

Review Paper

UDC: 272/273:(100)"1914/1918"

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7442906>

Received: 17 January 2022

Accepted: 11 March 2022

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THE PAPACY AND THE GENESIS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR Chart of a Little-Known Territory

Abstract

The Catholic church in the nineteenth century was still a formidable power in the European world, with a large and devout following of believers. But it was deeply connected with the ancient feudal world, the influence of which was gradually waning in Europe between 1789 and 1918, and so in that time, the church found itself in a cultural and political territory which was difficult to manoeuvre and which threatened it with a loss of relevance. It's contradiction with the age came to a peak in the 1st Vatican Council 1869/70, which, in a situation where fewer and fewer people listened to the pope, nevertheless megalomaniacally declared the pope infallible. To afterwards move out of this impasse, the church undertook various political initiatives with which it played an important, if not well-known, role in European diplomacy leading up to the Great War of 1914. The most important of these was probably it's role as the midwife in the French-Russian alliance, which formed in the early 1890s. The essay will trace the role and the initiatives of the church in the developments which led towards the World War of 1914.

Keywords: Catholic church, the Pope, Vatican Council, diplomacy

THE CHURCH IN THE YEARS AROUND 1870

The years 1870 to 1871, the years of the Franco-German war, marked a turning point in European affairs altogether. In a speech in the House of Commons, Benjamin Disraeli, the British Prime minister of the time, called the war „No common war. (...) The war represents the German revolution, a greater political event than the French Revolution of the last century. (...) The balance of power has been entirely destroyed“ (Clark, 2013, p. 136). The war and these years were also an important turning point in the history of the Catholic Church (see Rhodes, 1983; Deschner, 1991; Chadwick, 1998; Coppa, 1998).

The situation of the Catholic church around and after these years could be described in four aspects, which allude to (1) the doctrinal development of the church and its implications, (2) the loss of its own state territory and the conflict with Italy, (3) its position among the great powers of Europe, and (4) longing for war as a consequence of the wish to break out from its locked-in situation.

How It's Started

The 19th century in Europe in general was a century where the public believed in ideas like progress, science and liberty, in the infinite betterment of the material, earthly life. From the side of these ideas the church on the one hand looked like an enemy, the European hotbed of everything reactionary, and also like a fossil, something outlived, an institution from the past. The church itself took up a furious fight with this *Zeitgeist*, not being willing to make any compromise. It denounced the modern world with a phantastic ferocity, it especially denounced the idea of freedom and its core, freedom of thought and of opinion. Pope Gregory XVI (1832) for example wrote in one of his doctrinal letters:

This shameful font of indifferentism gives rise to that absurd and erroneous proposition which claims that liberty of conscience must be maintained for everyone. It spreads ruin in sacred and civil affairs, though some repeat

over and over again with the greatest impudence that some advantage accrues to religion from it. "But the death of the soul is worse than freedom of error," as Augustine was wont to say. When all restraints are removed by which men are kept on the narrow path of truth, their nature, which is already inclined to evil, propels them to ruin. Then truly "the bottomless pit" is open from which John saw smoke ascending which obscured the sun, and out of which locusts flew forth to devastate the earth. Thence comes transformation of minds, corruption of youths, contempt of sacred things and holy laws – in other words, a pestilence more deadly to the state than any other. Experience shows, even from earliest times, that cities renowned for wealth, dominion, and glory perished as a result of this single evil, namely immoderate freedom of opinion, license of free speech, and desire for novelty. Here We must include that harmful and never sufficiently denounced freedom to publish any writings whatever and disseminate them to the people, which some dare to demand and promote with so great a clamour. (...)

The peak of this contradiction against the modern world came with the Vatican Council of 1869/70, when the infallibility of the popes (in their doctrinal pronouncements) was made a doctrine. They were right, the popes said, and nobody should doubt that. The infallibility doctrine send a shock wave of disbelief and outrage through Europe, it was considered like a blasphemy, or like a suicide of the church. It was understood as to constitute an attack on truth, on the idea of truth itself, truth as something that people would aspire and strife for, that they would look up to as their ideal, but here it was presented as the proclamations of a specific person. In that sense the doctrine of infallibility was the peak point of the church's fight against freedom of conscience: truth was something that had to accepted from the pope, not something that people could themselves try to strife for.

First it seemed the Catholic church might not survive this atmosphere of outrage

at the council of 1870, but in the end, nothing came out of it and the church marched on.

With the pope declaring himself infallible there naturally was an idea involved that the pope, the possessor of absolute truth, should be the leader of mankind altogether and should have some guiding function also for all the political leaders. The pope with this proclaimed himself some kind of world ruler. He had always had this idea but the reinforcement of that through the doctrine of infallibility naturally caused a shock among worldly leaders.

