

# ***Roman Catholicism in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century***

## *Sources*

John W. O'Malley, *Vatican I: The Council and the Making of the Ultramontane Church* (2018)

August Bernhard Hasler, *How the Pope Became Infallible: Pius IX and the Politics of Persuasion* (1981)

Kenneth Scott Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age* (1969), 1:234-462

Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom* (1983), 1:108-202

## I. Overall Situation

### A. Factors promoting resurgence of Roman Church

1. Political reaction to the French Revolution
2. Romanticism (e.g., Gothic style)

### B. Agenda of Political Liberalism Challenging RCC

1. Religious toleration
2. Disestablishment
3. Anticlericalism: opposition to political power of clergy
4. Nationalism

## II. Papal History in the 19th Century

### A. Importance of Papal States

1. Rooted in “donation” of Pepin in Middle Ages
2. Popes considered temporal authority essential to their power
3. Pattern of the 19th Century
  - a. Declining political power
  - b. Ascending “moral” power

### B. Pius IX

1. Character: Reactionary (González, 401-5)
2. Declared Immaculate Conception (1854)
  - a. Mary conceived w/o original sin
  - b. Used Mariology as a weapon against modern tendencies
  - c. Declaration virtually a claim to infallibility
3. Syllabus of Errors (1864)
  - a. Polemic against modern trends
  - b. Lists 80 errors
4. First Vatican Council (1869-70)
  - a. Declared papal infallibility (speaking *ex cathedra*)
  - b. Also superiority of popes to councils
5. Unification of Italy (1870)
  - a. Forces of Kingdom of Italy captured Rome
  - b. Loss of temporal power for papacy
  - c. Pius IX declared himself “Prisoner of the Vatican”
  - d. Not settled until Lateran Treaty w/ Mussolini in 1929

### C. Leo XIII

1. Shift from confrontation to accommodation—but not acceptance (i.e., working w/in liberal political systems w/o agreeing with them)
2. Declared Thomas Aquinas “official” theologian of the church
3. Leading figure in *Kulturkampf* and Americanism controversies

4. “Workingman’s pope”: Issues *Rerum novarum* (González, 406-7)
- III. Major Controversies
- A. From Without: With Major Governments
    1. Germany: *Kulturkampf*
      - a. Chancellor Bismarck saw RCC as threat to new German unity
      - b. Sought to eliminate political power and educational institutions
      - c. Actions proved increasingly unpopular
      - d. Leo XIII & Bismarck negotiated settlement of issues
    2. France: Dreyfus Affair
      - a. Alfred Dreyfus, Jewish army officer convicted of espionage
      - b. Pitted RCC & army against liberals
      - c. Outcome
        - 1) Dreyfus exonerated
        - 2) Fueled anticlericalism & total disestablishment of RCC
        - 3) Canonization of Joan of Arc a response?
  - B. From Within: Liberal Catholicism
    1. Attempt to reconcile political liberalism w/ Catholicism
    2. Chief Exponents
      - a. Lamennais in France (“father of liberal Catholicism”) (González, 400-401)
        - 1) Taught separation of church & state as means of protecting the church
        - 2) Popular sovereignty did not impinge on authority of pope
        - 3) Eventually left the church
      - b. Americanism
        - 1) Overall aim of adapting, when possible, to American life (e.g., adopting English as language)
        - 2) Acceptance of republican govt. & pluralism
        - 3) Suggested—but not stated—was idea that loyalty to the pope and loyalty to nation do not clash
        - 4) Chief advocate: James Cardinal Gibbons
        - 5) Condemned as heresy by Leo XIII
        - 6) Practically, the strategy of John F. Kennedy in 1960