto towards Fascist movements: *cooperazione, ma non confusione* -- cooperation yes, but "confusion" and loss of a distinctly Catholic identity, no.

As Father Ledóchowski announced in a circular letter to fellow Jesuits, the Secretariat's first mass exhibition should embody the latest propaganda strategies and convince viewers that Bolsheviks professing, "the twofold monstrosity of atheism and absolute communism," were "daily making new conquests throughout the world." The exhibition should also highlight how the Vatican stood at the head of a campaign to fend off the Soviet danger. "At the present time," the Superior-General of the Jesuits noted, "nothing is more to the point, nothing is more

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forthcoming work on Fascist anticommunism; Dietrich Orlow, "Fascism, The Only Bulwark Against The Advance of Bolshevism, May 1936-March 1938," in *The Lure of Fascism in Western Europe: German Nazis, Dutch and French Fascists, 1933-1939* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 77, 89-121; Nir Arielli, *Fascist Policies and the Middle East, 1933-40* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Marco Mugnaini, *L'America Latina e Mussolini: Brasile e Argentina nella politica dell'Italia, 1919-1943* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2008); and Francesca Cavarocchi, *Avanguardie dello spirito: il fascismo e la propaganda culturale all'estero* (Rome: Carocci, 2010).

<sup>68</sup> So argue, for instance, Knox, *Common Destiny*, and Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008). Authors like D'Orsi and Waddington instead claim that Fascist and Nazi anticommunism was ontological, rather than instrumental. See Angelo D'Orsi, "Antibolscevismo," *Dizionario del fascismo* (Turin: Einaudi, 2002), eds. Victoria De Grazia and Sergio Luzzatto, 65-6; and Waddington, *op.cit.*



necessary, than our war against atheistic communism.”<sup>69</sup> Foreshadowing the actual armed confrontation between anticommunist and Republican forces in Spain, the Vatican’s early 1936 exhibition complemented the Fascist Regime’s 1932-4 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution, which in at least three of its twenty-three rooms had shown that how Fascism had destroyed the Bolshevik menace at home.<sup>70</sup> Global communism, the Vatican exhibition claimed, had only been destroyed in limited national settings, like Italy. Elsewhere, it represented an enormous threat, and only by partnering with the Vatican in a global "war" (metaphorical or real), could civil governments destroy the Soviet Union's tentacles entirely.

The core message of the Vatican's anticommunist exhibition was carried by a single image, which was present in nearly all of the exhibition rooms and reprinted on the back of the visitor booklet (Figure 1). The simple image depicted three things: to the left, a towering white crucifix, to the right, a black hammer and sickle dripping with blood, and in the central, lower, part of the canvas, a cross-hatched planet earth. Even without text, the message of the image came across clearly: two powers were vying for world dominance, Christians and communists. Communism was an evil faith -- black as the color of the hammer and sickle, and bloody, as evidenced by the bright red blood dripping from the signature communist symbol. Christianity, on the other hand, was a faith of light and life, as symbolized by the bright white of the cross, which cast its comforting shadow over planet earth.

As the text illustrating the image further clarified, civil governments would be able to defeat the dark and evil communist faith only by partnering with the Vatican. "Which Sign Will Win?" asked the caption below the image, with the word "win" written in white, to reference the bright crucifix to which viewer's eyes were then drawn. On the crucifix was scrawled a phrase which answered the question. *In hoc signo vinces*: "In this sign, you will win." Good old

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<sup>69</sup> Ledóchowski, "On Furthering the Fight Against Atheism: A Letter Addressed to the Whole Society," 19 June 1936. In *Selected Writings of Father Ledóchowski*, 608-14.

<sup>70</sup> Marla Stone, "Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution," *Journal of Contemporary History* 28 (1993): 215-43, here 221 and 231-2.

Constantine: the famous sentence referenced the story of Constantine marching toward the battle that would give him control of the Roman Empire. As myth would have it, during the march Constantine had seen the sentence *in hoc signo vinces* scrawled in the sky, after which point he would convert to the Christian faith and transform the Roman Empire into a powerful tool for Christianity's expansion. Through this sparse image, the Secretariat on Atheism was thus communicating the message that the Soviet Union could only be defeated through the collaboration of state powers with the Vatican. With the sign of the crucifix, state powers would win the battle (*in hoc signo vinces*); without it, their empires would be doomed.

In more or less subtle ways, the entirety of the Secretariat's anti-Soviet exhibition drove home the same message. Very much in the spirit of the exhibitions of the day (from the World Fair, most recently held in Chicago in 1933, to the 1932-4 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution), this exhibition made use of elaborate staging techniques to communicate its heavy-handed thesis.<sup>71</sup> Its rooms were not organized chronologically (as was the case with the Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution, for instance), but the long entryway staircase contained an important chronological summary of the progress of Bolshevism from its earliest days through the mid 1930s. Each step on the staircase corresponded to a year and event, which demonstrated that the Soviet nemesis was none other than the Vatican. For instance, 1923 was highlighted as the year of the "sacking of the Churches"; something which literally paved the way and prepared the viewer/stair-climber for the 1926 step, the "mass arrests of the Catholic clergy" (Figure 2). The illustrated staircase steps thus showed that the Soviets were literally escalating their tactics so as to completely destroy the Vatican's global power.

The Soviet Union's nefarious progress was also highlighted spatially, as each exhibition room corresponded to a different part of the world. Some rooms tracked communist progress

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<sup>71</sup> Though the Vatican was not formally represented at the World's Fair, various Catholic lay organizations – such as the Catholic Women's League – played a role in the activities, and were likely inspired by them. See Cheryl R. Ganz, *The 1933 Chicago World's Fair: A Century of Progress* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 106-7. On the Fascist exhibition, see Stone, "Staging Fascism."

within a single country (e.g., “France”), while others documented an entire continent (e.g., “the Americas”). Rather than celebrating in World-Fair spirit the technological and cultural innovations of these geographic regions, the spatial trope presented a world carved up between the Soviet Union and the Vatican. Troublingly, even countries and regions traditionally associated with Catholicism were shown to be literally overrun by communist propaganda, which lined the walls and ceilings in an oppressive montage. The thousands of colorful posters and pamphlets – doubtless chosen for their lewd, disturbing and violent imagery – literally impinged on Vatican strongholds in Western Europe and Latin America (Figure 3). Prolific maps present in each room and hallway helped underscore that all of the propaganda on display originated from Moscow, and that Vatican City was capable of facing off with it (Figure 4). The final exhibition room put on jolly display the Vatican's prolific anticommunist literary production, and prominently featured the umpteenth copy of the iconic *in hoc signo vinces* poster. The final room thus showed that there was light at the end of the tunnel: the Vatican was capable of countering a world under threat, provided that it be given freedom to do so and that it work in tandem with allied anticommunist states (Figure 5).

The message was not simply rhetorical. Indeed, prior to hosting the exhibition, Father Ledóchowski had run its contents by the Fascist censors, who assured him that "everything was correct, according to civil authorities." It was not least thanks to the collaborative attitude of the Fascist regime, Ledóchowski noted, that "the Exhibition was a great success." In addition to the numerous high-profile Fascist officials who enjoyed the Vatican's propagandistic installation, the exhibition was also visited by Catholic journalists from around the world and by at least three members of the Gestapo. The Vatican was promptly encouraged to not limit its exhibition to Rome, but rather pack it up and bring it to the major European capitals, which indeed it

would. The success of the May 1936 exhibition would also motivate the Secretariat to host two additional such exhibitions -- one in 1938 and another in 1939.<sup>72</sup>

From the mid 1930s, the Vatican and Nazi-Fascist groups began to actively feed off of one another's anticommunist propaganda. Shortly after the conclusion of the 1936 exhibition in Rome, Ledóchowski asked the head of the Secretariat on Atheism, Father Joseph Ledit, to travel to Munich. The purpose of Ledit's trip was to take part as a guest of honor in the opening ceremonies of the first anticommunist exhibition of the Nazi party. The exhibition had been organized in collaboration with the Fascist government and most likely with input from Ledit himself. The Nazi exhibition -- as had been the Vatican's -- was a great success. As a reporter for the Fascist newspaper *Avvenire d'Italia* noted, "though much more cumbersome," the Munich exhibition had been influenced by the Vatican's "scholarly and universal touch." As Ledit later recalled, Father Ledóchowski "did not hide his satisfaction" following Ledit's trip, which consolidated the Vatican-Nazi-Fascist bond against the Soviet Union. His joy, Ledit later explained, was understandable: "This was 1936," he wrote in a 1942 obituary for the recently passed Ledóchowski; "Father General, at that time, was less frightened by the Nazis than by the Communists."<sup>73</sup>

## Conclusion

But despite Joseph Ledit's excusatory tone, in 1936, there was in point of fact no consensus within the Vatican or in the Catholic world at large regarding the relative threat posed by Nazi, Fascist, and communist movements. Indeed, there were several Catholics convinced that Nazism and Fascism posed greater threats -- both due to their hyper-nationalistic and so-called

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<sup>72</sup> Father Ledit's memories of Ledóchowski, written in English. Undated manuscript, most likely written between December 14, 1942 and January 31, 1943. JESCOM, Ledochówsky, "Varia ad eius Vitam" n.1025/355.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

neo-pagan tendencies, and due to a spate of increasingly violent and paranoid attacks on Catholic Action and Catholic institutions, which took place in Italy in 1930-1, and in Germany in 1933-4. Fears had further mounted regarding the Nazis' willingness to stamp on Vatican prerogatives when on July 24, 1934, a group of Austrian Nazis assassinated the Catholic corporatist Chancellor of Austria, Engelbert Dollfuss. Suddenly, one of the chief symbols of how Vatican political and economic precepts could be translated into state practice was dead. Perhaps, some murmured, the Vatican's newfound prominence in international affairs might similarly die a premature death.

In the same years that Eugenio Pacelli and Wladimir Ledóchowski busily mobilized against the Soviet Union, and sought to institutionalize Vatican anticommunism through the Secretariat on Atheism, other officials sought to direct Vatican foreign policy in a different direction. The battle between these two factions stretched from fall of 1934 through spring of 1937, and pitted those who considered the Soviet Union the leading enemy against those convinced that Nazism (and, for some, Fascism), was more dangerous. As will be investigated in the following chapter, though this second group would initially gain followers it would ultimately lose ground -- not least due to the institutionalization of the Vatican anticommunist campaign, which increasingly became an "iron cage," structuring Vatican diplomacy. Despite its failure to enshrine Nazism and Fascism as threats to the Catholic Church, this anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist group would leave an important legacy. Paradoxically, it initially stood to benefit the anticommunist campaign, but after 1945, it would help the Vatican whitewash its record of alliance with Germany and Italy. The legacy amounted to a sophisticated philosophical and theological case against "totalitarianism" -- a word originally used by Catholic theorists to condemn the Nazi and Fascist deification of the state. Only from circa 1937 would the word, per the Pope's express suggestion, be applied to communism as well, by which point the battle to issue a stirring theological condemnation of Nazi-Fascism was all but lost. The contrast between

these two factions, and the strange and counter-intuitive emergence of a theoretical grounding for the Vatican's anticommunist campaign, is the subject of the following chapter.



**Fig.1:** The poster bears the caption: "Which Sign Will Win?" The crucifix answers: *In Hoc Signo Vinces.*

Source: JESCOM 1038 (De comm. Atheo, 1933-1943), fasc. "Secretar. AntiCom. Rome."



**Fig.2:** The central stairway of the 1938 exhibition, as that of the 1936 exhibition, dramatically presented the chronology of Soviet religious persecution (literally) at every step.

Source: Ibid.



**Fig. 3:** Soviet posters depicting guns and violence dominated the exhibition. The handwritten caption reads, "Our army is the army of the world revolution -- Stalin."  
 Source: Ibid.



**Fig. 4:** The 1936 exhibition room dedicated to communist propaganda in France. French Communist posters and newspapers line the walls. The room is dominated by a statue of the Virgin Mary to the right (representing the Vatican) and by a map of the world (upper left), which bears the caption: "La pieuvre communiste étend ses tentacles" (*The communist octopus extends its tentacles*). Moscow is the black dot/octopus irradiating communist propaganda worldwide.  
 Source: Ibid.





**Fig.5:** The final exhibition room sold copies of *Lettere de Rome* and other Vatican anticommunist literature to visitors. The kiosk is framed by the statement, "Per Vincere, Bisogna Lottare" (*In order to win, you need to fight*). The classic "Which Sign Will Win?" poster can also be seen on the wall, in the upper left-hand corner.  
 Source: Ibid.



## Chapter Six

### *The Theoretical Underpinnings of the Campaign, 1934-8*

*Language does not simply reflect the processes of society and history. On the contrary, [...] important social and historical processes occur within language.*  
-- Raymond Williams, 1983<sup>1</sup>

*Every historical event begins with a struggle centered on naming.*  
-- Milan Kundera, 1982<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

As the previous chapter investigated, by 1936 the Secretariat on Atheism had institutionalized Vatican anticommunism. But the project of mobilizing all members of the Catholic hierarchy and laity to support and internalize the Vatican's new campaign was no simple matter. Despite the centralization of power in the person of the Pope and the expansion of Catholic Action worldwide, the Vatican remained a messy, antiquated, institution, replete with operational redundancies and vying centers of power, many of which had a direct stake in controlling the Vatican's diplomatic priorities. Similarly, the Catholic world at large -- composed as it was of millions of individuals from many different countries -- was by no means uniform. Consider the fact that different members of the Catholic world often produced wildly divergent interpretation of the Pope's dense, oddly worded, and potentially polysemic, messages, all the while convinced that their interpretation was the correct one. This was for instance the case with *Quadragesimo Anno*, which some saw as a strong endorsement of Italian-style corporatism, and others

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 15-6; 22.

<sup>2</sup> Milan Kundera, as cited in Alain Finkielkraut, "Milan Kundera Interview," *Cross Currents: A Yearbook of Central European Culture* 1 (1982): 15-29, here 15.

interpreted as a criticism of the emergence of an all-controlling Fascist state.<sup>3</sup> Even within the bounds of the anticommunist campaign there was room for confusion, as commentators wondered whether Pius XI's criticisms of "atheistic communism" were coded quips targeting the antireligious tendencies manifest in Nazi Germany, or even Fascist Italy. In a sense, Pius XI's expansion of Catholic Action had further increased the potential for divergence, despite all its centralizing tendencies. Catholic Action empowered clerics and laypeople (workers and intellectuals, men and women) to become citizen journalists and on-the-ground implementers of the Pope's vision. Either out of caution (so as to not offend ruling authorities), out of ideological conviction, or out of confusion (given the under-determined nature of the Pope's recommendations), Catholic Action in different countries did very different kinds of things -- despite the fact that all branches were dependent on Vatican oversight, and claimed, in some way, to be furthering the kingdom of Christ on earth.<sup>4</sup>

Because of this high degree of heterogeneity, the path towards a unified Catholic vision of foreign affairs involved not only creating relevant institutions capable of implementing the new turn (such as the Secretariat on Atheism); it also involved constructing a theoretical apparatus capable of justifying the Vatican's campaign against the Soviet Union, and convincing the varied personnel in the Vatican and in the wider Catholic world, of the necessity and

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<sup>3</sup> See the exchange of notes between Italy's Catholic Action members, led by Ludovico Montini and Igino Righetti, and French Jesuit leaders of Action populaire, regarding a planned 1935 Social Week on the topic of corporatism and the "crisis of capitalism." To belie the fanfare of a joint Vatican-Fascist corporatist vision, Father Gustave Desbuquois for instance noted that *Quadragesimo Anno* articulates an anti-statist position. He did, however, add that the corporatist vogue owes much to papal teachings. Fascist authorities, worried about the presence of anti-Fascist interpretations of the encyclical in the Catholic world, banned the Social Week. See the letter of Father Desbuquois to Ledóchowski, Vanves, 5 April 1935. ARSI, Ledóchowsky 1016, fasc.5, d.554; addendum to the letter of Igino Righetti to Ledóchowski, Rome, 15 March 1935. Ibid, fasc. "Settimana sociale italiana 1935," ff.553.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the debate around anti-communism and the variance of political views within different branches of Catholic Action, see Renato Moro, *La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica (1929-1937)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979), 441-85; Paolo Ranfagni, *I clerico-fascisti: Le riviste dell'Università Cattolica negli anni del regime* (Florence: Cooperativa Editrice Universitaria, 1975), 190-3; Gerd-Rainer Horn, "Part I: Catholic Action: A Twentieth-Century Social Movement (1920s-1930s)," in *Western European Liberation Theology: The First Wave (1924-1959)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 1-54; and Paul Droulers, *Politique sociale et christianisme: Le Pere Desbuquois et l'Action populaire* (Paris: Les editions ouvriers, 1969).

legitimacy of mobilizing against it. Inevitably, there would be individuals who remained unconvinced that the Pope, his Secretary of State and the Secretariat on Atheism had made the right decision to make the Soviet Union the Vatican's leading enemy; accordingly, the process of implementing this unified Vatican diplomacy also involved new finding ways to censor (and in some cases, silence) internal dissenting voices.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the year between 1933 and 1934 was not only characterized by the reorientation of Vatican diplomacy against the Soviet Union. During this same arc of time, the Vatican struggled to respond to the troubling behavior of Nazi Germany, which soon after concluding the 1933 concordat had begun persecuting Catholic Action, pursuing eugenics and forced sterilization, and endorsing a political theology that deified the state and contradicted Catholic precepts. With the Nazi murder of the Vatican-backed Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss and Hitler's cultivation of an alliance with Mussolini, worries mounted. Perhaps the time had come for the Vatican to publicly protest Germany's actions, many clerics wondered. But how could it do so? And would it even be possible to plausibly criticize Nazi Germany, or were critics like the aforementioned Gustav Gundlach right in noting that the anti-Soviet turn had strengthened the Nazi-Fascist cause, and thus the Vatican's allegiance to Nazi-Fascist powers?

Initially, the Pope allowed a series of eager clerics within the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office (the branch of the Vatican dedicated to enforcing questions of doctrine), to tackle the matter, and come up with their own response to Nazi and Fascist theories and practices. In 1936, shortly before the Holy Office was slated to issue its condemnation of Nazi-Fascism in the form of an updated Syllabus of Errors, the Vatican Secretariat of State attempted to simultaneously stall and transform the project. By this point, anticommunism had been institutionalized in the Secretariat on Atheism, and several key members within the Vatican (including the Pope himself) had grown convinced that the Soviet Union represented the greatest threat to the Vatican's survival. They argued that given its transnational influence, the

Vatican was best positioned to lead the "Catholic International," that would face off the "Communist International" in a global war of words and worldviews.

In an attempt to impose this conviction on all Vatican officials and the Catholic world at large, Pius XI and Eugenio Pacelli effectively killed the Holy Office project, despite the considerable investment of time and personnel taken to complete it. In place of the Syllabus of Errors condemning Nazism and Fascism, Pius XI issued three encyclicals in 1937, all within weeks of one another. Two denounced Soviet actions writ large, while the third more softly chided Nazi Germany, by encouraging the capricious state to return to the terms of the concordat. Curiously, the Holy Office discussion of how Nazi-Fascism ran counter to theories of the ideal Catholic state was incorporated not in the encyclical on Germany, but rather in the anti-Soviet texts. Thus some of the core theoretical commitments of the Holy Office project survived, though they were redeployed to criticize communism, rather than Nazi-Fascism.

Though many scholars have analyzed Pius XI's three 1937 encyclicals, they have done so primarily to bandy anti-Nazism against anti-communism as a weapon in the Pius wars. Few have situated these texts within their proper context, and none have argued that the triple encyclical emerged from the shadow of the failed Holy Office project, and registered how these texts together marked a bold new step for Vatican diplomacy.<sup>5</sup> As will be argued in this chapter, the encyclicals of 1937 carried three important messages. First, they argued that only the Pope and the Secretariat of State were in a position to make decisions about the aims of Vatican diplomacy -- not other Vatican officials or bodies. Further, they imposed loyalty to concordat allies (like Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy) and to the Vatican's anti-Soviet campaign, by

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<sup>5</sup> The only scholars to discuss the Holy Office project in any detail are Hubert Wolf, Thomas Brechenmacher and Peter Godman, all of whom focus on how the project exemplifies Catholic anti-Nazism, but fail to tease out the relation between this project and the triple encyclicals. See Wolf, "Contro razzismo e antisemitismo? La Santa Sede e l'ideologia nazionalsocialista alla luce delle fonti vaticane ora accessibili," in *Die Herausforderung der Diktaturen Katholizismus in Deutschland und Italien, 1918-1943/5* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2008), 249-71; Idem, *Pope and Devil*; Thomas Brechenmacher, *Der Vatikan und die Juden: Geschichte einer unheiligen Beziehung* (Munich: Beck, 2005), 180ff; Peter Godman, *Hitler and Vatican: Inside the Secret Archives that Reveal the New Story of the Nazis and the Church* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 21-82.

providing a far-reaching theoretical apparatus to justify it. Finally, the triple encyclicals upped the ante of the Vatican's anti-Soviet campaign, by proposing that even the use of violence was warranted in the war against the Soviet Union. Oddly, this bold sanction of armed revolt against communist movements -- issued precisely during the years of the Spanish Civil War and renewed violence in Mexico -- has received almost no attention in the scholarship. And yet it was arguably precisely this sanction, and the theoretical apparatus that undergirded it, that allowed the Vatican to maintain and expand its reach during the interwar and postwar years.

### **1. The Syllabus of Errors against Nazi-Fascism**

The Holy Office project began to take shape a few months after the assassination of the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss in July of 1934. In a sense, the Vatican had been prepared for the event; well aware of Hitler's ambitions regarding Austria, Pius XI had repeatedly urged Mussolini to help keep Hitler at bay throughout the spring of 1934.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, the murder in cold blood of no less than the Chancellor of "Catholic Austria" shocked many, including a rather enigmatic Austrian Bishop, Alois Hudal (1885-1963). As Rector of the German Pontifical Institute Santa Maria dell'Anima and former go-between with the Weimar Republic, Hudal was a respected diplomat and cleric within the Vatican. Shortly following the assassination, Hudal traveled to Germany and Austria to check on the status of concordat gains in these countries and to make sense of political developments.

Upon his return to Rome in October of 1934, Hudal retracted his earlier conviction regarding the possible union between Nationalism Socialism and Catholic theology.<sup>7</sup> Instead, he

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<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., Pacelli's Udienze notes, 23 May 1934. ASV, AES Stati Ecclesiastici (quarto periodo), 1933-1940, pos.430b P.O., fasc.361, ff.14.

<sup>7</sup> Hudal's change of heart would not be his last -- within the span of two years, he would once again present the Catholic cause as reconcilable with Nazism. On this perplexing figure, see Philippe Chenaux,

informed the Pope that matters were much worse than he had feared. "It is false," he noted, "to affirm that National Socialism is merely a political party that is founded on a positive form of Christianity and has protected religion in Germany against the dangers of Bolshevism."<sup>8</sup> Rather, Hudal affirmed, Nazism was best understood as a heretical and terribly dangerous worldview. It was a form a "radical nationalism," which erected the nation-state over and above all else, including God. Nazism embraced a "totalitarian concept of the state," Hudal claimed, borrowing a term that had recently entered into regular use. The Nazi "totalitarian concept," Hudal remarked, not only suppressed the personal worth of the individual; it also denied that Christ and his intermediary on earth, the Pope, could play any significant role in social and political life. Finally, Nazism espoused a "radical conception of race," according to which all human beings were in no sense equal before the eyes of God. More worrisome still was that Nazism's brazenly sacrilegious theoretical commitments were winning large numbers of followers among German and Austrian youth.<sup>9</sup> In several cities, Hudal noted, Nazi youth organizations were directly competing with their Catholic Action equivalents, and seeking to render the latter

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"Pacelli, Hudal et la question du nazisme, 1933-8," *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia* 57 (2003): 133-54; Dominik Burkard, "Alois Hudal – ein Anti-Pacelli? Zur Diskussion um die Haltung des Vatikans gegenüber dem Nationalsozialismus," *Zeitschrift für Religions und Gestesgeschichte* 59.1 (2007): 61-89; and Matteo Sanfilippo, "Los papeles de Hudal como fuente para la historia de la migración de Alemanes y Nazis despues de la segunda guerra mundial," *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 43 (1999): 185-209.

<sup>8</sup> "Così è dunque un'affermazione finta di pretendere che il Nazionalsocialismo sia solamente un partito politico, [...] o più che sia fondato su un Cristianesimo positivo e che abbia protetto la religione in Germania contro i pericoli del Bolscevismo." Letter of Alois Hudal to Domenico Sbarretti, 7 October 1934. In "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario: Relazione, Voto ed Elenco," July 1935, 1-15. Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede (henceforth ACDF), S.O., *Rerum Variarum* 1934, n.29, f.3.

<sup>9</sup> In 1937, Alois Hudal would pen a text denouncing Nazi racism, which went through five printings in Austria, and found quite an audience there. See Alois Hudal, *Grundlagen des Nationalsozialismus: Eine ideengeschichtliche Untersuchung von katholischer Warte* (Leipzig and Vienna: Johannes Günther Verlag, 1937); and John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933-1965* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 25-32.

irrelevant. Furthermore, Nazism's able use of print and radio propaganda, Hudal argued, risked crowding out Catholic media.<sup>10</sup>

In short, Nazism was militating against the core precepts Pius XI defended: the right of the Vatican to integrate civil society through Catholic Action, and its duty to partner with states and involve itself in social-political affairs. By elevating nationalism hued with racism over and above Vatican supra-nationalism and by demanding the total allegiance of its citizens (rather than the partial allegiance, as enshrined by the 1933 concordat), Nazi Germany was posing an evident danger to the Vatican. Accordingly, Hudal advised that the Pope send Hitler a sharp reproof by issuing a theological condemnation of all those aspects of Nazism deemed sacrilegious. The Pope could do this, Hudal recommended, in various ways: by issuing an Encyclical, by alerting Catholic Action to "begin a uniform battle against the spread of these currents of thought," and by encouraging the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office to condemn Nazi teachings via an updated "modern Syllabus [of Errors], modeled on that of Pope Pius IX."<sup>11</sup> Archival evidence and Hudal's later written testimonies suggest that Pius XI immediately took one of these three suggestions quite seriously, by recommending that the Holy Office put together a draft Syllabus of Errors on Nazism.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> "[Il nazismo] è una teoria che rovescia i fondamenti della religione cristiana e tanto più pericolosa perché diviene predicata in una epoca di *estremo Nazionalismo*, che già da solo rappresenta una eresia; inoltre nei tempi *dello Stato Totalitario*, che come una seconda grande eresia di questi tempi contraddice al pensiero cristiano sullo Stato. Così si uniscono nel popolo germanico *tre grandi eresie*, che per la religione cristiana e più per la cattolica nel corso dei prossimi anni formeranno un gravissimo pericolo." Letter of Alois Hudal to Domenico Sbarretti, 7 October 1934.

<sup>11</sup> "A sgravio della mia coscienza dopo queste esperienze mi sia permesso di proporre che dopo un esame di una persona competente queste *tre eresie moderne* [...] siano condannate dalla Santa Sede in forma solenne sia con una Enciclica, sia con un Sillabo moderno nella forma di quello del Papa Pio IX. Nei paesi specialmente minacciati da queste eresie si dovrebbe anche incaricare gli Eccmi Vescovi che l'Azione cattolica delle relative diocesi cominciasse una lotta uniforme contro queste correnti [...] con tutti i mezzi adatti e possibili e appena la Santa Sede ha dato la sua censura." Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> See Alois Hudal, *Römische Tagebücher: Lebensberichte eines alten Bischofs* (Graz: Leopold Stocker Verlag, 1976), 120ff; and mention that Pius XI passed along the project on 25 October 1934, in "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario: Relazione, Voto ed Elenco," Suprema Sacra Congregazione del S. Offizio, July 1935, p.5. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.3.

This Vatican institution had been a central component of the counter-reformation; until 1908, it had been known under the more descriptive title of the Congregation of the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition. Since the time of its founding, the Congregation's tasks had remained largely unaltered and included the identification of heretical systems of belief and the condemnation of their transnational vehicles of dissemination, the book and the newspaper. To enforce its purported monopoly on truth, the Congregation issued the Syllabus of Errors, which catalogued erroneous systems of belief, and the Index of Forbidden Books. Until the eighteenth century, the extirpation of opposing viewpoints was carried out through a real-life pyre of banned books, as indicated by a striking gravure on the title page of the yearly Index, depicting books burning under the approving surveillance of the Holy Spirit and Saints Peter and Paul (Figure 1).

Because the Congregation had been crucial to identifying Catholicism's leading enemies for centuries, Pius XI's decision to charge the Holy Office with putting together a new Syllabus of Errors directed against Nazism was no small matter. After all, since 1864 no Pope had updated Pius IX's sweeping Syllabus of Errors. To get the new and ambitious project underway, the Pope turned to his trusted executor, Wladimir Ledóchowski, whom he asked to put together a commission of experts capable of drafting the document. In place of a large and well-known group of specialists, Ledóchowski appointed one, relatively unknown, man: the German-born Father Franz Xavier Hürth (1880-1963). A professor of moral theology, Hürth since 1918 had taught at a Jesuit house of studies in the Netherlands. He had worked for the Holy Office once already by helping draft a 1928 condemnation of a German book advocating the forced sterilization for the mentally ill, which laid the groundwork for the Pope's limited condemnation of eugenics in the 1930 encyclical, *Casti Connubii*.<sup>13</sup> Likely overwhelmed by the prospect of drafting a Syllabus of Errors by himself, Hürth asked Ledóchowski if he could appoint a

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<sup>13</sup> The book was Joseph Mayer, *Gesetzliche Unfruchtbarmachung Geisteskranker* (Freiburg im Briesgau: Herder, 1927). For the Holy Office condemnation of the text, see ACDF, S.O. 1797/1928 and 1885/1930. On the slow road to *Casti Connubii*, see Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother*, 86-92.



colleague in moral theology as his assistant: Johannes Baptista Rabeneck (1874-1960). Rabeneck, about whom the sources tell us very little, was being summoned to work for the prestigious Vatican office for the first time.<sup>14</sup>

As Hürth and Rabeneck began their research, they drew widely from papal teachings and from the writings of Dutch, German, Italian, Austrian and French Catholic theorists, to help draft a unified interpretation and condemnation of Nazi texts. In 1935, the body of anti-Nazi lay Catholic theorists was small but growing, as was the number of German Catholic clerics attempting to resist Hitler in various ways.<sup>15</sup> The polyglot Jesuit scholars, who attracted promising students like Karl Rahner, kept abreast of these developments -- something that would shape the substance of their text.<sup>16</sup> In place of investigating the writings of Nazi theorists already on the Vatican's radar (such as Alfred Rosenberg, Ernst Bergman, Hans F.K. Guenther, and Lothar Gottlieb Tirala), Hürth and Rabeneck boldly headed straight to the top, and immersed themselves in the writings of the German Chancellor, Adolf Hitler.<sup>17</sup>

Perhaps convinced that indicting the Chancellor of the Third Reich was not sufficient -- and disturbed by Mussolini's plans for the unilateral invasion of Ethiopia (though not by the opening up of this territory to Vatican-directed Catholic missionaries) -- the two men also

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<sup>14</sup> Hürth's request for assistance can be found in "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario: Relazione, Voto ed Elenco," Suprema Sacra Congregazione del S. Offizio, July 1935, p.5. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.3.

<sup>15</sup> The most comprehensive recent summary of pan-European Catholic anti-Nazism is provided by Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother*. For an account of anti-Nazism amongst German clergy, see Kevin Spicer, *Resisting the Third Reich: The Catholic Clergy in Hitler's Berlin* (DeKalb, Ill: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004). For a discussion of Catholic anti-Nazism in the Netherlands, where Hürth and Rabeneck were based, see Joop Wekking, *Untersuchungen zur Rezeption der nationalsozialistischen Weltanschauung in den konfessionellen Periodika der Niederlande, 1933-1940* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1990).

<sup>16</sup> For Rahner's recollections of Hürth, see Karl Rahner, *Sehnsucht nach dem Geheimnisvollen Gott: Profil, Bilder, Texte*, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1990), 118. As cited in Brendan J. Cahill, *The Renewal of Revelation Theology (1960-2): The Development and Responses to the Fourth Chapter of the Preparatory Schema De deposito fidei* (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1999), 137, fn.83.

<sup>17</sup> In January-February of 1934, the Holy Office had indeed placed two works by these men on the Index of Forbidden Books: Alfred Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20 Jahrhunderts* (München: Hoheneichen, 1930) and Ernst Bergmann, *Die deutsche Nationalkirche* (Breslau: F. Hirt, 1933).

turned their attention to Italy's *Duce*.<sup>18</sup> The Jesuit scholars analyzed at length the speeches and writings of Benito Mussolini, incorporating the reflections of Mariano Cordovani, a prominent Roman theologian who had recently published a book condemning Fascism's authoritarian and "statolatrous" tendencies as anti-Catholic. Cordovani had also helped place the *magnum opus* of Fascist theorist Giovanni Gentile on the Index, and organized a conference in Rome, which called for the rebirth of Thomism over and against Fascist philosophies venerating the nation-state.<sup>19</sup>

By early 1935, the draft Syllabus of Errors was complete. In place of a simple discussion of Nazism, Hürth and Rabeneck chose to outline a sweeping condemnation of a modern worldview, which they claimed was espoused by both Hitler and Mussolini, from whom they quoted at length. In line with Hudal's initial wording, they called this worldview "totalitarianism," and outlined its elevation of the state above individual rights, above the Catholic Church, and above God. In so-called "total states," the text explained, "nothing is completely exempt from the state's oversight." "Proclaiming the principle of the 'totalitarian

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<sup>18</sup> The Pope spoke out against the invasion only on one occasion, and Eugenio Pacelli and Domenico Tardini immediately censored his speech for the press. For an extensive recent analysis of the Vatican reaction to the Ethiopian war, which perhaps overemphasizes Pius XI's dissidence, see Lucia Ceci, *Il papa non deve parlare: Chiesa, fascismo e guerra d'Etiopia* (Rome: Laterza, 2010); for an account showing instead how the Vatican prepared the ground for Italian and French expansion in the territories and happily grew its missionary base there, see Annie Lacroix-Riz, "Le rôle du Vatican dans la colonisation de l'Afrique (1920-1938): de la romanisation des missions à la conquête de l'Éthiopie," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 41, 1 (January-March 1994): 29-81; and Elizabeth Foster, *Faith in Empire: Religion, Politics and Colonial Rule in French Senegal, 1880-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> Cordovani, to whom we shall return, had already made quite a name for himself as a coordinator of Catholic Action's youth branch, as a professor of theology at the Catholic University of Milan, and as a consultor and professor in Rome, at the Angelicum, the Dominican Order's House of Studies. In 1924, he published his first reflection on Fascist statolatry, in "L'autorità sociale nella dottrina cattolica," *Atti della XI sessione delle 'Settimane sociali d'Italia'* (Turin: Settimane sociali d'Italia, 1924), 53-70. In 1928, he issued his indictment of Giovanni Gentile and the "idealist" strand of Fascist thought; Idem, *Cattolicesimo ed Idealismo* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1928). In 1934, he was central in the condemnation of Gentile's work by the Holy Office and in the organization of the "Primo Convegno Antidealista," as outlined in "Bibliografia Domenicana," *Memorie Domenicane: Rivista di Religione, Storia, Arte* (May-June 1934): 206-7.

state'," Nazi and Fascist movements sought to justify the state's "total dominion" over all, allowing "public powers the inherent right to control all things."<sup>20</sup>

"All theories which teach the 'total' state are full of error," the text announced. "According to those Christian principles which the Church has always taught, and which Popes have recently repeatedly noted, the state has a different origin, and a different purpose." In line with Aquinas' recently revived teachings, Hürth and Rabeneck noted that, "the supreme authority of the state is natural law, and therefore in the last analysis derives from God." Further, as Popes like Leo XIII and Pius XI had explained, the God-given purpose of the state was to allow citizens to pursue the "common good" -- a term Aquinas had famously borrowed from Aristotle.<sup>21</sup> Thus, "citizens do not have the state as their end; rather, it is the state that is made for citizens" so that they may achieve their true end. Though according to natural law, the state in some circumstances can "restrain individual rights in the name of the common good, it can never completely remove individual rights, insofar as it is not the source of those rights." Rather, the true source of these individual rights was God. Nazi and Fascist totalitarianism,

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<sup>20</sup> "Potestati civitatis nihil omnino subtrahitur, habet dominatum totalem; unde proclamant 'rem publicam totalem' ('totale Staat'). Quod ita interpretantur. Potestas publica in omnes res proprio suo iure se ingerere potest [...] Quanta autem sit oppositio inter asserta theoriae expositae et veritates religionis christianae neminem effugere potest [...] Tandem erroribus sunt plena quae de republica docent, de eius origine, fine, regimine, imprimis quae docent de republica 'totali'. Secundum principia christiana quae Ecclesia numquam non professa est et quae Summi Pontifices his ultimis temporibus iterum iterumque inculcarunt alia est origo civitatis et alius eius finis quam quae ab asseclis theoriae expositae statuuntur. [...] Auctoritas suprema in civitate est etiam iuris naturalis et sic ultimam a Deo [...] Omnino autem reicienda sunt ea quae de republica ut 'totali' seu de 'principio totalitatis' docent, secundum quod respublica proprio suo iure se in omnes res civium ingerere potest et cives Duci supremo illimitatam oboedientiam debent [...] Etsi cives auctoritati etiam politicae sint subiecti, et hoc ex voluntate Dei et propter Deum, et licet pro viribus suis ad bonum commune conferre debeant: tamen cives non sunt propter civitatem, sed civitas est potius propter cives, ut communi activitate omnium, quae ab auctoritate suprema est dirigenda, id obtineatur quod singuli pro se solis obtinere non possunt. Inde utique sequitur, ut etiam singuli in usu iurium suorum non possint esse plane independentes et pati debeant, ut iura sua hinc inde a civitate propter bonum commune magis determinentur vel etiam restringantur: sed civitas sicut haec iura non dedit, sic etiam ea plane auferre non potest." "Voto" of 17 March 1935. "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario: Relazione, Voto ed Elenco," Suprema Sacra Congregazione del S. Offizio, July 1935, pp.6-16. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.3.

<sup>21</sup> For an introduction, see Thomas W. Smith, "Aristotle on the Conditions for and Limits of the Common Good," *The American Political Science Review* 93, 3 (September 1999): 625-636; and Mary M. Keys, *Aquinas, Aristotle and the Promise of the Common Good* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

therefore, stood ranged against the corpus of Catholic teachings, and was juxtaposed to an ideal Catholic state, which guaranteed individual rights and the pursuit of the common good.

That "individual rights" and "totalitarianism" should emerge as central to the Holy Office condemnation of Nazi-Fascism showed that the two clerics were up-to-date with an emergent language of Catholic politics. Historically, the two keywords had been strongly associated with the defense of liberalism: "rights" had this connotation since being enshrined in the Vatican-condemned French Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789), while "totalitarianism" was associated with liberalism since its recent coinage by liberal democrats in Italy protesting Fascist policies.<sup>22</sup>

To be sure, certain Catholic theorists had begun to refer to rights from the late nineteenth century, but until the Holy Office document, the usage of the term had remained limited and undertheorized. In 1891, Leo XIII for instance argued that according to Thomas Aquinas, individuals were endowed with "rights and duties" by virtue of natural law -- and that these "rights and duties" were "quite independent of the State," and prior to it.<sup>23</sup> Picking up on these ideas, many American Catholics eager to bring an end to their isolation from American culture defended a Thomistic notion of rights, and argued that the U.S. Bill of Rights had been inspired by Catholic teachings.<sup>24</sup> Soon after World War I, the fusion of a Thomistic rights talk with liberal-democratic claims began appearing in the new constitutions of Eastern European

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<sup>22</sup> For the papal condemnation of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, see Pius VI, *Quod Aliquantam* (10 March 1791).

<sup>23</sup> Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* (15 May 1891), §12.

