

Internal Church Reform in Catholic Germany

Claus Arnold

Reform at the Time of the Secularisation, 1780-1803/15

159

During the last decades of the Holy Roman Empire the Catholic Church with its 23 prince bishops and its 44 imperial abbeys constituted not only a political force of cohesion and a career market where the younger sons of the nobility could live in style, but showed remarkable efforts in the field of internal ecclesiastical reform. The absolutism of the prince bishops was combined with a renewed sense of their episcopal dignity and relative independence from Rome.¹ These episcopal ideas, which were in part similar to French Gallicanism, went in Germany under the label of 'Febronianism', named after the pseudonymous author Febronius - Johann Nikolaus von Hontheim (1701-1790), auxiliary bishop in Trier - whose *De statu ecclesiae et legitima potestate Romani pontificis liber singularis* had appeared in Frankfurt in 1763. Furthermore, the Catholic version of late Enlightenment influenced many of the last prince bishops. The archduke Maximilian Franz of Austria (1756-1801) for instance, who became Archbishop of Cologne in 1784, not only went as far as receiving the higher orders of priesthood and episcopate very quickly and actually fulfilling liturgical functions himself - things unheard of in the older generation of prince bishops who relied for these things mainly on their bourgeois auxiliary bishops - he also tried to enforce an Enlightenment programme of church reform that was similar to the so-called Josephinism of his elder brother, Emperor Joseph II (1741-1790). Although holidays, processions, confraternities, festive liturgies and the activities of mendicant and contemplative orders were reduced and 'popular' pieties like the rosary viewed with suspicion, the enlightened

¹ Cf. the 'Punctuation of Ems' of 1786; English translation in Maclear, ed., *Church and State*, 28-31.

reforms were only partly at odds with the former post-Tridentine confessionalisation and the resulting baroque piety. Their core element was the strengthening of pastoral care and education on the parish level, e.g. by regulating the size of parishes. Thus, although the reformist reduction of some elements of Baroque Catholicism caused many conflicts, the overall post-Tridentine trend of social control and religious intensification persisted in the years after 1780 and well into the nineteenth century.²

The papal suppression of the Jesuits and their colleges in 1773 paved the way for a reorganisation of the training of priests. On the orders of Empress Maria Theresa (1717-1780), the Benedictine Abbott Franz Stephan Rautenstrauch (1734-1785) developed a new plan of studies with a typical 'Jansenist' character: an anti-scholastic emphasis on biblical studies and ecclesiastical history was combined with a decidedly practical orientation, institutionalised in the new subject of Pastoral Theology. In contrast to the strictly centralised but short-lived 'General Seminaries', introduced by Joseph II, Rautenstrauch's plan had lasting effects and parallels in other German states. Here, a consecutive model was favoured, which was fundamental for the formation of a modern diocesan clergy in Germany: university studies in theology were followed by the immediate preparation for ordination in the episcopal seminary. In the diocese of Münster, for instance, the Vicar-General and Minister Franz von Fürstenberg (1729-1810) prepared the foundation of a new university and a seminary in 1773.

German Catholic theology in these years was partly 'rationalist' and tried to integrate historical criticism. Johann Lorenz Isenbiehl (1744-1818), professor at Mainz University, had studied Oriental languages at the Protestant university in Göttingen (with the approval of his enlightened Archbishop-Elector Emmerich Joseph von Breidbach zu Bürresheim (1707-1774)). In his *Neuer Versuch über die Weissagung von Emmanuel* (1778) he contested the messianic interpretation of Isaiah 7,14 and reaped the most solemn form of ecclesiastical censure, a special papal *Breve* against his book in 1779. Franz Berg (1753-1821), professor of ecclesiastical history at Würzburg University, tried to explain the entire development of Christianity from the standpoint of an immanent human psychology. At Ingolstadt, the ex-Jesuit Benedikt Stattler (1728-1797) demonstrated the rational character of Revelation by using the philosophy of Christian Wolff. But on the whole a moderate religious Enlightenment prevailed. For example, in the case of Johann Michael Sailer (1751-1832), who taught at Ingolstadt, Dillingen and Landshut, a biblical and patristic, anti-scholastic re-orientation was combined with a strict Christocentrism and a pietist interiorisation of religion. Sailer's pastoral theology was implemented as a concrete programme of reform in the Constance Diocese by his pupil, the influential Vicar-General Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg (1774-1860). Wessenberg's reform of the Meersburg seminary with stress on biblical, historical and liturgical studies, his introduction of pastoral conferences and theological libraries

² Klueting, *Katholische Aufklärung*; Schneider, "Katholische Aufklärung"; Holzem, *Religion und Lebensformen*.