The German church historian Ignaz von Döllinger, sometimes considered the most important theologian of the age, was among the priests, theologians and bishops that refuted the doctrine of infallibility. He once stated his refutation as following (Friedrich, 1959):

As a Christian, as a theologian, as a historian and as a citizen I cannot accept this doctrine. Not as a Christian: because it cannot be reconciled with the spirit of the gospels, and with the teachings of Christ and the apostles; it wants to erect the empire of this world, which Christ refuted, wants the rulership over the communities, which Petrus denied to himself and all others. Not as a theologian: because the whole true tradition of the church stands against it. Not as a historian: because as such I know that it has cost Europe streams of blood, has confused whole countries and has bred, nourished and confirmed the worst misdeeds in the church. As a citizen I have to refute it, because it has lain the ground to endless, detrimental strife between state and church, between clericals and laymen with it's demands of subjugation of states and monarchies and of the whole political order under the dominion of the popes and with the exclusive position which it demands for the clerics.

Döllinger became the spiritual inspirer of a movement of Catholics, which wouldn't accept the doctrine, called the Old Catholics. He was excommunicated by the Roman church but continued to teach and write until his death in 1890.

Another bishop who refuted the doctrine and who spoke up against it on the Roman council of 1869-1870 was the Croatian bishop Jossip Strossmayer. He compared the way how Pius IX had his bishops acclaim him as „infallible“ at the council with the ways how Roman emperors had had themselves declared gods by the acclamation of the senate.

But Strossmayer didn't draw the consequence of leaving the church and joining e.g., the Old Catholics. The Old Catholics were strongly impregnated by a German spirit, they were a German group and because of this national tinge didn't seem acceptable to a lot of other dissenters. Strossmayer, though – as the name shows – of German background thought of himself as a Slav or Croat or as tied to the Slavs. After the split in 1870 he gradually drew closer to the Roman church again and gradually showed signs of accepting even the infallibility doctrine. After the accession of Leo XIII in 1878 he became an important adviser in matters of dealing with the Slavic people and the Orthodox churches, things that were in the forefront of Leos thinking.

The infallibility doctrine also meant a new peak for centralisation within the church. The pope now more clearly than ever became some kind of an absolute ruler within the church; tendentially all Catholics in the world were his army, his troops, which he could use for whatever purpose seemed desirable and who should feel like subjects who had to follow the orders of their sovereign. This absolute rulership was then also affirmed in the new codification of clerical law, which was initiated through Pius X. 1904 and was finished in 1917.

The Role of the Pope

The popes since a long time were not only spiritual rulers over a large part of the European – and increasingly also non-European – mankind, but they also had a state of their own, which stretched in the middle of Italy. With the Italian unification taking place in the 19th century between 1859 and 1870 the church lost its territorial possessions; last, in 1870, as a consequence of the Franco-

German war, it lost the rulership over the city of Rome, which had been guarded until then for the popes by a small army of the French emperor Napoleon III. Rome, for more than a millennium the city of the popes, became the capital of the Italian monarchy. The popes continued to exist in the Vatican, but their legal situation was hanging in the balance. After this loss the pope declared himself “the prisoner of the Vatican.” After 1870 the popes lived in a state of Cold War with the new Italian monarchy, which they hated and which they considered being run by freemasons. The Italian national liberation movement also considered the popes their worst enemies, “the vampires of Italy”, as Garibaldi, the most popular, most appealing leader of the Italian risorgimento, had once said, or, in another statement (Löhde, 2001): „The cancerous ulcer of the papacy has to be excised from Italy. Separate yourself from the vipers in the form of priests, from the representative of the devil, from the Antichrist in Rome.“

Garibaldi’s radical spirit became not dominant in the new Italian kingdom, but the popes didn’t forget the hatred and the humiliation that they had suffered from the side of the Italian unification movement. The Italian state in 1870 offered the papacy a „Law of Guarantees“, meant to safeguard the rights and the independence of the church. But the church insisted on it’s right to its territorial possessions and was not willing to normalize its relations with the Italian state.

The cold war between the church and Italy lasted until the signing of the so-called Lateran accords of 1929, when through a contract with the then state of Italy, Mussolini’s Italy, the Catholic church regained a tiny piece of territory around St. Peter’s church as their worldly territory and became a worldly power, a legal state, again. From 1870 to the First World War the enmity against the Italian State was a constant feature of the policy of the popes, very pronounced under Pius IX (1846-1878) and Leo XIII (1878-1903), a little less fierce under Pius X. (1903-1914).

The outlook of the church was also informed greatly by the fact, that the church in the decades after 1870 looked constantly for a power or a coalition of powers

which would for her sake take up a war with Italy and reinstitute the church in its worldly territorial possessions. Sometimes the church mused about retreating itself into an exile from Italy and then return triumphantly under the wings of the armies of some of the major European powers. Some kind of an exile was still contemplated by Benedict XV (1914-1922) after Italy's entry into the First World War in 1915. The pope then made some plans of moving the papacy to the principality of Liechtenstein between Austria and Switzerland. The role of warrior for the church against the kingdom of Italy was under Leo XIII offered or pushed onto states like Russia, Austria, Germany, Spain and France, but nobody took it up. The disappointment about this lack of crusading spirit surely made the church less sentimental when it came to dismantling three of these political entities at the end of WW 1.