<sup>24</sup> The fusion of neo-Thomism and Anglo-Saxon rights talk is discussed in William M. Halsey, *The Survival of American Innocence: Catholicism in an Era of Disillusionment, 1920-1940* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), esp. chapter 8 and 9; R. Bruce Douglas and David Hollenbach, eds., *Catholicism and Liberalism: Contributions to American Public Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); and David Hollenbach, *Claims in Conflict: Retrieving and Renewing the Catholic Human Rights Tradition* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979).

states, for reasons that scholars have only begun to analyze.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps inspired by his Eastern European concordat partners, starting from the 1920s Pope Pius XI himself had begun mentioning certain religious rights in his speeches, such as the "right to education," by which he meant the right to a Catholic education.<sup>26</sup> It may well be the case that the Catholic turn towards rights reflected an increased interest in preserving a Catholic uniqueness, all the while cultivating a hybrid legal/rhetorical space which shared much of its language with that occupied by civil governments. Regardless, Hürth and Rabeneck were central to giving Catholic rights talk a much more precise shape, as they yoked an emergent defense of individual rights to a new theory of state totalitarianism.

Partisans of liberal democracy in Italy had first coined the term "totalitarianism" soon after Mussolini's rise to power. For the Italian liberal Giovanni Amendola, the neologism had been a convenient way to trace the characteristics of a system that he saw as opposed, in all things, to liberal democracy.<sup>27</sup> Picking up on Amendola's term, in 1924 Luigi Sturzo, the founder of the Italian Popular Party, noted in a liberal-democratic journal that Mussolini's "totalitarianism" sought "to subsume everything moral, cultural, political and religious [into] the Fascist [state]." To restore Italy to the right path, it was, "imperative to renounce the totalitarian spirit, and recognize the necessity of political parties [and] the popular will, as expressed in political elections."<sup>28</sup> For both Amendola and Sturzo, all-controlling state power stood at the

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<sup>25</sup> See Boris Mirkine-Guetzévitch, *Les constitutions de l'Europe nouvelle*, 10th ed. (Paris: Delagrave, 1938); and Idem, *Droit constitutionnel international* (Paris: Recueil Sirey, 1933), chap.6, section 2. For a more recent analysis, see Case, *Between States*.

<sup>26</sup> Pius XI, *Rappresentanti in terra* (31 December 1929). The Pope mentioned rights on 25 occasions in this encyclical. To prove that education was not exclusively in the hands of the state, the Pope cited Aquinas, the newly written Code of Canon Law, and a 1925 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court.

<sup>27</sup> Giovanni Amendola, "Maggioranza e minoranza," *Il Mondo*, 12 May and 28 June 1923. On Amendola's use of the term, see Bruno Bongiovanni, "Il Totalitarismo: La Parola e la Cosa," in *La Chiesa Cattolica e il totalitarismo*, 45ff.

<sup>28</sup> "Alcuno osserva che per una concezione esagerata della realtà fascista, la tendenza prevalente è quella della trasformazione *totalitaria* di ogni e qualsiasi forza morale, culturale, politica, religiosa in questa nuova concezione: "la fascista" [...] Occorre rinunciare allo spirito *totalitario* e riconoscere la necessità e le funzioni dei partiti [...] rimettere nella sua realtà libera e non alterata, la volontà popolare espressa nelle

opposite end of the spectrum from liberal, parliamentary, democracy (and from hybrid Church-state models that accepted the fusion with the state).

Just as "individual rights" had gradually made its unlikely way into Catholic discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the same fate was reserved for the term "totalitarianism." By the late 1920s, many continental Catholics -- perhaps thanks to Luigi Sturzo's early usage of the term -- had picked up the word for their own uses. They argued that only a re-energized Catholicism could curb the "totalitarian," hypertrophied, tendencies of many modern states keen on limiting Church influence.<sup>29</sup> Turning the term's original usage on its head, some Catholics, like the aforementioned Vatican theologian Mariano Cordovani, argued that Fascist totalitarianism was in fact a modern variant of liberal democracy, claiming as it did that "nothing stands above the State," not even God or the Catholic Church.<sup>30</sup> In line with these developments, in 1930 Pope Pius XI used the word "totalitarianism" for the first time in a papal document, in a widely publicized letter to the Italian Cardinal Schuster. The Pope asserted that a state which demands the allegiance of the "entirety of the citizen body," and presumes to control all "private domestic, spiritual and supernatural matters," is "totalitarian [and] a manifest

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elezioni politiche." Luigi Sturzo, "Spirito e Realtà," *La rivoluzione liberale*, 22 January 1924. The article, which appeared in Piero Gobetti's liberal-democratic mouthpiece, aptly named *La rivoluzione liberale*, was extracted from Luigi Sturzo, *Popolarismo e Fascismo* (Turin: P. Gobetti, 1924), which was also published by Gobetti.

<sup>29</sup> The rise of anti-totalitarianism in European Catholic circles is discussed in James Chappel, "Slaying the Leviathan: Catholicism and the Rebirth of European Conservatism" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2012); Healan Gaston, "The Genesis of America's Judeo-Christian Moment: Secularism, Totalitarianism and the Redefinition of Democracy" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 2008), chapter 2.

<sup>30</sup> "Si ammette generalmente che nulla è al di sopra dello Stato, nessuna limitazione può riconoscersi alla sua attività [...] Il liberalismo di ieri credette di non poter governare senza uno spunto di ostilità alla Chiesa; l'assolutismo di oggi, più intelligente, senza mutare profondamente le cose [...] misconosce la natura della Chiesa." Mariano Cordovani, "L'autorità sociale nella dottrina cattolica," *Atti della XI sessione delle 'Settimane sociali d'Italia'* (Turin: Settimane sociali d'Italia, 1924), 53-70. Again, in 1928, Cordovani noted how Fascist "absolutism" drew its heritage from liberalism: "La storia viene ad insegnarci che la questione dei rapporti fra autorità e libertà non è nuova, e che se il liberalismo ha nel suo passivo molti peccati da espiare, l'assolutismo di tutti i tempi non si è dimostrato meno disastroso. La filosofia insegna che non si arriva alla verità ed alla giustizia passando da un eccesso all'altro: si può morire assiderati, come anche ustionati." Idem, *Cattolicesimo ed Idealismo* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1928), 229.

monstrosity." "Fascism declares itself to be Catholic," Pius XI affirmed. "Well there is one way and one way only to do that: obey the Church and its head."<sup>31</sup> Referencing an earlier pronouncement, Pius XI noted that the totalitarian "conception of the state is not the same as the Catholic conception." Indeed, the totalitarian conception "turns the state into an end, and makes the citizen a means, monopolizing and absorbing him in the process."<sup>32</sup>

Angered by Mussolini's renewed attempts to limit the scope of Catholic Action, Pius XI again used the new language of anti-totalitarianism in a 1931 audience with French Catholic leaders. Fascism's self-proclaimed totalitarianism was sacrilegious, for "If there is a regime that is totalitarian, totalitarian in reality and according to the law, that is the regime of the Church." The reason for this was simple: "Man belongs wholly to the Church, and must belong wholly to it, insofar as he is a creature of God." Thus, the Pope concluded, "the Church really has the right and duty to claim the totality of its power over individuals: every man in his entirety belongs to the Church, because in his entirety he belongs to God."<sup>33</sup> In keeping with the central ideas of *Ubi*

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<sup>31</sup> "Per non parlare se non di quello che presentemente ci occupa, è troppo evidente che una totalitarietà di Regime e di Stato che voglia comprendere anche la vita soprannaturale, è una manifesta assurdità nell'ordine delle idee e sarebbe una vera mostruosità quando volesse portarsi nell'ordine pratico [...] Il fascismo si dice e vuol essere cattolico: orbene per essere cattolici non di solo nome ma di fatto, per essere cattolici veri e buoni, e non cattolici di falso nome, e non di quelli che nella grande famiglia che è la Chiesa col loro modo di parlare e di agire affliggono il cuore della Madre e del Padre, contristano i fratelli e li fuorviano coi loro mali esempi, per tutto questo non c'è che un mezzo, uno solo, ma indispensabile e insurrogabile: ubbidire alla Chiesa ed al Suo Capo e sentire con la Chiesa e col Suo Capo." Letter of Pius XI to Cardinal Schuster, *Osservatore Romano*, 26 April 1931.

<sup>32</sup> "Sembra che un'altra volta si riveli e si pronuncii una concezione dello Stato che non può essere la concezione cattolica, mentre fa dello Stato il fine, e del cittadino, dell'uomo un mezzo, tutto in quello monopolizzando ed assorbendo." Pius XI, Allocution to the Secret Consistory regarding Catholic Action, Vatican City, December 20, 1926. As reprinted in *Pio XI e l'Azione Cattolica*, ed. A.M. Cavagna (Rome: Ferrari, 1928), 61-3.

<sup>33</sup> "La Chiesa propugna giusti rapporti tra [la] collettività [e] l'individuo...ci sono delle intenzioni occulte più gravi; e quelli che dicono: tutto alla collettività, dicono anche che la collettività è qualcosa di divino, e allora ecco l'individuo divinizzato...una specie di panteismo divinizzato...E in questo caso ci sarebbe una grande usurpazione, perché se c'è un regime totalitario – totalitario di fatto e di diritto – è il regime della Chiesa, perché l'uomo appartiene totalmente alla Chiesa, deve appartenerele, dato che l'uomo è la creatura del buon Dio...Allora la Chiesa ha veramente il diritto e il dovere di reclamare la totalità del suo potere sugli individui: ogni uomo tutto intero appartiene alla Chiesa, perché tutto intero appartiene a Dio." Pius XI, "Alla Federazione francese dei sindacati cristiani," 1931, *Discorsi di Pio XI*, ed. Domenico Bertetto (Turin: Società editrice internazionale, 1960), III: 811.

*arcano Dei* and *Quas primas*, Pius XI asserted that the Vatican could claim dominion over Catholics far and wide -- something no other state had the right to limit or prohibit.

Hürth and Rabeneck fleshed out the connection between Catholic anti-totalitarianism and Catholic rights talk, in a second draft of the Syllabus of Errors text. This May 1935 draft defined in detail the meaning of "totalitarianism" (referred to interchangeably as "the total state" and "totalism"), by exploring what totalitarianism meant in theory and in practice. The text included analysis of "The Church and the Total State," "The Economic Order and the Totalitarian State," "Education of Youth," and "Political Life and the Totalitarian State." The same overarching definition of totalitarianism provided in March was repeated: "According to the totalitarian principle," the draft Syllabus noted, "the state has the total right and total powers [...] to control all things that in any way concern the life of men in society."<sup>34</sup>

Under the subheading "The Individual and the Total State," totalitarianism's violation of individual rights was laid out in detail. In totalitarian regimes, the draft noted, "individual human beings and private associations of men are not thought to possess any rights prior to those granted to them by the state, either in virtue of divine law, or in virtue of natural law." Indeed, totalitarian regimes consider "the Supreme Pontiffs in error when they claim that human beings have rights that do not derive from the state, but rather from divine law and natural law."<sup>35</sup> Wielding justifications such as these, totalitarian regimes violated individual

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<sup>34</sup> "DE TOTALISMO: Essentia Totalitatis. Statui ex principio totalitatis competit totale ius et totalis potestas, idest: ius extensione et comprehensione illimitatum et absolutum, quo omnia, quae quocumque modo hominum in societate civili consortium tangunt, tota et totaliter sibi subiecta habet." Section subheadings included "Ecclesia et Status Totalis"; "Ordo oeconomicus et Totalitas Status"; "Educatio iuventutis"; and "Vita politica et Totalitas Status." 1 May 1935 draft, as stored in "Elenchus Propositionum de Nationalismo, Stirpis cultu, Totalismo," in "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario: Relazione, Voto ed Elenco," Suprema Sacra Congregazione del S. Offizio, July 1935, pp.16-27. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.3.

<sup>35</sup> The section was entitled "Individuum et Totalitas Status." It noted: "Singulis hominibus hominumque societatibus privatis neque ex divina neque ex naturae iure ulla sunt iura quae habeant antecederent ad Statum vel independenter ab eo, et quidem non solum, is ad iurium exercitium attenditur, sed etiam quoad ad eorum originem et nudam existentiam attinet. Errarunt Summi Pontifices vindicando hominibus iura quae eis quoad eorum originem et substantiam non primo competant ex concessione Status, sed immediate ex iure sive divino positivo sive naturae." Ibid.



rights continuously. The draft thus went on to provide a long laundry list of the rights totalitarian regimes supposedly desecrated. To name a few: the text noted that totalitarian states stamp out the individual "right to life and the integrity of the body," by encouraging practices like eugenics. They violate "the right to procreate," via population control and forced sterilization measures, as well as "the right to educate children" in the Catholic faith, by limiting Catholic education in schools. They disturb "the right to association" -- that is, the right of the Catholic Church to "exercise full independence in civil society," through its work with Catholic Action. Finally, they desecrate "the right to true religion and to attain a supra-natural end," by hindering the Church in its mission to save souls and profess God's word.<sup>36</sup> To be sure, the list was a bit of a hodgepodge, uniting the rights defended by the Vatican in concordats with liberal-democratic rights laid out in foundational eighteenth-century French and American texts. But it nonetheless pointed to a larger development: the use of individual rights as the antithesis of totalitarianism, in the Vatican struggle against regimes deemed capable of diminishing its powers.

In May of 1935, precisely as the Secretariat on Atheism entered into operation and began publishing its journal, the Holy Office was nearing completion of the sweeping *Syllabus of Errors*. The *Syllabus* spent not a word on communism, focusing instead on how Fascism and Nazism espoused "totalitarian" worldviews that ran counter to Church teachings. In place of respecting the rule of the Vatican in civil society and in political matters, Fascism and Nazism sought "total" control over society. And in place of recognizing that individual rights derived from God, Fascism and Nazism claimed that these rights were invented by the state, and therefore that the state could arbitrarily take them away. The message regarding the pre-eminence of the Vatican

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<sup>36</sup> The laundry list of rights which totalitarian regimes violate reads as follows: "... inter alia: ius vitae et integritatis membrorum, ius verae religionis et finis supernaturalis; ius mediorum quae ad vitam sive naturalem sive supernaturalem necessaria sunt; praeterea, suppositis supponendis: ius connubii fertilis in eoque ius procreandae et educandae prolis, ius vitae coelibis, ius famae, ius proprietatis privatae, ius contrahendi, ius coalitionis." *Ibid.*

and its right to occupy public and private life was by now a staple of Vatican discourse, but the words that were being used to defend this claim, as well as the choice to target Nazism and Fascism, was new indeed.

## **2. One Enemy Replaces Another: How Communism Became Totalitarian**

Though the draft Syllabus of Errors was ready to be published, work on it was stalled for over one year, at which point it was redeployed to condemn communism rather than Fascism and Nazism. The purpose of the action was twofold: first, to provide a theoretical underpinning for the Vatican's new campaign against the Soviet Union, and second, to clean up house, and make clear to clerics within the Vatican that the Soviet Union -- not Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy -- represented the greatest threat to the Vatican's survival.

The evidence suggests the Eugenio Pacelli and the Superior General of the Jesuits, Wladimir Ledóchowski, were primarily responsible for this outcome. Ledóchowski had received the final draft of the Holy Office Syllabus of Errors from Hürth and Rabeneck in July of 1935. He proceeded to sit on the project for a whole year, busying himself instead with getting the Secretariat on Atheism off to a good start. In April of 1936, three months before Franco's *coup*, and just as the elderly Pius XI fell ill, Ledóchowski and Pacelli resumed the stalled conversation on the Syllabus of Errors project. They urged two in-house experts they themselves appointed to comment on the draft. Both men promptly recommended that communism be added to the list of "totalitarian" heresies catalogued by the Holy Office's Syllabus of Errors. At the precisely the same time, Ledóchowski suggested to the Pope that it was urgent to draft an encyclical condemning "atheistic communism," given the Soviet Union's "ever-more intense propaganda," and the need for "Catholics and others to unite in a more energetic and better-organized resistance." "Your Holiness will pardon my boldness," Ledóchowski noted, adding that the

Jesuit order would happily contribute to the text's drafting.<sup>37</sup> Pius XI agreed that drafting such an encyclical would be a good idea. Thus, Ledóchowski asked Joseph Ledit, the head of the Secretariat on Atheism, to draft an addendum to the Syllabus of Errors dedicated to the Bolshevik menace. Perhaps from the get-go, Ledóchowski hoped that this addendum would serve as the basis for an encyclical against communism.<sup>38</sup>

Ledit's addendum to the Syllabus of Errors amounted to a cut and paste operation rather than to the construction of a new theoretical apparatus. In his first draft of the text, Ledit noted that communism, like Nazism and Fascism, was "totalitarian." It too deprived the Church of its rightful place in human society, and it too sought to control all aspects of human life. Most importantly, it too violated rights -- indeed, the very same rights which the Syllabus had accused Nazi-Fascism of violating. Communism trampled on the right to education, Ledit claimed, as well as the right to a religious marriage, the right to the priesthood, and the right to worship the Catholic religion.<sup>39</sup> A junior cleric overwhelmed by the major responsibility of leading the Secretariat, Ledit most likely copied the work of Hürth and Rabeneck in the interest of time, rather than out of some more nefarious motive. Indeed, as the Vatican's anti-Soviet campaign picked up speed, with the victory of the Popular Front in France (in May), the start of the Spanish Civil War and of Nazi-Fascist arms shipments to Franco's troops (in July), Ledit -- who was no theologian -- had little time or interest in delving into theoretical reflections about the

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<sup>37</sup> "La propaganda ateistica di Mosca diviene sempre più intensa [...] e sempre più abile e perfida, [e] molti si lasciano ingannare, i quali non cadrebbero nell'errore se sapessero tutta la verità. Una enciclica su questo argomento [...] inviterebbe non soltanto i cattolici ma anche altri a una più energica e meglio organizzata resistenza. Vostra Santità perdonerà il mio ardire e se credesse opportuno di scrivere una tale Enciclica credo che potremmo anche noi contribuire." Next to this letter, Tardini wrote by hand "prima idea per l'enciclica del comunismo." Ledóchowski to Pius XI, 1 April 1936. ASV, AES, Stati Ecclesiastici, pos.548, f.577, *Enciclica Divini Redemptoris*.

<sup>38</sup> See "Voto del P. Gillet, Consultore," in "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario," April 1936, pp.1-3. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.4; and "Voto del Mons. Tardini, Consultore," in "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario," 20 April 1936, pp.6-11. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.4.

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Ledit, "Nota d'Ufficio," in "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario," Suprema Sacra Congregazione del S. Offizio, July 1936 pp.1-7. *Ibid.*, f.9.

communist menace: more pressing tasks were upon him. Indeed, per Ledóchowski's request, Ledit was using his connection to the Holy Office to help the Vatican step up its activities against the Soviet Union.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps it was his advice that encouraged Holy Office clerics to place several Catholic journals with presumed communist sympathies on the Index of Forbidden Books, and force other left-leaning Catholic publications to cease operation -- something that also much delighted the Fascist secret police.<sup>41</sup> Certainly, Ledit and Ledóchowski were not unhappy with the fact that by the fall of 1936, the Holy Office had thus begun morphing into an internal anti-communist surveillance mechanism.

By fall of 1936, the Holy Office had also completed its new Syllabus of Errors, which was characterized by a thorough theological exposition of the underlying similarities between Nazi, Fascist and communist worldviews, all of which were branded totalitarian violators of individual rights. Complete with corrected footnotes and citation pages, the project seemed complete. All told, it had mobilized over a dozen theologians, and taken four years of hard work. Hürth and Rabeneck, we can surmise, must have been pleased with the final product.

But despite its impressive and coherent content, the Syllabus of Errors never saw the light of day -- at least in the form in which it was originally intended. In late 1936, Pius XI fell ill once again, this time more seriously. Until his death, the Pope would be forced to carry on his leadership duties from his bedside -- something which in practice meant that he delegated more

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<sup>40</sup> The Soviets began sending aid and organizing military brigades in mid-September, 1936.

<sup>41</sup> In June of 1936, the French journal *Terre nouvelle* was placed in the Index of Forbidden Books, and a decree was appended warning Catholics against communists and fellow travelers (*cum comunismi asseclis*). The Holy Office also forced *Sept* to close its doors in August of 1937, and issued a stern warning to *L'Aube*. For the Holy Office proceedings, see ACDF, R.V. 1938, n.1, 187/1937, doc.n.8, 10 May 1937. For the response of the Fascist secret police, see Anonymous secret police note, Rome, 25 Nov 1936. ACS, MI, DGPS, DPP, fascicoli per materia, b.146, fasc. "Comunismo e Chiesa Cattolica, 1936-8." On the Holy Office injunctions against left-wing Catholic journalism from July of 1936, see Françoise Mayeur, *L'Aube: étude d'un journal d'opinion (1932-1940)* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966); Agnès Rochefort-Turquin, *Terre nouvelle: organe des chrétiens révolutionnaires pendant le Front populaire, 1935-1939* (Paris: Éd. De l'EHESS, 1983); Aline Coutrot, *Un courant de pensée catholique: L'hebdomadaire Sept (mars 1934-août 1936)* (Paris: Cerf, 1960); Magali Della Sudda, "La suppression de l'hebdomadaire dominicain *Sept*: Immixtion du Vatican dans les affaires françaises?," *Vingtième siècle* 104, 4 (2009): 29-44.

and more power to his trusted Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli, and to the Superior General of the Jesuits, Wladimir Ledóchowski. Most likely due to the influence of these two men, the Holy Office project once again gathered dust, as it had between July of 1935 and April of 1936, and its transfer to the printing press was stalled for over a year. At last, in November of 1936, the Cardinal Assessor of the Holy Office received the cryptic news that the Pope was going to "do something" about the draft Syllabus, independent from the Holy Office.<sup>42</sup> In March of 1937, the Pope informed the Holy Office that the publication of the draft Syllabus of Errors should be postponed until after the publication of an encyclical "in preparation."<sup>43</sup> By mid March, the contents of the project were revealed.

In place of the ambitious Syllabus of Errors, Pius XI issued three encyclicals for global consumption, in March of 1937: one on Nazi Germany (March 14), a second on the Soviet Union (March 19), and a third on Mexico (March 28). Though bits and pieces of the Syllabus of Errors made it into the encyclicals and into a 1938 set of instructions the Pope quietly sent to the rectors of Catholic universities and seminars, the original structure of the text was lost -- something Holy Office employees themselves noted with displeasure.<sup>44</sup> In 1940, the entire draft of the Holy Office draft Syllabus of Errors was shipped from Vatican City to the United States, perhaps in an attempt to conceal that such a daring project had ever been undertaken in the first place.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> "Sua Santità ha dichiarato che da parte sua farà qualche cosa; intanto il S.Offizio prepari il suo Atto in forma di Istruzione o Decreto e condanne." Ottaviani's notes from his 19 November 1936 Audience with the Pope. ACDF, ACTA C.G. 1936.

<sup>43</sup> "Dilata post publicationem Enciclicae quae est in praeparatione," 17 March 1937. ACDF ACTA C.G. 1937.

<sup>44</sup> "De Communismo," in "Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario," Suprema Sacra Congregazione del S. Offizio, March 1937, pp.13-22. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.16.

<sup>45</sup> The final meeting of the Holy Office Cardinals dedicated to the draft Syllabus of Errors would take place on 2 June 1937. The fact that the report was "Mandato in America nel 1940" is written on the cover sheet of the file, ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29.

In the main, scholars have both neglected to connect the triple encyclical to the failed Holy Office project, and to see the three texts as intimately interlinked. Instead, they have devoted the lion's share of attention to Pius XI's encyclical on Germany, in the attempt to argue that the Pope was pro-Nazi or anti-Nazi. However, according to a contemporary observer of the Pope (the French Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart), even "in the moment of his worse sufferings," when "he could not sleep, the bed-ridden Pope "would think of the three encyclicals that he wanted to write." First, Baudrillart noted in a diary entry in 1937, Pius XI "planned them mentally." "Then he had others read to him and deliver news; sometimes, he would dictate his thoughts on them aloud. And this is how the *oeuvre* was prepared."<sup>46</sup> To be sure, Baudrillart exaggerated the extent to which Pius XI directly controlled the encyclicals, which the archives clearly demonstrate were written with the substantial assistance of clerics such as Joseph Ledit (the head of the Secretariat on Atheism), Friedrich Muckermann (an influential German Jesuit also employed by the Secretariat), the Austrian Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, and, of course, Eugenio Pacelli himself. But what he did not misrepresent was the extent to which the three encyclicals were part of a single Vatican diplomatic platform, and one that the Pope had endorsed. The platform asserted that concordat partners must be retained as allies, while the Soviet Union must be condemned, both due to its heretical theories and to its violent practices, which must be brought to an end, if necessary, through war.

This platform was also commented upon by the editor-in-chief of the semi-official organ of the Vatican, *Civiltà Cattolica*, in an article personally approved by Eugenio Pacelli. In May of 1937, the Enrico De Rosa wrote that the three encyclicals were part of "a whole positive and practical 'program' of Christian social restoration." This "program," the Jesuit editor-in-chief explained, "essentially and by definition touches on the religious and supernatural order," as

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<sup>46</sup> "Anche nel momento delle sue peggiori sofferenze, quando si placavano, se non poteva dormire, si sentiva in riposo con il cervello attivo. Allora pensava alle tre encicliche che voleva scrivere. Le elaborava mentalmente, poi si faceva leggere e s'informava; a volte dettava. E così si preparava l'opera." *Les Carnets du cardinal Alfred Baudrillart, vol.1: 20 novembre 1935-11 avril 1939*, ed. Paul Christophe (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1994-2003), 437.

well as on “domestic and civil society.” It seeks to “promote, reinvigorate and perfect” civilization as a whole, by making that civilization more Christian. Accordingly, the Pope's encyclicals emphasized that Godless Bolsheviks were “those ‘enemies of God and Jesus Christ’ deplored by the Pope.” “Able to pull together a large number of fearful men in their ranks,” Bolsheviks had tricked them into participating “in the de-Christianization of peoples.” This was true not only in the Soviet Union, but also in Mexico and Spain – countries, that is, “which owe to the Catholic religion their greatest glories.” Indeed, the Soviet Union waged its battle against the Vatican precisely in Catholic strongholds – a fact used to underline both the existential nature of the communist-Catholic conflict and the degree of danger posed. Nazi Germany, by way of comparison, posed a much less extreme problem.<sup>47</sup>

### **3. Declaring War on Foes and Mending Matters with Friends**

Though forging a reply to Nazi Germany had been the genesis of the Holy Office project, the encyclical on Germany was put together last (starting from January of 1937), while the texts on the Soviet Union and on communist presence in Mexico were in the making since April and December of 1936. While Eugenio Pacelli was the key figure responsible for putting together the encyclicals on Germany and the Mexico, the central person who helped draft the encyclical on the Soviet Union was Joseph Ledit, the head of the Jesuit Secretariat on Atheism. Small wonder that the core theoretical precepts put forward in the encyclical resonated with the anti-

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<sup>47</sup> “[Le encicliche rappresentano]...tutto un ‘programma’ positivo e pratico di cristiana restaurazione sociale. Questo programma, senza dubbio, riguarda essenzialmente e per principio l’ordine religioso e soprannaturale [...] ed anche la società domestica e civile [...] Si estende altresì all’ordine materiale, alla prosperità stessa terrena, ossia a quella civiltà naturale ed umana, che dalla civiltà cristiana non è soppressa o attenuata, è anzi promossa, rinvigorita e perfezionata. Il che per l’appunto è sconosciuto da quei ‘nemici di Dio e di Gesù Cristo’ che il Papa deplora [...] che sono riusciti a tirare gran numero di tiepidi e paurosi nelle loro file, inducendoli a cooperare [...] allo scristianeggiamento di un popolo che deve alla religione cattolica le sue glorie più belle.” Enrico De Rosa, “l’Enciclica sul Messico e l’opera della restaurazione sociale,” *Civiltà cattolica* (mid May 1937). Stored with hand-written corrections (with a stamp from the Segreteria di Stato – Rapporti con gli stati) in ASV, AES Messico (4° periodo), 1937-1939, pos.591 P.O., fasc.389, ff.8-9.

totalitarian, rights-based, attacks, which Hürth and Rabeneck had originally used to condemn Nazism and Fascism, and which Ledit had by and large recapitulated in his addendum on communism for the Holy Office.

When the encyclical on the Soviet Union was issued in mid March of 1937 under the title *Divini Redemptoris*, it bore so many similarities to the draft Syllabus of Errors that Holy Office members painstakingly took note of them, via a line-by-line comparison.<sup>48</sup> Like the draft Syllabus of Errors, *Divini Redemptoris* depended on the rhetorical juxtaposition of individual rights (mentioned on no fewer than twelve occasions) and totalitarianism, which violated these rights at whim. The encyclical highlighted that it was wrong for the Soviet Union “to defraud man of his God-granted rights,” and “systematically void these rights by making their use impossible.” Like the draft Syllabus of Errors, it provided a laundry list of the rights the Soviet Union violated, which included the right to private property, the right to marriage and the right to education. Referencing the notion of a totalitarian state that sacrifices the individual to attain its own ends, the text noted that in the Soviet Union, “there is no recognition of any right of the individual in his relations to the collectivity.” Indeed, “no natural right is accorded to human personality, which is a mere cog-wheel in the Communist system.”<sup>49</sup>

The encyclical further emphasized that the Vatican was capable of countering the "collectivistic terrorism" embodied by the Soviet Union. This was because the Vatican possessed a strong ideology, which provided a positive, Catholic, alternative to the "most atrocious barbarity" of communism. It cared deeply about justice and the common good, and was a voice

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<sup>48</sup> In late March of 1937, the Holy Office compiled an elaborate document which demonstrated the line-by-line overlap of the Holy Office document and *Divini Redemptoris*. “De Communismo,” in “Nazionalismo, razzismo, stato totalitario,” Suprema Sacra Congregazione del S. Offizio, March 1937, pp.13-22. ACDF, S.O., Rerum Variarum 1934, n.29, f.16.

<sup>49</sup> Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris* (19 March 1937), §10; §11; §28; §30; §50. All citations are drawn from the official English-language translation of the encyclical, available on the Holy See website, *Encyclicals -- Pius XI -- The Holy See -- The Holy Father*, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_19031937\\_divini-redemptoris\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19031937_divini-redemptoris_en.html)>. Last accessed 28 July 2012.



for individual rights. Indeed, the “divine and human rights” violated by the Soviet Union, the text noted, were precisely those “on which Sacred Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church insist so often.” In conclusion, the text noted, it was "with good reason [that] outstanding statesmen have asserted that, after a study of various social systems, they have found nothing sounder than the principles expounded in the encyclicals." In short, there was nothing better to lead "Catholic and non-Christian countries" than "the social doctrine of the Church."<sup>50</sup>

In addition to having ideas capable of winning over the masses, the encyclical noted, the Vatican was capable of countering the Soviet Union because it had the practical capacity to do so. True, the Soviet Union was actively attempting to expand its influence far and wide, "directing the struggle against Christian civilization" not only "in Mexico and now and Spain," but even farther afield. Presenting the Vatican's misinterpretation of current events as a self-evident fact, the encyclical affirmed that Soviet-led revolution "has actually broken out or threatens everywhere, and exceeds in amplitude and violence anything yet experienced." But despite these grave geopolitical threats, the encyclical noted, the Vatican was up to the challenge. After all, it too was endowed with transnational influence. Via the Secretariat on Atheism, the Vatican could respond to the Soviets' "truly diabolical" propaganda, which was "directed from one common center," and "shrewdly adapted to the varying conditions of diverse peoples." Indeed, the Vatican wielded influence in the press, motion pictures, radio programs, schools and universities. Furthermore, the Vatican had a network of tightly allied partner states. Thus, the Vatican's Catholic International could counter the Communist International and rival the Soviet Union's "great financial resources, gigantic organizations, and international congresses."<sup>51</sup>

*Divini Redemptoris* thus constituted a very important component of the manufacture of consent to the Vatican anti-Soviet campaign. The encyclical explained, celebrated and tacitly

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., §17; §20; §22; §33; §35-6; §46.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., §2; §15; §17; §19; §22; §57.

imposed the Vatican's turn against the Soviet Union on the Catholic and non-Catholic world. Using very strong language, it claimed that Moscow stood at the head of a global war against "civilization," that sought to advance a dangerous, sacrilegious, political ideology. The Soviet Union, it asserted, posed a great threat to world peace. To the communist declaration of war on "all that is called God," it stood to reason that only Christ's vicar on earth, the Pope, had a lasting reply. Indeed, the Vatican was capable of rivaling the Soviet Union's wealth, strength, and theoretical sophistication, countering communism's "false principles" in a theoretical sense, and stemming the spread of communism through the practical actions of its anti-Soviet campaign.<sup>52</sup>

By asserting with no hesitation that the Soviet Union posed the greatest threat to world peace, *Divini Redemptoris* implicitly prepared the Catholic world for *Firmissimam Constantiam*, the encyclical sanctioning a violent response to communist penetration in Mexico. As we saw in the previous chapter, Eugenio Pacelli had defended the notion that Soviets were plotting a communist revolution in Mexico from c.1932. As the 1930s wore on, this conviction grew stronger, under the influence of local clerics, Vatican officials, and American Jesuits. By 1935-6, increasing numbers of reports that reached the Vatican Secretary of State claimed that many "authentic Russians" were taking over Mexican government offices. "There [is] absolutely no doubt," a correspondent informed Pacelli, "that the ultimate aim of the [Mexican] government is to create a new communist generation."<sup>53</sup> Similarly, pamphlets written by American Jesuits "greatly contributed to enlightening public opinion on the danger of

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., §2; §7; §22.

<sup>53</sup> "Je puis affirmer avec certitude que les principaux membres qui composent le ministère de l'Instruction publique sont des Russes authentiques venus de Russie, et qui ne se cachent pas pour dire que l'expérience qu'ils sont en train de tenter à Mexico réussira mieux encore qu'en Russie [...] Il n'y a aucun doute que le but absolu du gouvernement, c'est de former une génération communiste." Father Alba, "Pro Memoria," March 1936. Underlining in the original. ARSI, Registro-Allegata, Epistolae ad Romanam Curiam, n.1-100, 1934-1938, ff.303-312.

communist penetration in Mexico," as the Jesuit Secretariat on Atheism put it.<sup>54</sup> (These pamphlets were, per the Pope's direct request, promptly translated and distributed in extracted form to European newspapers.<sup>55</sup>)

Given these mounting pressures, Pacelli decided to undertake a trip in the fall of 1936 to the United States, to cultivate a burgeoning friendship with the U.S. government and convince it of the Soviet enemy at the gates, as well as to meet with several high-ranking members of the Mexican hierarchy. These clerics, much to Pacelli's initial surprise, sought papal support for the use of violence to fend off the supposedly imminent Soviet take-over. In place of Catholic Action, they affirmed, what was needed was "Civic Action," defined as the same "liberty of action against communism" accorded "to Spanish Catholics": that is, "armed defense."<sup>56</sup> In the words of a Mexican Bishop: "Faced with the danger of communism and the fear that its deeds succeed,

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<sup>54</sup> "[Ils] ont beaucoup contribué à éclairer l'opinion publique américaine sur le danger que la pénétration communiste au Mexique constituait pour la tranquillité des Etats-Unis." Summary of Jesuit pamphlets on Mexico, in *Lettres de Rome* 4 (March 1936): 63-4.

<sup>55</sup> For instance, with regard to one of these pamphlets -- Michael Kenny, *No God Next Door: Red Rule in Mexico and Our Responsibility* (New York: William J. Hirten Co., 1935) -- the Pope noted: "[Il Santo Padre] si è assai compiaciuto del lavoro del P. Kenny SJ e pensa che si potrebbe fare qualche recensione od estratto per i giornali europei." Letter of Pizzardo to Ledóchowski, Vatican City, 20 November 1935. ARSI, Documenta, 1020: Congregat. Romanae, 1935-6, fasc.XIII, Secr. Status Privata; for Ledóchowski prompt response, promising action in this sense, see Letter of Ledóchowsky to Pizzardo, 28 Nov 1935. ARSI, Registro – Epistolae, Apud Curiae Romanae, 1935-7, ff.159.

<sup>56</sup> From Pacelli's summary of the meeting for the Pope: "La Comissione Messicana [ritiene] che l'Azione Cattolica sia un mezzo insufficiente per il bene della religione oppressa e che perciò deve essere integrata dall'Azione civica, per la quale richiedono benedizioni dalla Santa Sede etc. [...] Se s'intende l'Azione civica desiderata dai detti messicani allora si sdrucchiola nella Difesa Armata." Pacelli, "Messico: Comissione Messicana diretta dal Vescovo di Chiapas," 14 Dec 1936, ASV, AES Messico (quarto periodo), 1936, pos.590, fasc.388, ff.13-16. From a memorandum for Pacelli from Mexican clergy: "Que las autoridades eclesiasticas dejen a los laicos en plena libertad de acción en nuestra lucha contra el comunismo para salvar nuestra sociedad, para defender nuestros hijos, nuestras familias, nuestros derechos naturales primarios, la civilización misma[...] En una palabra, que se nos deje en la misma libertad que los católicos españoles." Next to this, Pacelli writes, "Difesa armata!" Underlining in the original. "Cuestion Civica" portion of 6 Nov 1936 memorandum for Pacelli, signed by Gerardo, Busto, Castiello and Pablo Arámburu. *Ibid.*, ff.32.

everyone understands that it is necessary to be ready to defeat force with force, and that this defense is legitimate."<sup>57</sup>

Pacelli rushed the message back to Rome, and by December of 1936, the Vatican Secretariat of State, in collaboration with Mexican clerics and Father Wladimir Ledóchowski, had begun the project of writing an encyclical on Mexico, to respond to the Mexican request. Picking up where *Divini Redemptoris* left off, the draft encyclical on Mexico noted that armed revolt against atheistic communism was legitimate when "individual rights" were being violated.

The hardline endorsement of armed revolt was facilitated by Pacelli and Ledóchowski's ability to triumph over the Pope's more nuanced position. In early March of 1937, Pius XI had added a passage to the encyclical encouraging Mexican Catholics to avoid "certain abuses of Armed Defense," which had taken place during the Cristero wars. These included the Cristeros' renown willingness to "kill and mutilate teachers, chop off ears, rape [women] and pillage, all the while crying out: 'Long Live Christ the King!'" In his notes on Pius XI's additions, Ledóchowski decided that the Pope's recommendations needed "to be mitigated." Thus, the Secretary General of the Jesuits proposed that in place of this list of atrocities, which cast doubt on the wisdom of armed revolt and the probity of the Cristeros, the encyclical should simply "keep to more general language."<sup>58</sup> It was Ledóchowski's recommendations that would be

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<sup>57</sup> "Los hechos desarrollados en España y las horribles matanzas de Sacerdotes, Religiosos y Religiosas, hombres, mujeres y niños, han despertado el deseo de hacer algo parecido en México y se cree que esto no ha de tardar mucho tiempo. Es cuestión de meses únicamente. En este estado de cosas, los católicos mexicanos y la gente de orden desean estar prevenidos para evitar una hecatombe: esperan [...] poder organizar una defensa armada, no católica sino derechista [...] Ante el peligro del comunismo y el temor que se desarrollen en México sucesos como los de España, todos comprenden que es necesario prepararse para rechazar la fuerza con la fuerza y que esta defensa es legítima." Letter to Pacelli from Gerardo, Bishop of Chiapas, New York, 8 November 1936. Underlining, most likely by Pacelli, in the original. Ibid., ff.17-20.

<sup>58</sup> Instead of stating, as the Pope suggested, "I principii qui ricordati hanno lo scopo di impedire alcuni abusi della Difesa Armata, come quelli di uccidere o mutilare i maestri, mozzando loro le orecchi, violare le maestre, darsi al saccheggio unendo al grido W Cristo Re, quello di M. Calles, ecc," Ledochowski suggests: "forse [...] si potrebbe un po' mitigare omettendo [gli] 'atti di crudeltà' e tenendosi più 'al generale.'" Letter from Ledochowski to Pizzardo, Rome, 9 March 1937. ASV, AES Messico (4° periodo), 1937, pos.591 P.O., fasc.388, ff.62-3.

incorporated in the encyclical's final version, which considerably downplayed the potential excesses of armed revolt, and avoided any list of atrocities, like that supplied by the Pope.<sup>59</sup>

When *Firmissimam Constantiam* was published in March of 1937 as part of the Vatican's new diplomatic turn against the Soviet Union, the encyclical justified recourse to armed resistance noting that, "it is quite natural that when the most elementary religious and civil liberties are attacked, Catholic citizens do not resign themselves passively to renouncing these liberties." Referencing Catholic just war theories, the text affirmed that the armed revolt of Catholics must be "licit" and waged through acts that were "not intrinsically evil." Furthermore, these acts should have "reason [ratio] of means," be "proportionate to the end" they sought to achieve, and "not cause the community greater damages than those they seek to repair."<sup>60</sup> These were, in sum, the conditions of just war. Leaning heavily on negative and passive constructions, the text indeed asserted that,

It is not to be seen how citizens are to be condemned who unite to defend themselves and the nation, by licit and appropriate means, against those who make use of public power to bring it to ruin.<sup>61</sup>

Despite the text's perhaps intentionally evasive language, the endorsement of violence was clear. Furthermore, as was the case with *Divini Redemptoris*, the Mexican encyclical effectively silenced dissident voices within the Vatican. This time, the voices worried that a justification of armed revolt was a renunciation of the Church's tradition of pacifism, and might be interpreted as an "exhortation to revolt."<sup>62</sup> The decision for when and how to publish *Firmissimam*

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<sup>59</sup> See the new version, integrating Ledóchowski's edits, in ASV, AES Messico (4<sup>o</sup> periodo), 1937, pos.591 P.O., fasc.388, ff.55.