*M. Ellenrieder, Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg,
engraving, 1819.
[Konstanz, Städtische Wessenberg-Galerie]*

for the rural chapters, his creation of a 'civic' clergy, his liturgical reforms (compulsory homily during mass, German Vespers, use of German in the administration of the sacraments) remained a model for South Germany and beyond well into the 1830s.

The secularisation of 1803 brought the end of most abbeys and religious orders and had a negative effect on the cultural standard in rural Catholic areas, where the abbeys had been centres of art and education and had offered some degree of vertical mobility to gifted youths. On the diocesan level many prince bishops, who did not want to be mere pastors, resigned; the vacuum was filled by capitular or apostolic vicars, who had to cooperate with the new territorial states and their Protestant monarchs (with the exception of Bavaria and its Catholic Wittelsbach dynasty). The secularisation brought no real disestablishment, but started a re-establishment of Catholicism on a new political basis. In this process the new governments were often influenced by enlightened Catholic clergymen and their ideas of reform. Wessenberg, for instance, was backed by the government of Baden against the Roman Curia and could carry on with his work until 1827.

From Restoration to Revolution 1815-1848

The Vienna Congress did not bring a *Bundeskirche* or 'federal Church' under a German Primate, because the Roman Curia and the new states of the German Federation opposed such relative independence. Thus, after bilateral talks with the states, the pope erected new ecclesiastical provinces and dioceses, which reflected exactly the political situation after 1815 - a reorganisation which remains fundamental until the present day (Bavarian Concordat of 1817; papal bulls for the Protestant states: Prussia 1821, Hanover 1821, Upper Rhenish Church Province for Württemberg, Baden, Hessen-Darmstadt, Frankfurt, Hessen-Kassel and Nassau 1821-1827).³ As Napoleon had done after the Concordat of 1801, the states introduced, after the canonical erection of the dioceses by the pope, a system of control over the new Catholic *Landeskirchen* which echoed Napoleon's 'Organic Articles' of 1802 (these were a unilateral addition to the French Concordat of 1801 and in themselves an echo of Gallicanism/Josephinism). Before the first new bishops were installed (most of them only around 1830, and rarely recruited from the nobility), the states became active in founding new seminaries, *lycea*, clerical colleges and university faculties for the professional training of their new Catholic 'religious servants'. The Prussian *Kultusminister* (Minister of Religious Affairs) Karl Freiherr von Altenstein (1770-1840) formulated the new situation thus: "The Prussian State is an evangelical State and has one third of Catholic subjects. It is correct behaviour, if the Government provides for the Evangelical Church lovingly and for the Catholic Church dutifully. The Evangelical Church must be favoured. The Catho-

³ Burkard, *Staatskirche - Papstkirche - Bischofskirche*.

lic Church must not be disadvantaged - for its good all provisions must be made."⁴ On the whole, the consecutive model of the late eighteenth century was preserved. After studying at a state university faculty (Tübingen for Württemberg, Freiburg for Baden, Giessen for Hessen-Kassel, Bonn and Breslau for Prussia, Würzburg and Munich for Bavaria) or at a lyceum (e.g. Münster and Braunsberg in Prussia or Regensburg and Passau in Bavaria) the candidates would go to the seminary for ordination.

The states gave subsidies for the new dioceses and cathedral chapters, thus securing a relative financial independence and a modicum of (well-controlled) self-government. The chapters had not only liturgical functions, but assisted the bishop in his care of the diocese. In the dioceses of the Upper Rhenish Church Province they formed the *Ordinariat* - a collegial body of diocesan government, theologically inspired by an enlightened 'presbyterialism' and modelled on the contemporary collegial ministries of state. In the Prussian dioceses Trier and Cologne the cathedral chapters were also integrated in the diocesan government (the *Generalvikariat*), but a strict episcopal control prevailed. The situation in Bavaria was similar. On the whole, the bishops became clearly the ecclesiastical key figures, and a long process of episcopalisation and centralisation began which has continued until the present and has remained unaffected by all changes in theological preferences or church politics. Centralised bureaucratic structures were more and more imposed. The *Ordinariat* or *Generalvikariat* themselves were regulated by a strict order of business with regular conferences and a formalised way of downward and upward communication. This is also mirrored in the increase of personnel in the *Generalvikariat* (diocesan curia): in Trier numbers rose from 5 officials (additional to the canons) in 1824 to 12 in 1832, in Cologne from 13 in 1825 to 54 in 1838. In time more and more laymen were included, some of them in important positions (mainly legal experts). In this process the deans became the intermediaries of episcopal control. The deaneries in Cologne and Trier for instance were reorganised in a 'manageable' size and in correspondence with the administration units of the state. The deans had the obligation of constant control and regular visitation of the parishes; regular reports to the *Generalvikariat* were expected; elaborate questionnaires were developed for the visitations. Episcopal confirmation of the dean's election was necessary; Bishop Hommer of Trier went as far as to simply nominate new deans himself. Also the immediate presence of the bishops in their dioceses increased. Auxiliary bishops were rare now, and episcopal acts like confirmation (often hundreds of young people at a time) or the consecration of churches and altars were executed by the ordinaries themselves. (Not without reason two out of four bishops of Rottenburg in the nineteenth century died when touring their diocese).⁵