The church considered itself the spiritual core, the essence of the old, monarchical, feudal order in Europe. But the states which were still steeped in that order, Russia, Austria-Hungary, the German empire to a certain extent etc., did not really come to the help of the church when it was threatened and humiliated especially since 1859. This infuriated the church and made it embark on a reorientation where it would gradually loosen her connection with the old social order in Europe and with its representative empires.

Vatican and the Beginning of the War

The wars and events since the middle of the 19th century had weakened the position of the church greatly. It's most trusted, helpful states in the 19th century had been Austria and after 1849 also the France of Napoleon III. Both were greatly defeated in the wars of German unification by Bismarck's Prussia, first Austria 1866, then France 1870. Their power position afterwards was not as big as it was before. Both also after these defeats changed their interior policies and became less willing to be transmitters for clerical impulses stemming from the Vatican. France became a republic, which for a long time existed in a state of almost a frozen civil war between the genuine Republicans and the

adherents of a return to a monarchical form of regime. Among the adherents of the republic freemasons played a leading role and the Catholic church was considered the main enemy, which they tried to oust from its position in public life. In Austria also Liberals, Anti-Clericals for some time took over and the Hungarian nobility which governed the eastern part of the empire since 1867 was strongly tinged by liberal (albeit not democratic) principles; also, Austria-Hungary finally entered into an alliance with two enemies of the church: the Protestant German Empire and the Italian monarchy.

The most powerful European continental states after 1870 were the German empire, led by the decidedly protestant Prussia, and the Russian empire, in which the orthodox religion was dominant. These were two states, which from the point of view of the Catholic church, although they were conservative, were nevertheless considered heretical.

The church was still an important factor, a large part of the European population was still Catholic and some of them very devoted, but it became difficult for the church to gain her foothold in the circles of political power.

This was the background from which it will seem plausible that in diplomatic reports one sometimes finds hints, that the church – or important circles in the church – in the decades after 1870 was longing for a major European war to break out, for a war which might bring a „new deal“, a re-shuffling of the cards for it. Such notions were usually ascribed to the Jesuits, i.e., the most strategic thinking, political of all the Catholic orders. The church after 1870 was powerless as never before, but it's demand of power was as big as it had ever been.

E.g., the German ambassador in Austria, Stolberg, when asked by Bismarck in 1877 about the situation of the Austrian monarchy and the influence of the Ultramontane circles there conceded „that as well inside as from the outside of the monarchy there is no lack of intriguing and suspicions against Germany. As a main breeding centre of this agitation he pointed to Rome, where the suspicion of the Italian government against the court in Vienna was only outdone by the

rage of the Vatican over the fact, that Austria-Hungary was no helping power anymore for the implementation of ultra-montane plans. Sometimes, Stolberg seemed to know, also Russia partook in these intrigues, to which also France was close, since it hoped for a reversal of the inner and foreign policy of the monarchy. The connecting centre between all these different parties was the papal Rome (...). The impression was, as if one strove to incite a general inflammation of the world, so that in the whole confusion being created by such a state the Vatican could float to victory“.

Or, in 1890 the Prussian ambassador at the Holy See, Schlözer, who, because of his good connections at the curia was also called ‘Cardinal Schlözer’ reported, that “in Jesuit circles the old parole is again brought up ‘that the flames of war should be kindled, because only a general war could effect the restitution of the worldly power of the pope“.

THE POLITICS OF LEO XIII

Pius IX, the pope of the infallibility doctrine, died in 1878 after a pontificate of over 31 years; after him came Leo XIII, like Pius IX an Italian nobleman and unlike Pius IX a passionate and able diplomat. He was called a “diplomat pope“ and also a Machiavellian. He made a multitude of diplomatic and doctrinal initiatives to lead the church out of the dead-end street into which it had manoeuvred itself under Pius IX. The powers which figured most importantly in his diplomatic game were France as well as Germany and Russia, the two heretical empires.

Concerning Germany, the pope made some efforts to enter into some form of alliance with Germany. The German empire, after it’s foundation in 1870, had waged a kind of a war with the Catholic church, which was to some extent triggered by the infallibility doctrine and its implicit consequences. Bismarck, the chancellor, wanted to curtail the influence of the pope in internal matters of Germany. He launched what was called a “Kulturkampf“a cultural war, which mostly failed, since the German Catholics, which he wanted to separate more

from the pope, rallied around Rome. Pius IX. because of this Kulturkampf had called Bismarck a “second Nero“ and a “new Attila“. One of the Kulturkampfs features was the expulsion of the Jesuits from Germany (which lasted until 1917). Since 1882 Germany was also allied with Italy, an enemy of the church, in the so-called Triple Alliance (the third party was Austria-Hungary), there was more reason for frictions.