<sup>60</sup> Pius XI, *Firmissimam Constantiam* (28 March 1937), §26-7. The official English-language translation can be consulted online, at <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_19370328\\_firmissimam-constantiam\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19370328_firmissimam-constantiam_en.html)>. Last accessed on March 24, 2012.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, §28.

<sup>62</sup> For instance, the *minutante* of the Secretariat of State, Mons. Antonio Colonna, noted diplomatically, "Circa la difesa armata della quale il Santo Padre vuole che si parli [...] Mi pare che sarebbe meglio far innanzitutto rilevare che se si seguissero i dettami della Chiesa insegnati per mezzo dell'Azione Cattolica, i cattolici sarebbero educati alla resistenza passiva, dinanzi alla quale qualunque tiranno deve cedere senza

*Constantiam* exacerbated some of these worries. Indeed, the text was released on Easter day of 1937 (March 28<sup>th</sup>), thus making the papal recommendation of just war coincide with the most important festival of the liturgical year. In the United States, clerics already mobilized around the Mexican issue exulted. The mainstream non-Catholic American press, on the other hand, simply asserted that the encyclical “lamented the spread of atheism and communism.” According to the Vatican nuncio in Washington, DC, American journalists had quite possibly failed to grasp the import of the encyclical’s core message, insofar as their articles “made no particular reference to the extremely delicate point, that of armed resistance.”<sup>63</sup>

When *Firmissimam Constantiam* was published in Mexico, it was paired in a two-cent pamphlet with *Divini Redemptoris*. The cheap package made clear that the theoretical and geopolitical condemnation of communism undergirded the Vatican's recommendation to resist "Soviet" emissaries with force in Mexico.<sup>64</sup> The third text issued in March of 1937 -- on Nazi Germany -- was not included in the pamphlet, most likely because this text was more narrowly directed at a German audience, and did not seek to mobilize a global Catholic citizenry against Nazism. Instead, *Mit Brennender Sorge* sought to remind German officials of the importance of keeping to the terms of the concordat they had signed with Vatican diplomats in 1933.

Eugenio Pacelli and Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, an Austrian cleric whom Pacelli had befriended during his time in Bavaria, drafted the encyclical on Germany. Like Pacelli, Faulhaber was convinced that communism, not Nazism, represented the greatest threat to the

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difese armate, che è difficile che non eccedano [...] Se non si espongono questi concetti la lettera pontificia verrà interpretata (sia pure a torto) come un eccitamento alla ribellione. Bisogna tener a mente che si parla a teste calde!” ASV, AES Messico (quarto periodo), 1937, pos.591 P.O., fasc.388, ff.58.

<sup>63</sup> “Si capisce che il Papa vuole lamentare la diffusione dell’ateismo e del comunismo e denunciare il pericolo che tali dottrine si diffondano in altre nazioni dell’America Latina [...] Non ho trovato alcun accenno particolare ad un punto assai delicato, quello della difesa armata.” “Per notizia: la stampa nord Americana non cattolica e l’enciclica *Firmissimam*. Letter of Amleto Cicognani, U.S. Nunzio, to Pizzardo, 29-30 March 1937. Ibid., ff.89-90.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from Archbishop Ruíz to Pizzardo, San Antonio, Texas, 24 April 1937. Ibid., fasc.389, ff.3.

survival of Christian civilization.<sup>65</sup> Pacelli tightly controlled the process of putting together the encyclical, despite the fact that the push for issuing the text came from within the German hierarchy and perhaps from the Pope himself. In stark contrast to the spirit of both the other 1937 encyclicals and the draft *Syllabus of Errors*, Pacelli informed Faulhaber that the encyclical on Nazi Germany should “avoid polemic.” Furthermore, unlike the Holy Office project, the encyclical should steer clear of any mention of Nazism or specific Nazi texts, and avoid branding Nazism as heretical. Rather, *Mit Brennender Sorge* should try to restore cordial relations with the German state and guarantee the protection of the concordat.<sup>66</sup>

Faulhaber closely followed Pacelli's recommendations, and when *Mit Brennender Sorge* was issued in mid March of 1937, the text presented itself as an attempt to restore an agreement that united two now-bickering friends. Though rights were discussed, primary emphasis was placed on “rights guaranteed by a treaty,” namely, the concordat.<sup>67</sup> Unlike *Divini Redemptoris*, which argued that communism was inherently a rights-violating ideology, *Mit Brennender Sorge* limited itself to a protest of “violations of the treaty.”<sup>68</sup> And unlike *Firmissimam Constantiam* and *Divini Redemptoris*, which were translated into many languages and received a wide audience, the consumption of the German-language *Mit Brennender Sorge* was largely limited to a single nation-state. For Reinhold Niebuhr, the triple encyclical was proof positive of a dangerous new turn for the papacy, whose actions in the preceding decade he had endorsed. “It is becoming daily more apparent,” he wrote, “that the Catholic Church has cast its lot with

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<sup>65</sup> ASV, AES Germania, quarto period, pos.719, fasc.314, ff.5-6. Wolf, *Pope and Devil*, 265-6; Chenu, *Pie XII*, 196.

<sup>66</sup> *Akten Kardinal Michael von Faulhabers 1917-1952*, ed. Ludwig Volk (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1975-2002), II: 28. As cited in Godman, *Hitler and the Vatican*, 142-3. Also see Angelo Martini, “Il cardinale Faulhaber e l’enciclica *Mit brennender Sorge*,” *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* vol. II (1964): 303-320.

<sup>67</sup> *Mit Brennender Sorge* (14 March 1937), §5. Official English-language translation, available online at: <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_14031937\\_mit-brennender-sorge\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_14031937_mit-brennender-sorge_en.html)>. Last accessed 3 August 2012.

<sup>68</sup> The Encyclical only mentioned the fact that “Catholics have a right to their children’s Catholic education,” and that Catholic youth have the “right” to join “religious associations.”Ibid., §5; 33.

Fascist politics."<sup>69</sup> As a dismayed British Catholic publicist noted, accidentally referencing the keyword of the failed Holy Office project,

With considerable skill, the extravagances of German Nazi doctrine are picked out for condemnation in a way that would not involve the condemnation of political and social Totalitarianism.<sup>70</sup>

The fact that *Mit Brennender Sorge* skirted strong theological claims was something Pacelli himself openly admitted in an article authored for the *Osservatore Romano* soon after the publication of the triple encyclical. The three encyclicals -- he stated -- together taught that communism was irreconcilable with Christianity, and that communism was unquestionably worse than Nazism, which could still "save itself" by returning to Jesus Christ.<sup>71</sup> Immediately following the publication of *Mit Brennender Sorge*, Pacelli also dashed off a conciliatory note to the German Ambassador to the Vatican, Diego von Bergen, assuring that friendly relations could doubtless be restored. Going directly against the strong criticism of Nazism foregrounded by the draft Syllabus of Errors, Pacelli noted that the Vatican would never dare "interfere in the question of what concrete form of government a certain people chooses," nor in what political ideology governments professed.<sup>72</sup> In other words, brandishing Catholic anti-totalitarianism against Nazi Germany was a move Pacelli could not endorse.

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<sup>69</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Catholic Heresy," *Christian Century* 54 (8 December 1937): 1524. As reprinted in D.B. Robertson, ed., *Essays in Applied Christianity* (New York: Living Age, 1959), 207. On Niebuhr's earlier sympathies with the Catholic Church (and his celebration of medieval Catholicism "as a communal and authoritarian foil to the individualistic and libertarian tendencies of American Protestant thought"), and his later differentiated reaction to the institutional Church (which he now considered pro-Fascist) and liberal Catholicism (espoused by figures such as Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson), see Richard Wightman Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 148ff.

<sup>70</sup> Michael de la Bedoyère, *Christian Crisis* (London: The Catholic Book Club, 1940), 100. Bedoyère edited London's *Catholic Herald* from 1934 to 1962.

<sup>71</sup> "Dopo il Congresso di Norimberga," *Osservatore Romano* (15 September 1937).

<sup>72</sup> Pacelli to Bergen, 30 April 1937. *Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945*, Series D, Volume I (Washington: Department of State, 1953), doc.649, 964-5. As cited in Guenter Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 158.



## Conclusion

By the latter half of the 1930s, the Vatican's concordat diplomacy, integration of civil society, and strong anti-Soviet campaign had won it recognition as an important actor on the international stage. Thanks to the strenuous efforts of the Vatican Secretariat of State and the Jesuit order, Vatican anticommunism had successfully trumped other possible diplomatic undertakings and other theologically warranted ways of legitimizing these undertakings. Institutionalized by the Secretariat on Atheism and provided with a justificatory framework by the 1937 triple encyclical, the Vatican anticommunist campaign had successfully shifted attention away from other enemies, all the while turning Catholic anti-totalitarian criticism of these movements to new ends.

As the Vatican oriented itself completely against the Soviet Union, it brought much of the Catholic world along with it. Following the March 1937 triple encyclical, American and European Catholic publications underwent a visible shift, concerning themselves more with daily geopolitical affairs, and siding decidedly with Franco's troops in the ensuing Spanish Civil War. The call to take up arms against communists was echoed in the British Catholic press,<sup>73</sup> in a “Catechism on Atheistic Communism” jointly drafted by Italian Catholic Action and the Jesuit *Civiltà Cattolica*,<sup>74</sup> and during the First International Congress of Christ the King, held in Poland in the June of 1937.<sup>75</sup> In Spain, for evident reasons, the tie with the Vatican was notably strengthened, and many of Franco's supporters increasingly agreed with the Pope that the battle of the moment was one between Catholicism and communism. Franco's *Nacionales* claimed

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<sup>73</sup> See, e.g., Douglas Jerrold's coverage of the Spanish Civil War in *The Nineteenth Century*, in early April of 1937. As cited in Herbert Rudledge Southworth, *Conspiracy and the Spanish Civil War: The Brainwashing of Francisco Franco* (London: Routledge, 2002), 5; 10-16.

<sup>74</sup> The catechism was published under the title *Tenebre di errore e luce di verità: contro il comunismo*, and was issued by the editor-in-chief of *Civiltà Cattolica*, Father Enrico Rosa. The booklet – which sold at 0,50 lire a copy – was extensively advertised in the 1938 issues of the *Bollettino Ufficiale dell'Azione Cattolica*.

<sup>75</sup> Father Muckermann, “Le Congres de Poznan,” *Lettres de Rome* (15 June 1937): 184-6.

Catholicism rather than fascism as their leading cause, Catholicism as their chief source of emotional and ideological sustenance, and Catholicism vs. communism as Spain's ultimate choice. No matter that communists were by no means dominant in the anti-Franco struggle, insofar as they were far outnumbered by anarcho-syndicalist and socialist groups. The Vatican's anticommunist campaign, and the need to quickly name enemies and construct wartime propaganda, increasingly encouraged the *Nacionales* to point the finger directly at Moscow, and its "Communist International," which they juxtaposed with the "Catholic International," based in Vatican City.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, Franco's men saw clearly that Vatican support was crucial to the efforts, as evidenced by their repeated attempts to petition to the Pope via various channels to provide forceful and frequent endorsements of their cause.<sup>77</sup>

Given this context, most onlookers found it unsurprising that the Vatican moved quickly to send a papal representative to the Burgos government, and became the first among the major powers not militarily allied with Franco to grant the post-*coup* Spain official diplomatic recognition (in May of 1938). Negotiations between the Vatican and Spain promptly got underway, in a bid to bring concordat diplomacy to this European outpost as well.<sup>78</sup> In the

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<sup>76</sup> For an introduction to how Catholicism mobilized Franco's supporters, see Stanley G. Payne, *Franco and Hitler: Spain, Germany and World War II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 5-13, and *passim*; Mary Vincent, *Catholicism in the Second Spanish Republic: Religion and Politics in Salamanca, 1930-1936* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); José M. Sánchez, *The Spanish Civil War as a Religious Tragedy* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987); Sid Lowe, *Catholicism, War and the Foundation of Francoism: The Juventud de Acción Popular in Spain, 1931-1939* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2010); Hilario M. Ragner Suárez, *Gunpowder and Incense: The Catholic Church and the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

For an introduction to the international nature of the Spanish Civil War, and the role of "internationalist" discourses therein, see Michael Alpert, *A New International History of the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Christian Leitz and David J. Dunthorn, eds., *Spanish in an International Context, 1936-1959* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999); and Martin Baumeister and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, eds., *If You Tolerate This--': The Spanish Civil War in the Age of Total War* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2008).

<sup>77</sup> The Vatican archives are replete with evidence of this pressure, mediated by French and Spanish clerics, and by Vatican officials such as Eugenio Pacelli himself. See, e.g., letter from Valeri to Maglione, 11 June 1939. ASV, Arch. Nunz. Parigi, b.609, fasc. 853, ff.17; and Pacelli's Udienze notes, 18 January 1937 and 13 February 1937, ASV, AES Stati Ecclesiastici, pos. 430a, f.354, ff.13f and 24f.

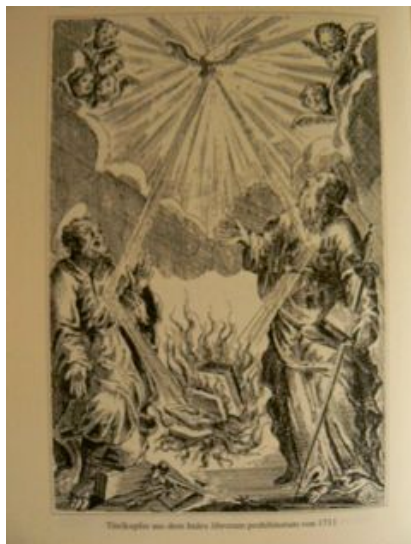
<sup>78</sup> For a discussion of these events, see Antonio Marquina Barria, *La diplomacia Vaticana y la España de Franco (1936-1945)* (Madrid: CSIC, 1983), 92ff.

meanwhile, outlying lay Catholic attempts to maintain a neutral stance in the conflict and denounce atrocities committed by Franco's troops were increasingly met with clerical ridicule and suspicion of "Bolshevik complicity." Consider, for instance, the fate of an organization tightly surveilled by Vatican officials: the French *Comité français pour la paix civile et religieuse en Espagne*. Despite the fact that one of the leaders of the *Comité*, Jacques Maritain, had a personal relationship with the Pope and had provided invaluable assistance in the Pope's *rapprochement* with the French government in the 1920s, his articulate petitions to the Vatican regarding mass atrocities committed by both sides in Spain fell on deaf ears.<sup>79</sup>

With the 1937 triple encyclical, it was hard not to concur with Reinhold Niebuhr's assessment that the Vatican had cast its lot with Nazi-Fascist states against the Soviet Union, and endorsed violence against left-wing (and typically non-communist) forces in Mexico and Spain. However, the fact that the Vatican sided with Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and the *Nationalistas* in Spain did not mean that it was turning its back to democratic powers like the United States. Paradoxically, the Vatican's anticommunist campaign in fact helped lay the foundations for an emergent diplomatic relationship with the United States. How it did so is the subject of the following chapter.

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<sup>79</sup> See, e.g., *Comité français pour la paix civile et religieuse en Espagne* to Pius XI, Paris, 16 June 1937. ASV, AES *Spagna* (quarto periodo) 1936-1939, pos.896 PO, fasc.296, ff.15r. The *Comité* members included illustrious French Catholics like Jacques Maritain, Georges Duhamel, Louis Le Fur, Gabriel Marcel and François Mauriac. For the strong clerical reactions against the *Comité* in Spain, France, Italy and Latin America, see Piero Doria, *La condanna della 'dottrina Maritain'* (Rome: ARACNE, 2008), 69ff.



**Fig.1:** The 1711 cover of the Index of Forbidden Books.

Source: *Index librorum prohibitorum usque ad annum MDCCXI regnante Clemente XI* (Rome, 1711).<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> As reproduced in Hubert Wolf, ed., *Römische Inquisition und Indexkongregation. Grundlagenforschung 1814-1917: Einleitung 1814-1917* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005), 12.

**Part III**



**Reconstructing Christian Europe**

## Chapter Seven

### *The Pursuit of Old Diplomacy and New Allies: Towards the Vatican-U.S. Partnership, 1939-1943*

*The defense of religion, of democracy and of good faith among nations is all the same fight. To save one we must now make up our minds to save them all.*  
-- Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1939<sup>1</sup>

*Where the rights of God are ignored, how do you expect the rights of man to be respected?*  
-- Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., 1935<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

The Vatican's anticommunist campaign and its perceived role in internationalizing the Spanish Civil War would increase the Vatican's influence in the United States, and lay the foundations for a *rapprochement* between the two powers during the Second World War. *Realpolitik* considerations that brought the two powers together and led them to forge what from late 1942 can be called an alliance.

Through attention to both deeds and words, this chapter will follow three key episodes enabling the emergence of the Vatican-U.S. alliance: the growth of Vatican influence in the United States as a result of the Spanish Civil War (1938-9); the joint U.S.-Vatican pursuit of a strategy of appeasement in Europe, well beyond Munich (February-June of 1940); and the Vatican decision to secretly help the United States prepare to wage war against the Axis (from September of 1941). It will be emphasized that on the U.S. side, cultivating ties with the Vatican was part of a broader project to obtain the American Catholic vote in national elections, mobilize Catholics at home and abroad against the Axis, and gain crucial knowledge about, and influence

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<sup>1</sup> Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "Annual Message to Congress," 4 January 1939. As reprinted in *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (henceforth PPAFDR) (New York: Random House, 1939), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., "The Challenge to Religion in a Changing World," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 180 (July 1935): 183-91, here 187.

in, European affairs. For the Vatican, the *rapprochement* was deemed advisable because of the United States' great economic prowess and because the United States seemed willing to protect the Vatican's interwar gains in Europe and keep sustained pressure on the Soviet Union. The Vatican's cautious turn to the U.S. was also caused by the fear that interwar partners were in the process of considerably rolling back concordat commitments and limiting the Vatican's presence in civil society.

The standard literature on the Second World War has not duly emphasized the emergence of the Vatican-United States partnership, due to difficulty in obtaining relevant sources and the prevalence of certain historiographical trends. Scholars consulting the Secret Vatican Archives in Vatican City are not allowed to view documents written after January-February of 1939, and the papers of the leading American diplomat in residence at Vatican City during the war are unhelpfully scattered between four different U.S. archives.<sup>3</sup> These papers nonetheless contain a wealth of material and have been, to date, been quite underused, even by those enterprising scholars who took the trouble to publish and translate archival selections.<sup>4</sup> Lack of access to the Secret Vatican Archives for the wartime years has been partially remedied by the publication of an eleven-volume work, which contains a selection from these archives from the years between 1939 and 1945.<sup>5</sup> Using these materials, alongside evidence from

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<sup>3</sup> The FDR Presidential Library in Hyde Park, New York; the National Archives in College Park, Maryland; the Cornell University Rare Books and Manuscripts Archive in Ithaca, New York; and the Harry Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri.

<sup>4</sup> See Myron C. Taylor, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti, 1939-1952: Dalle carte di Myron C. Taylor*, ed. Ennio Di Nolfo (Milan: F. Angeli, 1978). I am profoundly grateful to Ennio Di Nolfo, who has provided me with orientation to these archives, three of which I have personally visited.

<sup>5</sup> The multi-volume work contains selections from the Secret Vatican Archives covering the arc of time between 1939 and 1945. It was published per Pope Paul VI's request between 1965 and 1981, in response to the rise in Holocaust consciousness and the Pius wars, which accused Pius XII of having ignored the plight of Jews during the conflict. The selection of documents was curated by four Jesuit historians telling from France, Italy, Germany and the United States, and issued by a prominent Vatican publishing house. Given the context in which it was put together, there are reasons to question the *choices* of sources made by the four scholars, though not -- I believe -- the content or existence of those sources. Thus, the eleven-volume work represents a valuable research tool for scholars of the Vatican and of the Second World War. See *Actes et documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (henceforth ADSS), eds. Pierre Belt, Angelo Martini, Burkhardt Schneider and Robert A. Graham, 11

published newspaper reports, and French, Italian, British and American foreign ministry papers, I have here tried to sketch a picture of Vatican-U.S. relations in the war years.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to source difficulties, scarce attention to the forging of the Vatican-U.S. alliance during the Second World War has most likely been due to the existence of two historiographical trends, one within U.S. diplomatic history and the other concerning the history of the Vatican during World War II. Until quite recently, diplomatic histories of the United States' role in the war have tended to downplay the role of religion. Though much work still remains to be done, happily the tide has been turning, as more attention is being paid to how religious groups and rhetoric shaped American diplomacy and the electorate at large.<sup>7</sup> On the Vatican side, the primary reason that the history of relations with the U.S. has been understudied is because of scholarly preoccupation with the role the Vatican played in the Holocaust.<sup>8</sup> Though it certainly matters whether Pius XII was a tacit accomplice of the Holocaust or a strong opponent to it, over-emphasis on this particular question has occluded

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volumes (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965-1981). Scholars (including this one) may have to nuance or modify their arguments regarding the Vatican between 1939 and 1958 when Pope Pius XII's papers at the Secret Vatican Archives are opened to the public.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the well-known published foreign policy papers available, new sources have been recently scanned and made available to scholars. See, e.g., *U.S. Relations with the Vatican and the Holocaust, 1940-1950* (Farmington Hills, Mich.: Gale, 2010), which provides a selection of documents from the National Archives in Washington, DC.

<sup>7</sup> Recent works that explore the connection between religious groups and the U.S. entry into World War II include Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 2012); Charles Gallagher, S.J., *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); David Zietsma, "'Sin Has No History': Religion, National Identity and U.S. Intervention, 1937-1941," *Diplomatic History* 31 (June 2007): 531-565; Mark A. Noll and Luke E. Harlow, eds., *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); and David B. Woolner and Richard G. Kurial, eds., *FDR, the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church in America, 1933-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). For a general reflection on the importance of this "religious turn," see Andrew Preston, "Bridging the Gap between Church and State in the History of American Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 30 (November 2006): 783-812.

<sup>8</sup> The famous spark was the following play: Rolf Hochhuth, *Der Stellvertreter: ein christliches Trauerspiel* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1963).



many other important historical developments, such as the ones under analysis in this chapter.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, as will be suggested, a better understanding of Vatican diplomatic priorities during the conflict can also provide a new perspective on the Pius wars.

### **1. The Spanish Civil War and Vatican Influence in the United States**

The triple encyclical of March of 1937 showed the world that the Vatican had launched an uncompromising battle against the Soviet Union -- a battle which depended as much on the mobilization of a certain political ideology as it did on the participation of Catholic civil society. From spring of 1937, it became clear that the majority of American Catholics had heeded the Pope's calls. The American hierarchy quickly united behind the Vatican, by condemning the Soviet Union's violation of "the fundamental rights of God" and disseminating a July 1937 letter penned by the Spanish episcopacy justifying armed revolt.<sup>10</sup> In late November of 1937, American bishops expressed their sympathy and admiration for General Franco and his fight against communism through a collective letter. Additionally, the vast majority of American Catholic publications -- despite their traditional isolationist stance -- came out solidly in favor of Franco, and the use of violence "against communism" in Mexico and Spain. Strongly influenced by the triple encyclical and convinced that Soviet agents were indeed responsible for unrest in these two Catholic countries, American Catholic periodicals increasingly presented the choice as one "for God or against God."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See William Patch, "The Catholic Church, the Third Reich, and the Origins of the Cold War: On the Utility and Limitations of Historical Evidence," *Journal of Modern History* 82 (June 2010): 396-433, and Mark Ruff, *The Battle for the Catholic Past in Germany, 1945-1975* (forthcoming).

<sup>10</sup> Collective Letter of the Spanish Episcopate, drafted by Cardinal Gomá, 1 July 1937. As reprinted in Gabriele Ranzato, *L'eclissi della democrazia: la guerra civile spagnola e le sue origini, 1931-9* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2004), 153-7.

<sup>11</sup> *NCWC News Service* (March 19, 1937). Many high-ranking American Catholics (most vocal among whom being Archbishop McNicholas, Bishop John F. Noll, Monsignor Ready and Father Edward L. Curran) were convinced that the Spanish Civil War was brought about by Soviets advancing world

Taking the Vatican's anti-Soviet crusade to a new level, Catholics in the United States also formed powerful lobbies that sought to sway congressional opinion on Spain and influence political asylum policies regarding Spanish refugees.<sup>12</sup> Particularly when compared to the much more radical exponents of religious revivalism, who similarly sought to shape domestic and foreign policy, Catholics were taken seriously, in that they were perceived as well-organized, disciplined, and willing to play by the books.<sup>13</sup>

Due to transformations in both domestic affairs and in the United States' perceived role abroad, by 1938 American politicians began to listen to Catholic demands. In this year, President Roosevelt noted that Catholic activism around the Spanish Civil War had taught him that, "in his whole policy, domestic and foreign, it was necessary to carry along the Catholic Church." Indeed, Roosevelt reckoned, if he failed to do so, his party would risk "losing every Catholic vote" in the 1938 midterm elections.<sup>14</sup>

Accordingly, Roosevelt and American congressmen began to respond to Catholic pressure. Congress agreed not to send American arms, men or funds to defend Republican Spain -- a

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revolution. From mid March of 1937, the same view was espoused by nearly all of the United States' Catholic journals, including the *National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service*, *America*, *Catholic Action*, *Catholic Mind*, *Catholic Digest*, *Catholic World*, *Columbia*, *Commonweal* and *Sign*.

On the Catholic mobilization in favor of Franco following the publication of *Divini Redemptoris* in the United States, see Michael E. Chapman, *Arguing Americanism: Franco Lobbyists, Roosevelt's Foreign Policy and the Spanish Civil War* (Kent, Ohio: Kente State University Press, 2011), 1-35; 156-84; David J. Valaik, "American Catholic Dissenters and the Spanish Civil War," *Catholic Historical Review* 53 (January 1968): 553ff; Roger Van Allen, *'The Commonweal' and American Catholicism: The Magazine, The Movement, The Meaning* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 61-66, 70-3; Allen Guttmann, *The Wound in the Heart: America and the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), 202ff; Donald F. Crosby, "Boston's Catholics and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939," *New England Quarterly* 44 (March 1971):100ff; and George Q. Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism: Catholics and American Diplomacy, 1937-45* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1976), 34-7.

<sup>12</sup> Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism*, 33; 39-40; 48-52.

<sup>13</sup> For a recent reflection on the reactionary impulse of U.S. religious revivalism in the 1930s, see Matthew Pehl, "'Apostles of Fascism,' 'Communist Clergy' and the UAW: Political Ideology and Working Class Religion in Detroit, 1919-1945," *The Journal of American History* 99, 2 (2012): 440-65.

<sup>14</sup> Norman Thomas, "Interview," 14 May 1938. Columbia University Oral History Project. As cited in Flynn, op.cit., 43.

policy which, according to many contemporary reports (including the diary entries of Roosevelt's Interior Minister, Harold L. Ickes), was drafted in part in response to Catholic pressures, and maintained in place despite FDR's subsequent change of heart, due to powerful Catholic interests.<sup>15</sup> The policy was all the more surprising given the fact that not just Catholics had mobilized around the Spanish Civil War: as one historian has noted, for American citizens in the 1930s, none "of the major international crises of the 1930s -- Manchuria, Ethiopia, the Rhineland, the Anschluss, the Sudetenland -- aroused half the passion of the Spanish Civil War."<sup>16</sup> Of course, it was not simply Franco who "aroused passions": so too did the Loyalists, who throughout the war obtained the support of American citizens in various ways.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to being motivated by local factors (i.e., the perceived importance of the Catholic vote in the 1938 midterm elections), the decision to heed Catholics during the Spanish Civil War was also due to a shifting perception of the United States' relations with the European continent. If in 1936, members of the Roosevelt administration viewed the Spanish Civil War as a distant conflict of little relevance to the United States, starting from 1937, and even more so, in 1938, officials increasingly saw developments in Spain as intimately connected to U.S. national interests. Specifically, they began to see the war as part of a wider bid for Nazi-Fascist dominance, which might undermine U.S. interests in places like Latin America. There was no question in fact that the Spanish Civil War had brought Germany and Italy closer together, and

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<sup>15</sup> See Harold L. Ickes, entry of May 12, 1938. *The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes: vol. 2, The Inside Struggle, 1936–1939* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 389–90; Leo V. Kanawada, Jr., *Franklin D. Roosevelt's Diplomacy and American Catholics, Italians, and Jews* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982), chap. 3; and Dominic Tierney, *FDR and the Spanish Civil War: Neutrality and Commitment in the Struggle that Divided America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), who shows that as late as December 1938, FDR was unable to ship sorely needed wheat supplies to Loyalist fighters, due to Catholic opposition. Though historians continue to debate the extent to which Catholics shaped FDR's neutrality policy towards Spain, most agree that Catholic pressure had an effect on the President's diplomacy.

<sup>16</sup> Justus D. Doenecke, "Review: No Longer a Sphinx: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Spanish Civil War," *Diplomatic History* 33, 1 (January 2009): 139–142, here 139.

<sup>17</sup> For an overview of the contribution of Americans to the Loyalist cause, see Peter N. Carroll, *The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade: Americans in the Spanish Civil War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

further isolated the Soviet Union, as Great Britain, France and the United States, of course, which had been unwilling to partner with Bolshevik leaders to save the Spanish Republic.<sup>18</sup> From 1938, the Roosevelt administration thus decided that the time had come to get a better handle on developments in Europe, and that one way to do so would be by strengthening ties with the Vatican.

The Vatican seemed like a useful interlocutor for the United States, since as a result of the Spanish Civil War it had gained newfound prominence in the Americas and the wider world. New U.S. War Department maps of Western Europe and Latin America clearly marked the regions as Catholic, and U.S. diplomats based in Europe adamantly argued that the Vatican played a leading role in the political, moral and social life of the continent's citizens.<sup>19</sup> To be sure, U.S. officials likely overemphasized the Vatican's importance in Europe, due a combination of ignorance about the true power centers in Europe ("Who to call if I want to call Europe?"), and the old American Protestant prejudice casting all Catholics as slaves of the Pope. Nonetheless, the United States' interest in the Vatican was yet more proof that the interwar reconfiguration of Church-state relations on the continent had been successful -- or at least, that it was widely perceived as such.

From 1938, the FDR administration thus began to strengthen its ties with top-ranking Vatican clergy, just as the country was tentatively emerging from isolationism, but had yet to create a robust, multifaceted, transnational presence of its own.<sup>20</sup> In November of 1938, FDR made a bold proposal to unite with the Vatican to bring the Spanish Civil War to a halt, and

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<sup>18</sup> See Tierney, *op.cit.*, 25-39; 75-89.

<sup>19</sup> See Emmet Kennedy, "Ambassador Carlton J.H. Hayes' Wartime Diplomacy: Making Spain a Haven from Hitler," *Diplomatic History* 36, 2 (April 2012): 237-260; and Hayes' discussion of his own Catholicism and his personal affinity with Franco's Spain, in his autobiography, *Wartime Mission in Spain, 1942-1945* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1945).

<sup>20</sup> Though the United States had already created a "market empire" in Europe, it had yet to fully couple its commercial predominance with a winning cultural-ideological project. See Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

simultaneously control European political affairs. The mediation proposal involved no less than a joint U.S.-Vatican nomination of a three-man provisional ruling government for Spain. Though the plan was never realized (most likely due to feasibility questions), it showed the Pope that the United States was serious about assigning him considerable power in European affairs. The project also confirmed to U.S. officials that if only they could win over the Vatican, they might considerably limit Axis influence in Europe.<sup>21</sup>

## **2. A Joint Vatican-U.S. Appeasement Strategy for Europe**

The Roosevelt administration was hopeful about its ability to sway Pope Pius XI to turn against the Axis powers. After all, particularly between 1938 and early 1939, this Pope had begun issuing several emotional eruptions against Germany's seizure of Czechoslovakia, Italy's "anti-Catholic" Race Laws, and Fascist and Nazi attempts to limit an ever-growing Catholic Action movement. Indeed, despite his full endorsement of the anticommunist campaign and his passage of the triple encyclical (in which Nazi-Fascism was deemed less worrisome than communism), Pius XI had grown somewhat impatient with both Hitler and Mussolini, particularly in 1938-9. He worried that the movements these leaders had created were overrun by a modern form of anticlericalism that bode ill for the survival of the Catholic Church, pointing in particular to the ways in which their policies violated the rights of Catholic citizens and the tenets of concordats.<sup>22</sup> In 1939, Pius XI had even secretly asked a group of clerics to draft a modest anti-racist encyclical, to protest the Nazi regime's deification of Arianism.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See Tierney, *op.cit.*, 75-135. I only learned of this important episode recently, and would like to do more research on it in the future.

<sup>22</sup> The historiography has, predictably, spent a great deal of ink analyzing Pius XI's eruptions against Hitler and Mussolini. Some, like Emma Fattorini, Hubert Wolf, and Frank J. Coppa, have tended to inflate the Pope's opposition to these leaders; others have cast Pius XI's words as insignificant and/or overly cautious. This chapter and the subsequent ones will argue that both Pius XI and Pius XII remained primarily concerned with protecting Catholics (rather than Jews or certainly Muslims or other religious minorities). Further, it will be suggested that actions speak louder than words; at this level, neither Pope

More often than not, Pius XI's Secretary of State Eugenio Pacelli had been able to censor the Pope's fiery statements, editing or rewriting them substantially before they hit the international press or were published on the pages of Vatican newspapers.<sup>24</sup> Sometimes, however, Pius XI's defiant words had slipped through, making him a hero for a small number of Catholics and a considerable bother for large numbers of Fascist and Nazi officials, who were eager to see the sickly Pope off to his grave. "One hopes that the present Pontiff is really on his last legs," a Fascist spy for instance glibly commented in a confidential note on the eve of Pius XI's death.<sup>25</sup>

Figures like these were thus quite relieved when one month after Pius XI's death in February of 1939, Eugenio Pacelli was elected Pope, in the swiftest conclave in three hundred years. Pacelli received the vote of all the sixty-two Cardinal electors, the overwhelming majority of whom were European.<sup>26</sup> Of the seven non-European Cardinal electors, six came from the

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dared not intervene in any substantial sense, for instance by repealing the German or Italian concordats, or officially breaking diplomatic relations with either of these governments.

<sup>23</sup> On the suppression of the so-called "secret encyclical" (which was not however as radical as many scholars have claimed), see John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933-1965* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Georges Passelecq and Suchecky, *The Hidden Encyclical of Pius XI*, trans. Steven Rendall (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997); and Emma Fattorini, *Hitler, Mussolini and the Vatican: Pope Pius XI and the Speech That Was Never Made*, trans. Carl Ipsen (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011).

<sup>24</sup> Ample evidence in the archives exists of these rewritings, of which the Pope often approved. For scholarly discussions, see, e.g., Lucia Ceci, *Il papa non deve parlare: Chiesa fascismo e guerra d'Etiopia* (Rome: Laterza, 2010); Carlo Felice Casula, *Domenico Tardini, 1888-1961: L'azione della Santa Sede nella crisi fra le due guerre* (Rome: Studium, 1988).

<sup>25</sup> "A buon conto però si spera che l'attuale Pontificato stia proprio...agli sgoccioli; e pare che tra i Cardinali si sia formata come una lega di reazione, e che tutti si siano giurati l'un l'altro di riformare tutto quanto è stato fatto da Pio XI, giungendo al Papato. I più accanati nell'opposizione [...] agogna[no] il papato il modo superlativo." Note on Pius XI stored within a Fascist secret police file on Giuseppe Pizzardo, dated Rome, 25 December 1937. ACS, MI, DGPS, DPP, Fascicoli personali, Serie B, b.19, fasc. "Pizzardo monsignore," ff.31.

<sup>26</sup> The 1939 College of Cardinals contained no Cardinal electors from Africa or Asia, and one lonely Cardinal hailing from the Middle East. In keeping with the Vatican's longstanding Eurocentrism, fifty-five of the sixty-two Cardinal electors were Europeans, the vast majority of whom hailed from Italy (with thirty-five representatives), or from other countries transformed by the interwar conclusion of concordats or *modus vivendi* with the Vatican. Among the European and non-Italian Cardinal electors, there were six Frenchmen, three Spaniards, two Germans, two Poles, one Brit, one Irishman, one Portuguese, one Belgian, one Hungarian, one Austrian, and one Czech.

Americas, with the largest number originating from the United States.<sup>27</sup> In terms of the absolute number of Cardinal electors present, the United States was tied with Spain, second only to Italy and France. The existence of comparatively so many U.S. Cardinal electors reflected the Vatican's growing realization that it was important to maintain good relations with the United States.

Pacelli was widely well liked by virtue of his diplomatic, rather than pastoral, contributions to the Church; indeed, he was the only twentieth-century Pope who had never occupied a bishopric, or tended to a flock of his own. The former Secretary of State was known for introducing two diplomatic strategies that had much benefitted the Vatican since World War I: concordat diplomacy and the anti-Soviet campaign. He was also widely viewed as a conciliator. During his first year in power, Pius XII would stay true to his practices as Secretary of State: he would continue to strongly back the Vatican's anti-Soviet campaign, voice his support for Franco and "Catholic Spain," and do his best to heal the rifts created by his predecessor in Vatican relations with Italy and Germany. At the same time, Pacelli would quietly accept the offer to increase ties with the United States, in the interests of preserving the peace and the Vatican's prominence in European affairs.

Between May and August of 1939, Pius XII worked hard to show Italy and Germany that he remained loyal to them, and that the Vatican was capable of averting war by encouraging other European powers to grant Italy and Germany land and influence.<sup>28</sup> Proposing to address Italy and Germany's demands in the international arena, Pius XII called for the Vatican to host an international conference (effectively, a second Munich), wherein the Five Powers might reach

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<sup>27</sup> Six Cardinals hailed from the Americas: in addition to the three U.S. Cardinals present, there was one French Canadian, one Argentine and one Brazilian.

<sup>28</sup> German Ambassador to the Holy See, Diego von Bergen, to Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, Rome, 13 March 1939. In *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, series D (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949-1954), d.475, IV: 601. See, inter alia, Giovanni Miccoli, *I dilemmi e i silenzi di Pio XII* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2000), 18-9.

a “peaceful solution to questions that divide Germany and Poland, and France and Italy.”<sup>29</sup> Mussolini and the Italian foreign minister, Galeazzo Ciano, initially applauded the proposal, in the hopes that listing Italian and German demands side by side would give Italy a powerful place at the bargaining table. However, the initiative ultimately failed to win the support of any of the other invited powers. Hitler noted coyly that he “did not see the possibility of war,” and that in place of a conference, the Vatican should impose “a period of spiritual retreat for all of these Heads of State and Government, who appear to be exceptionally overexcited.” The skepticism of the British Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax took a different form: he affirmed that the Vatican conference would be useless and add nothing to Munich. Ultimately, even Mussolini eventually distanced himself from the Pope's proposal.<sup>30</sup> Pius XI responded to his failure by pursuing a second but less binding peace strategy. In August of 1939, he circulated a letter to German, French, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Belgian, Dutch, Swiss, and British heads of state, which asked for a simple show of support for a vaguely worded papal message that called for a solution to the present conflict, the preservation of the status quo, and a return to the principles of Christ. Though praise was privately showered on the Pope, in public the interested parties jealously guarded their silence and refused to endorse the peace message.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to his failure to become a broker of peace, the Pope was increasingly forced to realize that Italy and Germany did not appear interested in working with the Vatican. In 1938-9, Mussolini had begun to persecute Catholic Action, violate Catholic teachings on

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<sup>29</sup> The official invitation, written by Pius XII and sent out by Cardinal Maglione, the Pope's Secretary of State, read as follows: “Pur evitando di scendere ai particolari Sua Santità proporrebbe come scopo della Conferenza di comporre pacificamente le questioni che tengono in disaccordo la Germania e la Polonia, la Francia e l'Italia.” Cardinal Maglione to the nuncios of Paris, Berlin and Warsaw, and to the apostolic delegate of London, Rome, May 3, 1939. As reprinted in ADSS, I: 120 (doc.19).

<sup>30</sup> See Orsenigo to Maglione, reporting on a conversation with Hitler of the same day. Berlin, 6 May 1939. ADSS, I: 130 (doc.29); Halifax to Osborne, 5 May 1939, in *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, series III, eds. E.L Woodward, R. Butler and A. Orde (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1949-1961), V: 435ff (doc. 380). For all of the reactions to the Pope's proposal, see ADSS, I: 123-32, 139, 141 (docs.22-29, 37, 39).

<sup>31</sup> The second appeal was sent in late August of 1939. For letters pertaining to the two appeasement attempts, cf. ADSS, I: 270 (docs.159-61); and I: 123-32, 139, 141 (docs.22-29, 37 and 39).



conversion and marriage (via the aforementioned Race Laws), and cultivate a pragmatic alliance with Muslim groups in Europe and the Middle East, for instance by attempting to build a mosque in Rome, over and against Pius XII's robust, and prejudiced, protests.<sup>32</sup> Even more worrisome was Hitler, who was encouraging the closure of confessional schools, seminaries, and religious institutions in Germany, as well as the substitution of teaching of catechism with courses on National Socialism.<sup>33</sup> The final blow came on August 23, 1939, when Hitler concluded a non-aggression pact with his long-avowed enemy, Stalin. Though Vatican newspapers failed to officially condemn the pact robustly (most likely fearing reprisals), in private Pius XII and his advisors voiced disgust, and exerted great pressure on Germany to repeal the pact. German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop attempted to appease Pius XII, affirming that, "National Socialism had prevented the triumph of communism in Germany. In the years 1930-1932 [...] communism was about to triumph. Hitler beat it." Had Hitler not risen to power to save the country, "in Germany not even one church would have remained standing, as happened in Russia." To this, the Pope brusquely responded that there was no way of

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<sup>32</sup> Mussolini proposed to erect a mosque in Rome just a few days after Italian troops invaded Albania in April of 1939, "in view of the fact that six million Italian subjects are now Moslems." In response, Pius XII informed Fascist officials that he was "horrified at the idea." Mussolini tried to push through the project anyway, but abandoned efforts by spring of 1940, thanks in part to the Pope's mobilization of Italian Catholics to protest the construction of a mosque. The Pope's words and Mussolini's logic is reported in Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano's diary, in an entry of 11 April 1939. *Idem, Diary, 1937-1943*, trans. Robert L. Miller (New York: Enigma Books, 2002), 217-8, and discussed in Abdul Vahab Bey, "Una Moschea a Roma," *Politica nuova* 9, 6 (March 1940): 185-6. As cited in Nir Arielli, *Fascist Italy and the Middle East, 1933-1940* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 152. For more on Mussolini's pursuit of Muslim support and the Vatican's opposition, see Davide Rodogno, *Fascism's European Empire: Italian Occupation during the Second World War*, trans. Adrian Belton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); and John L. Wright, "Mussolini, Libya and the Sword of Islam," in *Italian Colonialism*, eds. Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 121-31.

<sup>33</sup> On the Vatican's growing impatience with Nazi Germany's violation of the concordat, see, e.g., Notes of Cardinal Maglione, following his meetings with Joachim von Ribbentrop, Vatican, 11 March 1940. ADSS, I: 389 (doc.258). Germany's increasingly repressive treatment of its Jewish population was not the cause for much concern in Vatican headquarters either at this point in time or, arguably, subsequently.

knowing that Germany could contain Russia now; and for that matter, what would have happened to Germany had Hitler not come to power.<sup>34</sup>

The situation was perplexing indeed. In a conversation with the distraught Spanish ambassador to the Holy See, Domenico Tardini noted,

The Spanish know through painful experience what communism means. They thought they had delivered a serious blow to communism, defeating it in Spain. Instead now they see [that]...even he who had helped Spain against communism is entering into agreements with Stalin.<sup>35</sup>

Could Nazi Germany really be counted on to carry on a campaign against communism if it was willing to sign agreements of this sort with the Soviet Union?

Prospects for a Vatican-German *rapprochement* worsened when on September 1, 1939, German and Soviet troops invaded "Catholic Poland," and France and Great Britain declared war on Germany. Donning the mantle of neutrality, the Pope hardly commented on the events in public, despite repeated urgings to do so.<sup>36</sup> Even his much-awaited first encyclical, issued in October of 1939, contained such a vague and watered-down call to obeying the "laws of God"

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<sup>34</sup> ADSS, I: 386 (doc.257). Notes of Monsignor Tardini following Pius XII's meeting with Ribbentrop, Vatican City, 11 March 1940.

<sup>35</sup> "Gli Spagnuoli sanno per esperienza dolorosa che significhi il comunismo. Essi credevano di aver inferto un grave colpo al comunismo, sconfiggendolo nella Spagna. Invece ora si vedono tutte le Potenze come inginocchiate davanti a Stalin e si vede accordarsi con lui proprio chi aveva aiutato la Spagna contro il comunismo." ADSS, I: 249 (doc.131). Notes of Monsignor Tardini, following a meeting with the Ambassador of Spain to the Holy See, Vatican City, 26 August 1939.

<sup>36</sup> Pius XII declined the many requests made of him to protest the German invasion of Poland, citing possible German reprisals. In response to a French request, he for instance noted, "That would be too much. We can't forget that in the Reich there are 40,000,000 Catholics. What would they be exposed to after a similar act of the Holy See!" Later, Cardinal Maglione affirmed in response to a similar request: "The acts speak for themselves. Let's let them do that." Notes of Monsignor Montini and Monsignor Tardini, Vatican City, 28 August 1939; Notes of Cardinal Maglione, Vatican City, 1 September 1939. In ADSS, I: 257 (doc.144); *ibid.*, I: 277 (doc.171). The same response is recorded in Charles-Roux, *Huit ans au Vatican*, 339. The Vatican's official and semi-official publications followed the Pope's lead, and refrained from discussing the event in any detail. *Civiltà Cattolica* devoted a scant paragraph to the invasion, downplaying the importance of this "armed conflict between Germany and Poland, whose origin lies in the Treaty of Versailles." The *Osservatore Romano* highlighted the conflict's formal characteristics, parroting the official version of events provided by the Italian Council of Ministers on 1 September 1939. See "Cronaca contemporanea," *La Civiltà Cattolica*, vol.III (16 September 1939), 568; and *Osservatore Romano* (2 September 1939).

that both the Gestapo and the Western Allies allowed its free distribution.<sup>37</sup> Commentators wondered which side the Vatican was really on.<sup>38</sup>

As it turned out, Pius XII was answering the question -- but only in private. To his closest advisors, he made it known that Germany could no longer be relied upon to stick to the terms of concordats and carry out a pro-Catholic and anticommunist foreign and domestic policy. Three of the Vatican's allies in East Central Europe had already fallen, and Nazi and Soviet influence was on the rise in Hungary and in concordat strongholds in the region, like Latvia and Lithuania. At the same time, the Vatican was also losing hope in Italy. For though Fascist officials had long boasted of their power to shape German foreign policy, now they at last admitted that they had "lost any chance of stopping Hitler," and that a world war "now seemed inevitable."<sup>39</sup>

In response to this state of affairs, the Pope and his closest advisors began to slowly and tentatively transform the Vatican's alliance structure. In order to maintain concordat diplomacy, continue the anticommunist campaign, and preserve a measure of peace on the continent, they decided to try to form alliances with powerful non-concordat states with influence in Europe. First, Vatican diplomats turned cautiously to Britain, a country with which they had established

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<sup>37</sup> For the full text of the Encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus* (20 October 1939), see the official English-language translation, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xii\\_enc\\_20101939\\_summi-pontificatus\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20101939_summi-pontificatus_en.html)>. Last accessed on 2 November 2012.

In Germany, the Encyclical was read from the pulpits, after having been approved by the Gestapo; in the United States, it was reprinted in full on the government's Official Bulletin of the Federation -- which, as Jesuit commentators noted, "amounted to something more than a simple advertisement ploy." See F. Pellegrino, "L'Enciclica *Summi Pontificatus* e le sue ripercussioni nella stampa mondiale," *La Civiltà Cattolica* (16 March 1940), 411; and Order of Gestapo Munich, 7 Nov 1939, National Archives in Washington, T-175, roll 250, frame 2741860. The Gestapo order is cited in Lewy, *The Catholic Church*, 245.

French and Polish Catholics predictably reacted with anger and a sense of betrayal to Pius XII's first encyclical.

<sup>38</sup> Pius XII, *Christmas Sermon*, 25 December 1939.

<sup>39</sup> "[La decisione aveva tolto] all'Italia la possibilità di intervenire per frenare Hitler...[e] non vede[va] come si po[tesse] evitare la guerra." Note of Tardini following conversation with Fascist officials, 24 August 1939, in ADSS, I: 240 (doc.116).

tepid, tactical, relations after the Great War, largely to expand the Catholic missionary presence in British colonies in Africa and Asia.<sup>40</sup> The British minister in Vatican City, Sir d'Arcy Osborne, who held the Pope in high esteem, helped mediate a risky project to replace Hitler as Chancellor of Germany. Though Pius XII briefly served as an intermediary between British officials and members of a Catholic anti-Nazi group pioneering the anti-Hitler plot, the secret initiative soon floundered.<sup>41</sup> Further, Britain and the Vatican were unable to establish a relationship of trust, given the Vatican's discomfort with the Church of England, and the resurgence of long-standing British fears regarding an "Italianized" Vatican, whose preferences for Catholic Ireland (and its religiously-imbued 1937 constitution) were well known. In some cases Osborne himself inadvertently exacerbated these fears, as his dispatches played up the Vatican's pro-Italian sentiments, in a bid to get them past Fascist censors. Though forms of collaboration between the two powers continued through 1945 and beyond, a true partnership did not bloom.<sup>42</sup>

Relations with the United States, on the other hand, seemed more promising. The vibrancy and wealth of American Catholic civil society had long impressed Eugenio Pacelli, who

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<sup>40</sup> Following an agreement with London concluded in the summer of 1918, the Vatican gained access to many of Britain's Eastern territories, including Egypt and East Africa, and to former German colonies (turned into mandate territories of France and Britain), like Togo and Cameroun. See Annie Lacroix-Rix, "Le rôle du Vatican dans la colonisation de l'Afrique (1920-1938): de la romanisation des missions à la conquête de l'Éthiopie," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 41, 1 (January-March 1994): 29-81, here 30-1.

<sup>41</sup> See Public Record Office, National Archives in Kew (henceforth PRO), Records of the Cabinet Office, Cabinet Minutes and Papers (henceforth CAB), 65: War Cabinet Minutes, October 30, 1939, CAB 65/2/1/13: The Vatican; and *ibid.*, November 1, 1939, CAB 65/1/65/8: The Vatican. The leading member of the Catholic opposition to Hitler, Josef Müller, proposed to win the support of the British in his bid to replace Hitler with a government supported by the German military. On two occasions the Pope had met personally with Francis D'Arcy Osborne, British ambassador to the Holy See, to discuss the initiative; otherwise, he had acted as an intermediary, enabling news from Müller to be communicated speedily to his British interlocutors. The episode is also discussed in Owen Chadwick, *Britain and the Vatican during the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Peter Ludlow, "Papst Pie XII., die britische Regierung und die deutsche Opposition im Winter 1939/40," in *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 22 (1974): 299-341; Peter Hoffman, "The Question of Western Allied Co-Operation with the German Anti-Nazi Conspiracy, 1938-1944," *The Historical Journal* 34,2 (June 1991): 437-64; and Miccoli, *op.cit.*, 25-31.

<sup>42</sup> On the Vatican's great influence over Irish politics and constitutional law, see Dermot Keogh, *The Vatican, the Bishops and Irish Politics, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); and Samuel Moyn, "Did the Irish Save Civilization? The Secret History of Constitutional Dignity" (unpublished paper, 2012). On Osborne's self-censorship, see Chadwick, *op.cit.*

had worked with wealthy American groups such as the Knights of Columbus to fund Vatican City's rebirth as an opulent, independent, state, and who certainly knew well that by the eve of World War II, American Catholics had risen to become the largest contributors to the Vatican's annual collection of funds from the faithful, known as Peter's Pence. Additionally, as explored in Chapter Four, Pacelli also greatly respected the work of American Catholic organizations and a sector of the U.S. government against communism. But could the U.S. government, as a whole -- which Pacelli in the 1920s had deemed in the hands of liberalistic and secular Freemasons -- really be trusted to act in the Vatican's interests?

In the summer of 1939, U.S. diplomats were asking themselves the same question about the Vatican, and decided that it was worth the trouble to make an attempt at *rapprochement*. The time, they argued, had come to tighten connections with the Vatican -- connections for which the bases had been laid by Pacelli's 1936 trip to Hyde Park and by the 1938 joint mediation attempt in Spain. The Pope could help the U.S. avert war in Europe and give the U.S. a privileged vantage point on European affairs, all the while increasing the support of Italian, Irish and other Catholics at home for American policies abroad.<sup>43</sup> Convinced by the reasoning of officials like the Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles and the American ambassador to Italy, William Phillips, Roosevelt agreed to approach the Pope. Soon after Germany's invasion of Poland, Roosevelt thus bypassed Congress and proposed to send a personal diplomatic representative to Vatican City, so that the Vatican and the United States could work together on a joint platform to appease Europe and keep Italy neutral. As Eleanor Roosevelt later suggested,

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<sup>43</sup> Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles and the American ambassador to Italy, William Phillips, adamantly encouraged the U.S. to turn to the Vatican for these reasons. See FRUS, 1939, II: 869-70. On how Sumner Welles helped shape U.S. policies and his various attempts to guarantee American hegemony, see the first monograph to make extensive use of his private papers: Christopher D. O'Sullivan, *Sumner Welles, Postwar Planning and the Quest for a New World Order, 1937-1943* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

the bold move may be considered the United States' first act of war -- even though it was of course cast as an act of peace.<sup>44</sup>

The Pope promptly accepted Roosevelt's offer, as he too had a strong interest in maintaining Italy's neutrality and averting war. In December of 1939, FDR appointed Myron Taylor as his special representative at the Vatican, and in February of 1940, Pius XII welcomed Taylor in his first trip to Rome. A businessman with a self-proclaimed passion for "solving the problems of modern civilization,"<sup>45</sup> Taylor nursed a deep admiration for the leader of the Catholic world, despite his Protestant faith.<sup>46</sup> Between their first meeting and December of 1945, Taylor and the Bishop of Rome would meet privately on twenty-nine different occasions. Between February and June of 1940, their central project would be to keep Italy out of the war. In doing so, they would work in tandem with Roosevelt's Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, who arrived in Rome with Taylor in February of 1940, and subsequently toured the European continent, to pressure state leaders to choose the path of peace.<sup>47</sup> In late April of 1940

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<sup>44</sup> "In December [of 1939] Franklin appointed Myron Taylor as his special representative at the Vatican. The letters between my husband and the Pope seem to indicate that this appointment was one of the wise preliminary steps in the preparation for war, although it created a certain amount of difficulty among some of our Protestant groups." Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* (1961; New York: Da Capo Press, 1992), 209-212. This hypothesis is more plausible than that given by certain scholars that the American president decided to open diplomatic relations with the Holy See in exclusively in order to win the Catholic vote in the November 1940 elections. Of course, as Eleanor herself notes, the gesture also alienated some Protestant voters, who were of course in the majority. See Di Nolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti*, 24.

<sup>45</sup> As cited in William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy: The Soul of Containment, 1945-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 120.

<sup>46</sup> It is likely that Roosevelt chose a Protestant for the post to counter a variety of anti-Catholic Protestant fundamentalism at home, and show his support for growing Catholic-Protestant collaboration in matters of both domestic and foreign policy. On the relation between these two strands of religious politics in the United States, see David Mislin, "Preserving the Family, Saving the Nation: Catholic-Protestant Ecumenism and the Politics of Divorce in Late Nineteenth-Century America," and Andrew Preston, "Anti-Ecumenism in Evangelical and Fundamentalist Politics," unpublished papers presented at *Religion and American Politics*, Boston University, March 23, 2012.

<sup>47</sup> See Stanley E. Hilton, "The Welles Mission to Europe, February-March 1940: Illusion or Realism?" *Journal of American History* 58, 1 (June 1971): 93-120; and Sidney Pash, "Containment, Rollback and the Onset of the Pacific War, 1933-1941," in *The United States and the Second World War: New Perspectives on Diplomacy, War and the Home Front*, eds. G. Kurt Piehler and Sidney Pash (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 38-67.

– following Germany’s invasion of Denmark and Norway -- Pius XII and FDR sent coordinated messages to Mussolini to urge him to avoid war. The Pope’s letter praised Mussolini for his labors to date to ensure the peace, expressing the wish that these labors continue unabated; Roosevelt’s letter, though less effusive, expressed the same sentiments.<sup>48</sup>

Drawing attention to the joint Vatican-U.S. initiative, American newspapers began to “frequently highlight the efforts of the Holy Father and the President to keep Italy out of the conflict,” according to the upbeat press summary provided by the Vatican nuncio in Washington. Deploying an argument that American diplomats and Vatican officials were testing on the ground, U.S. newspapers affirmed that Italy should shun war, because it was “contrary to the tradition, Latin spirit and religion of the Italian people.”<sup>49</sup> The pacification policy was also publicized by the Vatican's daily newspaper, the *Osservatore Romano*, which effused over the “almost literal identity of views” between President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “the leader of one of the most powerful and modern nations of the world, and the principles enunciated by the supreme religious leader with the highest spiritual authority of the world,” namely, the Pope.<sup>50</sup>

However, following Germany's invasion of Belgium, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands (on May 10, 1940), American and Vatican efforts to keep Italy out of the war began to seem rather vain. Soon after the invasion, Italian-Vatican relations took a dip for the worse, as Mussolini editorialized Pius XII's behind-the-scenes diplomacy as follows: “The Church is

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<sup>48</sup> For the Pope's message, see *Documenti Diplomatici Italiani* (DDI) (Rome: Libreria di stato, 1952-2007), series IX, vol. IV:157-8 (doc.189); for FDR's message, see *ibid.*, 212-4 (docs.262 and 263).

<sup>49</sup> “Stampa spesso richiama sforzi Santo Padre et Presidente Repubblica per mantere Italia fuori del conflitto; et pure ammettendo ragionevoli richieste italiane, rileva intervento in favore della Germania come contrario tradizione et spirito latino et religione popolo italiano.” Apostolic Delegate in Washington Cicognani to Cardinal Maglione, Washington, 4 June 1940. ADSS, I: 483 (doc.340).

<sup>50</sup> The text of this *Osservatore Romano* article was translated and cited in full by Reverend Bernard James Sheil, auxiliary bishop of Chicago, in “America’s Catholic Youth and Europe’s War: Radio Address,” a speech delivered over the National Broadcasting Company’s Red Network on 2 October 1939. The speech was reprinted in full in the *Congressional Record* of 9 October 1939. We can surmise that FDR took the speech seriously, insofar as it was also stored in his personal file: Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York (henceforth FDRL), President’s Personal File (henceforth PPF), Folder 321.

always on the wrong side. With Austria in 1915-18; against Germany today [...] The Church has always been, and I mean always, the ruin of Italy.”<sup>51</sup> When Mussolini repeated similar sentiments in a private audience with the Pope, Pius XII rebuffed that "in certain circumstances the Pope could not be silent." Drawing a distinction between the *realpolitik* that determined the actions of normal states and the religious considerations that supposedly determined the actions of the Vatican, Pius XII affirmed that, "while governments put military and political concerns first," for the Vatican, "moral and legal considerations come first, and can in no way be overlooked."<sup>52</sup>

With Belgium and Holland's surrender to Germany in late May of 1940, Pius XII informed Roosevelt that the time had come to abandon all attempts to pacify Italy.<sup>53</sup> Simultaneously, he strongly suggested that the special relationship that had previously existed between the Fascist and Vatican state was coming to an end. From late May of 1940, the Pope informed both Taylor and Roosevelt that the Catholic Church was under attack in the Fascist media, that Fascist ruffians were beating up Roman Catholic priests, that the distribution of

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<sup>51</sup> "La Chiesa è sempre dall'altra parte, con l'Austria nel 1915-18; contro la Germania, oggi. La Chiesa è stata sempre, dico sempre, la rovina d'Italia [...] Se avessi tempo, scriverei un libro di non più di duecento pagine, per dimostrare quanto dico. Costantemente, la Chiesa fu rovina alla causa italiana." Mussolini's words are recorded in Giuseppe Bottai, *Diario, 1935-1944*, ed. Giordano Bruno Guerri (Milan: Rizzoli, 1982), 187. Bottai was a firm believer in Fascism's totalitarian project and was a fervid Catholic. In mid-May of 1940, Mussolini expressed similar sentiments about the Pope to Galeazzo Ciano, his loyal son-in-law and inexperienced Foreign Affairs Minister. Cf. Galeazzo Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, ed. Renzo De Felice (Milan: Bur Biblioteca Univ. Rizzoli, 1994), 429. Mussolini was particularly incensed to learn of a private telegraph the Pope had sent to deposed state leaders in May, which lamented Hitler's violation of international law, and expressed the hope "for the re-establishment of freedom and independence" in the invaded European territories. The Pope's telegrams of 10 May 1940 are reprinted in full in ADSS, I: 444-5 (docs.301-3).

<sup>52</sup> The words pronounced by the Pope and Mussolini during their meeting were immediately recorded by the participating Giovanni Battista Montini, who noted: "Il Santo Padre si è mostrato molto tranquillo e sereno, osservando di non avere alcun timore di finire, se sarà il caso, in un campo di concentramento o in mani ostili [...] Il Papa [disse che] in certe circostanze non può tacere. I governi mettono in primo luogo la considerazione politica e militare, e [...] trascurano di proposito la considerazione della morale e del diritto; per il Papa questa considerazione è invece la prima, e non può essere da Lui assolutamente trascurata." Notes of Montini following Mussolini's audience with Pope Pius XII, 13 May 1940, ADSS, I: 454 (doc.313).

<sup>53</sup> On 23 May 1940, Mussolini's Under Secretary of State had in fact informed a Vatican intermediary that Italy would enter the war within fifteen days. Italian nunzio Borgongini Duca to Cardinal Maglione, Rome, 23 May 1940. ADSS, I: 468 (doc.328).



Vatican print media (including the *Osservatore Romano*) was gravely hindered, and finally, that Fascist hooligans in the street had gotten into the habit of yelling the following chant: "Down with the Pope, the French and the English!"<sup>54</sup> To protect Vatican funds, and to show the U.S. that the Vatican was indeed turning away from Fascist Italy (which had of course been its primary funder since 1929), Pius XII arranged to transfer the Vatican's gold reserves to New York's Federal Reserve Bank.<sup>55</sup> By this point, the United States' status as the new global economic hegemon had become crystal clear to the Vatican: in 1940, in fact, American Catholics contributed as much to the annual collection of offerings by the faithful, known as Peter's Pence, than all other countries combined.<sup>56</sup>

From the spring of 1940, Roosevelt also changed course and began to work to convince the Vatican, as well as Catholic and Protestant Americans, to abandon neutrality and support U.S. intervention in the European conflict. Roosevelt began by articulating this message in speeches, which presented the defense of "Christianity" as the United States' leading diplomatic priority. Echoing to a longstanding tradition of civil religiosity, Roosevelt declared that "democracy" and "Christianity" were inextricably interlinked. As he informed Congress in 1939, "Storms from abroad directly challenge three institutions indispensable to Americans [...] The first is religion. *It is the source of the other two – democracy and international good faith.*"<sup>57</sup> With this message, Roosevelt was affirming that Christianity provided the grounds for American democracy. He was also suggesting that because of the co-dependence of religion and democracy, and the flagrant disregard of both by Axis powers, the United States could not

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<sup>54</sup> See Borgongini Duca to Cardinal Maglione, Rome, 23 May 1940, ADSS, I, doc.328, pp.467-8; and Taylor to Roosevelt, Rome, 23 May 1940. FDRL, Taylor Papers, box 10, N.27. As cited in Di Nolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti*, 120, who however does not provide any interpretation of the letters.

<sup>55</sup> Hull to Taylor, Washington, 22 May 1940. FDRL, Taylor Papers, box 10, N.26. As cited in Di Nolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti*, 119.

<sup>56</sup> Pollard, *Money and the Rise of the Modern Papacy*, 137.

<sup>57</sup> FDR, "Annual Message to Congress," 4 January 1939. PPAFDR, 1. Emphasis mine.

remain indifferent to the escalating global conflict. “The defense of religion, of democracy and of good faith among nations is all the same fight,” the President summarized. “To save one we must now make up our minds to save them all.”<sup>58</sup>

As Roosevelt nudged the United States towards war in 1940 and 1941, he continued to align himself with the cause of "Christian civilization," stressing that the United States was founded "not upon strength nor upon power, but upon the spirit of God."<sup>59</sup> In the process, he was not simply trying to win over American Christians in general; he was also targeting Catholics more narrowly, both at home and abroad. Roosevelt did so for instance by creating an annual Day of Prayer to God exactly on the day of a pre-existing Catholic holiday: the Catholic Feast of the Nativity of Mary. The president also loudly celebrated the work of Catholic civil society organizations in the fight against Nazism and for "the fundamental rights of all."<sup>60</sup> American Catholics promptly responded to the president's special attentions. Archbishop Francis Spellman, who has been responsible for bringing FDR and Pacelli together since 1936, noted for instance that "Catholics especially welcome" FDR's actions and words, in that they "bear public witness to the Christian-mindedness of the American people and their leaders."<sup>61</sup>

### **3. The Local Suspension of the Anti-Soviet Campaign**

The emergent U.S.-Vatican friendship was put to the test with Operation Barbarossa, when on June 22, 1941 Germany invaded the Soviet Union and German and Italian officials began to

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<sup>58</sup> FDR, "Annual Message to Congress," 4 January 1939. PPAFDR, 1939, 2.

<sup>59</sup> "The President stresses the importance of religion in democracy," 16 December 1940. PPAFDR, 1940, 603.

<sup>60</sup> The passage is quoted from the letter of FDR to Emanuel Chapman, 27 July 1940. FDRL, PPF, 6755, "Committee of Catholics for Human Rights." Also see, e.g., Radio Address Before the Eighth Pan American Scientific Congress, Washington, D.C., May 10, 1940, as reprinted in PPAFDR, 1940, 185.

<sup>61</sup> Cardinal Francis Spellman, as quoted in, "Nation's Catholics to Join President in 'Day of Prayer'," *NCWC News Service* (2 September 1940), 1.

plead with the Vatican to endorse the invasion. Picking up on the language of the Pope's anticommunist campaign, they called the invasion a "crusade" against atheism. By way of reply, Pius XII's closest advisor, Domenico Tardini, noted that while the Vatican clearly saw the need for a crusade against the Soviet Union, "it did not see the crusaders." Because the swastika or "uncinate cross" was carrying out a "genuine persecution of Catholics," how was it possible to equate it with "that of the crusades"?<sup>62</sup> The Pope repeated the same idea to the Italian ambassador to the Holy See, affirming: "If one day I speak out against Bolshevism -- something I am very ready to do -- how could I be silent about Nazism? [...] If one day I *must* speak, I will, but I will say everything."<sup>63</sup> Though local clergy members and Catholic civil society organizations were quick to enroll in the Nazi-Fascist crusade against "atheistic Bolshevism," the Pope stayed true to his word, and refrained from issuing an official endorsement of the invasion. In his public statements, he remained "neutral"; in private, he and many others expressed the wish that the two states would destroy each other. "In the designs of God," Tardini for instance informed the Pope, Operation Barbarossa might inaugurate "the end of communism and Nazism alike."<sup>64</sup> The view was popular across the Atlantic as well.<sup>65</sup>

On the day after Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, President Roosevelt proposed to Congress that the United States begin delivering aid to the Soviet Union. American Catholics were incensed and noted that the Vatican's 1937 encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* spoke loud and clear. According to its fifty-eighth paragraph, "communism is intrinsically wrong." Indeed, "no

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<sup>62</sup> Note of Tardini, 5 September 1941, ADSS, V: 182-184 (doc. 62). As cited in Italo Garzia, "Pope Pius XII, Italy and the Second World War," in *Papal Diplomacy in the Modern Age*, eds. Peter Kent and John F. Pollard (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994), 121-36, here 129.

<sup>63</sup> "Se io parlassi – e sarei prontissimo a farlo – del bolscevismo, non dovrei dunque dir nulla del nazismo? [...] Se un giorno 'dovrò' parlare, parlerò, ma dirò tutto." Bernardo Attolico to Ciano, 16 September 1941, in *Documenti Diplomatici Italiani*, IX, vol.7, 58off (doc.570).

<sup>64</sup> ADSS, V: 208; ADSS, V: 272.

<sup>65</sup> See Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Paterson, "Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930s-1950s," *American Historical Review* 75, 4 (1970): 1046-64.

one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever." Even if that "undertaking" were beating Nazism and that "collaboration" the provision of material aid, they must be shunned in the interests of "Christian civilization."<sup>66</sup> Though Roosevelt urged American officials to try to calm the angry public by emphasizing that the provision of material aid betrayed no sympathy with communist ideology and its anti-religious policies, the protests continued.<sup>67</sup> Even Sumner Welles' prompt condemnation of both communism and Nazism as worldviews opposed to religion had little effect.<sup>68</sup> At this point, the President decided that he could only get Catholic opinion on his side by convincing the Pope to take action through covert or overt channels. Taylor concurred, suggesting that perhaps the Pope could convince "some bishop or group of bishops [to] take definite measures to counteract [this] movement of opposition to national policy."<sup>69</sup>

But before the Pope would agree to something like this, Roosevelt correctly calculated, he needed to see that the U.S. was truly ready to act in its interests. Accordingly, the American President immediately and publicly asked two American ambassadors on mission in Moscow to begin pressuring the Soviets to outline a government plan to protect religious freedom. The declaration, the president advised, should take the form of "a declaration that could be given to

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<sup>66</sup> *Divini Redemptoris*, §58. For a discussion of the ways this passage was used by Catholics opposing FDR's policies, see Di Nolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti*, 38-41; Pietro Pastorelli, "Pio XII e la politica internazionale," in *Pio XII*, ed. Andrea Riccardi (Bari-Rome: Laterza, 1984), 125-47, here 130ff; and Flynn, *op.cit.*, 139ff. For a broader account of the origins of the Lend-Lease program and its domestic reception, see William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Undeclared War, 1940-1941* (New York: Harper, 1953), chapters 8 and 9, and Raymond Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia, 1941: Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959).

<sup>67</sup> See notes of telephone conversation between FDR and Myron Taylor, Locust Valley, Long Island, 30 August 1941. FDRL, President's Secretary's File (henceforth PSF), Box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941"; Eden to Osborne, 27 June 1941, PRO 371/30179; and Eden to Osborne, 3 July 1941, PRO, 371/30179. As cited in Italo Garzia, *Pio XII e l'Italia nella seconda guerra mondiale* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1988), 200-1.

<sup>68</sup> See Di Nolfo, *op.cit.*, 133.

<sup>69</sup> Notes of telephone conversation between FDR and Myron Taylor, Locust Valley, Long Island, 30 August 1941. FDRL, PSF, Box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941."

the press."<sup>70</sup> What mattered here, Roosevelt calculated, were words, and words that could promptly reach the world through a speedily drafted Soviet *communiqué*. To the astonishment of many, Roosevelt's actions had their intended effect. The American President's statement in favor of religious rights was promptly reprinted and endorsed in the leading organ of the Russian communist party, *Pravda*.<sup>71</sup> In a dramatic *volte-face* dictated as much by wartime diplomacy as by the desire to keep a still-religious population on board with the war effort, the newspaper went further still, and presented the Soviet Union as the protector of religion against the "barbarous Fascist hoards, drunk with blood" that "turn into ridicule the religious sentiments of women, Catholic and Protestant, devastating churches and violating the sacred vessels." In other words, now the Soviet Union stood with religion against "Godless Germany."<sup>72</sup>

In case the Pope had missed the news, Roosevelt promptly informed him that the Soviets had finally started to recognize religious rights as a result of American pressure. "The churches in Russia are open," Roosevelt triumphantly informed Pius XII. "I believe that there is a real possibility that Russia may as a result of the present conflict recognize freedom of religion," he added.<sup>73</sup> But in order to continue to carry out a diplomacy based on "the teachings of the New Testament," Roosevelt informed the Pope that he would need his support and "spiritual

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<sup>70</sup> See FRUS, 1941, I: 832; 1001-2.

<sup>71</sup> Roosevelt had charged the two ambassadors with convincing the Soviet government to better its treatment of religious groups, and issue a "declaration that could be given to the press" that would outline a government plan to protect religious freedoms. Cf. FRUS, 1941, I: 832; 1001-2.

<sup>72</sup> The article appeared on the front page of *Pravda* on 8 September 1941, and was translated by Father Leopold Braun in his letter to Myron Taylor. Moscow, 3 October 1941. FDRL, PSF, box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941." On the revival of religion and religious rhetoric in the Soviet Union during World War II, see Daniel Peris, "'God is Now on Our Side': The Religious Revival on Unoccupied Soviet Territory During World War II," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 1, 1 (Winter 2000): 97-118; and Heather J. Coleman, "Atheism versus Secularization? Religion in Soviet Russia, 1917-1961," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 1.3 (Summer 2000): 547-558.

<sup>73</sup> Roosevelt to Pius XII, 3 September 1941, in ADSS, V: 179ff (doc.59); the original transcript of the letter is in FDRL, PSF, box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941."

leadership."<sup>74</sup> Following a similar line of argumentation, Taylor noted: "Unless these two symbols of civilization at its best operate in harmony, there can no fair or permanent justice in the world."<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, now that the United States had curbed the Soviet Union's campaign against religion, Germany alone represented the greatest threat to "the survival of religion."<sup>76</sup> To emphasize this, Roosevelt painted a dreadful picture of the world that would result were Germany to win the war. Stressing that Germany held Jesus Christ in opprobrium, he noted in a well-publicized speech that were Germany to win, "The god of Blood and Iron will take the place of the God of Love and Mercy." Further, "In place of the Bible, the words of *Mein Kampf* will be imposed and enforced as Holy Writ." With Hitler in charge and the Nazi New Order in place, Christianity as such would come to an end: "In place of the churches of our civilization," Roosevelt prophesized, "there is to be set up an International Nazi Church."<sup>77</sup> By emphasizing that National Socialism rather than communism was the leading enemy of the Christian Churches, Roosevelt followed the American Bishop Joseph P. Hurley, who had long since begun to make the same argument -- with Sumner Welles' support, no less.<sup>78</sup>

The Pope's willingness to heed American pressure and locally suspend the anti-Soviet campaign was also greatly influenced by a series of reports received from the staunchly anticommunist Leopold Braun, one of two Catholic priests still stationed in the Soviet Union. Roosevelt's actions, the American priest onsite noted, had had a visible impact on the rhetoric

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<sup>74</sup> 1 Sept 1941 letter of Roosevelt to Taylor. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University (henceforth RMC), Myron Taylor Papers, n.3308, box 4.

<sup>75</sup> Memorandum from Taylor to FDR, Washington, DC, 2 September 1941. Letter of FDR to Pius XII, 3 September 1941. FDRL, PSF, Box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941."

<sup>76</sup> Letter of FDR to Pius XII, 3 September 1941. *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Navy and Total Defense Day Address, 27 October 1941. PPAFDR, 1940, 440. As cited in Preston, *op.cit.*

<sup>78</sup> Joseph P. Hurley, speech at National Council of Catholic Women, Florida state convention, April 30, 1941, Hurley Papers, Archives of the Diocese of St. Augustine, Florida. As cited in Charles Gallagher, S.J., *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 117.

and practice of Soviet leaders.<sup>79</sup> The time was ripe for the Vatican to suspend its anticommunist campaign, Braun recommended, and restart its long-suspended negotiations with the Soviet Union for a concordat or *modus vivendi*. "This is, if ever, the time to act," Braun wrote. "One must "beat the iron while it is hot and soft and obtain from these people what they would be only too willing to grant."<sup>80</sup>

At last, the Pope listened and acted. At the end of September, he agreed to a local suspension of the Vatican anti-communist campaign. Pius XII set the process underway by asking Domenico Tardini to contact the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, so that he, in turn, could enroll the influential Archbishop McNicholas of Cincinnati in the delicate project. McNicholas -- despite his well-known sympathies for Franco -- promptly accepted the Pope's request. Tardini informed McNicholas that he must help suspend the Vatican's anticommunist campaign in the United States by issuing a new interpretation of *Divini Redemptoris*. McNicholas should do so via a pastoral directed at American clergy and the faithful, which should make no mention of Pius XII or suggest that the Pope had issued the directive. Drawing on a combination of political and theological motifs, the text should argue that *Divini Redemptoris* was, in Tardini's words, "not applicable to the present circumstances." Suggesting a potential line of argumentation, Tardini proposed that McNicholas might note that it was a "fundamental exegetical norm that each text be accurately examined in its natural context." Tardini reminded McNicholas that the "natural context" of *Divini Redemptoris* had been the

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<sup>79</sup> Letter of Father Leopold Braun to Myron Taylor and Pope Pius XII, Moscow, 3 October 1941. FDRL, PSF, box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941." Until 1936, there had been approximately fifty Catholic clerics in the Soviet Union; by 1939, the number was down to two. In addition to Leopold Braun, who was protected by the United States and served as chaplain to the U.S. embassy, the other Catholic priest in the Soviet Union at the time was Michel Clovis Florent, who was protected by France. The fact that Leopold Braun was an American citizen and in touch with both Pius XII and Myron Taylor made his presence all the more valuable to Roosevelt. Braun's memoirs have recently been published under the title, *In Lubianka's Shadow: The Memoirs of an American Priest in Stalin's Moscow, 1934-1945*, ed. G.M. Hamburg (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

<sup>80</sup> Letter of Father Leopold Braun to Myron Taylor, Moscow, 3 October 1941. FDRL, PSF, Box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941."

rise of Popular Fronts in Spain to France and the fear of a communist take-over in much of Western Europe. Never mind that the Pope's encyclical, insofar as it was an official statement of doctrine issued *ex cathedra*, was infallible, according to the Vatican's own rulebook: instead, McNicholas could treat the text as a historically bound recommendation, applicable only to the moment in which it had originally been uttered.<sup>81</sup>

In early October, Archbishop McNicholas' pastoral suspending the Vatican's anticommunist campaign in the United States was released. The text put forward three lines of argumentation: Tardini's radical historicism, Roosevelt's claims regarding Nazi Germany as a greater threat to Christianity than the Soviet Union, and McNicholas' personal flourish, the reinterpretation of the concept of "collaboration." The text began by highlighting the similarities between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, as well as the fundamental identity of interests of the U.S. and the Vatican in the war. The Vatican and the United States ("our country"), McNicholas affirmed, were gravely and "rightly concerned not only about the total war of many nations, but also about the total loss of freedom under two systems that seek world dominance – Nazism and Sovietism." However, Nazi Germany, not the Soviet Union, was posing the most immediate threat to Christianity's survival. In these exceptional circumstances it was warranted for Christian nations to cooperate with communist ones, and thereby engage in a "war of defense [...] to save Christian civilization."<sup>82</sup>

True, the Archbishop conceded, *Divini Redemptoris* appeared to prohibit collaboration between Christians and communists, as many of the president's critics had correctly noted. But the critics of the president had misunderstood a crucial point. By "collaboration," McNicholas affirmed, the Pope had clearly intended to refer to person-to-person interactions, not state-to-

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<sup>81</sup> "È [...] fondamentale norma esegetica che ogni testo va accuratamente esaminato nel suo naturale contesto. Ciò posto, è agevole a chiunque constatare che, in quel contesto, Pio XI intendeva riferirsi alla ben nota manovra della *main tendue*." Tardini to Amleto Cicognani, 20 September 1941, in ADSS, V: 240 (doc.95).