Under Leo XIII Bismarck tried to make his peace with the church again and Leo consented somewhat. In 1886 he handed a high church order to Bismarck, who himself was a Protestant and extremely distrustful of the Catholic church.

When Wilhelm II acceded to the throne in Germany in May 1888 the Kaiser soon scheduled a visit to Rome, in October 1888. He arranged a complicated protocol to visit the Italian king as well as the pope, the first international head of state to do so. The pope, at this visit immediately tried to pressure the new Kaiser to assist the church in the restitution of its lost property.

The Pope went for everything: restitution of his worldly powers. We should make that possible through an alliance with Russia, Austria, Spain, against Italy and France (...). To Herbert [von Bismarck] the pope then said that if Germany didn't make any efforts in direction of the restitution of the worldly powers, then the pope would be forced *de traiter l'Allemagne avec hostilité*. (...) I forgot that the pope said to the emperor that when the curia was satisfied it would use it's influenced to make sure that the 15 million German Catholics would fulfil their duty towards the government (von Norman Rich & Fisher, 1957, p. 426).

In another note from this visit the pope was also quoted as having threatened to then play the French card, i.e., look for an alliance with France, in case the German emperor didn't want to take up this task, which the pope had laid before him.

Also still in 1903, just before his death, at the last visit of the German emperor, Leo XIII again, called at him to become the new Holy Roman emperor, the worldly

arm of the church, the trusted guardian of the church. Wilhelm, a Protestant ruler of a majority protestant empire, didn't know what to do with such an offer, which to him seemed anachronistic. Wilhelm himself reported about this visit in his memoirs:

It was interesting that the pope said in this meeting that Germany should become the sword of the Catholic church. I argued that the old Roman empire of the German nation did not exist anymore and that the conditions had changed. But he insisted (Koehler, 1922, p. 177).

Nothing came out of this offer at that time and Leo XIII died soon afterwards. But this episode and this kind of thinking might throw an interesting light on how later the Catholic church looked at the 'Third Reich', the Germany of the years of 1933–1945.

Wilhelm II. didn't seem to take the threats of the pope in 1888 serious. He didn't fully comprehend the power of the popes. The German government tried to portray the visit of 1888 as a success, not acknowledging the differences and the threats of the pope. In fact, already at the time of the talks in October 1888 the pope had started to redivert his attention especially to France. This would yield results, which, in the long run, would prove to be detrimental to the German empire. The pope would become one of the main sponsors of the French-Russian alliance, which was a main cornerstone of the alliance system of the First World War. The pope would sometimes pride himself with the achievement of this alliance and also the French newspaper *Le Figaro* in 1896 would call Leo XIII. "The first and most important author of the rapprochement between France and Russia."

The decisive moment for this reorientation was already in spring 1887 when the pope had to choose a new cardinal secretary of State after the old one, Lodovico Jacobini, had died at the age of only 55. Instead of Luigi Galimberti, a diplomat-cardinal who was thought to be friendly disposed towards the central powers, the pope chose Cardinal Mariano Rampolla del Tindaro (1843-1913), a

cleric from a Sicilian noble family with a Spanish background. Rampolla had a strong personal inclination towards France and was the right man to put into place a policy of rapprochement with France and of working for a Franco-Russian alliance.

Leo XIII had several objectives in mind in that endeavour:

1) he encouraged French Catholics, who until then mostly had worked for a monarchic restoration in France, to accept the French republic. Through this policy of „ralliement“ (re-alignment) Leo wanted to reconcile the church with the republic and at the same time make the French republic more conservative, more clerical; he wanted to act as moral creditor for the French republic in its dealings with Russia to overcome the fears of autocratic, monarchic Russia against an alliance with republican, revolutionary France.

2) he wanted to gain a foothold of trust with the Russian emperor and the Russian leaders in order to maybe gain a foothold for the church in Russia; this he did with the perspective of in some future being able to bring about the union of the Catholic with the Orthodox church; this union he envisioned of course as the Orthodox church in Russia accepting the Roman pope as their superior head; and this union could at the same time be a union of the church with the Russian empire, which might become the new Holy Roman empire, the new sword of the church. It would then be a union of the two most ardent Conservative bulwarks of Europe.

3) Leo, it seems wanted to be on the winning side of a coming general European war, which he considered inevitable. The politics of the Franco-Russian alliance had also been initiated from England (from circles around the leader of the Conservatives, Lord Salisbury, and the Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII) as part of a planned reorientation of British policy, the ‚New Course‘. Leo knew about this through Lord Norfolk, a leader of the English Catholics. Since he had some idea that England would be on the side of the Russian French alliance, he thought he would be on the winning side with his support for the Russian-French

alliance (Adamov, l.c. & Riemeck).

4) Also, Leo and his Cardinal secretary of state, his prime minister, Rampolla, felt the church to be an institution which was in a special way rooted in the Romanic countries (Italy, Spain, France). The modern world seemed to put these Romanic countries in a second tier behind the Germanic countries England, Germany, America. The Germanic peoples at the same time were the Protestant people. Leo and Rampolla wanted to somewhat forge an alliance of the Romanic peoples and the Slavic peoples against the Germanic peoples and the Russian French alliance which came about 1891–1894 was the centrepiece of such an endeavour.

Rampolla for example told the Russian envoy once that the Holy See would without wavering come to the side of France and Russia, because it considered Protestantism and that meant Germany to be the biggest danger (It had been a typical thinking in the church since the French revolution, brought forth e.g., by a man like Joseph de Maistre, to consider Protestantism the original revolution, the original revolutionary sin from which then had followed the enlightenment, the French revolution and liberalism, all the enemies of the church. In that sense Protestantism could seem like the biggest of these enemies). The church sometimes tried to incite European resistance against the rise and power of Germany. For example, Rampolla told in 1888 to the French ambassador at the Holy See, Lefebvre, that Europe was in danger of becoming „a slave of Germany“.

In that way the church made a big diplomatic activity concerning France, Russia and the Russian French alliance in the years between ca. 1888 and 1896 or even 1903. Since 1888 there was a Russian envoy at the Vatican. Until 1896 this was the diplomat Alexander Izvolsky, who later became Russian foreign minister and who played an important part in the years leading up to 1914. With Izvolsky the pope and Rampolla continuously discussed world politics. I give an example from a report of Izvolsky's from the beginning of his embassy, in December 1888:

I could gather from the words of the pope that his bad mood against Germany and the Triple Alliance has not calmed down. On the other hand, he doesn't believe in the prolongation of an armed peace for infinite times and is anticipating serious crises in the near future. He seeks, that the day of the crisis would see Russia and the Papacy united through an honest agreement, which, in his opinion, could give us important security guarantees for our borders and where the papacy would give its moral support to the might of the empire, also, since in the opinion of the pope, the Tsar was destined to be the arbiter of war and peace.

Big state visits of Russian delegations in France in these years would be accompanied by the blessings of the French clergy, masses of the archbishop of Paris or friendly interventions of the Roman nunties in Paris. When Nikolaus II, the last Russian Tsar, came to Paris in 1896, he also met the Papal ambassador, Nuncio Domenico Ferrata. Ferrata described parts of their conversation in his memoirs such (Stutz, 1926, p. 142):

When after this I touched upon a more comprehensive and important question, I said to the Tsar, that it was a very good and advantageous thing, that the politics of the Holy See and that of His Majesty were in complete agreement concerning France. "Such as the Holy Father had generously put his moral power into the service of this noble nation, such has Your Majesty added your military and political power. Your Majesty", I added, "could not have placed it in a more useful and noble manner. France because of the generosity and the efforts of its children is the country which exerts the greatest influence on the ideas which move the world; it has its fixed place there and also with everything that relates to the Christian religion. It has the genius of propaganda. If it takes a good road, it can do great service to mankind, and if it takes a bad one", so I added smilingly, "it can set fire everywhere, as it has happened" (An allusion to the French revolution of 1789 and the subsequent

revolution of 1830, 1848 and 1871). The Emperor answered vividly and smiling himself: "That is true, that is true".

The French revolutionary leanings, which otherwise were a problem for the Tsars in their alliance with France, were here from the pope's envoy presented as an additional reason, why the Tsar should keep an alliance with France. He should exert a moderating, calming, conservative influence on this adventurous temper.

As a means to strengthen their influence in the societies they were targeting Leo and Rampolla also used Anti-Semitism, the stirring up of antisemitic feelings. Two well known and mysterious events of that time have to be looked upon from this angle: The Dreyfus Affaire in France, an outbreak of unprecedented antisemitism because of a Jewish officer who allegedly had spied for Germany, which had it's peak in the years 1898-1899 and the fabrication of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the most important template for the notion of a Jewish Conspiracy in the 20th century. Anti-Semitism was from the side of the Catholic hierarchy meant to be as well a unionizing ideology for the Catholic conservative milieu and the French republic as for the Franco-Russian alliance and for the Catholic church and Russia.

Antisemitism also became a main instrument of a new Catholic policy of mobilizing the masses. Leo XIII, as an addendum to his other political projects had started a new social policy of the church in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891. With this the church became some kind of a competitor of the socialist and social-democratic movements which were mostly influenced by Marxism. Antisemitism here became a main ideology to counter the socialist movements, it directed the anti-capitalist feelings in a different direction, it capitalized on the fact that numerous leaders of Socialist parties in different European countries were Jews (people with a Jewish background). This was in Leo's time especially important in France and Austria. In Austria Leo and Rampolla initiated and backed the new Christian Social Party, which started in 1890 and whose leader Karl Lueger became mayor of Vienna from 1897-1910. Leo and Rampolla backed him against

the interventions of the Austrian emperor Franz Joseph, who saw in Luegers use of antisemitism a dangerous and detrimental stirring up of ethnic hatred in the complex multi-ethnic web of the empire. Franz-Josef two times denied Lueger the mayor's office in Vienna although he had been the winner of the elections. When after the third election he finally gave in, the mood in the Vatican was all jubilant. It was their victory. This political instrumentalization of antisemitism through Leo and Rampolla was the most important influence on the political antisemitism of the twentieth century.