<sup>82</sup> McNicholas' pastoral is reprinted in ADSS, V: 285-88.



state relations. "The great and courageous Pope," McNicholas explained, was "not laying down a course of action governing our country and all other countries regarding every future circumstance whatsoever." Indeed, when it was precisely "saving Christian civilization" that was at stake, state-to-state collaboration with communist powers was not only warranted, but necessary.<sup>83</sup>

Much to Roosevelt's delight, McNicholas' pastoral was broadly effective in reorienting the positions of low-ranking American clergy and American Catholics at large. At the end of October 1941, the largest Jesuit publication in the United States, *America*, buttressed its views, prophesizing that once Nazism was defeated, communism would fall as well and thus Russia would turn into "one of the greatest missionary fields in the world."<sup>84</sup> (The resurgence of the great conversion narrative in Catholic circles was part and parcel of the resurgence of the possibility of concordat diplomacy with the Soviet Union.) By the end of October, the Vatican-based Jesuit Secretariat on Atheism closed its doors.<sup>85</sup> As the Secretariat's leader, Joseph Henri Ledit noted, the Secretariat had for years received the bulk of its outside funding from American sources; now, in the absence of this funding (given the silencing of the anticommunist campaign in the United States), the Secretariat could no longer stay afloat.<sup>86</sup>

Ironically, in the same months that Roosevelt scrambled to obtain guarantees regarding "religious rights" from the Soviets -- and at the same time that the Pope was so impressed that

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen, "Soviet Russia May Be Helped But Russia Must Be Reformed," *America* (18 October 1941), 35. As cited in David S. Foglesong, *America's Secret War Against Bolshevism: U.S. Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 88.

<sup>85</sup> Francesco Pellegrino, S.J., "Sopravvivenza religiosa nella Russia sovietica," *Civiltà Cattolica* (October 1941). There is some evidence that this article was published to quell continued Fascist pressure to publish something "against communism" in the Jesuit journal. See Notes of Tardini, 17 September 1941, in ADSS, V: 226-9 (docs.84-5).

<sup>86</sup> Private American funders and the North American College M.L., "La 'centrale anti-ateistica' istituita da Padre Ledit cessa la sua attività: L'incomprensione dei cattolici per un movimento di grande importanza," unidentified newspaper, 1941. Article clipping stored in ARSI, JESCOM 1038 (De comm. Atheo, 1933-1943), fasc. "Secretar. AntiCom. Rome."

he bowed to American pressure -- Vichy France was putting in place a series of measures against Jews and Nazi Germany had begun to implement the "final solution." In other words, the grandstanding about religious rights in the Soviet Union had largely ignored the leading humanitarian plight of 1941 and beyond: that of the Jews.

## **Conclusion**

By the fall of 1941, President Roosevelt had successfully begun to prod the Pope out of his official stance of neutrality, by convincing him to locally suspend the anticommunist campaign. Shortly after the United States entered the war in December of 1941, Roosevelt redoubled his efforts, particularly once he learned that the Vatican was pursuing diplomatic relations with Japan.<sup>87</sup> The American President thus encouraged Taylor and the U.S. intelligence establishment to undertake a large-scale effort to convince the Pope and Catholics across Latin America and Western Europe to openly side with the Allied powers. The core way in which he chose to do so was by continuing to argue that Christianity and democracy were inextricably interlinked, and that the Axis powers were bent on destroying them both.

In early 1942, Roosevelt asked the U.S. intelligence establishment to assist in the task of winning Catholics over to this message, in that "direct pro-Allied propaganda" had thus far shown itself to be "not effective in a Catholic milieu."<sup>88</sup> Soon, influential lay Catholics and Vatican officials joined the effort, and helped disseminate the message that because democracies

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<sup>87</sup> In March of 1942, Pius XII welcomed Japan's acting ambassador to Vichy, Ken Harada, as special minister to the Vatican. Though the U.S. State Department promptly protested, the Pope did not discontinue relations, though it did try to misrepresent the relationship by describing Harada as a "personal representative" of the Japanese emperor, rather than as an accredited minister to the Holy See. Sumner Welles to Franklin D. Roosevelt, memorandum, March 14, 1942. FDRL, PSF, Departmental File: State Department, box 77. As cited in Gallagher, *op.cit.*, 254, fn.10.

<sup>88</sup> Top Secret memorandum on "Special Propaganda in Catholic Milieu of Latin America," sent by F. L. Belin to Mr. Edmond Taylor, 8/12/1942. National Archives at College Park, Maryland (henceforth NACP), RG 226, Box 388, folder 14960.

were based in Christian teachings and grounded in respect for the Christian Churches, Christians around the world must cast their lot with the Allied powers. For instance, the French Catholic Jacques Maritain, who had worked closely with the Vatican in the interwar years prior to his migration to the United States, readily lent his support. He agreed to have a short tract he had recently written, *Christianity and Democracy*, be dropped from Allied planes over France in 1942-3. The pamphlet affirmed that, "democracy is linked to Christianity," insofar as "the democratic impulse has arisen in human history as the temporal manifestation of the inspiration of the Gospel."<sup>89</sup> Similar ideas were foregrounded in texts penned by leading American Catholic clerics with ties to both the Vatican and the FDR administration, such as Monsignor John A. Ryan, Monsignor (future Archbishop) Fulton Sheen, and Archbishop Francis Spellman. Inadvertently putting Catholic anti-totalitarianism to its original purposes, these clerics emphasized that Nazi-Fascist "totalitarianism," was "anti-Christian," and "destructive of democratic government," and implied that the battle against this form of totalitarianism was more pressing than the battle against the Soviet Union.<sup>90</sup>

In addition to mobilizing individual Catholics, the U.S. intelligence establishment encouraged entire news agencies to back its message. For instance, it targeted the Catholic Center of Information Pro Deo, founded by the Belgian Dominican Father Morlion, who had been rescued by American forces during the German invasion of Belgium. With OSS funding and support, Morlion set up satellite Pro Deo agencies throughout Latin America and non-occupied Europe, which were encouraged to include a series of "special articles answering the

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<sup>89</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Christianity and Democracy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), 37. The best-selling pamphlet was translated into English from the French in 1944, and republished nearly every year throughout the 1940s.

<sup>90</sup> Fulton J. Sheen, *Philosophies at War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 8-9; Cardinal Spellman, "Radio Address," 22 March 1942. Sent to FDR and stored in FDRL, PPF 4404, folder "Spellman, Archbishop Francis J., 1936-1942" (from which the second citation is drawn). For similar themes, also see John A. Ryan and Francis J. Boland, *Catholic Principles of Politics* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1940); and Cardinal Spellman, "Baccalaureate Address," p.2. FDRL, PPF 4404, folder "Spellman, Archbishop Francis J., 1936-1942."

precise questions which bother Catholics” about the war.<sup>91</sup> American intelligence experts carefully specified that the articles that appeared in Catholic news agency publications should address topics such as “The Thomist Doctrine of Democracy as the Most Perfect Form of Government,” and “The Christian Foundations of American and English Democracy.”<sup>92</sup>

Though it was certainly exploited to great propagandistic effect, the yoking of Christianity and democracy was not a theory invented wholesale in the context of the American war effort. Starting from the interwar years, a group of American Catholics -- perhaps inspired by their brethren overseas -- had indeed begun to argue that democracy could constitute the best form of government, on the condition that it be grounded in neo-Thomist principles rather than the French Revolutionary legacy. The efforts of these American Catholic intellectuals had received a powerful boost following a 1938 pastoral letter of the American hierarchy, issued without the Pope's consent or subsequent support.<sup>93</sup> The pastoral affirmed the compatibility of Catholicism and democracy, and called for a deeper study of how Catholicism had contributed to the political ideology of the “Christian democracy” of the United States. Following this pastoral,

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<sup>91</sup> Top Secret memorandum on “Special Propaganda in Catholic Milieu of Latin America,” sent by F. L. Belin to Mr. Edmond Taylor, 8/12/1942. NACP, RG 226, Box 388, folder 14960.

<sup>92</sup> Top Secret memorandum on “Special Propaganda in Catholic Milieu of Latin America,” sent by F. L. Belin to Mr. Edmond Taylor, 8/12/1942. NACP, RG 226, Box 388, folder 14960.

<sup>93</sup> In a November 1938 letter to the American hierarchy, Pope Pius XI had asked the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., to expand its courses in fields like “the science of civics, sociology and economics,” and had made no mention of democracy as a political form. In the attempt to present Catholicism and American democracy as compatible and interdependent, the Bishops’ pastoral taken the Pope’s recommendation a textually unwarranted step further. The late November 1938 pastoral affirmed that the Pope had approved “the American hierarchy’s traditional position of unswerving allegiance to our free American institutions. To carry out the injunction of the Holy Father, it is necessary that our people, from childhood to mature age, be ever better instructed in the true nature of Christian democracy. A precise definition must be given to them both of democracy in the light of Catholic truth and tradition and of the rights and duties of citizens in a representative Republic such as our own.” This “precise definition,” the pastoral continued, would be enshrined in “a more comprehensive series of graded texts for all educational levels.” *The New York Times* summarized the pastoral as outlining “a plan for the study of democracy by Catholic schools,” suggesting that it was Catholics who were accepting a pre-existing American model of democracy, rather than seeking to redefine democracy on their own terms. See “Pastoral Letter on the Teaching of Democracy,” *The New York Times* (25 November 1938), 2. I owe this reference to Samuel Moyn, “Jacques Maritain: le origini dei diritti umani e il pensiero politico cristiano,” in *Dialogo interculturale e diritti umani: la Dichiarazione universale dei diritti umani. Genesi, evoluzione e problemi odierni (1948-2008)*, eds. Luigi Bonanate and Roberto Papini (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2008), 97-124.

a re-energized group of American Catholics sympathetic to democracy developed some of its core insights, and in a January 1939 article in the Jesuit journal *America*, the American Father John LaFarge for instance spent a great deal of ink on formalizing the phrase “Christian Democracy,” which had been mentioned in passing in the Bishops' pastoral. As Jacques Maritain soon noted, American Catholics like LaFarge and the "American episcopacy" had thus “officially reintroduced [...] 'Christian Democracy' into the Catholic vocabulary.”<sup>94</sup>

The fact that European and American Catholics had done so was of course contentious. Historically, the phrase “Christian Democracy” --- coined in the 1880s and popularized in the mid 1890s in European Catholic lay circles – had not sat well with the Bishops of Rome. Initially used to reference Catholic non-political aid organizations, by the early twentieth century, “Christian Democracy” was used to denote more radical political parties, which called for the separation of Church and state and the independence of the Catholic laity from the hierarchy. Predictably, these movements had promptly received the explicit and implicit censure of the papacy. But as Tardini had noted in his talking points summary to Archbishop McNicholas, in the "present conditions of war," certain time-honored precepts perhaps did not apply. In the following chapter, I address how the papacy at last turned towards "Christian Democracy," and at the same time redefined the phrase, to bring it in line with the Vatican diplomatic priorities of the interwar years.

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<sup>94</sup> Jacques Maritain, *The Twilight of Civilization* (New York: Sheed and War, 1943), 55-6. For more on this moment, See Gaston, “The Genesis of America’s Judeo-Christian Moment,” 400ff.

## Chapter Eight

### *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose?* *Redefining Democracy at War's End, 1944-5*

*We must lay claim to the word democracy, because it has not yet been seized, and for this reason, it expresses an idea in conformity with the Gospels [...] We are taking it before it is taken away from us, and we will be able to substantiate it.*  
-- Father Joris Helleputte, 1891<sup>1</sup>

*To call Representative Democracy into our debate will appear to some to be calling a Rip van Winkle of social and political doctrine [...] Representative Democracy is not a philosophy that anyone could accept nowadays without a radical restatement, which has yet to be provided.*  
--Michael Oakeshott, 1939<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

The striking thing about Vatican diplomacy in the war and postwar years was not how much it changed, but how much it stayed the same. Throughout the period under analysis, the Vatican continued to pursue the core of its interwar diplomacy: protecting concordats, expanding the Vatican's presence in civil society, and convincing partner nations to curb the Soviet Union and the spread of communism. However, the historical circumstances in which the Vatican was operating were drastically shifting, particularly from the fall of 1942 on. From this date, it became clear that the Allies were gaining the upper hand in the war, and that President Roosevelt's campaign to convince Catholics to come to the Allied side was winning converts. Furthermore, from summer-fall of 1942, Western European writers and intellectuals had begun to come together, to found newborn "Christian Democratic" political parties.

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<sup>1</sup> Father Joris Helleputte pronounced these words in his capacity as representative of the Belgian Democratic League, during a speech at the Congress of Malines (Belgium) in September of 1891. As cited in Father Angelo Brucculeri, S.J., "Giuseppe Toniolo, il milite della Democrazia Cristiana," *Vita e Pensiero* (1929): 35-51.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Oakeshott, *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), xvi; xix-xx.

This chapter will argue that the Vatican responded to these momentous transformations by preserving the core elements of its interwar diplomacy and translating them into a new language, which was broadly appealing to the United States and to Europe's emergent Christian Democratic parties. Like any language, it did not depend on perfect agreement on meanings; rather, it established sufficient grounds for communication by employing a shared set of words, which each power productively misinterpreted and redefined in its own way. Developed between 1942 and 1944, the Vatican's new language sought to show its allegiance to the United States and to emergent Christian Democratic parties, all the while defending its prominence and leadership position on the European continent. It made use of terms like "rights," and "Christianity," and had at its center the redefinition of the word "democracy." Over and against the myth of 1945 as a year zero characterized by a great democratic awakening, this chapter argues that Pius XII's democracy talk drew heavily from Catholic interwar theorizations of a corporatist, anti-totalitarian, and anti-liberal, order, and helped foreground a certain model of democracy that was highly constrained and deeply suspicious of "the masses."<sup>3</sup> Though it may be correct to continue to call Pius XII the Pope who "baptized democracy," this chapter suggests that what matters more is what exactly he baptized, and why.<sup>4</sup> I argue that the Pope's "turn to democracy" emerged as a result of Myron Taylor's second trip to the Pope, in September 1942. From this point forward, the United States, Christian Democratic parties and the Vatican began to work more closely together, developing what looked from afar like overlapping peace platforms,

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<sup>3</sup> Only in the past five to ten years have scholars begun asking the question of how not just democracy writ large – but how a particular, highly constrained, conception of democracy – emerged as normative in Western Europe in the years following 1945. Key works include Martin Conway, "The Rise and Fall of Western Europe's Democratic Age, 1945-1973," *Contemporary European History*, 13, 1 (February 2004): 67-88; Jan-Werner Müller, *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), esp. chapter four; Phil Nord, *France's New Deal: From the 1930s to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); and Nicolas Guilhot, *The Democracy Makers: Human Rights and International Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Dominique Durand used this phrase to refer to Pius XII's 1944 message, in his *L'Église catholique dans la crise de l'Italie (1943-1948)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1991), 407. Many other scholars have expressed similar sentiments.

couched in a shared vocabulary. Though this rhetorical overlap the concealed substantial differences of opinion that would gradually come to light, in 1944, Pius XII would seek to soften these differences by suggesting that the Vatican's vision of postwar Europe was fundamentally capable of reconciliation with that of the United States and Christian Democratic parties.

### **1. The Papal and Allied Peace Platforms of 1942**

The deeper the United States became embroiled in the war, the more it needed the Vatican as a source of intelligence and legitimacy. In the late summer of 1942 -- boosted by success in the Pacific war -- Roosevelt instructed Myron Taylor to meet with Pius XII, win the Pope's support for the Allied platform, and begin sketching the outlines of the postwar peace. To guarantee his success, Taylor invited a marginalized American bishop who had long advocated American war against the Nazis to join him in the effort.<sup>5</sup> The bishop and two like-minded American clerics proceeded to secretly draft a long document that would be presented as the work of the United States government. The text sought to convince the Pope to definitively endorse Allied war aims, including the Atlantic Charter and the Manifesto of the United Nations. By late August the draft was complete, and in mid September of 1942, Taylor traveled to Rome, with the text in hand.<sup>6</sup>

The fine piece of black propaganda -- which purported to articulate a United States government position but was in fact the work of a small faction in the American Catholic hierarchy -- was read aloud by Taylor during his September 19 audience with the Pope.<sup>7</sup> Taylor's

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<sup>5</sup> Taylor to Edward Mooney, September 2, 1942, Archives of the Archdiocese of Detroit. As cited in Charles Gallagher, S.J., *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 136.

<sup>6</sup> For a broader discussion of this text, see *ibid.*, 136-9.

<sup>7</sup> Compare the letter from Welles to FDR, 4 September 1942, which contains a full draft of the *communiqué* drafted by Archbishop Mooney, Bishop Hurley and Monsignor Ready, to that sent to the Pope by Taylor. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York (henceforth FDRL), President's Secretary's File (henceforth PSF), Box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1942."



speech sought to cast American war aims in a language that would appeal to the Pope. The letter began by asserting that the friendship between the U.S. and the Vatican had been forged in the "parallel effort [...] for the preservation of peace" (i.e., the failed attempt to keep Italy out of the war). It went on to argue that the American entry into the war was the direct outcome of papal teachings. "In the just war which they are now waging," it asserted, "the people of the United States derive great spiritual strength and moral encouragement from a review of the utterances of His Holiness Pope Pius XII and his venerated Predecessor." Indeed, the Pope's statements had been their mark upon all Americans; "Catholic and non-Catholic have been profoundly impressed." Further, Taylor declared, the Pope's statements clearly showed that the Vatican and the United States were in the same camp. Take Pope Pius XI's *Mit Brennender Sorge*, with its condemnation of "Nazi religious persecution," or Pius XII's encyclicals and sermons, which outlined "the essential postulates of a just peace." Even the secret telegrams Pius XII had circulated following Germany's invasion of the Low countries contained "forthright and heroic expressions of indignation." Thus, Taylor boldly concluded, the Vatican and the United States had shared enemies: "the enemies of Christian civilization." And they also had a shared cause in the war. "Now that we are fighting against the very things which the Popes condemned," Taylor affirmed, "our conviction of complete victory is one with our confidence in the unwavering tenacity with which the Holy See will continue its magnificent moral leading."<sup>8</sup>

In addition to casting American policies as the actualization of papal pronouncements, the text argued that the postwar peace envisioned by the American administration was similar to that desired by the Vatican. Echoing FDR's commitment "to establish a new order in the spirit of

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<sup>8</sup> Memorandum of Taylor to Pius XII, Washington, 19 September 1942. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University (henceforth RMC), Myron Taylor Papers, Folder 1, Box 1. The memorandum is also stored in FDRL, PSF, Box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1941.

Christ,"<sup>9</sup> Taylor stressed that the American President and the Pope both sought to “ensure rights and liberties to the world.” Indeed, these rights and liberties would be the centerpiece of the American peace. “The provisions of the Atlantic Charter and the Manifesto of the United Nations,” Taylor boldly asserted, “are in substantial agreement with the Holy Father’s above-mentioned postulates for a just and lasting peace.”<sup>10</sup>

Though Vatican officials responded positively to Taylor’s speech, they asked him to return in a week with more details on the precise nature of the postwar order envisioned by the United States. “The Vatican would be much more enthusiastic when faced with the prospect of an allied victory in Europe if it felt reassured that this would not mean a period of anarchy following the victory,” the head of the Vatican daily newspaper, *L’Osservatore Romano*, informed Taylor, alerting him to the Vatican’s core worries regarding the spread of communism and left-wing unrest. “Do the Allies have concrete projects to maintain order after the cessation of hostilities?” he asked. “It is possible that the Vatican believes that the Axis, in case of victory, would have the means to maintain order, whereas the Allies, on the other hand, would not.”<sup>11</sup>

On September 25, 1942, Taylor met with Pius XII’s Cardinal Secretary of State, Maglione, to allay the Vatican’s fears by explaining the United States’ postwar planning in greater detail. Taylor was prepared to do this by virtue of his ongoing work with the Subcommittee on Political Problems.<sup>12</sup> In the September 25 meeting, Taylor informed Vatican intermediaries that the U.S. could guarantee the peace at war’s end, insofar as it was prepared to maintain “order in every country,” and set up a “world organization” or “world court,” endowed

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<sup>9</sup> Aloisius Muench, “One World in Charity,” (1946), reprinted as Appendix C in Suzanne Brown-Fleming, *The Holocaust and the Catholic Conscience: Cardinal Aloisius Muench and the Guilt Question in Germany* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 154.

<sup>10</sup> Memorandum of Taylor to Pius XII, Washington, 19 September 1942.

<sup>11</sup> Memorandum of Conte Della Torre, September 1942. FDRL, Taylor Papers, Box 10. As cited in Ennio Di Nolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti, 1939-1952: Dalle carte di Myron C. Taylor* (Milan: F. Angeli, 1978), 199.

<sup>12</sup> FDR gave formal approval to start postwar planning in 1942. See Anna Liza Su, “The Law on Religious Liberty and the Rise of American Power” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard Law School, 2013), chapter 3.

with “enforcement powers,” and capable of settling “minor disputes between nations.” In particular, Taylor suggested that this world organization would help curb the Soviet Union’s antireligious forces and limit its expansionistic tendencies.<sup>13</sup> He also reminded his interlocutors that the Soviet Union had already endorsed the Atlantic Charter, whose “preamble, among other things, asserts adherence to the principle of Religious Freedom.” This showed that U.S. pressure could indeed force Russia to both “cease her ideological propaganda in other countries, and make religion really free within her borders.”<sup>14</sup> The United States was also preparing to provide extensive “relief immediately upon the cessation of hostilities,” again to avert the possibility of European individuals turning in despair to communism.<sup>15</sup>

In closing, Taylor asked Vatican officials to articulate their vision for postwar Europe, particularly with regard to the redrawing of the boundaries of Central European states. Vatican officials readily concurred that redrawing the boundaries of European states would be an important way to protect the continent from the twin menace of Soviet and German expansionism. The most important place to redraw boundaries – Taylor and Vatican interlocutors agreed -- must be “that part of Europe bound roughly by Germany and Austria on the one side and by Russia on the other.” When Taylor suggested that the United States was considering recreating “the old Austria, the Empire,” Vatican officials showed themselves quite interested in the idea. The new “Austria which was set up by the Versailles treaty was a nation in name only,” one Vatican official lamented, resuscitating the old Vatican animus against the Versailles settlement. The post-Versailles Austria, “was bound to be a source of trouble because

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<sup>13</sup> Memorandum of Conference between the Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione and Myron Taylor, prepared by Myron Taylor, 25 September 1942. FDRL, PSF, box 51, “Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1942.”

<sup>14</sup> Informal memorandum of Myron Taylor for discussion with Pope Pius XII, Maglione, Montini and Tardini on the Russian Post-War Position. FDRL, PSF, box 52, “Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., Report on [September] 1942 Trip.”

<sup>15</sup> Taylor is cited in the testimony of another person present at the meeting between Taylor and Maglione, the American priest, Father Walter Carroll. The Carroll memorandum of the meeting between Cardinal Maglione and Taylor, 25 September 1942, is stored in *ibid*.

it was not self-sufficient.” The trouble with restoring the Empire, however, was what to do with all of the peoples within it “demanding autonomy and independence.” “If it were possible to have these various peoples accept a restoration of the former empire, then it might be possible to establish a new Austria,” Vatican officials concluded.<sup>16</sup> The question merited further study – and were the Holy See to be invited to take part in a postwar peace conference by the United States or Great Britain, it would be happy to lend its support and advice.<sup>17</sup>

It is possible that in the course of discussion about European borders, Myron Taylor also presented Vatican officials with Sumner Welles' proposal to the Subcommittee on Political Problems. Welles' plan, completed in April of 1942, called for the redrawing of European boundaries according to religious lines so as to guarantee the peace. A Europe subdivided by religious faiths was justified by appeal to State Department maps, which showed that the continent was already in effect carved up into Catholic and Protestant blocs (figs. 1 and 2).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Memorandum of Conference between the Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione and Myron Taylor, prepared by Myron Taylor, 25 September 1942. FDRL, PSF, Box 51, “Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1942.” In late December of 1943, there is evidence that Pius XII was actively trying to push the creation of a larger Austria – to include Budapest as well – so as to isolate the Soviet Union. According to a secret report on the Vatican, “Pio XII sogna un’unione delle antiche nazioni civilizzate per isolare il bolscevismo a est, come fece Innocenzo XI, che unificò il continente e liberò Budapest e Vienna dai musulmani. Il pontefice ha tentato invano di convincere le potenze occidentali su questo punto...” “Events in the Vatican,” 13 December 1943. NACP, RG 226, s.210, b.440, f.1. As translated and reprinted in Nicola Tranfaglia, *Come nasce la repubblica: la mafia, il Vaticano e il neofascismo nei documenti americani e italiani, 1943-1947* (Milano: Bompiani, 2004), 218-9.

<sup>18</sup> In the case of Germany, for instance, Welles favored a federated republic composed of three quasi-autonomous states: the first consisting of Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt and the Rhine-Ruhr region, including the Saar and Palatinate regions, would be predominantly Roman Catholic; the second, a North German confederation made up of Hesse, Thuringia, Westphalia, Oldenburg and the Hamburg region, including Schleswig and Holstein, would be largely Protestant; and the third would consist of Mecklenburg, Saxony, Silesia and a new Prussia, divested of East Prussia after its incorporation into Poland. NACP, Minutes of the Subcommittee on Political Problems, 1942-3 (henceforth P minutes), 7, April 18, 1942, box 55; Ibid., Supporting documents of the Subcommittee on Political Problems, 1942-3 (henceforth P documents), 175, “Agenda for Meetings on Germany,” January 15, 1943, box 57; P document 186, “Memorandum to Welles from Division of Political Studies regarding Germany,” January 22, 1943, box 57; P document 182, “Myron Taylor memorandum on Germany,” January 23, 1943, box 57; P minutes 5, April 4, 1942, box 55; P minutes 6, April 11, 1942; P document 121-a, “Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on International Organization,” October 22, 1942, box 56. As cited in Christopher O’Sullivan, *Sumner Welles, Postwar Planning and the Quest for a New World Order, 1937-1943* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 111-2.

Religious minorities like the tragically shrinking Jewish minority were entirely out of the equation, insofar as the Committee deemed them a racial-ethnic category, on par with "Germans, Russians, Poles, and so forth." This led to the disturbing conclusion that while there could, for instance, be "Catholic Germans," there could not be "Jewish Germans" (fig. 3). Further, the plan suggested, making Europe Christian was all the more pressing because it was surrounded by an incurring "Moslem world," keen on self-determination (fig. 4).<sup>19</sup> If Taylor presented this plan to Vatican officials, it is likely that they would have approved it, insofar as concordat diplomacy had been part of the Vatican response to minority rights regimes, via the construction of greater religious homogeneity under the state. Furthermore, as demonstrated by Pacelli's anti-Jewish views in the interwar years, and the pushback against Mussolini's entreaties to Muslim communities during World War II, pro-Jewish and pro-Muslim sentiment had not exactly been a Vatican *forte* in the interwar and war years.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, Pius XII and his intermediaries showed themselves to be "very pleased" and "greatly impressed" by American plans to keep the Soviet Union at bay and keep Europe safe through the redrawing of boundaries and the distribution of aid. They noted with pleasure that the United States appeared committed to bringing about a postwar order characterized by "the preservation of man's God-given rights," as well as the "assurance of [...] the vital interests of the Vatican and of Catholic Church."<sup>21</sup> Further, they agreed that without order and "the absolute necessities of life," a most "fertile ground" would be created "for the seeds of internal strife and [communist] revolution." They also liked the plan of a "world organization" or "world court," and agreed that perhaps such an institution would help limit religious persecution in the Soviet

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<sup>19</sup> I learned of the Welles plan only recently, and would like to learn more about its details and try to ascertain whether Vatican officials were indeed informed of its contents.

<sup>20</sup> Of course, it is less clear whether Pius XII would have accepted relinquishing a part of Europe to Protestant groups.

<sup>21</sup> Carroll memorandum of the meeting between Cardinal Maglione and Taylor, 25 September 1942. FDRL, PSF, box 51, "Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1942."

Union. Finally, Vatican officials were flattered that Taylor had asked them to help reimagine Europe's borders and that he took seriously the idea of restoring the old Austrian Empire.<sup>22</sup>

In sum, Taylor's meetings of 19 and 25 September had their intended effect, as the Pope made clear in his Christmas sermon of December 24, 1942. Resuscitating the language of the failed Holy Office project, Pius XII repeatedly defended the protection of "individual rights" and of religion, perhaps as a way to connect to the language of the 1942 Declaration of the United Nations and the Atlantic Charter. The 1942 Christmas message additionally laid out the Vatican's peace platform, emphasizing that "dignity and the rights of the human person" must be the foundation for the new social order following the war. Echoing recent conversations with Myron Taylor, Pius XII stated that, "the call of the moment is not lamentation but action; not lamentation over what has been, but reconstruction of what is to arise and must arise for the good society." Happily, the Pope suggested, certain nations were already putting their energies towards planning for "reconstruction." Indeed, these nations were prepared to instantiate a "juridical order" founded on belief in God, which would protect the human being's innate "dignity" and "unforgettable rights." Echoing American condemnations of Nazi Germany and repurposing Catholic anti-totalitarianism, the Pope affirmed in closing that recent history had showed only too clearly that if the most "fundamental personal rights" were not protected, an "excessive herding of men, as if they were a mass without a soul," would result.<sup>23</sup>

Though Pius XII's peace platform stopped short of a full-scale and explicit endorsement of the Atlantic Charter, it was quite well received by the Allied powers. The message was translated and reprinted in full on the pages of the *New York Times* on the same day it was

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<sup>22</sup> Memorandum of Taylor's conversation with Card. Maglione, Vatican City, 25 September 1942. FDRL, Taylor Papers, box 10. As cited in Di Nolfo, *op.cit.*, 191.

<sup>23</sup> Pius XII, Christmas Address, 1942. As reprinted in *The Major Addresses of Pope Pius XII*, ed. Vincent Yzermans (St. Paul: North Central Pub. Co., 1961), II: 60-3.

delivered.<sup>24</sup> It was accompanied by two interpretive articles, which extolled the Pope for providing a “verdict in a high court of justice”: namely, that “fundamental personal rights” were non-derogable and that they must be protected through legal instruments. As one American journalist stated, underlining the alliance between the United States and the Holy See, “Pope Pius expresses *as passionately as any leader on our side* the war aims of the struggle for freedom.”<sup>25</sup> Though the journalist had missed Pius XII's attempt to situate Allied war aims within a Catholic framework, he or she had hit upon an important wartime development: the emergence of a language that was used by divergent forces to rally around a shared cause and condemn the Axis powers. By speaking a hybrid language of rights, Pius XII was showing himself to be a friend of the United States and suggesting the possibility of a reconciliation of the Vatican's "vital interests" with those of the United States. In 1942, only careful observers would have noticed that the Pope was making this crucial rhetorical move. Matters would become much more explicit in 1944, when the Pope strongly endorsed "democracy," the keyword of U.S. interventionist rhetoric. As he did so, the Pope attempted to reframe democracy talk within the context of the Vatican's interwar gains, using the term to legitimize a highly constrained and anti-secular model of democracy, which had in fact little to do with the kind of democracy envisioned by President Roosevelt or by most partisans of democracy on European soil.

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<sup>24</sup> “Text of Pius XII’s Christmas Message Broadcast from Pope to the World,” *New York Times* (25 December 1942): 10.

<sup>25</sup> “The Pope’s Verdict,” *The New York Times* (25 December 1942): 16. Emphasis mine. For similar sentiments, cf. “The Pope Speaks,” *New York Times* (27 December 1942): E1.

## 2. The Rise of "Christian Democracy"

President Roosevelt had increasingly begun to yoke “democracy” and “Christianity” in his public speeches, as he prepared to have the United States join the war.<sup>26</sup> As explored in the previous chapter, following the attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States’ entry into war in December of 1941, the calls to save Christianity and democracy had gained strength, particularly following the launching of a propaganda effort to win over Catholics to the Allied cause. Furthermore, the yoking of “Christianity” and “democracy” was not simply popular in U.S. propaganda efforts; in the course of the 1940s, presenting the two terms as co-constitutive became increasingly common in the Western European context as well. The contested phrase was dusted off by Christian lay groups in 1942-3, as they formed national “Christian Democratic” political parties with strong transnational ties. As compared to their interwar predecessors, these movements were more centrist and more closely bound to the Catholic Church. Many of their leaders had been trained in Catholic Action, which had shaped their views on concordat diplomacy and communism in important ways.

In Italy, the rebirth of Christian Democracy began in the summer of 1942, when a small group of Catholic laymen with strong connections to the Vatican gathered near Trento to lay the foundations for a new political party.<sup>27</sup> Their leader, Alcide De Gasperi, had worked as a librarian at the Vatican in the interwar years, where he had quietly opposed concordat

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<sup>26</sup> On this general phenomenon, see David Zietsma, “‘Sin Has No History’: Religion, National Identity and U.S. Intervention, 1937-1941,” *Diplomatic History* 31 (June 2007): 531-565, and Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 2012), Chapter 17.

<sup>27</sup> On the close link between many of these figures and Catholic Action, see Renato Moro, *La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica (1929-1937)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979). The group which gathered near Trento, in the small city of Borgo Valsugana, was primarily composed of former members of the Italian Popular Party and members of the Movimento Guelfo d’Azione, a political party which had maintained a clandestine existence in Italy since the 1930s and which espoused close loyalty to the Pope. On this group, see Gioacchino Malavasi, *L’antifascismo cattolico. Il movimento guelfo d’azione (1928-1948)* (Rome: Edizioni Lavoro, 1982); and Carlo Brezzi, “Il gruppo guelfo fra gerarchia ecclesiastica e regime fascista,” in *I cattolici tra fascismo e democrazia*, ed. Pietro Scoppola and Francesco Traniello (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1975), 235-98.



diplomacy, all the while earning his keep by supplementing his librarian income with journalism jobs, including a stint at the Vatican's popular illustrated magazine, *Illustrazione Vaticana*.<sup>28</sup> In October of 1942, a larger group met in Milan and founded the new political party under the contested name “Christian Democracy.” So as to avert potential problems with the Vatican, the members of the new party decided that they must take stock of the movement’s past failures. Rather than advocate for the separation of Church and State, as Luigi Sturzo had after World War I, the new political party vowed to help promote Church interests on the peninsula. Further, rather than operate independently from the Vatican hierarchy, the new movement decided to bring Vatican personnel onboard with its activities.<sup>29</sup> In July of 1943 – just as Allied troops were landing in Sicily -- the newly founded party met at a famous monastery in a remote town of Camaldoli, near Arezzo, where they drafted their organizing principles. The process was overseen by the Bishop of Bergamo and Father Pietro Pavan, a young priest with close ties to Pope Pius XII.<sup>30</sup>

The resulting Code of Camaldoli outlined the new party’s views on the state, the family, education, work, the economic regulation of society and international life. However, it made no mention of democracy, nor did it justify democratic forms of rule. Perhaps out of caution, its theses stayed close to the views outlined by Pope Pius XII and Pius XI on the importance of limiting excessive state power and the need for a corporatist economic order. The fact that democracy was left out of the founding Code was also unsurprising in that key members of the

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<sup>28</sup> De Gasperi’s numerous articles for the *Illustrazione Vaticana*, published under the pseudonym “Spectator,” have been collected and reissued in Angelo Paoluzi, ed., *De Gasperi e l’Europa degli anni Trenta*, (Rome: Edizioni Cinque Lune, 1974).

<sup>29</sup> Much work remains to be done on the rise of Christian democratic parties in Europe during the war and their relationship with the Vatican. For an introduction, see Jean-Marie Mayeur, *Des partis catholiques à la Démocratie chrétienne* (Paris: A. Colin, 1980); Jean-Dominique Durand, *L’Europe de la démocratie chrétienne* (Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1995); Philippe Chenaux, *Une europe vaticane?* (Brussels: Editions Ciaco, 1990); and Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of the European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>30</sup> Pietro Pavan was indeed central in disseminating the myth that Pius XII was the Pope of democracy. See id., *La democrazia e le sue ragioni* (Rome: Studium 1958).

new party with close ties to Vatican officials asserted that they “did not love the name” that De Gasperi had chosen for the party, and particularly the second word in that name.<sup>31</sup>

The challenge of making a commitment to democracy an integral part of Italian Christian Democracy would be taken up by the party’s leader, Alcide De Gasperi, in January of 1944. He did so through a short pamphlet entitled *La parola ai democratici cristiani*, released under the telling pseudonym “Demofilo,” or *demophile*, lover of democracy.<sup>32</sup> The pamphlet laid out the exact model of democracy that Christian Democrats could, and must, espouse. Speaking directly to the corporatist vision endorsed by the Vatican since *Quadragesimo Anno*, De Gasperi proposed to counter the risks of excessive state power represented by so-called “state totalitarianism” (*il totalitarismo di stato*) by empowering Italy’s individual regions with greater institutional autonomy. Direct democracy, De Gasperi recommended, must be heavily constrained by a multiplicity of local interests. Furthermore, there should only be a limited number of political parties allowed to vie for power -- already in Italy there were “fatally too numerous” (*fatalmente troppi*) groups. To curb the proliferation of parties and to instantiate a corporatist order, De Gasperi proposed that professional organizations, trade unions representing local interests, and regions within the Italian peninsula elect members of the Senate -- not the general electorate. Finally, in a sign of the emergent geopolitical balance of power, De Gasperi closed with a celebration of the British Commonwealth and the Pan-

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<sup>31</sup> In a letter to don Sturzo, Mario Scelba had explained that the new party was called “Democrazia cristiana, col proposito di riunire vecchi e giovani che non conobbero il Ppi o che ne conobbero la storia attraverso la polemica fascista. Io non amo il nome perché, non avendo vissuto l’epoca leonina, non ne sento il fascino.” Letter from Scelta to Sturzo, 18 August 1944. For reasons unknown, this letter made it into the National Archives in College Park, Maryland. NACP, RG 226, s.92, b.531, f.10. As cited in Tranfaglia, *Come nasce la repubblica*, 240-1.

<sup>32</sup> “La molteplice esperienza mondiale degli ultimi 150 anni ha portato alla conclusione che il metodo più adatto alle presenti condizioni della convivenza umana è il metodo della libertà;...ne è anche risultato che il miglior sistema politico ci è dato da una democrazia rappresentativa fondata sull’uguaglianza dei diritti e dei doveri...Oltre la netta distinzione dei poteri, lo Stato democratico dovrà rispettare i diritti naturali dell’uomo e della famiglia e considerare le autonomie locali, sindacali, culturali ed economiche come lo spazio vitale del cittadino.” Demofilo [Alcide De Gasperi], “La parola ai democratici cristiani” (January 1944). As reprinted in *Atti e documenti della D.C., 1943-1967*, ed. Mariano Rumor (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1967).

American Union, which had been established by the U.S. Secretary of State at the turn of the century and was reconstituted in 1948 as the Organization of American States. In an awkward attempt to liken transnational Christian Democracy to imperial or quasi-imperial structures, De Gasperi asserted that both the British Commonwealth and the Pan-American Union provided sources of inspiration for Christian Democracy, insofar as they, too, were committed to the principles of liberty and democracy and able to “keep peace within their borders.” As such, they represented a source of inspiration for a potential federation of Christian Democratic parties on European soil.<sup>33</sup>

Soon after De Gasperi issued his pamphlet, leaders of the Christian Democratic party began to urge the Pope to speak out in their favor. From circa August of 1944, Pius XII's provisional Secretary of State, Giovanni Battista Montini, urged the Pope to back the Christian Democrats.<sup>34</sup> However, the Pope remained silent. As late as October of 1944, leaders of the Christian Democratic party complained that the Pope had not yet clearly voiced his support for the party, despite repeated urgings to do so.<sup>35</sup> Only in December of 1944 -- when Allied victory in Italy was assured, but extensive partisan activity continued in the North -- would Pius XII finally give his support to the new movement, and with it, to the Allied powers. Pius XII's 1944 message allowed him to express shared ownership over the concept of “democracy,” and also redefine it in a narrow and novel sense. Tellingly, neither De Gasperi nor other leading Christian Democrats were involved in drafting the speech, which was the work of two theologians who had never explicitly theorized democracy before. The speech they crafted for Pius XII reflected their

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> “Report of the Vatican on the Catholic-communist movement,” 27 August 1944. National Archives in College Park, Maryland (henceforth NACP), RG 226, s.108, b.152, f. jp-1000. As reprinted in Tranfaglia, *Come nasce la repubblica*, 246-7.