This all was a background out of which Leo and Rampolla became quite cold against Austria, which really was the catholic state par excellence in Europe with an emperor who considered himself a son of the church. But Franz Josef had rejected the council of 1870 and had used it to dissolve the Concordat of 1855 which had been very important to the church; he was since 1879 in an alliance with Protestant Germany, in which Austria more and more seemed like an appendix of the big Protestant empire, and since 1882 additionally in an alliance with Italy, another enemy of the church. To the Austrian ambassador at the Holy See Rampolla said that the church was unhappy to see "catholic Austria in an alliance with the enemies of the papacy and the church", i.e., Germany and Italy. Rampolla's Slavic policy after 1887 activated something like a Catholic Pan-Slavism, which was also meant to emphasise the connection between the Catholic and the Orthodox slavs. This tended to orient the Austrian slavs towards Russia and thus strengthened the centrifugal tendencies of the K. and K. monarchy. Rampolla also hinted that he considered Austria-Hungary a doomed state, a state with no future. Although the Austrian ambassadors at the Holy See didn't completely understand the scope of Rampolla's thinking, the Austrian court nevertheless came to consider him an enemy.

The same holds even more true for Germany, the great heretic (Protestant) empire. There Leo's and Rampolla's combination of Francophilia, support for a Franco-Russian-alliance, extreme ultramontanism and church centralism and stirring

up of quasi-socialist and democratic demagoguery was viewed with the greatest suspicion. From 1894 to 1900 the imperial chancellor of Germany was Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingfürst (1819-1901), a Bavarian Catholic, brother of a cardinal of the Catholic church who had thrown in his lot against the infallibility doctrine in 1870. Hohenlohe-Schillingfürst followed the developments in the church with the greatest attention, his trusted informant was Franz Xaver Kraus, a noted theologian with good connections in Rome, who, although himself a Catholic, looked with despair at the Roman scene. Both had sympathies for the Old Catholics, the people who separated themselves from the church because of and after the Vatican council of 1869-70.

THE POLITICS OF PIUS X

This was the situation when in 1903 Leo XIII died and a new pope had to be elected. In the conclave Leo's Secretary of State Rampolla seemed to be winning. This would have meant a continuation of the policy of working for the French-Russian alliance. But then the Austrian emperor by way of the archbishop of Cracow, Puzyna, voiced a veto against Rampolla in the conclave. This veto as some kind of an informal right of contradiction against the election of a pope which they didn't want, was a right, which was claimed by the most important Catholic states Spain, France, Austria. The veto was not binding, it was more like a right to voice one's opinion in the – otherwise – completely secluded conclave, but it nevertheless usually had its desired effect. And so, it was also in 1903, the last time that this instrument was used in a conclave. Rampolla in this case was not elected but instead of him the Archbishop of Venice, Giuseppe Sarto, who most of his life had been a small-town parish priest and came from a poor family. He named himself Pius X.

Pius X did not continue Rampolla's policy concerning France, Russia and the French-Russian alliance, also, because this policy had failed in respect to most of its aims. It hadn't really succeeded in making the French republic more conservative and more clerical. In the Dreyfus affair, the Catholic and Conservative milieu,

which had insisted on the guilt of Dreyfus, had finally lost against the Dreyfusards who advocated for a retrial and for the innocence of Dreyfus, which was finally proven. The affair was a victory of the liberal, republican forces in French society against the Clerical Conservatives. In 1904, under Pius X, who was less Francophile than his predecessor and didn't speak French himself, the relations of the Vatican and the French republic broke down completely and the French republic then embarked on a new set of anticlerical laws. Also, Russia, in spite of all gestures of goodwill from the side of the church, did not invite the Vatican to open an embassy, a nunciature, in Russia, which had been the main short-term aim there of Leo and Rampolla. The suspicion of the orthodox hierarchy and especially of the head of Russian orthodoxy at that time, Pobedonoszew, a close adviser of the Tsar, against that was too strong. In that sense Leo's policy concerning Russia and France had broken down by his death in 1903.

Pius X. was a much less diplomatically inclined pope than Leo XIII had been. He made a young Cleric from a Spanish-English diplomatic family, Raffaele Merry del Val, his Cardinal Secretary of State, but the diplomatic style of the church became more abrasive and less subtle. Pius X was a staunch conservative, and his main objective was to clean and purge the church in the inside, to eradicate what was called "modernism" inside the church. In his world policy he now again courted and supported Emperor Franz Joseph and Austria-Hungary as the most important Catholic power in the world.