<sup>35</sup> “Alcuni membri del partito hanno faticato nel tentativo di convincere il papa a pronunciare parole di incoraggiamento al partito, parole che non sono mai arrivate.” Letter from Vincent J. Scamporino to the Director of the OSS and the Chief of the Italian sector of Si, Earl Brennan, 3 October 1944. NACP, RG 226, s.108, b.124, ff.-875.

work on Catholic corporatism as a third-way solution to liberal democracy and Nazi-Fascist totalitarianism.

### **3. New Words, Old Ideas? Pius XII's Redefinition of "Democracy"**

Pope Pius XII's speech would be delivered as part of the midnight mass in St. Peter's Cathedral, on Sunday, December 24, 1944. By this point, the Pope had become very much a public figure by virtue of his 1942 film *Pastor Angelicus*, frequent radio sermons, and highly choreographed appearances in bombarded working-class neighborhoods in Rome.<sup>36</sup> As the sky over Rome fell dark, hundreds of thousands of Italians and foreigners thus flooded the Basilica and filled the surrounding square to capacity to catch a glimpse of the spiritual celebrity and lend an ear to his annual assessment of world affairs. Those who could not make it onsite tuned in to Vatican Radio, to hear the sermon live over the airwaves (Figs. 6 and 7).

Pope Pius XII's 1944 sermon had a simple three-part rhetorical structure: question-answer-warning. Question: (1) Would it be possible to build a postwar order that could prevent the occurrence of future wars? Answer: (2) Yes, through the creation of "true democracy." Warning: (3) "True democracies" must be carefully distinguished from "false democracies," which would lead the world back into war and destruction.

The Pope set up his question by describing the war in apocalyptic terms. He mourned the great suffering of the "dreadful war": its "sinister darkness," "mournful groans of sorrow," "heart-rending anguish" and the "blazing heat of a prison-like furnace," which had been created by unprecedented aerial bombardments. However, the Pope noted, the suffering had not been for naught. If a "deliberate straying from Christ" had brought about war, the glorious "new era"

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<sup>36</sup> For a comparison of the cult of the *Duce* to that of Pius XII, as well as an analysis of the content of the "cult of Pius XII," see Oliver Logan, "Pius XII: Romanità, prophesy and charisma," *Modern Italy* 3, 2 (1998): 237-47. Clips of Pius XII's rehearsals for film and TV appearances are provided in Luigi Bizzarri, "Pio XII, Principe di Dio," screened Rai Tre on 29 December 2006. The segment is available on Youtube, at <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3PR1\\_vb4To](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3PR1_vb4To)>. Last accessed November 2, 2012.

which was “dawning” would be one of “far-reaching renovation” in all domains of life. The “total reordering of the world,” Pius XII affirmed, would involve the replacement of stale, failed models of government with new, more lasting, forms -- forms “more in keeping with the dignity and liberty of citizens.”<sup>37</sup>

But what exact shape might this new political order take? Faced with the failures of authoritarianism, the Pope noted, large numbers of people were now espousing the “democratic tendency.”<sup>38</sup> In the abstract, this was a move that the Pope could endorse. Citing Pope Leo XIII’s famous words, Pius XII asserted that, “Catholic teachings on the origin and use of the authority” were the yardsticks by which the Church judged which “of the various forms of government” it considered legitimate. If democracies were in keeping with Catholic teachings, then the Church would neither “forbid” nor “disapprove” of them.<sup>39</sup> As long as it did not contradict papal teachings, democracy could be an acceptable political form. However, Leo XIII’s recommendation still left open the important question of what exactly democracy was. The precise meaning of the buzzword, Pius XII affirmed, remained “vague and confused,” and this constituted a “problem.”<sup>40</sup> Thus, the Pope explained that his message would be dedicated to a definition and exploration of “the *problem* of democracy.”<sup>41</sup> If “the future is to belong to democracy,” the Pope affirmed, then that “democracy” must be defined precisely and made safe

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<sup>37</sup> Pope Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace” (24 December 1944), §6; 9; 11; 12.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, §13.

<sup>39</sup> “The Church does not disapprove of any of the various forms of government [...] It is not forbidden to prefer temperate, popular forms of government, without prejudice, however, to Catholic teaching on the origin and use of authority.” Pope Leo XIII, *Libertas* (20 June 1888), as cited in Pope Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace,” §14. Pius XII explained that the Church judged the legitimacy of “republics” and “monarchies” by precisely the same logic. He further noted that, “democracy, broadly defined, admits of various forms, and can be realized in monarchies as well as in republics.” *Ibid.*, §15-6.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, §12.

<sup>41</sup> Section one of the message – entitled “Dawn of Hope” (and composed of paragraphs 1 through 10) – was followed by section two entitled, “The Problem of Democracy.” Section two is the overarching title for the entire rest of the message (paragraphs 11 through 93) and may accordingly be considered a kind of alternate title for the encyclical as a whole. Thus, the core of the Pope’s message was the double assertion that democracy is a “problem” that can nonetheless be solved, with papal guidance.

for the world.<sup>42</sup> What shape should a democracy take in order to be in keeping with “Catholic teachings,” and not become a “problem”? That is, what was the model of democracy that the Vatican could stand behind?

Transitioning from part one to part two of the sermon -- that is, from question to answer -- Pius XII asserted that the Vatican could only favor “true democracy.” “True democracies,” the Pope stated, must recognize the Vatican as their source of legitimacy, and place the Vatican in a position to provide state leaders with directives, guidelines, and prescriptions. “Christ and his Church” must be recognized as “the ultimate foundation and directing norm of every [true] democracy.”<sup>43</sup> “Only a clear appreciation of the purposes assigned by God to every human society,” the Pope stated, “can put those in power in a position to fulfill their own obligations in the legislative, judicial and executive order.”<sup>44</sup> Indeed, a “sound democracy” deserving of its name could only be one “based on the immutable principles of natural law and revealed truth,” insofar as “the authority of God” was the ultimate source of political legitimacy.<sup>45</sup> In sum, Pius XII's definition of “true” or “sound democracy” implicitly called into question the underlying premise of many democratic theories of the day: the idea that legitimacy derives from popular sovereignty rather than from God or the Church.<sup>46</sup> It also undermined the signal liberal

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<sup>42</sup> How conservative movements discussed the need to make democracy “safe for the world” in the period following 1945 is discussed in Charles S. Maier, “Democracy since the French Revolution,” in *Democracy: The Unfinished Journey, 508 BC to AD 1993*, ed. John Dunn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 126.

<sup>43</sup> Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace” (24 December 1944), §19. Similar ideas were touched upon in various of Pius XII's speeches. See, e.g., his Christmas message of 24 December 1951, §25.

<sup>44</sup> Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace,” §41.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, §44; 39.

<sup>46</sup> Similar thoughts were expressed by Pius XII, in his “Speech to the Rota Romana” (2 October 1945): “Certamente il medio evo cristiano, particolarmente informato dallo spirito della Chiesa, con la sua dovizia di fiorenti comunità democratiche mostrò come la fede cristiana sappia creare una vera e propria democrazia, ed anzi ne sia l'unica durevole base....” In AAS, 37 (1945), 256-62.

democratic principle of the separation of Church and state -- a principle against which concordat diplomacy had militated so effectively.<sup>47</sup>

To justify this somewhat unusual definition of democracy, Pius XII followed the lead of American Catholics and the U.S. intelligence campaign by noting that true democratic ideas in fact originated in Christian teachings. This was particularly the case with three terms closely associated with democratic theory: “liberty,” “equality” and “the people.” Because these were in origin Christian concepts, only by recognizing their Christian heritage would democracies accomplish their stated aims and function smoothly. “Liberty,” the Pope reminded, was defined by Thomas Aquinas and Church fathers as the moral duty of the individual to perfect him or herself, thus imitating the perfect Creator to whom he owes his life. It implied the individual’s freedom to pursue the “common good” as a supranational and non-earthly aim.<sup>48</sup> “Equality” referred to the inherent value of human beings as equal in the eyes of God and united in a single “family of peoples.”<sup>49</sup> However, because God endowed human beings with different qualities, “there is an order to be found among men,” and society is necessarily composed of stratifications and class distinctions. Attempting to eliminate these class distinctions via a “mechanistic flattening, or monochrome uniformity” was a barren strategy that only fools (or communists) would pursue.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Throughout his pontificate, Pope Pius XII argued for the “intrinsic involvement” of the Vatican with political affairs, and hence with the state. By the time of his 1944 message, Pius XII had already made this claim on several occasions. See, e.g., his radio message on Pentecost, 1 June 1941. AAS, 33 (1941), 195-205. He repeated similar ideas in his address of 20 February 1946 to the College of Cardinals, and in his radio messages to the German *Katholikentage* of 4 September 1949 and 17 August 1958.

<sup>48</sup> In the same vein, Father Fulton J. Sheen argued that Catholicism was incompatible with liberal democracy (which “understands freedom as the right to do whatever you please”), but compatible with a model of democracy which recognized “the sacredness of the individual” and the “Christian concept of freedom, which is the right to do whatever you ought.” Fulton J. Sheen, *Philosophies at War* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1943), 23; 175.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, §53. Some analysts have considered this passing statement to be a condemnation of Nazi Germany’s anti-Semitic tenets and practices. Though this may be the case, the critique was extraordinarily subtle.

<sup>50</sup> Pope Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace,” §32-3; 35-46; 84. According to Paul E. Sigmund, Pius XII’s reference point here was Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 4, 81, and *Summa Theologica*,

Finally, Pius XII emphasized that the concept of “the people” was one to which “prominent Christian thinkers from time immemorial” had devoted great attention. “The people,” the Pope clarified, were “original subjects endowed with civic rights by God.” They were to be scrupulously distinguished from “the masses,” which constituted an “impulsive [and] shapeless multitude,” highly susceptible to propaganda and bribery.<sup>51</sup> Following a resurgent nineteenth-century conception of the lower and worker-class as animalistic, uneducated, and unethical,<sup>52</sup> Pius XII affirmed, unequivocally: “The masses are the capital enemy of true democracy.”<sup>53</sup> So as to guarantee that politicians become “representatives of the entire people and not the mandatories of the mob,” it was imperative that these leaders be “spiritually eminent,” of “solid Christian convictions,” and of superior “intellectual capacity.”<sup>54</sup> Thus, though Pius XII recognized the principle of equality in a nominal sense, he also espoused a deep suspicion of “the masses” and accordingly called for the delegation of authority to society’s most Catholic, and most intelligent, individuals, who would become its leaders. In this sense, Pius XII’s model of democracy contained elements that made it analogous to a rival form of political rule – aristocracy, insofar as it privileged the rule of the enlightened few over the uneducated masses.

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I, q.92, arts.3-4. Id., “The Catholic Tradition and Modern Democracy,” *The Review of Politics* 49, 4 (Autumn 1987): 530-48, here 534. Mariano Cordovani also analyzes these passages from Aquinas in his *Spunti di sociologia* (Rome: Belardetti, 1948), 35-42; 76-110.

<sup>51</sup> Pius XII made the same point in his “Speech to the Rota Romana” (2 October 1945), when he noted that totalitarianism “lascia le decisioni giudiziarie in balia di un mutevole istinto collettivo.” In AAS, 37 (1945), 256-62.

<sup>52</sup> This antipathy towards the “masses” was discussed at length in a best-selling nonfiction work: José Ortega y Gasset’s *La rebelión de las masas*. This work -- first published in 1930, and on the best-seller list in Europe throughout the 1940s and 1950s -- argued that “the masses” entered politics with the French Revolution, and are antithetical to the “noble life” and to individual choice. On the influence of this work in postwar Europe, see Müller, *op. cit.*, 126-7.

<sup>53</sup> Pope Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace,” §21-7.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, §44.



Having established the true history of true democracy, Pius XII proceeded to close his sermon with a warning. “If the future will belong to democracy,” he noted, “the religion of Christ and the Catholic Church must play an essential role in its realization.”<sup>55</sup> If this did not come to pass, states would once again seize excessive powers. Indeed, without a foundation in Christ and the Church, “even democratic regimes, notwithstanding their appearance to the contrary,” would devolve into a “pure and simple absolutism,” based on the “false principle that the authority of the state is unlimited,” and thus entitled to ignore the “absolute order, established by God.”<sup>56</sup> In sum, even “a democracy could easily change and grow deformed, and with the passage of time it is subject to fall into ‘totalitarianism’ or ‘authoritarianism.’”<sup>57</sup>

Pius XII’s theory of the ideal (democratic) state, and the threat posed by totalitarianism to it, was heavily influenced by the work of the two men who are widely credited with helping the Pope write his 1944 speech: the German Jesuit Gustav Gundlach (1892-1963) and the Italian Dominican Mariano Cordovani (1883-1950).<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, neither figure had ever explicitly theorized democracy prior to 1944.<sup>59</sup> Instead, in the interwar years, the two men had spent their

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., §82.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., §47-9.

<sup>57</sup> See *ibid.*, and the 1945 “Speech to the Rota Romana,” 259: “...una democrazia senza [il rispetto dei] diritti di Dio e [della] dignità della persona umana...sarebbe difettosa e malferma. Quando dunque il popolo si allontana dalla fede cristiana o non la pone risolutamente come principio del vivere civile, allora anche la democrazia facilmente si altera e si deforma e col trascorrere del tempo è soggetta a cadere nel ‘totalitarismo’ o nell’‘autoritarismo’ di un solo partito.”

<sup>58</sup> Gundlach is credited with having written the first drafts of all of the most important speeches of the Pope on social matters. Cordovani's influence was more mediated, but nonetheless decisive. For the influence of Cordovani and Gundlach on Pius XII, see Philippe Chenaux, *Pie XII: Diplomate et pasteur* (Paris: Cerf, 2003), 309; Johannes Schwarte, *Gustav Gundlach, S.J. (1892-1963)* (München: Paderborn, 1975), 126-7, 132-5, 590-1; Antonio Acerbi, *La Chiesa nel tempo: Sguardi sui progetti di relazioni tra Chiesa e società civile negli ultimi cento anni* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1984), 158ff.

<sup>59</sup> Nor did they do so afterwards. During his time working with Pius XII's Secretariat of State, Father Gundlach would for instance distinguish himself by developing the theories undergirding the Pope's attack on communist parties and the worker-priest movement, as well as the notion of nuclear warfare as "just war." For the latter, see Gustav Gundlach, "Die Lehre Pius XII vom modernen Krieg," *Stimmen der Zeit* 164 (1959): 1-14; and *Kann der atomare Verteidigungskrieg ein gerechter Krieg sein?* (München: Zink, 1960).

energies on developing an alternative ideal Catholic state, which was antithetical in both theory and practice to liberal democracies and to totalitarian dictatorships, as really existing in Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Father Gundlach's initial impetus for the project had been his opposition to Nazism's "hyper-statism" from as early as 1934; Father Cordovani had originally taken an interest in the question so as to expose the "statolatrous" tendencies of Fascist Italy's leading philosopher, Giovanni Gentile.<sup>60</sup> In the course of the 1930s, the two men had independently developed a diagnosis of the ills of extant political models and begun outlining their alternative ideal.

Father Gundlach took as his point of departure the work of his teacher, the German Jesuit Heinrich Pesch.<sup>61</sup> Gundlach had begun developing a distinctly Catholic sociological method with the help of other participants in the German Königswinter Study Circle (discussed in Chapter Three), which contributed decisively to Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno*.<sup>62</sup> Forced into exile from Germany following Hitler's seizure of power, Gundlach had left Germany for Rome, where he taught at the Gregorian University between 1934 and 1938. It is likely that his

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<sup>60</sup> See Mariano Cordovani, *Cattolicesimo ed Idealismo* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1928). Cordovani is discussed at greater length in Chapter Six.

<sup>61</sup> Gustav Gundlach's first substantive research project was entitled, *On the Sociology of Catholic Ideas and the Jesuit Order*, and defended in 1927, under the supervision of Heinrich Pesch, S.J. (who died in 1926). It was published as *Zur soziologie der katholischen ideenwelt und des jesuitenordens* (Frieburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1927).

For Gundlach's articulation of his debt to Pesch, see Gustav Gundlach, "Solidarismus," in *Staatslexikon*, ed. Hermann Sacher (Freiburg: Herder, 1931), col.1631-1621. As Pesch summarized the theory (emphasizing the concept of rights): "Christianity makes no distinctions between races, nations or classes with regard to human solidarity. For it, there is no class of pariahs who have no rights...The state is more than a mass of individual beings. It is a moral-organic unity, a community of people governed by public well-being as its objective. Citizens are morally obligated to assist this objective. They should serve the public welfare with their labor, positively by their economic achievements, negatively by respecting the rights of others and the public well being in their striving for income." As cited in Donald J. Dietrich, *Catholic Citizens in the Third Reich: Psycho-Social Principles and Moral Reasoning* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988), 70, fn. 56.

<sup>62</sup> Gundlach also issued the authoritative interpretation of *Quadragesimo Anno* in, *Die sozialen Rundschreiben Leos XIII und Pius' XI. Text und deutsche Übersetzung samt systematischen Inhaltsübersichten und einheitlichem Sachregister* (Berlin: Paderborn Schöningh, 1931; 1933). This was revised and expanded first in *Papst Pius XI, zur heutigen Wirtschafst und Gesellschaftsnot: kurze Erläuterung des Rundschreibens Quadragesimo Anno* (Berlin: Buchverlag Germania, 1932); and again in *Grundzüge der Gesellschaftslehr (zum Verständnis der Enzyklika Quadragesimo anno)* (Valkenburg: Valkenburg Ignatiuskolleg, 1934).

continued contact with the many members of this Circle who left Germany for the United States, where they played a crucial role in institutionalizing Catholic sociology, shaped his views throughout the 1930s and beyond.<sup>63</sup>

Throughout the interwar years, Gundlach defended the notion that the ideal Catholic state must fully reject socialism and communism and heed Catholic principles of social solidarity.<sup>64</sup> Insofar as human beings have an essentially social character and are situated within a hierarchical social order ascending from the person to the family and the state, the state must wield limited powers, facilitate the cohesion of local solidaristic networks, and guarantee the vocational and spiritual rights of citizens.<sup>65</sup> As Gundlach specified, this ideal Catholic state was antithetical to the underlying core commitments of both totalitarian and liberal democratic thinking. While totalitarianism privileged communitarianism and the expansion state powers over and against individual freedom (thus infringing upon the individual's right to pursue "the common good" and fulfill his Christian duties), liberal democracies privileged freedom *from* rather than freedom *to*, conceiving of society in contractualist terms, thus breeding selfishness and solitude.<sup>66</sup> Though Gundlach asserted that in certain under-specified cases the ideal

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<sup>63</sup> The subject merits further study. Members of the Königswinter Circle who ended up in the U.S. include Heinrich Rommen, Götz Briefs, Franz H. Mueller (1900-1994) and his wife, Therese J. Geuer Mueller (1905-2002), the latter of whom also played an important role in *Quadragesimo Anno*. Some of these figures, such as Heinrich Rommen, were able to flee thanks to the assistance of the Episcopal Committee for Catholic Refugees. The Muellers moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. Franz Mueller became Professor of Economics at the College of St. Thomas (now St. Thomas University) in St. Paul. Götz Briefs taught first at the Catholic University of DC, and then became a full professor at Georgetown University. Heinrich Rommen taught economics at St. Joseph's College in Connecticut (1938-1946), and political science at St. Thomas College in Minnesota (1946-1953). He was subsequently appointed Distinguished Professor at Georgetown University.

<sup>64</sup> Several notable texts authored by Gustav Gundlach before 1944 focused on socialism and communism, including his Habilitationsschrift, *Zum Begriff der Klasse und des Klassenkampfes* (Berlin: Phil-Theol. Hochschule Sankt Georgen, 1930), and *Sozialismus und sozialistische Bewegung* (Berlin: Paderborn Schöningh, 1931). Gundlach would write extensively on the irreconcilability of Catholicism with both socialism and communism in his postwar writings.

<sup>65</sup> This summary is provided in Dietrich, *Catholic Citizens in the Third Reich*, 70.

<sup>66</sup> Gundlach referred to this "third way" thinking on numerous occasions. In his memoirs, the Swiss Catholic theologian Hans Küng (1928--) recalled studying with Gundlach in the Königswinter circle, and then in a "Social Circle" or sociological circle which Gundlach ran in Vatican City. "Gustav Gundlach," he

Catholic state could be compatible with parliamentary democracy, he simultaneously reiterated his strong distrust of the hyper-rationalized character of modern democratic states.<sup>67</sup>

Mariano Cordovani's theory of the ideal Catholic state was similarly formulated as an alternative "third way" between the reckless all-powerful state of totalitarianism and the unrooted, free market-mentality created by liberal individualism.<sup>68</sup> Unlike Gundlach, whose contacts with the German laity had been enlivened by his time in Königswinter, Cordovani had matured intellectually exclusively within the confines of Roman, clerical, settings. Between 1927 and 1932, the Dominican priest would serve as regent at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, also known as the Angelicum, which Pius XI had indicated as the pre-eminent site for the study of St. Thomas Aquinas, and the official "sedes Thomae."<sup>69</sup> At the Angelicum, Cordovani would play an instrumental role in developing interwar Thomism in new directions.<sup>70</sup>

In the preface to one of his works, Cordovani explained that he was motivated by the great neo-Thomist project, "to marry reason and faith." He added that he also sought "the

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wrote, "impre[s]e[d] us with his knowledge, perspicacity, wit and aggressiveness [...] He is the one who makes me aware for the first time that there is a 'third way' between individualism and collectivism, capitalism and socialism, which regulates 'solidarism' through the principle of personality, solidarity and subsidiarity." Hans Küng, *My Struggle for Freedom: A Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Saint Paul University, 2003), 56.

<sup>67</sup> Gundlach discussed his views on democracy in general and on the Weimar republic in particular in a seminar of the Königswinter circle, on 12-13 May 1932. As referenced in Jürgen Elvert, "A Microcosm of Society or the Key to a Majority in the Reichstag? The Centre Party in Germany," in *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918-1945*, eds. Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wohnout (New York: Routledge, 2004), 38-53, here 44, footnote 42; Dietrich, *Human Rights and the Catholic Tradition* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 167, fn. 59.

<sup>68</sup> "...La storia viene ad insegnarci che la questione dei rapporti fra autorità e libertà non è nuova, e che se il liberalismo ha nel suo passivo molti peccati da spiare, l'assolutismo di tutti I tempi non si è dimostrato meno disastroso. La filosofia insegna che non si arriva alla verità ed alla giustizia passando da un eccesso all'altro: si può morire assiderati, come anche ustionati." Cordovani, *Cattolicesimo ed Idealismo*, 229.

<sup>69</sup> See Pius XI, *Studiorum duces* (June 29, 1923).

<sup>70</sup> For an overview of Cordovani's thought, see Giulio Alfano, *Filosofia dell'uomo e etica politica nel pensiero e nell'opera di padre Mariano Cordovani, O.P.* (Rome: Accademia degli Incolti, 1997).

marriage between the love of the Church and of my country,” namely, Italy.<sup>71</sup> Appealing to Thomas Aquinas, the Dominican priest explained that the best kind of state was one committed to a corporatist order, which protected private property against the excesses of both totalitarians and liberals.<sup>72</sup> Despite his stated project to reconcile Church teachings with the politics of the Italian state, Cordovani did not explicitly affirm whether the ideal corporate state would be democratic or committed to some other political form.<sup>73</sup> However, Cordovani did emphasize that the philosophical system of Aquinas militated against the atheism inherent in the “political modernism” of both communism and liberalism. He argued that both systems of thought were based on “rationalism and naturalism,” and amounted to “the negation of God and Christianity.”<sup>74</sup> Accordingly, these systems constituted “a violation of natural human rights,” which impinged on the intellectual and spiritual “perfection” of the human person, as discussed by Thomas Aquinas and mandated by God.<sup>75</sup> Worrying in particular that young Catholics would be led astray by these nefarious teachings, Cordovani denounced all those who “renounce Catholicism, in the amiable company of Kant and Hegel.”<sup>76</sup>

In sum: Pius XII's 1944 message on democracy emerged from an extensive interwar theorization of the ideal Catholic state as the antithesis to Nazi-Fascist totalitarianism, communism, and liberal democracy. Unsurprisingly, the 1944 message addressed the risk of Nazi-Fascist and communist totalitarianism, highlighting the dangers of excessive state power

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<sup>71</sup> Cordovani, “Gli Universitari Cattolici,” *Saggezza e santità: meditazioni filosofiche* (Milano: Ancora, 1931), 234-45.

<sup>72</sup> Cordovani, *Spunti di sociologia*, 284.

<sup>73</sup> See Cordovani, *Per la dignità della persona umana* (Brescia, Morcelliana, 1943) and *Tirannia e libertà: l'uomo e lo Stato* (Roma, Editrice Studium, 1945).

<sup>74</sup> Cordovani, “L'insegnamento di Pio XI,” *Saggezza*, 39-53; and “Il pensiero cristiano nel messaggio di Benedetto Croce ai filosofi americani,” *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* 19 (1927), 174ff. This was a response by Cordovani to an address Croce had delivered in September 1926, at the Sixth International Philosophy Congress, held in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>75</sup> Id., “L'insegnamento di Pio XI,” 227.

<sup>76</sup> Cordovani, “La Chiesa e la filosofia,” *Saggio*, 35.

and the creation of mass-men. Though for evident reasons liberal democracy was not condemned explicitly by the message, some of the positioning against it by Gundlach and Cordovani did creep into the text, for instance when the Pope condemned those states which considered themselves simply “amorphous agglomeration of individuals” rather than organic societies.<sup>77</sup> Further, the whole project of the message -- defining a new Vatican-approved model of democracy -- was in keeping with interwar debates about a Catholic “third way.” As the Jesuit journal *Civiltà Cattolica* defined it, the ideal Catholic polity that Pius XII hoped would emerge from the ruins of the war must be, “organized in such a way as to recognize Jesus Christ as its supreme King.”<sup>78</sup> Thus, rather than endorsing any existing political form, Pius XII made clear that constructing a religiously imbued “true democracy” was a goal for which all God-loving people must strive. Far from accepting a plurality of potential models of democracy, Pius XII’s highly constrained model recognized no alternatives and no modifications; anything that did not conform to his model in every respect was deemed by definition both anti-democratic and illegitimate. As we have seen, his maximalist stance on the foundational and directive power of Catholicism and the Vatican was very much in line with a long-standing nineteenth and early twentieth-century tradition; now, it was now defended through the redefinition of an increasingly popular word: “democracy.”

## Conclusion

Largely ignoring the Vatican's attempt to rewrite democratic theory in Catholic terms, the American press welcomed the Pope's speech as a “momentous pronouncement” which

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<sup>77</sup> Pope Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace,” §44.

<sup>78</sup> “[Una società cristiana] ordinata a riconoscere Gesù Cristo come il suo Re supremo.” Andrea Oddone, “Libertà moderne,” *Civiltà Cattolica* 96 (1945), 81.

supposedly proclaimed “democracy as the best form of rule.”<sup>79</sup> The sermon was presented as a powerful celebration of the political alliance between the Vatican and the American government. Journalists latched onto the fact that in his closing lines, Pius XII had praised with unprecedented boldness “the United States of America,” highlighting in particular the hard work of Myron Taylor, referred to as “His Excellency the personal Representative of the President of the Union.”<sup>80</sup> Journalists further suggested that American soldiers had “liberated” not only Italians, but also the Pope, from his prison within Fascist Italy. As proof, they noted that “many Allied military personnel,” had been present at the time of the Pope’s speech in the Basilica of St. Peters, where a “throng estimated at 100,000 jammed every available inch [...] and overflowed into the courtyards on all sides of the huge church.”<sup>81</sup> Similar demonstrations of Pope Pius XII’s high esteem for the United States were staged for the international press. Countering the image of an anti-modern, aloof, “Vicar of Christ,” the Pope was shown with broad smiles and in intimate discourse with large groups of American men and women (figs.8-10).

As I have tried to show in this chapter, Pius XII’s prescriptive 1944 message was directly connected to the Vatican’s core diplomatic priority: maintaining Vatican influence in Europe, and ensuring that groups willing to preserve that influence come to power. If in World War I, Pacelli had sided with the war’s losers and thundered against democracy as a conspiratorial plot to destroy the Vatican and Catholicism as such, during World War II he sided with the victors, and sought to “lay claim to democracy,” and redefine it in a way that could remind the Pope’s interlocutors that the Vatican had a vision for Europe that must be respected.<sup>82</sup> Both the

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<sup>79</sup> See for instance, “Democracy Best Form of Rule, Pope Pius Says,” *Los Angeles Times* (25 December 1944), 1; Anne O’Hare McCormick, “Papal Message a Momentous Pronouncement,” *New York Times* (25 December 1944), 18.

<sup>80</sup> Pius XII, “Democracy and a Lasting Peace,” §89.

<sup>81</sup> “Pope Opposes Lasting Burden for War Losers; Favors Allied Plan for Peace Organization,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (25 December 1944), 14.

<sup>82</sup> See the above citation by Father Joris Helleputte.

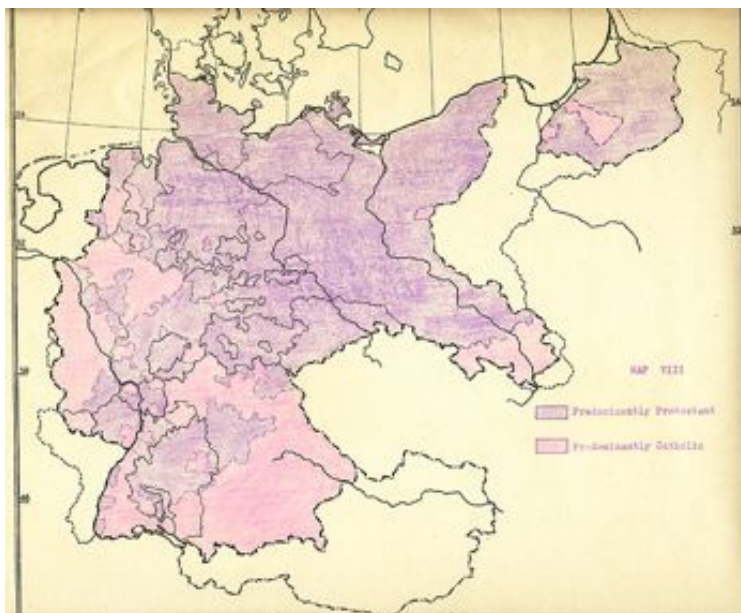
American government and European Christian Democratic parties had invited the Pope to join the conversation about democracy since the early 1940s, as a way to increase their own legitimacy and obtain the promise of support. From 1942, the Americans had in fact attempted repeatedly asked the Pope to speak in their favor by promising close postwar collaboration. So too, by 1942-3, a newborn and significantly tamer Christian Democratic movement had actively sought the official approval of the Pope, promising obedience to him if that support was forthcoming. As Pius XII's important 1944 message showed, the Vatican was willing to partner with these forces on the condition that it could maintain its interwar prominence on European soil. The Vatican's attempt to rebuild postwar Europe in the image of the interwar years was not a project circumscribed to the rhetorical realm, as the subsequent chapter will try to show.





**Fig. 1:** U.S. postwar planning map, showing religion subdividing East-Central Europe.

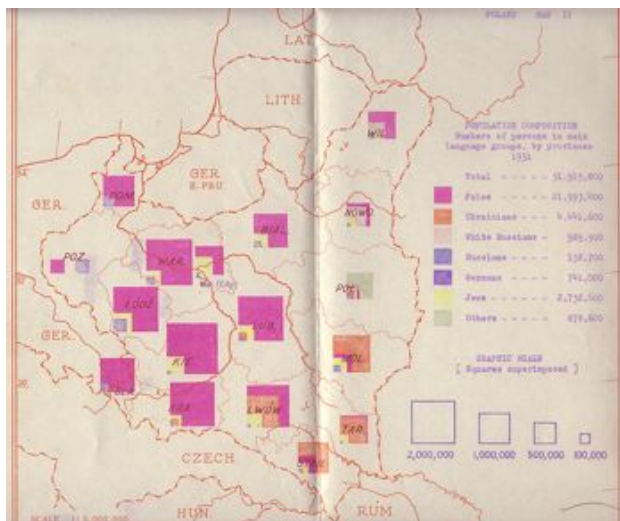
*Source:* Subcommittee on Political Problems, April 24, 1942.<sup>83</sup>



**Fig. 2:** U.S. postwar planning map presenting Germany as a land neatly subdivided between "predominantly Protestant" purple areas, and "predominantly Catholic" pink ones. Judaism and other minority religions are entirely absent from the map.

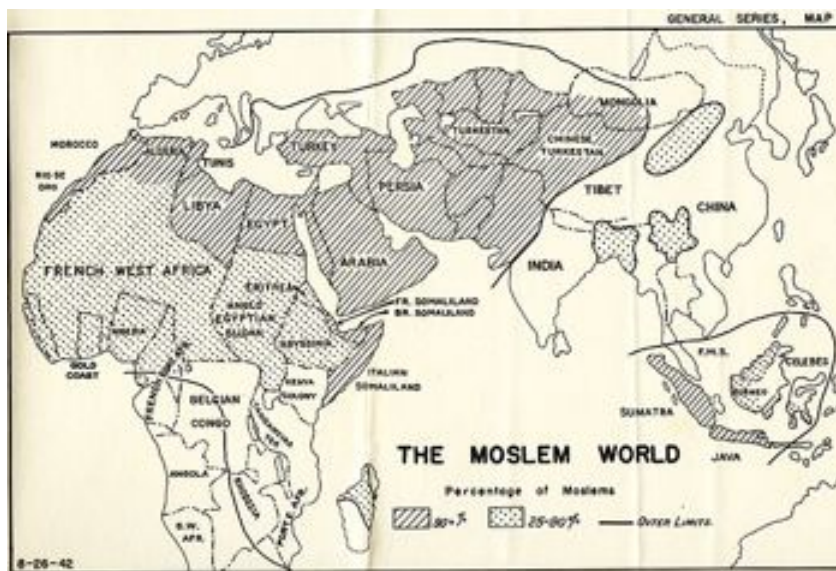
*Source:* Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> As reprinted in O'Sullivan, *Sumner Welles*, chapter 5.



**Fig.3:** Ethnic Map of Poland, prepared for use by the Subcommittee on Political Problems, 1941-3. Note that the paradoxical situation of classifying Jews as an ethnicity leads the map to suggest that one cannot simultaneously be Polish and Jewish, or German and Jewish.

Source: Ibid.



**Fig. 4:** U.S. postwar planning map presenting Africa, the Middle East and Asia as regions of the world so dominated by Islam that it is appropriate to refer to them uniformly as "the Moslem world." The entirety of Western and Eastern Europe (including Greece, "purged" of Muslim influence by Lausanne) is depicted as Muslim-free.

Source: Subcommittee on Political Problems, August 26, 1942<sup>84</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.



**Fig.5:** Crowds thronged St. Peter's square when Pope Pius XII spoke to the people of Rome the day after its liberation by Allied troops. Vatican City, June 5, 1944.

*Source:* NACP, 11-SC-190244.



**Figs.6 and 7:** The interior of St. Peter's on December 24, 1944. In the left-hand photo, men stand atop a confessional booth to catch a glimpse of the Pope.

*Source: Time Magazine (December 1944). Photos by Margaret Bourke-White.*



**Figs.8-10:** Pius XII warmly welcomes Allied personnel (left), Allied journalists (center) and American soldiers (right) soon after the liberation of Rome in June of 1944.

*Source: Ibid.*

## Chapter Nine

### *How the Vatican Helped Forge the Cold War West, 1945-1960*

*St Thomas [Aquinas] made the new by accident, as all he wanted to make was the truth; today, on the other hand, we make the new on purpose, and now it's the truth which will be constructed only by accident.*  
-- Jacques Maritain, 1930<sup>1</sup>

*Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself. (I am large, I contain multitudes.)*  
-- Walt Whitman, 1897<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

To summarize the arc of my argument thus far: after World War I, the Vatican reconfigured Church-state relations through concordat diplomacy and by launching a campaign against the Soviet Union, in which many of its concordat partners had a direct stake. During the Second World War, the Vatican began cultivating a relationship with the United States, which promised to remain in Europe after the war and work with the Vatican to rebuild the continent and protect it against the Soviet Union. Through his Christmas sermon of 1944, Pius XII definitively signaled his willingness to partner with the United States and Christian Democratic parties, on the condition that they recognize the Vatican's primacy in European affairs.

This chapter shows how in the early postwar years, the Vatican sought to use its interwar gains and wartime alliance-building to ensure that European Christian Democratic parties and the United States were acting in its best interest. In particular, I focus on how after the Yalta Conference, the Vatican re-energized its anticommunist campaign, which it used as a means of pressuring the United States -- and to a lesser extent, Christian Democratic parties -- to act in conformity with its wishes. Once the United States turned against the Soviet Union, the two

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Le docteur Angelique* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1930), 107-8.

<sup>2</sup> Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself," *Leaves of Grass* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Co., 1897), 78.

powers worked closely together for a brief, but intense, period. The collaboration was motivated by a conviction shared by the Pope, the United States president, and many U.S. officials stationed in Germany and Italy, that Christianity in general -- and Catholicism in particular -- was a superb weapon in the fight against communism. The chapter highlights in particular two sites of collaboration between the Vatican and the United States: their work in U.S.-occupied Germany between 1946 and 1949, and their collaboration in Italy, during the national elections of 1948.

### **1. The Resurgence of the Vatican Anticommunist Campaign**

Between January and February of 1945, the American President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin and Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain met in Yalta, to plan the defeat and occupation of Germany and the fate of Eastern Europe. The conference confirmed the previously accepted subdivision of Germany into occupation zones administered by America, French, British and Soviet forces, and called for free elections in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

Vatican officials promptly showed their displeasure at being excluded from preliminary talks and at the respect accorded Stalin. "We are struck by the silence of the three great powers on Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia," American Catholic bishops announced, speaking in one voice. In addition to failing to so much as mention two of the Vatican's concordat strongholds, the agreement -- by parceling up Germany -- ran counter to the principles of "peace loving nations."<sup>3</sup> The Vatican protested again when in July of 1945, the United States recognized the pro-communist government in Poland. Summoning the Catholic associational networks that had taken part in the interwar mobilization against the Soviet Union, the American hierarchy

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<sup>3</sup> *New York Times* (February 18, 1945): 24. On this episode, also see Robert I. Gannon, *The Cardinal Spellman Story* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1962).



promptly choreographed mass protests in numerous cities, calling for Soviet withdrawal from the country and for free and fair elections.<sup>4</sup> Behind the scenes, Vatican officials asked the United States to “use financial and economic pressure to force [the] provisional government to grant liberties, which have been promised.”<sup>5</sup> The Vatican emphasized that in Poland “freedom of speech” was being violated by the prohibition of “Polish clergy [to] communicate with the Holy See.” More broadly, Vatican officials urged the U.S. to take a stand against Poland’s termination of the concordat and its new provisions on civil affairs, which came into effect on January 1, 1946. Summoning Pius XII’s democracy talk, they argued that the “anti-Catholic legislation,” i.e., the repeal of the concordat, “in a country which is 95% Catholic is anti-democratic.”<sup>6</sup> The same message was also transmitted to Washington by Myron Taylor, who had been reappointed as personal representative to the President following the coming to power of Harry Truman in April of 1945.<sup>7</sup>

By the time the full Yalta agreement was made public in February of 1946, communist governments had been established across Eastern Europe, through elections that were neither free nor democratic. The agreement's release caused an uproar particularly in the United States, which was blamed with having naïvely trusted Stalin's word. American bishops spoke out again, noting with regret that Yalta had given the Soviet Union sanction to “dig deep inroads” in

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<sup>4</sup> *New York Times* (April 18, 1945): 25; *New York Times* (May 27, 1945): 11. As cited in Donald Crosby, *God, Church, and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church, 1950-1957* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 9.

<sup>5</sup> Cable from Ambassador Lane to the Secretary of State, 29 January 1946, Cable # 14. National Archives in College Park, Maryland (henceforth NACP), RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, Entry 1071: Records of the Personal Representative of the President to Pope Pius XII, Box 30, Folder, “Telegrams Sent 1946.”

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Cable from Taylor to the President and the Secretary of State, 19 April 1945, Cable # 92. NACP, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, Entry 1070: Records of the Personal Representative of the President to Pope Pius XII, Box 29, Binder, “Telegrams Sent June 1 to Dec. 30, 1944.”

Europe, as it “tirelessly [tried] to grind into dust the blessed freedoms for which our sons have fought, sacrificed and died.”<sup>8</sup>

In the meanwhile, priests stationed in East-Central Europe informed the Vatican that increasingly “widespread persecutions of the Church” were underway not only in Poland, but also in Hungary, Romania, the Ukraine, and of course the Soviet Union. As Vatican officials informed their American interlocutors, the Soviet Union’s temporary suspension of religious persecution during the war increasingly appeared to have been an instrumental farce rather than an action motivated by a profound change of heart. To buttress their case, Vatican officials prepared detailed English-language reports, which illustrated in lurid detail ongoing religious persecution in East-Central Europe. From as early as May of 1946, Vatican officials began to suggest that the United States must help guard against the expansion of Soviet influence by increasing its presence in Western Europe and perhaps even preparing to go to war against the Soviet Union. They noted with satisfaction that an “anti-communist trend” in the United States was growing by virtue of Winston Churchill’s Iron Curtain speech in March. Accordingly, they expressed the hope that the “anti-communist trend” on the rise in the United States would have an impact “in domestic but also in foreign policy.”<sup>9</sup> Curiously, a neo-Fascist group in Italy with which the Pope was in regular contact expressed an identical aspiration at precisely the same time. In February of 1946, it informed the Pope that to avert the Russian threat, Italy should advertise itself as a “Mediterranean base for the United States.” “If the United States abandons Italy,” the neo-Fascists feared, the country might well “fall in the hands of communism, and hence become a Soviet Republic in the Mediterranean basin.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *New York Times* (October 7, 1946): 48. As cited in Crosby, *op.cit.*, 14.

<sup>9</sup> “Vatican Policy Following the Recent Consistory,” 15 May 1946. NACP, RG 260, Box 203, folder, “Religious Affairs – Misc.”

<sup>10</sup> The February 1946 report from a neofascist group in Rome to the Pope was entitled “Gli Stati Uniti e l’Italia.” It affirmed: “L’Italia può diventare una base mediterranea per gli Stati Uniti nella loro lotta contro l’Inghilterra e la Russia; se gli Stati Uniti abbandoneranno l’Italia...l’Italia diventerà così un focolaio di infezione sociale per l’Europa e il mondo. Potrebbe quindi cadere nelle mani del comunismo,



As the Vatican anticommunist campaign re-energized, it found its *cause célèbre* in the fall of 1946, with the Archbishop Stepinac of Yugoslavia. Yugoslav authorities had arrested the Archbishop in September, and charged him with collaborating with Italy, Germany and the Ustaše government during the war, as well as with participating in the forced conversion of Orthodox Serbs to Catholicism. After a quick show trial, Stepinac was condemned to sixteen years in prison. The Vatican immediately responded to the event by encouraging the Holy Office to issue a decree excommunicating all those responsible for the imprisonment and arrest, including Prime Minister Tito and the entirety of the Yugoslav government.<sup>11</sup> The Vatican also organized a worldwide press campaign depicting Stepinac as a martyr and Tito as Stalin's bloodthirsty executor. So as to put pressure on the United States to change its policies towards the Soviet Union, the campaign suggested that the American partnership with the Soviet Union during the war had enabled the postwar disaster. "Since the beginning of our alliance with Stalin," one typical article thundered, "the crimes of Russia are on our soul."<sup>12</sup> Additionally, the Vatican vaunted its power in civil society by organizing mass rallies, with thousands of Catholics thronging the streets in all major American cities.<sup>13</sup> In New York, FDR's close ally Cardinal Spellman announced a drive to found an "Archbishop Stepinac High School" to honor the newest martyr to the Catholic cause. Through galvanizing sermons and fund-raisers, Spellman was able to raise \$4,000,000 in less than year – about \$2,000,000 more than needed.<sup>14</sup>

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diventando una repubblica sovietica nel bacino mediterraneo." The report is cited in Miss Quinn, "The Neofascist movement," 10 April 1946. Intelligence files stored at NACP, RG 226, s.108A, b.272, f.jzx-7740. As reprinted in Nicola Tranfaglia, *Come nasce la repubblica: la mafia, il Vaticano e il neofascismo nei documenti americani e italiani, 1943-1947* (Milan: Bompiani, 2004), 80-87, here, 87.

<sup>11</sup> Camille Cianfarra, "Pope Pius Excommunicates Members of Prague Regime," *New York Times* (June 21, 1949): 1.

<sup>12</sup> Father James Gillis, in *Catholic World*, as quoted in Peter H. Irons, "America's Cold War Crusade: Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy, 1942-1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1972), 170.

<sup>13</sup> For more on the mobilization, see the aptly titled Mathilde Landercy, *Le cardinal Stepinac, martyr des droits de l'homme* (Montréal: Apostolat des Éditions, 1981).

<sup>14</sup> *Almanac* (1948): 727, 800; *New York Times* (February 10, 1947): 19. As cited in Crosby, 11.

Under the impetus of the Vatican Secretariat of State, the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the American National Council of Catholic Women sent letters to U.S. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, urging him to intercede with the Yugoslav government and save the "saintly Stepinac."<sup>15</sup> Byrnes was also put under pressure to act by two Democratic Catholic Congressmen, John McCormack of Massachusetts and John J. Rooney of New York. Arguing that the United States "must be firm" in its dealings "with national governments who would make a plaything of religion or a foible of Christianity," McCormack and Rooney called on Byrnes and the House of Representatives to immediately lodge a formal protest with the Yugoslav government.<sup>16</sup> The indefatigable Myron C. Taylor also made himself an advocate of the Vatican cause.<sup>17</sup>

Though the Vatican's anticommunist campaign was certainly not the primary cause of the change in American policy towards the Soviet Union, the U.S. Secretary of State did acknowledge its effectiveness. In October of 1946, Byrnes in fact cast aside his initial skepticism regarding the gravity of the situation, and informed the secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference that the "arrest and trial of Archbishop Stepinac" had helped show him "that Yugoslavia is being used by the Soviets merely as a testing ground for Soviet policy in occupied countries." He additionally asked the secretary of the national Catholic organization to relay to the Pope that the United States government was beginning to heed his long-heralded warning about the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup> From the fall of 1946, the United States actively solicited

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<sup>15</sup> *New York Times* (October 19, 1946): 6.

<sup>16</sup> The citation is drawn from a speech of 27 July 1946, delivered by John McCormack in the House of Representatives, on the eve of the opening of the Paris peace conference (which would also deal with the boundary between Italy and Yugoslavia). The speech can be found in the *Congressional Record* for the 79<sup>th</sup> Congress, July 27, 1946. As cited in Peter Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 160-1.

<sup>17</sup> See NACP, RG 59, Myron Taylor papers, box 34, file: "Stepinac Case: 1946."

<sup>18</sup> Notes by the NCWC national secretary Monsignor Howard Carroll on his conversation with Byrnes in Paris, following the Paris peace conference, 11 October 1946. National Catholic Welfare Conference Archives, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC (henceforth NCWC), box 8, Communism: General 1946. As cited Kent, *op.cit.*, 178-9.

Vatican officials to produce reports on the influence of the Soviet Union and its violation of religious rights in countries such as Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Yugoslavia, Albania and Argentina.<sup>19</sup> In other words, rather than simply being the passive recipient of this information, the United States was putting the Vatican in the position of supplying what were deemed valuable and reliable reports; after all, as an anonymous U.S. official noted, "the Vatican possesses the best spy organization in the world."<sup>20</sup>

When in late 1946, the deeply religious successor to President Roosevelt, Harry Truman, began to reposition the United States against the Soviet Union, he chose to maintain strong ties with the Vatican. Truman's collaboration with the Vatican in occupied Germany and in Italy began in the same months that he loudly protested the Soviet Union's delayed withdrawal from Iran and agreed to help the British curb the expansion of communist influence in Greece and Turkey.<sup>21</sup> Vatican-U.S. collaboration in Europe was already well established by March of 1947, when Truman famously announced before a joint session of Congress that he would come to the assistance of Greece and Turkey and reorient U.S. policy so that it could "block aggressive movements that seek to impose totalitarian regimes." Pointing his finger directly at the Soviet Union, he highlighted the "violations of the Yalta agreement in Poland, Rumania and Bulgaria," wherein "totalitarian regimes" had been "forced upon [individuals] against their will." Using a language that overlapped substantially with that of Pius XII, Truman affirmed that the world was now faced a choice between two rival "ways of life": totalitarianism and democracy.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Taylor to Pius XII, 5 August 1947. RMC, Myron Taylor Papers (Collection N.3308), Box 1, Folder "Correspondence between President Harry S. Truman, His Holiness Pope Pius XII and Hon. Myron Taylor, 1945-1949."

<sup>20</sup> Anonymous U.S. intelligence report, 6 October 1945. NACP, RG 226, s.210, b.525, f.45.

<sup>21</sup> On the folksy religiosity of Truman, see Andrew Preston, William Inboden and Yves-Henri Nouailhat, *Truman: Un Chrétien à la Maison Blanche* (Paris: Cerf, 2007). On Holy See-U.S. relations during the Truman years, see, inter alia, George J. Gill, "The Truman Administration and Vatican Relations," *The Catholic Historical Review* 73, 3 (July 1987): 408-423.

<sup>22</sup> President Harry S. Truman's Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, 12 March 1947.

By June of 1947, when Truman announced the European Recovery Program or Marshall Plan, U.S.-Vatican collaboration was so robust that Pius XII played an important role not only in distributing aid, but in claiming to have originated the program itself.<sup>23</sup> Informing Truman that the Marshall Plan might indeed help save “what remains of a free world [from] Godless totalitarianism,”<sup>24</sup> Pius XII emphasized that the assistance would be successful only if paired with America’s continued support of Catholicism on the European continent. “Any program of assistance will fail,” the Pope remarked, “unless it takes into account the imperative need for men to return to God.”<sup>25</sup> Indeed, it was no accident that the provision of aid dovetailed with the end of joint Christian Democratic-Communist ruling coalitions in both France and Italy, signaling the decision of Christian Democratic parties to fully back what was by this point emerging as the U.S.-Vatican anticommunist crusade. Finally, when in July of 1947 the U.S. Congress passed the National Security Act, the Vatican's attempt to expand the U.S. presence in Europe seemed vindicated. The NSA in fact created a series of robust and semi-permanent instruments of war, in case of battle with the Soviet Union. During its unveiling, the American President noted that the United States also had at its disposal a “secret weapon” which was even more powerful than military might. Religion, Truman affirmed, would be used to consolidate the “Western bloc” against the East, and effectively reduce and perhaps eliminate the

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<sup>23</sup> Letter of Taylor to Tardini, Paris, 25 July 1948. RMC, Myron Taylor papers, # 3308, Box 3, "Summary of Contacts by Mr. Myron C. Taylor with Leaders in Religion, 1940-1953." In addition to his wartime conversations with Myron Taylor, Pius XII was most likely referring to a radio message he had delivered in January of 1946, urging Americans to come to the material aid of the European continent. See Pius XII's allocution to the ambassador of Argentina, 12 January 1946, *Documents pontificaux de Sa Sainteté Pie XII*, ed. Robert Kothén (Paris: Ed. Labergerie, 1947), 56-8. As cited in Philippe Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe, 1917-1989: de Lénine à Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 153.

<sup>24</sup> Pius XII to Truman, Vatican, 19 July 1948. RMC, Myron Taylor Papers (Collection N.3308), Box 1, Folder "Correspondence between President Harry S. Truman, His Holiness Pope Pius XII and Hon. Myron Taylor, 1945-1949."

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

communist phenomenon altogether. "Religion alone," Truman dramatically announced, "has the answer to humanity's twentieth century cry of despair."<sup>26</sup>

As will be explored in what follows, from late 1946 through 1948 the United States and the Vatican would thus work closely together to fight communism on European soil. Truman believed that the Pope was an essential partner, in that he could help lay "the essential bases of a Christian civilization" and re-establish a "moral world order."<sup>27</sup> Echoing the core of the Pope's 1944 Christmas message, the American President affirmed that, "No peace can be permanent which is not based upon Christian principles." Indeed, it was crucial that (Christian) religious rights and freedoms be protected, in order to avert the possibility of anti-Christian governments rising to power.<sup>28</sup> According to the American President, a "renewal of faith" in war-torn territories would prevent the rise of both Nazism and communism, and guarantee that "the individual's sacred rights, inherent in his relationship to God and his fellows, will be respected in every land."<sup>29</sup>

Truman's overtures to the Pope were not merely rhetorical. Indeed, Truman's direction of American policy in Italy, Germany and elsewhere would be shaped by the conviction that Christianity in general – and Catholicism in particular – could serve particularly useful to the United States in at least two senses. First, the Catholic Church could help the United States in organizational terms, through the distribution of food, aid, and propaganda justifying the presence of U.S. troops in Europe. Second, the Church could act as a moralizing force capable of

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<sup>26</sup> Truman to Jesse Bader, September 29, 1947. Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Independence, MO (henceforth HSTL), OF 213, Box 803. As cited in Preston, book manuscript, 638.

<sup>27</sup> Truman's recommendations to Taylor were later recalled by Taylor in *Correspondence between President Truman and Pope Pius XII*, ed. Myron C. Taylor (New York: s.n., 1953), 1-6.

<sup>28</sup> Letter of 19 April 1946 from President Truman to the Pope. *Ibid.*, 9-10. The same points were made in subsequent letters as well. See for instance Letter of Harry Truman to Myron Taylor, Washington, 26 March 1948. RMC, Myron Taylor Papers (Collection N.3308), Box 1, Folder 1.

<sup>29</sup> Letter of 6 August 1947 from President Truman to the Pope, in *Correspondence between President Truman and Pope Pius XII*, 23. Also in RMC, Myron Taylor papers, # 3308, Box 3, "Summary of Contacts by Mr. Myron C. Taylor with Leaders in Religion, 1940-1953."

helping with de-Nazification, and increasingly, anti-communist, activities. Soon, however, the United States was pulled into Catholic religiosity much more actively than Truman could have predicted. This was brought about in the course of the expansion of Catholic activism in occupied Germany and by the collaboration between the U.S. and the Vatican in the Italian elections of 1946 and 1948. In the process, the Vatican-U.S. crusade against communism accelerated the transformation of the Cold War into a global war, and bound the U.S. more tightly to Catholic organs on the ground.

## **2. Fostering Religion: Vatican-U.S. Policy in Occupied Germany, 1946-8**

Of the four occupied sectors of Germany, the United States had control of the largest and most Catholic one. If Catholics represented approximately a third of the German population in the mid 1940s, in the American zone they were a majority, with 53% of the population in the region professing the Catholic faith – a percentage which in Bavaria alone soared to approximately 70%.<sup>30</sup> Between 1944 and 1945, the Vatican worked hard to attain special status in these territories by convincing U.S. actors that not only had the Catholic Church strenuously opposed Nazism throughout the interwar years; further, it was the only local institution which had survived the war with power, wealth and a measure of dignity. U.S. soldiers and diplomats onsite internalized the idea of an anti-Nazi Church as the "almost only constituted authority" in Germany with surprising speed. They agreed to partner with the Vatican, and extend the collaboration of Church and state established by concordat diplomacy in the interwar years.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> "Population of Germany According to Religions," official statistics for use by the U.S. military, compiled by ETOUSA, 24 June 1945. NACP, RG 260: Records of the United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Box 203, folder "Religious Affairs – Misc."

<sup>31</sup> Paul W. Freedman, Editorial Unit, Office of Military Government for Germany (henceforth OMGUS), "The Catholic Church in Bavaria," pp.1-28, undated report prepared by OMGUS, presumably August 1946, in that the report was prepared after approximately "seventeen months of American occupation." NACP, RG 260, Box 15, folder 23A, "Catholic Church."

Indeed, the Americans played a crucial role in the preservation of this regime of shared power, by preserving German concordats and granting Catholic organizations substantial powers in both political and social domains.

At war's end, per Pius XII's orders, Catholic organizations and high-ranking priests had drafted long documents detailing the supposed resistance of German Catholics to Hitler and the importance of protecting Catholicism in the postwar years, as a means of averting Nazism's return.<sup>32</sup> Leaning on reports such as these, American occupying forces reasoned that Catholics were indeed the most reliable group in the American zone: the Catholic Church, they argued in reports sent to Washington, had successfully resisted Hitler's attack and speedily removed those "few" priests who had sympathized with National Socialism.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the Catholic democracy and anti-totalitarianism talk increasingly spoken by high-ranking German clerics convinced occupying authorities that the Catholic faith was ideologically better equipped to resist Nazism than were the Protestant faiths, thus giving it preferred status in the reconstruction project. A surprisingly isolated group of American observers worried that the Catholic Church was itself "totalitarian" and that its natural sympathies in reality lay not with American-style democracy, but rather with dictatorship.<sup>34</sup>

In the early months of the occupation, Catholics emerged as players with disproportionate influence in the American zone. Catholic clerics became preferred interlocutors

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<sup>32</sup> See, for instance, the series of sermons delivered in 1945 by the American-German priest Aloysius Muench, who was a top adviser to the American officials on religious affairs, *One World in Charity* (S.l.: s.n., 1946). Muench, like many of his coreligionists, also made a strong case against the American stance of "collective guilt." For more information on the large-scale attempt to cover-up the support of some German priests – and many more German Catholics -- for Nazism post-1945, see Kevin Spicer, *Hitler's Priests: Catholic Clergy and National Socialism* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2008), 203–20, 228–34.

<sup>33</sup> Tellingly, the assessment seemed exclusively based on reports produced by the Catholic Church itself rather than from independent investigations. The American occupiers were also aware that had they intervened to have Nazi-sympathizing Church officials removed, a conflict may have ensued, in that – as Paul W. Freedman reported -- a "a conflict of jurisdiction" between Military Government regulations on de-Nazification and "the law of [the] Roman Catholic Church, the *Codex Juris Canonici*," would have presented itself. Indeed, according to the *Codex Juris Canonici*, "no secular agency may judge a priest." Freedman, "The Catholic Church in Bavaria."

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

of OMGUS officials and were entrusted with distributing aid, maintaining order, and helping lay the groundwork for a shift from Nazi “totalitarianism” to democracy. The Religious Affairs Branch of the American Military Government, founded in 1945, was perhaps the institution most responsible for granting Catholics special status in the reconstruction project. For the first three years of its operation, the Religious Affairs Branch -- despite its name -- was given extensive powers to determine many aspects of economic, educational and cultural affairs in the American zone of Germany.<sup>35</sup> The stated aim of the Religious Affairs Branch was to “foster freedom of religion and respect for religious institutions”<sup>36</sup> -- a goal repeated in the Objectives of the American Military Government as follows: “(1) You will, in the U.S. area of occupation, continue to assure freedom of religion. You will assure protection of religious activity and support these principles in the deliberations of the [Allied] Control Council.”<sup>37</sup> The importance of protecting “freedom of religion” was also outlined in several other high-profile directives, issued by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee and by what came to be known as the Allied Control Authority.<sup>38</sup>

In practice, the Religious Affairs Branch sought to promote "freedom of religion" by strengthening Christianity's social and political role in German society. Given recent historical events, it may be surprising that a Christian religion received priority over Judaism in the U.S.-run Religious Affairs Branch, but this until a quite late date was unmistakably the case. As the

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<sup>35</sup> It was only in 1948 that the Religious Affairs branch handed over many of its responsibilities to the newly founded Education and Cultural Relations (ECR) Division. See NACP, RG 260, OMGUS General Order No.6, 18 February 1948.

<sup>36</sup> The aim of “develop[ing] and stimulat[ing] the acceptance of a policy and program of freedom of religion,” was repeated throughout the life of the Religious Affairs Branch and represented a shorthand way of referring to the support of organized religion. See “Religious Affairs Branch: Summary Report, 1949,” NACP, RG 260, Box 204, folder, “Summary of the F[iscal] Y[ear] – 1949 Program of the Religious Affairs Branch, E+CR Div.”

<sup>37</sup> The “Objectives of Military Government,” outlined by General Clay on 18 July 1947, are referenced in *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> See the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) report of August 1947 (report # 269/8) and the Allied Control Authority report of 6 February 1947, *ibid.*



head of the Religious Affairs Branch affirmed, Christianity was crucial to setting Germany back on its feet. The country would never have put its fate in Hitler's hands, he argued, "had the Christian religion permeated the life of the people and assisted them in developing not only a sense of responsibility but also a power to judge evil critically and therefore concertedly to oppose it."<sup>39</sup>

To grow Christianity's presence in German society, the Religious Affairs Branch encouraged greater interdependence of Church and state. As the head of the Religious Affairs Branch candidly explained in a summary prepared for Washington officials, "Some matters upheld in principle in America had to be modified in practice in Germany. This was obviously true of the religious situation."<sup>40</sup> In particular, it was not advisable to implement "the separation of church and state, as observed in America."<sup>41</sup> In one of its first moves, the American Military Government thus complied with concerted pressure from Vatican officials and recognized the 1933 concordat with Germany and the 1924 concordat with Bavaria as legally binding.<sup>42</sup> Setting aside the fact that concordat diplomacy had militated against religious freedom and minority rights, American officials argued that concordats represented "a bulwark for all religion,"<sup>43</sup> and further that Germany's Catholics would be sorely disappointed if the Americans did not seek to repair Nazism's wrongs by reaffirming their faith in these treaties.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> "Religious Affairs Branch: Summary Report, 1949."

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Soviet objections that the concordats represented Hitler-era legislation and should accordingly be abrogated were summarily silenced. Religious Affairs Section, "Statement of Principle Differences Encountered with Soviet Representatives on Official Matters," 1946. NACP, RG 260, Box 202, folder, "Intelligence Reports – Mitropa -- 1946."

<sup>43</sup> Letter from Ambassador Robert Murphy to Captain Richey, Berlin, 5 August 1945. NACP, RG 260: Records of the United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Box 203, folder "Religious Affairs – Misc."

<sup>44</sup> Memorandum of Conversations between John O. Riedl, Father Zeiger, Assistant to Bishop Muench, Monsignor Tardini, and Father Leiber, 30 December 1947. NACP, RG 59: General Records of the

As OMGUS officials noted, extensive “discriminations in favor of Catholics” increasingly became the norm in the America-occupied Germany. Citing restrictions on the rights of Catholics to free expression under Nazi rule, the American military government -- spurred on, of course, by Catholic journalists and opinion-makers -- helped flood the market with “a preponderance of Catholic publications,” which received distribution privileges and free supplies of hard-to-find printing paper.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, German Church leaders were taken under the wing of the Religious Affairs Branch and brought to the United States on short-term, all-expenses-paid, study trips, where they learned to improve and revitalize religious journalism, focusing on both business methods and the craft of writing.<sup>46</sup>

Catholics in Germany also pressured the United States authorities to preserve their gains in public and private schools. Appealing to the Pope's resurgent anti-totalitarianism, German clerics cast the school reform issue as one pitting excessive state power against individual rights: “The state is obliged to protect and support, not to restrict or eliminate the parents in carrying out this duty and in the practice of this natural right.”<sup>47</sup> Echoing Pius XII's distinction between true and false democracies, they affirmed that, “Every disregard of this legal right and every exaggeration of the power of the state in this field, even though it is done in the name of

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Department of State, Entry 1068: Office of the Personal Representative of the President to Pope Pius XII, Box 15, Folder “Memoranda of Conversations.”

<sup>45</sup> The State Department had noticed the imbalance and contacted the Military Government for an explanation. Letter from Robert A. McClure, Director of Information Control, to Ambassador Murphy, US Political Advisor, 14 November 1946. NACP, RG 260, Box 181, folder, “Muench, Bishop.” Emphasis in the original.

<sup>46</sup> “Religious Affairs Branch: Summary Report, 1949” NACP, RG 260, Box 204, folder, “Summary of the FY – 1949 Program of the Religious Affairs Branch, E+CR Div.” The “improvement of journalism in the field of religion” project aimed to help daily papers, religious periodicals, parish and diocesan publications, and religious news services, “present religion to the people in a more vitalized form.” See letter from C. Arild Olsen, Chief of the Religious Affairs Branch of OMGUS, to Jeremiah L. O’Sullivan, Head of the Marquette University School of Journalism, 27 December 1948, with associated addenda. NACP, RG 260: Records of the United States Occupation Headquarters, WWII, OMGUS, Records of the Education and Cultural Relations Division, Records of the Religious Affairs Branch, Box 204, folder, “American Experts and Prof. (Cath.)”

<sup>47</sup> Letter of Cardinal Faulhaber to Bishop Aloysius Muench, Munich, 7 January 1948. NACP, RG 260, Box 195, folder, “School Reform.”

democracy, leads to the degradation of a new state socialism and collectivism.” Thus, German clergy concluded, "Parents have the primary duty and right in the education of youth in its entirety."<sup>48</sup> Indeed, the American Apostolic Delegate Cardinal Aloisius Muench of North Dakota added, “attempts to abolish the denominational school” doubtless constituted “the first step to a totalitarian state.”<sup>49</sup> An influential draft proposal for school reform by Catholic groups in Germany was similarly prefaced by the avowal that “the preservation and revival of Christian education is the only effective protection for human personality and society against the dangers of our century which threaten them, against collectivism and totalitarianism in every form.”<sup>50</sup>

Under pressure from both German and American clergy, the American Military Government bowed to the Catholic demand for state support for religious instruction and confessional schools -- a demand which had been presented as a way to protect "democracy" against Nazi and communist "totalitarianism." In Bavaria, for instance, OMGUS “all but abolished” the interdenominational public schools, “reinstating parochial (or confessional) schools” with state funding.<sup>51</sup> “The system,” the chief of the Religious Affairs section reported to his superiors in Washington, “thus differs essentially from the United States, where religious schools are private parochial schools in most instances existing without state support.”<sup>52</sup> OMGUS also gave its support to two articles drafted by influential Catholics for the new Bavarian constitution of 1946, which sought to enshrine the special status of religion in education under the law. “The prominent goals for education are reverence for God, respect for

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Letter from Ambassador Robert Murphy, US Political Advisor, to Dr. J. W. Taylor, Education Section, IA & C Division, OMGUS, 4 November 1946, citing a recent memorandum of Bishop Muench. NACP, RG 260, Box 181, folder, “Muench, Bishop.”

<sup>50</sup> “General Goals and Tasks of Bavarian School Reform,” 1 April 1947. NACP, RG 260, Box 195, folder, “School Reform.”

<sup>51</sup> Freedman, “The Catholic Church in Bavaria.”

<sup>52</sup> James M. Eagan, Chief, Religious Affairs Section, OMGB, “Education and Religion in Bavaria,” Memo, 6 January 1948. NACP, RG 260, Box 195, folder, “School Reform.”

religious convictions and for the dignity of man,” one article announced. The second article called for the recognition of the Catholic Church as an “educational institution” on par with state institutions.<sup>53</sup>

Additionally, the Religious Affairs Branch helped organize and fund the “preparation, publication and importation of religious literature and religious education textbooks,” as well as the drafting of syllabi for courses in religion.<sup>54</sup> It sponsored the travel of Church experts to and from Germany, so that they could learn to apply “the most recent psychological and pedagogical advances” to the teaching of religion in schools and to help develop religious leadership among school-age children.<sup>55</sup> In response to objections, OMGUS officials again repeated the reasoning of Church officials, arguing that their actions were simply motivated by the desire to “establish and maintain the interests and rights of parents and guardians in the field of denominational schools and religious instruction in the schools.”<sup>56</sup>

OMGUS officials also chose to entrust Catholics in the American zone in Germany with important leadership positions. As American occupiers reasoned, it would be foolish not to draw upon the “bedrock of Catholicism” to furnish the region with its new generation of anti-

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<sup>53</sup> High-ranking members of the Catholic clergy exerted direct pressure on OMGUS officials regarding these articles; they emphasized that preliminary drafts showed that “the danger of an entirely socialist constitution has been averted,” but nonetheless worried that Church interests were not sufficiently protected. Letter of the Bishop of Mainz to His Excellency, Ambassador Murphy, Control Council, Berlin, Mainz, 29 October 1946. NACP, RG 260, Box 195, folder, “000.3 – Religion: Clergymen – Bishop Stohr (Bishop of Mainz).” Also see “General Goals and Tasks of Bavarian School Reform,” 1 April 1947. *Ibid.*, folder, “School Reform.”

<sup>54</sup> “Functional Program for Religious Affairs, 1 July to 31 December 1947,” NACP, RG 260, Box 202, folder, “Functional Program, R A Branch – 1947.”

<sup>55</sup> On this, see Pastor Gerhard Hildmann, “Report on my visit in the United States of America,” 26 February – 19 June 1949. NACP, RG 260: Records of the United States Occupation Headquarters, WWII, OMGUS, Records of the Education and Cultural Relations Division, Records of the Religious Affairs Branch, Box 204, folder, “Project: Development of Popular Pamphlets Bringing Religion to Bear on Various Phases and Problems of Daily Living.”

<sup>56</sup> “Functional Program for Religious Affairs, 1 July to 31 December 1947,” NACP, RG 260, Box 202, folder, “Functional Program, R A Branch – 1947.”

totalitarian leaders.<sup>57</sup> American diplomats accordingly asked contacts in Vatican City, as well as Church dignitaries in the United States, to draw up lists of “German Catholic leaders” who could help draft pro-democracy and anti-totalitarian propaganda and thus “properly indoctrinat[e] and equip” future generations.<sup>58</sup> An official OMGUS order announced that political leaders need not be laypeople, and that “members of the Clergy” could also “participate in politics, assume public office and speak from the pulpit on behalf of any particular party, provided such activity is not detrimental to Military Government or hostile to any of the Allies.”<sup>59</sup> Unsurprisingly, the more confessional political parties expanded and drew clerical support, the more high-ranking members of the clergy became crucial point-people for OMGUS. As early as 1945, General George S. Patton accepted the advice of Cardinal Faulhaber (who had been close friends with Pacelli since 1918) and appointed Fritz Schäffer as the first postwar Prime Minister of Bavaria. As a member of the Bavarian People's Party and one of the founders of the Christian Social Union (CSU), Schäffer “shared the Church point of view of all issues.”<sup>60</sup> He also, however, was a renowned anti-Semite, who hoped to turn the CSU in a Catholic-majority party, rather than the multi-confessional party others hoped it might be. In this particular case, General Dwight Eisenhower ultimately decided to intervene to relieve Schäffer of his post, once details of his anti-Semitic past came to light. Still, Schäffer was an example of the sort of figure OMGUS and the Catholic hierarchy typically came together to support, during their early years of working together in Germany.

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<sup>57</sup> “The Catholic Church in Bavaria.” For more evidence of the American occupation authorities privileging Catholic politicians, see for instance, report of Major Earl L. Crum, Chief of the Education and Religion Branch of G-F Division, USFET, to “Patrick,” 27 July 1945. *Ibid.*, Box 203, folder, “Religious Affairs – Misc.”; and “Report from Germany,” 20 June 1945, *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> The citations are drawn from a top Secret note from Anthony B. Kenkel to Brig. Gen. William J. Donovan, received 12 December 1944. NACP, RG 226, Box 328, Folder 13525. Also see undated handwritten note, attached to Top Secret note from Anthony B. Kenkel to Brig. Gen. William J. Donovan, received 12 December 1944. *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> “Party Leaders Not Optimistic Re: Elections,” Unidentified internal OMGUS publication, 28 June 1946. NACP, RG 260, Box 15, folder 23A, “Catholic Church.”

<sup>60</sup> Freedman, “The Catholic Church in Bavaria.”

To be sure, sometimes the Americans needed to be pressured to comply. Over the summer and fall of 1946, high-ranking German clergy supporting the CSU began lamenting that this party was not receiving enough support by the American Military Government to properly counter the influence of communist forces.<sup>61</sup> Well-positioned Catholics also issued veiled threats, suggesting that if the American Military Government backed away from supporting the CSU it would lose the Vatican's support and thus lose its legitimacy in Germany. As German bishops reminded their American protectors – in a successful bid to downsize de-Nazification programs -- communism had clearly become “much more dangerous now than Nazism.”<sup>62</sup> According to a pastoral issued by German bishops, the former allies of the United States, “the Russians, [were] murdering and enslaving those under their rule and suppressing the Roman Catholic Church.”<sup>63</sup> A “turn to the left,” Cardinal Faulhaber warned occupation authorities, would mean “the end of all of our work.”<sup>64</sup> In the United States, the National Catholic Welfare Conference organized a fund-raising operation to enable an anticommunist campaign in Germany.<sup>65</sup>

In more ways than one, OMGUS officials thus used their time in Germany to make the highly controversial decision to take no “steps to effect American-style or French-style

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> The words are the Bishop of Regensburg's. As cited in Freedman, “The Catholic Church in Bavaria.” Extensive archival evidence testifies to the Church's opposition to the United States' de-Nazification policies, which were deemed excessively harsh and dictated by incorrect theories of “collective guilt.” By 1948, the German Church had so successfully opposed de-Nazification that the United States was looking for a way to discontinue the program. Frankfurt to Foreign Ministry, 12 February 1948, Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (ASMAE), f.12, Santa Sede 5 – Germania (1949). As cited in Kent, op.cit., 147.

<sup>63</sup> Pastoral Letter, “A World of Love,” cited by the U.S. Civil Censorship Division report of 9 June 1947. NACP, RG 260, Box 15, folder 24 (equivalent of—folder is untitled).

<sup>64</sup> Cardinal Faulhaber is cited in Freedman, “The Catholic Church in Bavaria.”

<sup>65</sup> Foreign Ministry to Washington, 25 February 1947, ASMAE, folder 6, Santa Sede 12 – Germania; Cronin to Carroll, 6 November 1946, NCWC, box 8, Communism: General 1947-1949. As cited in Kent, 147.

separation of Church and State.”<sup>66</sup> To the contrary, they supported the Vatican-supported attempt to blur the line between Church and state in realms like education, economics and politics.<sup>67</sup> When called upon to explain these policies, they typically appealed to the trustworthiness of Catholic interlocutors and to their personal conviction that Christianity and "totalitarianism" (whether in its Nazi or communist form) were antithetical. General opinion surveys conducted in the American zone from as early as 1946 also suggested to OMGUS that their policies towards Christianity and the Catholic Churches enjoyed popular approval. The majority in fact agreed with a question asking whether religion was “basic to reconstruction,” and further whether “religion and belief in God organizes life into a meaningful pattern” and averts “chaos.” Further, when asked whether the American Military Government’s “support of the Church since the beginning of the occupation” was “sufficient and fitting,” the vast majority of Germans interviewed in the American zone said "yes," while a few outliers complained that they wished the Americans had done more.<sup>68</sup>

### **3. Buttressing Christian Democracy: Vatican-U.S. Collaboration in Italy**

As the previous chapter demonstrated, from c.1944 Pius XII had given his conditional support to Italy's newborn Christian Democratic party. Recognizing that the question of whether Italy should remain a monarchy or become a republic was highly contentious, he decided to feign neutrality during Italy's 2 June 1946 referendum and urged Christian Democrats to do the same. Once the results were released, Pius XII did privately agree with Myron Taylor that it would

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<sup>66</sup> The American choice to maintain this taxation system clashed starkly with the Soviet calls for abolishing it. NACP, Religious Affairs Section, “Statement of Principle Differences Encountered with Soviet Representatives on Official Matters.”

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Surveys Branch, ICD, OMGUS “Attitudes Toward Religion and the Church as Political Factors in German Life,” 7 June 1946 (interviews conducted in March 1946). NACP, RG 260, Box 15, folder 23, “Religion & Church (general).”

have been far preferable for Italy to remain a monarchy, but he also noted that what was done was done.<sup>69</sup> The Pope thus decided to do all that was in his power to ensure that the communists not win the upcoming administrative and general elections, and that the Christian Democrats protect the Vatican's interests.

First, the Pope and his advisors successfully pressured key members of the Christian Democratic party to uphold the concordat in Italian constitutional debates, through near-daily meetings and debriefings in which arguments and counter-arguments were suggested.<sup>70</sup> Then, the Pope began to pressure the United States to secretly re-arm Italy and Germany (in case of war with the Soviet Union), and to collaborate with the Vatican to mount an unprecedented electoral propaganda campaign in 1948. Truman, as it turned out, had plans of his own; while the Vatican sought to enmesh the United States even more deeply in European affairs, Truman was trying to forge a transnational religious bloc which -- he hoped -- would form a united front against the Soviet Union, and aid the United States in its battle against it. As things would turn out, Truman's failure would nonetheless pave the way for Pius XII's success.

Beginning in August of 1947, Truman informed Pius XII of his plan to create a union of religious leaders willing to speak out "in one voice" against the Soviet Union. Simultaneously showing his dependence on Catholic anticommunism and his will to turn it to his own ends, Truman (perhaps per Myron Taylor's suggestion) entrusted Pope Pius XII with the leadership of this campaign. Taylor justified the President's decision as follows: "In a definite sense no single voice has at so early a date and with such direct and forceful language and action fought

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<sup>69</sup> "Relationship between the Vatican and the DC," 13 February 1946. The note references the 8 January 1946 meeting between Pius XII and Attilio Piccioni, secretary of the DC. NACP, RG 226, s.108A, b.270, f.jzx-7000. As cited in Tranfaglia, *op.cit.*, 342.

<sup>70</sup> Giovanni Sale has recently delved into the extent of the pressure exercised by top-ranking Jesuits and members of the Vatican Secretariat of State through his analysis of the still-confidential papers of Father Martegani at the *Civiltà Cattolica* archive. The fascinating story of the Vatican contribution to the constitutional debates is outlined in Giovanni Sale, *De Gasperi, gli USA e il Vaticano all'inizio della guerra fredda* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2005), 134-141, and *passim*.



communism as a Godless anti-human freedom cult as has His Holiness the Pope."<sup>71</sup> Pius XII immediately agreed to Truman's request, and informed the American President that he would be happy to lend a hand to the battle for "the rights of the human person" and against totalitarian "states, [which] to the exclusion of God, make [themselves] the source of the rights of the human person."<sup>72</sup> The Pope also announced that he would "most warmly welcome collaboration with Protestants in the common fight of religious persons against the communist atheist."<sup>73</sup> In his letter of response, Truman thanked the Pope for his willingness to take part in the initiative, and reiterated his own "profound devotion to the welfare and rights of the individual because he is a child of God." "Every man, woman and child," he noted, "has rights upon which the state may not infringe."<sup>74</sup>

The Pope and Myron Taylor thus began working to build a union of religious leaders willing to publicly speak out in concert against the communist menace. Though the project was phrased in ecumenical terms, the leaders of Christian faiths were more aggressively targeted than those of other faiths -- after all, Taylor explained, "in the Atlantic area, Christianity is the decisive element."<sup>75</sup> And because Christian churches were more at risk, they were easier to mobilize. "Unfortunately in this critical passage of history," Taylor explained, "Christianity is under siege by Marxism." Accordingly, "the Christian Churches must establish a bond of union for the purpose of combatting the 'barbarian at our gates' and, it might be added, already well

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<sup>71</sup> Letter of Taylor to Truman, Paris, 15 July 1949. RMC, Myron Taylor papers, # 3308, Box 3, "Summary of Contacts by Mr. Myron C. Taylor with Leaders in Religion, 1940-1953."

<sup>72</sup> Letter of Pope Pius XII to Truman, Castel Gandolfo, 26 August 1947. RMC, Myron Taylor Papers (Collection N.3308), Box 1, Folder "Correspondence between President Harry S. Truman, His Holiness Pope Pius XII and Hon. Myron C. Taylor, 1945-1949."

<sup>73</sup> Taylor to Truman, 15 July 1949; Myron Taylor Papers 2; HST Papers. Letter contains excerpt of Pope's statement and Vatican official's commentary. As cited in William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy: The Soul of Containment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 143-4.

<sup>74</sup> Truman to Pius XII, Washington, 11 August 1948. RMC, Myron Taylor papers, # 3308, Box 3, "Summary of Contacts by Mr. Myron C. Taylor with Leaders in Religion, 1940-1953."