Whereas Leo XIII wanted to enter into an alliance with the Slavs, Pius X. looked at them, and especially at the Orthodox Slavs, with fear and anger. The Pan-Slavic ambitions seemed to him one of the greatest dangers for the position of the church. When, for example, Leo's politics would have tended to encourage the Croats to consider themselves Jugo-Slavs, South-Slavs and enter into close relations with the Serbs – all with the idea in that way maybe in the end to convert the Serbs to Catholicism – then Pius X would much rather encourage the Croats to cultivate a fiercely Catholic identity, and to strongly separate themselves from the Serbs.

Both the Policy of Leo XIII as that of Pius X tended to dissociate Germans and Slavs in Central Europe and tended to put them up against each other as enemies. Leo's politics went in the direction of setting up the Slavs as a possible bulwark of the church against the (Protestant) Germans, Pius' policy more in the direction of setting up the Germans (Austrians) as a bulwark for the church against the (Orthodox) Slavs. Both thereby strengthened the *idée fixe* of an 'unavoidable and upcoming decisive war between Germans and Slavs', an idea that was lingering and building up since at least the end of the Crimean war 1856 in Central and Eastern Europe and which became more and more important in the decades before 1914. This parole created a general atmosphere, which was an important background for the outbreak of the war in 1914.

Although Pius X was in general somewhat aloof from world affairs the church and its supreme head nevertheless stayed deeply involved in the political affairs of pre-war Europe.

It has been reported that Pius X in the years before 1914 quite often spoke about a coming great war and at times even pointed to the year 1914 as its beginning. This was later taken as proof for his prophetic abilities which played a role in the church procedure that led to his canonisation, i.e., being declared a saint, in 1954.

Beyond that also it seems that already years before 1914 he harboured the more specific idea that Franz Ferdinand, the presumptive Austrian heir to the throne, would never accede that throne. This shows in the following little story (Beyer, 2007, p. 49):

On the 13th of June 1911 they (Karl von Habsburg and Zita von Bourbon-Parma) celebrated their engagement. Before her wedding Zita travelled together with her mother to Rome, where she was received for a private audience by Pope Pius X. The pope congratulated her to her engagement. He said something which Zita remembered until her old age. "Now you're going to marry the heir to the throne." When the princess contradicted

the pope and said that Franz Ferdinand was the heir to the throne, Pius X insisted: "No, Carl will be the heir (...). If that is going to be a resignation I don't know. But one thing I know for sure: Karl will be the heir to the throne of Franz-Joseph". The princess didn't understand that and thought that the whole thing must have been an error on the side of the pope.

Soon, the 21st of October the wedding was celebrated on Schwarzaau Castle. (...) The marriage was celebrated by Cardinal Bisleti, a close friend of the family. He read the congratulatory letter of Pius X. Out of consideration for Franz Ferdinand the cardinal omitted the passages in which the pope again dealt with his prophecy, that Carl would be the next heir to the throne.

It seems impossible to completely solve the background of this strange, amazing story, and to completely understand the nature of the foreknowledge of the pope concerning Franz Ferdinand. The Roman curia was, of course, one of the most important information clearing houses in the world; it might have come through the grapevine there that important groups of people did not think Franz Ferdinand fit to inherit the Austrian throne. Or the Roman curia might even itself have been part of plans in that direction. Altogether the story – like some other traces that exist – points to the possibility or the likelihood that there must have been backgrounds to the Sarajevo murder, which go beyond Mlada Bosna or even Crna Ruka and Apis.

Quite well known from different reports is the fact that the pope in the years leading up to 1914 urged and advocated Austria-Hungary to employ a more firm, warlike policy in the Balkans, (which at that time meant mostly towards Serbia). He declared that policy a necessity for Austria's survival, which otherwise would disintegrate and be swept away by Slavic nationalisms and Pan-Slavism. The Bavarian ambassador at the Holy See for example assessed the following mood in February 1913, between the two Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 (Zedler, 1913, p. 193):

In Vatican circles I more and more hear the opinion that Austria now has to resort to military means to push back the Pan-Slavic onrush, which does not only threaten its existence but also European culture altogether and that this moment in which Russia's preparation for war is not yet completed should be used for that.

There is a famous Austrian diplomatic report from the end of July 1914, where these things can be seen right at the outbreak of the war. It reports about an audience of the Austrian ambassador at the Holy See (as one says) with the pope on the 27th of July 1914, that means two days after the Serbian answer to the Austrian ultimatum on the 25th of July and one day before the Austrian declaration of war to Serbia on the 28th of July.

When two days ago I visited the Cardinal Secretary of State, he immediately brought the conversation to the great questions and problems concerning Europe today. But there was no clemency or conciliatoriness in the remarks of His Excellency. The diplomatic Note which Austria-Hungary had sent to Serbia, which he called very sharp, he nevertheless supported indiscriminately and at the same time indirectly voiced his hope, that the Monarchy this time would not waiver again.