<sup>75</sup> "Statement of Purpose: Mission of the Honorable Myron C. Taylor," Rome, 13 April 1948. RMC, Myron Taylor Papers (Collection N.3308), Box 1, Folder "Memoranda Regarding Vatican Mission, 20 October 1949."

within our gates.”<sup>76</sup> In the end, however, the project was unsuccessful, largely because Protestant leaders were not comfortable with allying with the Pope, and strongly disagreed with his position (which was swiftly underwritten by American officials) that the Orthodox Church was an “arm of the Soviet government.”<sup>77</sup> By the late 1940s, Truman was forced to confront the failure of his grand initiative. Using the language of religious anti-totalitarianism, he bitterly concluded that it was “deplorable that all sorts and conditions of professing Christians,” had been unable to “unite in common cause against those twin blights -- atheism and communism.”<sup>78</sup>

Though Truman's project had failed, its pursuit gave the Pope further opportunity to lobby for some of his own demands. Starting from December of 1947, Pius XII and his advisors thus began to inform their American interlocutors that Italy and Germany should be immediately re-armed. Both countries, they argued, were aligned with the forces of “Christian civilization” and stood resolutely against “totalitarian and tyrannical countries.” Therefore, an unnamed Vatican official noted, “It would seem logical to consider rearming Italy now in spite of [the] peace Treaty rather than postponing her rearmament until after [the] outbreak of war” with the Soviet Union.<sup>79</sup> In the same vein, the Vatican backed the rearmament of Germany and suggested that sometimes when faced with the “virtual reign of terror” inaugurated by

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Taylor was gradually convinced by the Pope that the Orthodox Church should not be trusted, insofar as it is “little more than an arm of the Soviet government.” See Memorandum of a Luncheon Conference, Claridges Hotel, London, 30 April 1948. There were present his Grace the Most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; Mr. Clement Atlee, PM of the UK; the Ambassador of the US, Mr. Lewis Souglas; Ambassador Taylor, and Mr. Pell. RMC, Myron Taylor papers, # 3308, Box 3, “Summary of Contacts by Mr. Myron C. Taylor with Leaders in Religion, 1940-1953.” For more evidence of the same, see Letter of Truman to Taylor, Washington, 12 May 1948. Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Truman to Taylor, Washington, 19 May 1948. Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Cited in cable from J.G. Parsons to the Secretary of State, 19 December 1947, Cable # 4378. NACP, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, Entry 1071: Records of the Personal Representative of the President to Pope Pius XII, Box 30, Folder, “Airgrams (Outgoing) 1947.”

communism, “a show of force” was requisite.<sup>80</sup> While in public the Vatican called for peace, in private it was advocating quite the opposite.

In addition to pressuring the United States to re-arm Germany and Italy, Pius XII also asked Truman to collaborate with the Vatican to ensure that the Christian Democrats emerge victorious in their contest with the Communist Party in Italy's April 1948 elections. The U.S. government agreed to help, and in addition to considerable funds for electoral propaganda, it spearheaded novel tactics, such as letter-writing campaigns, wherein Italian-Americans begged their relatives in the home country to vote against atheism and for the Christian Democrats. The Vatican also became quite active.

In his typical centralizing spirit, Pius XII had passed his own reform of Catholic Action in his first year in power, which eliminated the Central Committee and concentrated responsibilities even more heavily in the hands of top-ranking clerics leading the organization.<sup>81</sup> This put him in the position to closely direct Catholic Action, and turn it into a veritable lobby for Christian Democracy. While priests preached from the pulpit how the faithful should vote in the elections, Catholic Action militants thus went door-to-door to convince friends and neighbors that true Catholics could never vote communist.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Pius XII's pressure for German rearmament has yet to be studied in any detail. Pius XII's words on Yugoslavia were referred to Harold Tittmann. Patterson to Tittmann, 12 October 1945, NACP, Taylor papers, box 36, Vatican Matters; Telegram from Tittmann, 28 March 1946, NACP, State Department, 866A.4611/3-2846. As reprinted in Kent, *The Lonely Cold War*, 161.

<sup>81</sup> See Luigi Paganelli, *I Cattolici e l'Azione Cattolica a Modena durante il fascismo, dal 1926 al 1945* (Modena: Mucchi e Sias Editori, 2005), 458ff.

<sup>82</sup> On the 1948 elections, the literature is vast. See, e.g., Robert Ventresca, "The Virgin and the Bear: Religion, Society and the Cold War in Italy," *Journal of Social History* 37, 2 (winter 2003): 439-56; C. Edda Marinez and Edward A. Suchman, "Letters from America and the 1948 Elections in Italy," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 14, 1 (spring, 1950): 111-125; and Mario Del Pero, "The United States and "Psychological Warfare" in Italy, 1948-1955," *The Journal of American History* 87, 4 (March, 2001): 1304-1334. For a discussion of the contribution of the Vatican and Catholic Action organizations, see Istituto di Studi e Ricerche Carlo Cattaneo, *L'organizzazione partitica del PCI e della DC* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1968), 493-548; Silvio Lanaro, *Storia dell'Italia Repubblicana: Dalla fine della guerra agli anni novanta* (Venice: Marsilia, 1992), 101-6; and Luigi Gedda, *18 aprile 1948: Memorie inedite dell'artefice della sconfitta del Fronte Popolare* (Milan: Mondadori, 1998).

Along with older media like magazines and radio, the 1948 campaign also relied on film, which was now produced and distributed by Vatican production agencies. In Italy, for instance, these films were brought to remote villages by mobile cinema trucks, known as "cinema carts" (*carri del cinema*) (Fig.1). Under the Pope's encouragement, Catholic Action also formed a special subdivision known as the "Civic Committees," led by Luigi Gedda, the leader of the youth male branch of the national organization. The Civic Committees drew from interwar Catholic anticommunism and modern-day advertising methods, developing playful and creative ways to drive home the message that communism was ruthless, Godless, and unfathomable (Figs. 2, 3 and 4). The Civic Committees would remain active after the elections as a lobby pushing the Christian Democratic party further to the right, towards the defense of clerical interests both in parliament and in international politics.

In the early months of 1948, Italy's Catholic Action ranks swelled, reaching well beyond three million as activists partook in a final effort to sway the populace to vote Christian Democratic.<sup>83</sup> The dramatic events of early 1948 helped seal the party's electoral victory on 18 April 1948, as the Christian Democrats won 48% of the vote, to the 31% gained by the left-wing Popular Democratic Front. Unsurprisingly, the party won most impressively in those regions of Italy where Catholic Action was strongest.<sup>84</sup>

#### **4. How the Vatican Came to Accept the Cold War "West" (1948-1949)**

For evident reasons, Pope Pius XII and most of his officials loudly protested against Stalin's seizure of many of the Vatican's concordat allies in East-Central Europe. However, over the course of 1947-8, the Pope came to accept the idea of a world divided into two blocs, which

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<sup>83</sup> Luigi Paganelli, *I Cattolici e l'Azione Cattolica a Modena durante il fascismo, dal 1926 al 1945* (Modena: Mucchi e Sias Editori, 2005), 458; Frank Coppa, "Pius XII and the Cold War," in *Religion and the Cold War*, ed. Dianne Kirby (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 59.

<sup>84</sup> Casella, op.cit.; Ernesto Preziosi, *Obbedienti in piedi: la vicenda dell'Azione Cattolica in Italia* (Turin: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1996).

corresponded to a new understanding of what was “East” and what was “West.” Unlike in the interwar years, when Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary had stood with the Vatican, now these territories formed part of the alien “East,” dominated by the Soviet Union. The conceptual map of the “West,” was also new, for in the interwar Vatican mindset, the “West” had included most of the European continent, with its western border delimited by Portugal and Ireland. Now, “the West” stretched to encompass North America and parts of Latin America, but its eastern border -- as Winston Churchill famously put it in March of 1946 -- was marked by “Stettin in the Baltic and Trieste in the Adriatic.” In sum, if the “West” had shifted considerably west, so too had the “East.”

Pope Pius XII began to signal his acceptance of a new definition of “the West” from March of 1948. In this month, the Pope began to throw his weight behind European integration projects. He gave his strong and open endorsement of the project of creating a European federation, hailing it as a Christian project necessary to counter the Soviet menace.<sup>85</sup> *Civiltà Cattolica* and the *Osservatore Romano* soon followed suit, as did Catholic Action groups across Europe, many of which inaugurated local “European integration” offices which sought to popularize the idea of integration as a Catholic idea and a global necessity.<sup>86</sup>

The Pope’s role in rhetorically justifying the emergence of the European Economic Community and in pressuring Truman to back the project deserves more study than scholars have devoted to it thus far.<sup>87</sup> In fact, Pius XII also pressured the United States to back European

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<sup>85</sup> Philippe Chenaux, “Der Vatikan und die Entstehung der Europäischen Gemeinschaft,” in *Die Christen und die Entstehung der Europäischen Gemeinschaft*, eds. Martin Greschat and Wilfred Loth (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1994), 97-124.

<sup>86</sup> See Ennio Di Nolfo, “La Civiltà cattolica e le scelte di fondo della politica estera italiana nel secondo dopoguerra,” *Storia e politica*, n.X (1971), 233-237. As cited in Daniela Preda, *Alcide De Gasperi: Federalista Europeo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2004), 386.

<sup>87</sup> To date, the most detailed study of the phenomenon has been made by Philippe Chenaux, *Une europe vaticane?: entre le plan Marshall et les Traités de Rome* (Bruxelles: Éditions Ciaco, 1990), and mention of the historiographical gap is made by Patch, “The Catholic Church, the Third Reich and the Cold War,” 427. Kaiser does not give the Pope more than a passing mention.

integration, using the new language of “East” versus “West.” The Pope argued that “if the United States would project its leadership increasingly into the organization of unity in the West,” this would provide “the best warranty of general security -- and peace.”<sup>88</sup> Ultimately, under pressure from various quarters, Truman accepted that European integration was a necessary and a natural correlate to the new containment strategy.<sup>89</sup>

Pius XII also stood forcefully behind the remilitarization of “the West” as a necessary response to the Soviet threat. He informed his American interlocutors that he was quite certain that a “war between the East and West blocs” was imminent. The Pope’s advisors specified that, “this subject [...] can never be discussed in writing being too secret and too delicate.”<sup>90</sup> Having sworn his American interlocutors to absolute secrecy, the Pope’s closest advisor asserted through confidential conversations and telegrams that reliable sources had informed him that the Russians were planning to “invade Italy and surround Vatican State,” only to then “remove [the] Pope to Russia and hold him as a hostage.” Pius XII had emphasized that “he would not (repeat not) abandon Rome” when the Russians invaded, suggesting that only an intervention from the United States could save the Vicar of Christ on earth. Furthermore, the “mere premature suggestion [the] Pope might leave Italy would have tremendously serious

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<sup>88</sup> Memorandum of Conversation with the Papal Nuncio, Lisbon, 30 March 1948. RMC, Myron Taylor papers, # 3308, Box 3, "Summary of Contacts by Mr. Myron C. Taylor with Leaders in Religion, 1940-1953."

<sup>89</sup> It was a matter of months before Congress approved with a large majority the creation of a “United States of Europe,” characterized by “political unification” and “economic integration.” Soon, American diplomats charged with translating the Marshall Plan into a reality would also become leading advocates of European integration. The resolution was introduced to Congress within two weeks of the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, and was widely publicized in the American press. On the role played by the United States in European integration projects, see Ludger Kühnhardt, *Crises in European Integration: Challenges and Responses, 1945-2005* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 36-8. Also see Pascaline Winand, *Eisenhower, Kennedy and the United States of Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); and Charles Maier, “Alliance and Autonomy: European Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy Objectives in the Truman Years,” *The Truman Presidency*, ed. Michael James Lacey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 273-299.

<sup>90</sup> Cable from Gowen to the Secretary of State, 19 November 1948, Cable # 4379. NACP, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, Entry 1071: Records of the Personal Representative of the President to Pope Pius XII, Box 30, Folder, “Airgrams (Outgoing) 1946.”

repercussions and vastly encourage Communists who would promptly [the] exploit news, making vast segments [of] ignorant Italian people conclude [that the] Pope had abandoned them.”<sup>91</sup> Given the Vatican's fears of a Soviet invasion, it came as no surprise to insiders when the Pope immediately gave his support to the newborn Western military alliance, following the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949.

From late 1948/early 1949, Pope Pius XII also showed his support for the new geopolitical and conceptual map of the West through his theological defense of the Western bloc at the United Nations. Pointing his finger directly at the Soviet Union, the Pope noted that, “the Church has rejected the erroneous idea of a sovereignty which is absolutely autonomous and without social obligations.” He thus added that he backed the Western bloc at the United Nations because,

The Catholic cooperates wholeheartedly in those generous efforts, which initially may have only modest results and encounter fierce opposition, which, however, are designed to draw individual states out of their narrow-minded and egocentric mentality.<sup>92</sup>

In precisely the same months – on the heels of the imprisonment of the Hungarian Cardinal Józef Mindszenty – Pius XII successfully pressured the United Nations to address the “religious rights violations” ongoing in East-Central Europe.

Finally, in July of 1949, Pope Pius XII showed in a definitive way that he stood with the new West -- and was willing to sacrifice the old West in the process. In this month, the Holy Office issued a decree excommunicating all Catholics who dared “enlist in or show favor to the Communist Party.” Even reading communist newspapers was considered sinful, because the

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> AAS 41 (1949): 10. Pius XII spoke of the theological grounds for the UN again in his Christmas address of 1951. He affirmed that the family, the state and the international society of states were all necessary to attain the common good. Thus, the union of states was something “natural”; and this union of states should express itself as a stable, external, organization – one that by definition responded to the voice of nature. AAS 41 (1952): 10. Pius XII also welcomed the World Health Assembly, the governing body of the World Health Organization, at the Vatican in 1949. Pope Pius XII also received the representatives of the FAO on at least five different occasions – in 1948, 1951, 1953, 1955 and 1957.

ideology was “materialistic and anti-Christian.”<sup>93</sup> The Holy Office decree thus took a self-defensive containment strategy to an extreme. In what was widely presented as an effort to wean Western Catholics away from communist parties and thus weaken the pull of communist parties in democratic regimes, the Vatican had chosen to effectively sacrifice the East. Here, many of the over fifty million Catholics living in communist-ruled countries, were being daily forced to read Communist newspapers and become members of the Communist party to maintain their livelihoods.<sup>94</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the Holy Office decree polarized the Catholic and non-Catholic world. Some sympathizers with the anticommunist struggle worried that the too-harsh phrasing of the document would effectively preclude any possibility of dialogue across the Iron Curtain. Others noted that the decree “would have no widespread effect as very few Communist party members were Catholic.”<sup>95</sup> If communist leaders in Western countries derided the decree, stating that the Vatican had more to lose than to gain from the announcement, communist leaders in the East did not give the document so much as a passing reference, though they did begin to refer to Pius XII as the “Coca-Cola Pope,” to indicate his support for the United States and jeer at his supposed embrace of consumer culture and capitalism.<sup>96</sup>

Members of the U.S. government, on the other hand, articulated a clear defense of the decree. Deploying the keywords of “East” and “West,” CIA officials for instance celebrated the

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<sup>93</sup> Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office: Decree, 1 July 1949. As translated and reprinted in RMC, Myron Taylor papers, # 3308, Box 3, “Summary of Contacts by Mr. Myron C. Taylor with Leaders in Religion, 1940-1953.”

<sup>94</sup> In a private conversation with Roncalli, Taylor learned that the decree had been considered by the Vatican “absolutely necessary in view of the necessity to open the eyes of the progressive Christian groups which have been collaborating with the Communists.” “Secret Memorandum” on the conversation between Taylor and Roncalli, Paris, 19 July 1949. Ibid. The 1949 decree helped prepare the ground for the 1950 Holy Year, whose aim was to “convert” the misled back to the “true faith.” Riccardi, “Governo e ‘profezia’ nel pontificato di Pio XII,” 71. For contemporary reactions to the decree, see “Pius XII, 1876-1958,” *Time Magazine* (20 October 1958).

<sup>95</sup> Camille Cianfarra, “Church Sets Drive on Reds of Italy,” *The New York Times* (July 15, 1949), 1.

<sup>96</sup> Arnaldo Cortesi, “Pope Hints Belief Ban is Effective,” *The New York Times* (18 August 1949):15. John M. Kramer, “The Vatican's 'Ostpolitik',” *The Review of Politics* 42.3 (July 1980): 283-308, here, 285.



decree as a "very powerful factor in the East-West struggle." They also unwittingly repeated the treasured juxtaposition proposed by Ledóchowski and *Lettres de Rome* in the interwar years pitting the communist against the Catholic international. CIA agents commented that the 1949 decree excommunicating communists was to be applauded because it "brought into open and basic conflict [...] the two most powerful organizations for moving men to act on behalf of doctrine": the Cominform and the Holy See.<sup>97</sup>

## Conclusion

By 1949, the United States government and the Vatican were still mutually dependent, but their relationship had changed in important ways. In the war and early postwar years, the U.S. had depended on the Vatican as a source of intelligence and help in Europe's moral, material and political reconstruction. But in the late 1940s, the two powers switched roles, as the U.S. had acquired greater relative importance in European affairs than the Vatican. The rise of the Cold War – both as a practical conflict and as a set of geopolitical metaphors and concepts – increasingly depended on the exponential growth of "hot war" capacities and on a permanent propaganda campaign waged by the United States. And though the Pope could contribute to the battle of ideas, he had "no battalions," as Stalin had famously noted with derision. Furthermore, in his will to align himself with the U.S. government, while simultaneously maintain active control of Christian Democracy (particularly on Italian soil), Pope Pius XII ended up losing many of his supporters. The distinctive "third way" solution of *Quadragesimo Anno* – which took a strong stance against capitalism – seemed no longer tenable in the new climate of concord between the Vatican and the United States. At the same time, Pius XII's overtures to "democracy" and "rights" clashed starkly with his will to closely censure sites of theological and

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<sup>97</sup> As cited in John Cooney, *The American Pope: The Life and Times of Francis Cardinal Spellman* (New York: Times Books, 1984), 157-168.

political innovation that arose in the Catholic world. In this sense, the anticommunist campaign and the internal inconsistencies represented by Pius XII's accommodation to "Americanism," including his rights and democracy-talk, paved the way for the reinvention of the Vatican once again -- this time, as an institution less concerned with matters of diplomacy and geopolitical control.



**Fig.1:** A *carro del cinema* is depicted here in a photograph from a 1948 Catholic Action journal. The caption explains that these "photo-cinematographic carriages" are able to "bring the live word of Christ and the person of the Pope to [Italy's] poorest and most isolated populations."

Source: *Iniziativa*, 4 (March, 1948): 2.



**Fig. 2:** A Comitato Civici poster from the 1948 elections. The caption reads, “...And if mommy and daddy don’t go vote, we will pee in our beds!”

*Source:* Istituto Paolo Sturzo, Manifesti Comitato Civici.



**Figs. 3 and 4:** The caption for the 1948 Civic Committee poster on the left reads, “Listen to the voice of your conscience: In the secluded voting booth, God sees you, Stalin DOESN’T!” The poster on the right announces, “If you don’t vote, the big-moustached cat [Stalin] will gobble up your municipality.”

*Source:* Ibid.

## Conclusion

### *When the Battle's Lost, and Won*

*It won't take long for the truth of the twentieth century to reveal itself, as the great masses reappear from behind the curtain. Let's hope our Church leaders never lose sight of them, for they are the reality of today and tomorrow.*  
-- Alcide De Gasperi, 1929<sup>1</sup>

*The masses [are] an easy plaything in the hands of anyone who exploits their instincts and impressions; ready to follow, in turn, today this flag, tomorrow another [...] The masses are the capital enemy of a true democracy and of its ideals.*  
-- Pope Pius XII, 1944<sup>2</sup>

In this dissertation, I have argued that the Vatican emerged as a leading player in European affairs in the middle part of the twentieth century through its concordat diplomacy, its integration of civil society, and its declaration of war against the Soviet Union. Through concordats, the Vatican carved out a legally protected space for itself in European social and political affairs; through its activism in civil society, it grew a loyal and mobilized base; and through its anticommunist campaign, it promoted a theocentric political ideology and became an indispensable ally to partner states, particularly in the context of war against left-wing forces. During and after World War II, the Vatican sought to keep its core interwar diplomatic aims intact by establishing partnerships with the United States and resurgent Christian Democratic parties. The new alliances rested on informal power-sharing agreements, mediated by a pidgin language composed of terms like "rights" and "democracy," which the Vatican redefined in the attempt to turn its interwar gains into postwar realities. Initially, it seemed as though the

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<sup>1</sup> "Ma la realtà del sec. XX non tarderà a farsi sentire, le grandi masse ricompariranno dietro allo scenario. Auguriamoci che gli uomini della Chiesa non le perdano mai di vista, perché esse sono la realtà di oggi e di domani." Alcide De Gasperi to S. Weber, Rome, 12 February 1929. The letter is reprinted in Alcide De Gasperi, *Lettere sul Concordato* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1970), 65-6.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Pius XII, "Democracy and a Lasting Peace" (24 December 1944), §24-7.

Vatican had won its battle, as American and Christian Democratic groups agreed to help re-enshrine concordats, protect the Vatican's hallowed place in associational life, and heed the Pope's dire warnings regarding the rise of communist parties and Soviet influence. However, from c.1949, the Vatican began to encounter considerable difficulties with both the United States and its Christian Democratic partners.

Troubles with the United States began with a wave of protests against the re-sacralization of American politics and the visible increase of Catholic influence in national affairs,<sup>3</sup> and continued as the Vatican reacted with shock when the United States failed to respond to its demands in the foreign policy arena, particularly with respect to the founding of the state of Israel and the U.S. *rapprochement* with Yugoslavia.<sup>4</sup> Tensions increased as Myron Taylor resigned from his post and the Pope condemned the Geneva Accords partitioning Vietnam and the U.S. failure to intervene in the 1956 Hungarian uprising, insinuating that the United States was more interested in *realpolitik* and the profit motive than in upholding the principles of Christian morality.<sup>5</sup> Though the American President Dwight Eisenhower (in power since 1953) bowed to Catholic lobbies and sent a personal representative back to Vatican City, supported the appointment of a Catholic Prime Minister in South Vietnam (in a country that

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<sup>3</sup> In U.S. domestic politics, three events brought Vatican-U.S. relations into the spotlight: the February 1947 Supreme Court ruling *Everson v. Board of Education of Ewing TP*, which upheld the decision to use public funds for the transportation of children attending parochial schools, the July 1948 vote of the New York Board of Superintendents to ban *The Nation* from public school libraries, due to its publication of "anti-Catholic" articles by Paul Blanshard, and the July 1949 conflict regarding the right of private and parochial schools to demand federal aid. Though the Catholic position prevailed in these conflicts, they became vicious public controversies, which mobilized prominent figures like Eleanor Roosevelt and Archibald MacLeish against the Vatican.

<sup>4</sup> See Silvio Ferrari, "The Vatican, Israel and the Jerusalem Question, 1943-1984," *Middle East Journal* 39, 2 (Spring, 1985): 316-331; and Richard P. Stevens, "The Vatican, the Catholic Church and Jerusalem," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 10, 3 (Spring 1981): 100-110.

<sup>5</sup> In his 1956 Christmas radio message, Pius XII condemned the "false realism" of the Western bloc's policy toward Hungary. See *Discorsi e radiomessaggi* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1941-60), vol.XVIII: 740. For a similar sentiment, see 24 December 1954 message. *Ibid.*, vol.XVI, p.342.

was 90% Buddhist), and signed a bill to add “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance, great apprehensions remained.<sup>6</sup>

The Pope’s relationship with European Christian Democratic parties also faced new difficulties as the Cold War set in. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the left-wing of the Christian Democratic movement was progressively alienated from the Vatican by Pius XII’s ban on everything from “Catholic Communist” parties to the worker-priest movement and innovative theological movements.<sup>7</sup> By way of response to his critics, Pius XII suggested that too many had strayed from the definition of “democracy” laid out in 1944, in that, “genuine democracy can only live and prosper in an atmosphere of respect for God and his commandments.”<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, however, the Pope’s credibility as a voice of genuine democracy was badly undermined as a result of the so-called Sturzo Operation, a Vatican-Catholic Action plot to insert neo-Fascists on the ballot in municipal elections in Rome.<sup>9</sup> Further, the Pope’s failure to strongly back the left-of-center French Christian Democratic party in the 1951 elections, and his equivocal reaction following Konrad Adenauer’s trip to Moscow in

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<sup>6</sup> See Thomas J. Carty, “White House Outreach to Catholics,” *Catholics and Politics: The Dynamic Tension between Faith and Power*, eds. Kristin E. Heyer, Mark J. Rozell and Michael A. Genovese (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 175-201, here, 179; Seth Jacobs, *Cold War Mandarin: Ngo Dinh Diem and the Origins of America’s War in Vietnam, 1950-1963* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); and id., *America’s Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950-1957* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Henri Du Lubac and the “nouvelle théologie” were implicitly condemned in Pius XII’s 1950 Encyclical, *Humani generis*. See Emmanuel Gerard and Gerd-Rainer Horn, eds., *Left Catholicism, 1943-1955: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001); and Sarah Shortall, “Catholic Ecclesiology and the Problem of Democracy” (unpublished paper, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Pius XII, “Radiomessaggio natalizio ai popoli di tutto il mondo” (24 December 1953).

<sup>9</sup> See Andrea Riccardi, *Roma ‘città sacra’? Dalla Conciliazione all’operazione Sturzo* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1979), 263-390.

1955, projected an image of an institution struggling to define its identity and maintain its power and independence in the face of changing circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

The troubles were not only due to the Vatican's clumsy attempts to manipulate political affairs; they were also connected to a profound anthropological transformation underway. Starting from the 1950s, the role of Catholicism in the daily lives of many European citizens was unmistakably on the decline. Not only was church attendance falling off; so too, decreasing numbers of European men and women were choosing what had once been a highly prestigious option: the priesthood or the monastery.<sup>11</sup> As new forms of association and pluralistic epistemologies proliferated, it became harder for Catholic Action and the Vatican to remain privileged sites for identity-formation and truth-making. Scholars have suggested that the more consumer culture, Hollywood, and new life forms became available, the less Western Europeans felt the need or desire to align themselves with the institutional Catholicism.<sup>12</sup>

In response to this state of affairs, the Vatican pursued two contradictory strategies. On the one hand, Vatican officials edged closer to Spain and Portugal, professing their loyalty to these governments and celebrating their identity as “Catholic states,” despite their quite anti-democratic character.<sup>13</sup> From the 1950s, Pope Pius XII redeployed his predecessor’s politically

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<sup>10</sup> See J.-M. Mayeur, “Pie et l’Europe,” *Relations internationales* (1981): 413-25, and, more generally, Philippe Chenaux, *Une Europe vaticane? Entre le plan Marshall et les Traités de Rome* (Bruxelles: Editions Ciaco, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> For extensive summary and reprinting of these statistics, see, e.g., Eli Berman, Laurence R. Iannaccone and Giuseppe Raguna, “From Empty Pews to Empty Cradles: Fertility Decline Among European Catholics,” *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper* (2012): 1-30.

<sup>12</sup> See Patrick Pasture, Hugh McLeod, Pasture, Horn, Winkeler and Butler entries in *The Transformation of the Christian Churches in Western Europe: 1945-2000* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010); William H. Swatos and Kevin J. Christiano, “Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept,” *Sociology of Religion* 60, 3 (1999): 209-228, here 221; Mark Ruff, *Wayward Flock: Catholic Youth in Postwar West Germany, 1945-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); and Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (University of California Press, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> Pius XII for instance celebrated the fact that Portugal had come into its own as a proud “Catholic country” (*Portugal já não é visto como o país mártir, mas é julgado nação católica*). Pius XII, “Radiomensagem Do Papa Pio XII Ao III Congresso Do Apostolado da Oração em Portugal,” 19 May 1957. For more on the Vatican's celebration of the Spanish model, see Andrea Riccardi, “Chiese di Pio XII o

ambiguous Kingdom-of-Christ rhetoric, noting that it was more important for states to commit deeply to the Catholic Church than for them to choose democratic forms of rule.<sup>14</sup> He also suggested that democratic systems were unreliable and dangerously prone to “protecting the sum of individual interests rather than promoting the good of the whole.” Soon, a series of Vatican officials began to proclaim in even starker terms that confessional, authoritarian states could protect Catholic interests more successfully than democracies.<sup>15</sup>

Alongside the search for new/old models more compatible with Vatican diplomatic priorities, the Pope also reacted to his declining influence in Western Europe with despairing gestures. According to the old Risorgimento logic of "O Roma, o morte!" (*Rome, or death*), the Pope fought to reclaim Western Europe and the Italian heartland. At times, he did so by adopting a hardline approach, for instance by canonizing participants in Pius X's anti-modernist crusade as saints. On other occasions, he advertised himself as a moderate by asking the Holy Office to issue a decree which under certain conditions permitted Catholic priests to celebrate marriages of communists and communist supporters.<sup>16</sup> Unwilling to decide whether conciliation or confrontation was best, Pius XII stalled whenever it was time to make a new appointment within the Vatican, often preferring to leave posts vacant indefinitely.<sup>17</sup> Significantly, on the eve

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chiese italiane?" in *Le Chiese di Pio XII* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1986), 40-50, and Guido Verucci, *La Chiesa nella società contemporanea: dal primo dopoguerra al Concilio Vaticano II* (Rome: Editori Laterza, 1988), 189ff.

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., “Radiomessaggio di Sua Santità Pio XII al Mondo Intero in Occasione del Natale,” 24 December 1948; and “Radiomessaggio di Sua Santità Pio XII a Tutto il Mondo in Occasione del Natale,” 24 December 1955. In *Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII*, vol. XVII, 433-449.

<sup>15</sup> “Nei sistemi democratici si può facilmente cadere in tale errore, quando l’interesse individuale è posto sotto la protezione di quelle organizzazioni collettive o di partito, alle quali si chiede di proteggere la somma degli interessi individuali, anziché di promuovere il bene di tutti: in tal guisa l’economia cade facilmente in balia di forze anonime, che la dominano politicamente.” Pius XII, “Radiomessaggio di Sua Santità Pio XII a Tutto il Mondo in Occasione del Natale,” 24 December 1954. *Ibid.*, vol. XVI, 329-345. The hardline position in favor of authoritarianism was forcefully articulated by Cardinal Ottaviani of the Holy Office.

<sup>16</sup> Arnaldo Cortesi, “Pope Hints Belief Ban is Effective,” *The New York Times* (18 August 1949), p.15.

<sup>17</sup> See Andrea Riccardi, “Governo e ‘profezia’ nel pontificato di Pio XII,” in *Pio XII*, ed. Andrea Riccardi (Bari: Laterza, 1985), 31-92, here 61, 75.



of the Pope's death in 1958, there were no fewer than fifteen vacancies in the College of Cardinals, in addition to no Secretary of State, no governor for Vatican City, and no Camerlengo.<sup>18</sup>

Above all, however, Pius XII stubbornly clung to his joint commitment to concordats and anticommunism, and retreated into an apocalyptic worldview. He prophesized an imminent clash between Catholicism and communism, which -- he noted -- would likely destroy the world.

<sup>19</sup> The view led him to systematically misread the challenges posed to Catholicism in the 1950s and pin nearly all that was wrong on the Soviet Union and its anti-Christian teachings. By the end of his life, Pope Pius XII had reached the tragic conclusion that the Vatican was bound to inevitably decline in power and perhaps even gradually disappear in the not-too-distant future. As he lamented in Easter of 1957, in his last year of life, the Church was like a “lost wayfarer,” making its way “through the darkness, a darkness almost of death.” Having reflected on whether this lost wayfarer could be brought back to the correct path, the Pope bitterly concluded: “It seems that every effort is useless [...] it’s not possible to find the way, and words get lost as the tempest rages.”<sup>20</sup>

It was left to Cardinal Pacelli's successors to carry out a change of course, which they tellingly did by trying to transform the hallmarks of the Vatican's interwar diplomacy. Pius XII's successor, Pope John XXIII, began by changing the Vatican's attitude toward the Soviet Union from “anathema to dialogue,” effectively bringing the anticommunist campaign to a halt.<sup>21</sup> He

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<sup>18</sup> “Pius XII, 1876-1958,” *Time Magazine* (20 October 1958).

<sup>19</sup> Riccardi, “Governo e 'profezia'.”

<sup>20</sup> “[Il] viandante smarrito...sommerso nell’ombra, ombra quasi di morte...Pare che ogni sforzo sia inutile...la via non si ritrova, le parole si perdono nell’infuriare della procella.” The Pope’s Easter message of 1957 is reprinted in *Discorsi*, volume XIX, 91-96.

<sup>21</sup> The phrase is Philippe Chenaux’s. See *L’Église catholique et le communisme en Europe, 1917-1989: de Lénine à Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 240; and John M. Kramer, “The Vatican's 'Ostpolitik,’” *The Review of Politics* 42, 3 (July 1980): 283-308. Despite its move towards dialogue, the Vatican notably never rescinded its 1949 excommunication decree.

also called the Second Vatican Council, in the first attempt to reform the Vatican internally since 1870-1. Under his impetus and that of his successor, Paul VI, the Vatican's embarrassing record during the Second World War was publicly discussed for the first time, as was the notion that the Church should perhaps privilege "spiritual ministry" over involvement in political affairs.

At the same time, Vatican II did not seek to reverse other aspects of the Vatican's interwar diplomacy, which still survive to this day. Partly as a legacy of its interwar enterprise, the Vatican for instance continues to enjoy diplomatic relations with a large number of states around the world. In Europe, the Vatican maintains active diplomatic relations with Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. The Vatican also exchanges ambassadors with twelve states in Central and East Asia, including India and China, and has formal diplomatic relations with eight countries in the Middle East, including Iran and Israel. Relations are also still active with the United States and Canada, as well as with Argentina, Mexico and Venezuela. Though considerably tarnished by its association with European colonial powers throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, the Vatican also maintains relations with four African states, including Rwanda and Sudan.

Since 1964, the Vatican has also enjoyed Non-Member State Permanent Observer Status at the United Nations. Undeterred by resurgent controversies -- including a recent petition that claimed it was unfair to "allow the Holy See, a religious entity, to act on par with states"<sup>22</sup> --- Vatican officials play an active role in U.N. bodies, and Popes have on multiple occasions addressed the General Assembly.<sup>23</sup> Some prominent Catholics have in fact argued that the Pope

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<sup>22</sup> Catholics for a Free Choice and the Center for Reproductive Law & Law, "A Call to the United Nations to Consider the UN Status of the Holy See," 1995. As cited in Yasmin Abdullah, "The Holy See at United Nations Conferences: State or Church?" *Columbia Law Review* 96, 7 (November 1996), 1835-1875, here, 1835.

<sup>23</sup> See Edward J. Gratsch, *The Holy See and the United Nations, 1945-1995* (New York: Vintage Press, 1997), x. Pope Paul VI (1963-1978) received an official visit from U Thant, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, only two weeks after his election, and informed Thant that, "The Holy See holds a very

would do well to transfer his official residence from Rome to New York, thus transforming the Bishop of New York -- rather than the Bishop of Rome -- into the visible head of the Catholic Church.<sup>24</sup>

Arguably, the legacy of the twentieth-century "Vatican moment" continues to be felt in other ways as well. In Europe, the provisions of concordats remained on the books for decades, and the institutional superimposition of Church and state in domains like education and healthcare is still a present-day reality.<sup>25</sup> As I hope future historians will investigate in greater detail, the particular form of democracy that took shape in many Western European countries after 1945 also bore striking similarities to the Vatican ideal outlined from the interwar years, in that it was characterized by a distrust of both popular and parliamentary sovereignty and by neo-corporatist government processes.<sup>26</sup> In Vatican spirit, Western Europe's constrained postwar democracies also defended a variety of new localisms, which placed great importance on the preservation of traditional Catholic family norms and values as a means of controlling the

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high conception of that international organism; it considers it to be the fruit of a civilization to which the Catholic religion, with its driving center in the Holy See, gave the vital principles." AAS 55 (1963): 653.

<sup>24</sup> Gratsch, 9.

<sup>25</sup> See Olivier Tschannen, "The Secularization Paradigm: A Systematization," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30 (1991): 395-415, Swatos and Christiano, op.cit., 213; Jeffrey Cox, "Master Narratives of Long-Term Religious Change," in *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750-2000*, eds. Hugh McLeod and Werner Ustorf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 201-217; Jeffrey Cox, "Secularization and Other Master Narratives of Religion in Modern Europe," in *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*, 14 (No. 1, 2001): 24-35; and David Nash, "Reconnecting Religion with Social and Cultural History: Secularization's Failure as a Master Narrative," *Cultural and Social History*, 1 (2004): 302-325.

<sup>26</sup> See Jan-Werner Müller, *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 128-9; Martin Shapiro, "'Deliberative,' 'Independent' Technocracy vs. Democratic Politics: Will the Globe Echo the EU?" *Law and Contemporary Problems* 68, 3-4 (Summer-Autumn 2005): 341-56; H.L. Wilensky, "Leftism, Catholicism and Democratic Corporatism: The Role of Political Parties in Recent Welfare State Development," in *The Development of Welfare States in Europe and American*, eds. P. Flora and A.J. Heidenheimer (New Brunswick, NJ: Praeger, 1981), 345-82; Martin Conway, "Democracy in Postwar Western Europe: The Triumph of a Political Model," *European History Quarterly* 32, 1 (2002): 59-84; John T.S. Keeler, "The Corporatist Dynamic of Agricultural Modernization in the Fifth Republic," in *The Impact of the Fifth Republic on France*, eds. William G. Andrews and Stanley Hoffman (Albany: SUNY University Press, 1981), 139-160.

potentially "totalitarian" tendencies of the modern state.<sup>27</sup> Even the project of a federalist European Union was initially grounded in a religious language which strongly echoed that employed by the Vatican, and early 1950s debates around the European Convention on Human Rights were dominated by religious actors who used human rights claims to uphold old Vatican hobby horses, like the right of Catholic schools to receive state funding.<sup>28</sup> Finally, the evidence suggests that Vatican officials and Catholic intellectuals contributed in important ways to the postwar revival of just war theory, the rehabilitation of natural law, and the rise of the academic discipline of international relations -- though the history of how they did so still remains, by and large, to be written.<sup>29</sup>

In the midst of calls to enshrine Europe's "Christian roots" within foundational texts and the recent troubling rulings of the European Court of Human Rights on questions of religious freedom, it seems all the more pressing to shed light on the Vatican's role in postwar European politics and society. Indeed, for better or worse, the specter of "Christian Europe" -- to which the Vatican sought to give flesh and substance between 1917 and 1958 -- still haunts us today.

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<sup>27</sup> See, e.g., Conway, *op.cit.*, 62; Roy Domenico, "Gedda e il mondo cattolica nell'Italia degli anni cinquanta," *Città e società* (forthcoming).

<sup>28</sup> Marco Duranti, "Globalizing *la Guerre Scolaire*: Christian Democracy, the Church Schools Controversy in France and the Construction of European Human Rights Law," *Human Rights in Perspective*, Boston College, 9 April 2011; Id., *Human Rights and Conservative Politics in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

<sup>29</sup> On the Catholic role in the revival of natural law, see Müller, *op.cit.*, 128-9; Francesco Olgiati, *Il concetto di giuridicità nella scienza moderna del diritto* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1950), 363-409; and Guido Fassò, *Storia della filosofia del diritto*, vol.III (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1972), 396-407. The influence of important figures in the history of IR, like Father Morlion, the founder of the Pro Deo University in Rome, or Father Edmund Walsh, S.J., the founder of Georgetown University in Washington, DC, still remains to be examined. Though Catholicism does not itself play an important role in Nicolas Guilhot's probing analyses of the birth of IR theory, Catholic thinkers do. See for instance Guilhot's discussion of Waldemar Gurian (one of the earliest defenders of IR as a distinct field of study), in "The Realist Gambit: Postwar American Political Science and the Birth of IR Theory," in *The Invention of International Relations Theory: Realism, The Rockefeller Foundation and the 1954 Conference on Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 128-162.

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- ACDF Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede, Vatican City
- ACS Archivio Central di Stato, Rome
- ACUA Archives of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.
- AGOP Archivio Generale dell'Ordine dei Predicatori, Rome
- AJC Archives des Jésuites au Canada, Montréal
- APFCJ Archives de la Province de France de la Compagnie de Jesuites à Vanves, Paris
- ARMS Archives and Records Management Section, United Nations Archive, New York
- ARSI Archivium Romanum Societatis Iesu, Vatican City
- ASMAE Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome
- ASV Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City
- CA Istituto "Paolo VI" per la storia dell'Azione Cattolica e del Movimento Cattolico  
in Italia, Rome
- FDRL Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York
- ICP Institut catholique de Paris, Paris
- ILS Istituto Luigi Sturzo, Rome
- MAE Ministère des affaires étrangères, La Corneuve, Paris
- NACP National Archives in College Park, Maryland
- NCWC National Catholic Welfare Conference Archives, ACUA, Washington D.C.
- PRO Public Record Office, National Archives, Kew
- RMC Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University

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