The Cardinal additionally said that it was unfortunate, that Serbia had not already earlier been put in its place, because at an earlier time it might have been done without such a display of incalculable possibilities as there are today. This pronouncement also reflects the thinking of the pope, because in the preceding years His Holiness several times voiced his regret, that Austria-Hungary failed to castigate its dangerous neighbour at the Danube.

One could ask oneself, why the Catholic church at the same time, when she is ruled by such a holy individual, filled with truly apostolic ideas, is so warlike. The answer is very simple. The pope and the papal court regard Serbia as the eroding illness, which slowly intrudes into the very heart

of the monarchy, and which would with time destroy it. But Austria-Hungary is and remains, notwithstanding other experiments that the curia has tried in the last decades, the strongest bulwark that has remained for the church in this age. If this bulwark falls, the church would lose its most important pillar and its strongest spearhead in its fight against the orthodoxy. (Winter, 1961, p. 573).

Already in an earlier report from July 24 about talks with the pope and the Cardinal secretary of state the Bavarian ambassador had reported of the aggressive mood in the Vatican. There also the pope, speaking as military expert, had discounted the strength of the Russian and French armies, i.e., he had obviously encouraged Germany to take the possibilities of an extension of the war into a general European confrontation lightly (The Austrian army surely would have had to be considered inferior to that of Russia or France.)

One could ask whether all these inducements to war were being triggered only by the papacy's worry for the survival for Austria-Hungary, which truly was the most important Catholic monarchy of the time. But maybe there was also in these adorations to Austria and even Germany an element of the curia's earlier longing for a general European war with the hope of a reshuffling of the cards. Austria was the best leverage that the Roman church had to push things in direction of such a war. Pius X, it could seem, not only prophesied the World War, but he also worked to bring it about.

So, the church had on both sides a certain part in the instigation of the First World War: First it had helped to forge the strange French-Russian alliance, which became such an important cornerstone of the alliance system of the First World War; then it encouraged the Central powers in a policy of distrust and aggression against the orthodox world.

Pius X died not long after the beginning of the 1st WW in August 1914. His successor, who was elected in the first days of September 1914, at a time when it seemed possible that a German victory in the war was almost at hand, became Giacomo

della Chiesa, an Italian nobleman from Genoa, naming himself Benedetto XV. Della Chiesa had been the closest, most trusted collaborator of Rampolla in the years before 1903, so with him again the Rampolla-Leo-faction took over in Vatican. Before 1903 German visitors had described him as the most anti-German man in the curia. Benedetto acted very cautiously during the war trying not to compromise his neutrality. Altogether the war at its end could be understood as a success for the church, since the two powerful heretic empires had been destroyed: the German Protestant one (where the Protestant Hohenzollern dynasty was ousted) and the Russian orthodox one (where an anti-religious group, the Bolsheviks, came to power). In Germany the Catholic party, which until 1917 had been an opposition party not considered safe to be included in the leadership of the Reich, now became a part of the Weimar State Coalition (made up of Social Democrats, Center Party and Liberals) and one of the leading government parties. The Third Reich from 1933-1945, although somewhat anti-Christian in its ideology, was led by men (Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler) who had been shaped by a Catholic milieu background. It's ascendancy to power happened with the support of important parts of the Catholic hierarchy, e.g., the then Cardinal Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli, the later Pope Pius XII. And after 1949 the Catholic influence became predominant in the newly founded Bundesrepublik, whose first, decisive chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, was a staunch, devout Catholic. Concerning Russia there was some hope that the destruction of the Orthodox Church through the Communists would maybe someday open up the road for the Catholic church, a hope that has not fully materialized to this day.

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ПАПСТВО И НАСТАНАК ПРВОГ СВЕТСКОГ РАТА

Сажетак

Католичка црква у деветнаестом веку је и даље била респектабилна сила у европском свету, са великим бројем верника. Али она је била дубоко повезана са античким феудалним светом, чији је утицај постепено јењавао у Европи између 1789. и 1918. године, па се црква у то време нашла на културно-политичкој територији којом је било тешко маневрисати. Контрадикција је са годинама достигла је врхунац на 1. Ватиканском концилу 1869/70, који је, у ситуацији када је све мање људи слушало папу, мегаломански прогласио папу непогрешивим. Да би касније изашла из овог ћорсокака, црква је предузимала различите политичке иницијативе са којима је играла важну, не и познату, улогу у европској дипломатији која је довела до Великог рата 1914. Најважнија од њих је вероватно била њена улога у стварању француско-руског савеза, који је настао почетком 1890-их. ЕУ раду ће се пратити улога и иницијатива цркве у развоју догађаја који су довели до светског рата 1914.

Кључне речи: католичка црква, Папа, Ватикански концил, дипломатија