The parishes, whose finances had been untouched by the secularisation, were partly reorganised. In Württemberg for instance, parish regulation on the model

⁴ Cited after Bachem, *Vorgeschichte, Geschichte und Politik der deutschen Zentrumspartei*, I, 158.

⁵ Wolf, "Generalvikar oder Domdekan?"; Burkard, "Zum Wandel der Domkapitel"; Ebertz, "Ein Haus

voll Glorie"; Lill, "Der Bischof zwischen Säkularisation und Kulturkampf"; Schneider, "Entwicklungstendenzen rheinischer Frömmigkeits- und Kirchengeschichte".

of Austrian Josephinism was continued until 1848 in a close collaboration of state and ordinariat: ‘unnecessary’ parishes were suppressed and 90 new parishes were founded in order to achieve better pastoral care in diaspora areas. In Eastern Prussia, however, the state suppressed parishes in Silesian diaspora areas for merely financial reasons, which led to episcopal protests. An accord was reached by Bishop Melchior von Diepenbrock (1798-1853) of Breslau in 1848. On the other hand, in the Prussian Rhineland many old parishes were reinstated which had fallen prey to the French regulation and its imposition of main (cantonal) and subordinate (succursal) parishes. In a high percentage of parishes, the monarchs had the patronage (the right to nominate the parish priest), thus reducing episcopal influence.⁶

With the end of the ‘parallel’ religious world of the monasteries and religious orders the parish became the almost exclusive place of pastoral care and the high ideal of the parish priest as the one and only real pastor of his flock could now be enforced effectively. Popular attachment to the old forms of baroque piety persisted nevertheless, at least in some areas (e.g. in Westphalia and Upper Swabia). Theologically, the ideas of the confessionally irenic and moderate Catholic Enlightenment continued to influence clerical education, at least in South and South-West Germany. The hugely popular professor of dogmatics at Bonn University, Georg Hermes (1775-1831), stood for a slightly different orientation. His Restoration theology was simultaneously anti-Enlightenment, anti-Romantic and anti-mystical and tried to establish a new rational basis for the belief in revelation. With the consent of Archbishop Ferdinand August von Spiegel (1764-1835) of Cologne, Hermes and his pupils created a civic, politically conservative and pastorally active clergy in Western Prussia. All dioceses aimed at greater homogeneity in their clergy, whose make-up was still characterised by the difficult situation in the period before 1821-1827.

From the 1830s onwards the ultramontane movement gained ground in Germany. The new call for *libertas ecclesiae* included the reduction of state control, the strengthening of episcopal influence on seminaries and colleges, and the nomination of parish priests. It did not include the wish for a complete separation of church and state, but the older generation of ‘cooperative’ bishops and theologians came more and more under fire: Hermes for instance was stigmatised as a rationalistic heretic shortly after his death in the papal brief *Dum acerbissimas* of 1833, which took up the denunciations of German ultramontanes. This way of intermingling theology and church politics and of acting (or trying to act) *via Rome* remained popular throughout the century, as shown by the cases of the relatively ‘progressive’ or merely non-neo-scholastic theologians Anton Günther (1783-1863), Jakob Frohschammer (1821-1893) or Johannes Evangelist von Kuhn (1806-1887) (the posthumous denunciation of Sailer failed).⁷ The turn towards ultramontanism was prepared in elitist circles, like the *familia sacra*

⁶ Gatz, ed., *Die Bistümer und ihre Pfarreien*.

⁷ Schwedt, *Das römische Urteil über Georg Hermes*; Id., “Die Verurteilung der Werke Anton Günthers”;

Pahud de Mortanges, *Philosophie und kirchliche Autorität*; Wolf, *Ketzer oder Kirchenlehrer?*; Id., ed., *Johann Michael Sailer*.

around the Countess Amalie von Gallitzin (1748-1806) in Münster or the ones around Joseph Görres (1776-1848) at Munich and the Redemptorist Clemens Maria Hofbauer (1751-1820)⁸ at Vienna, where historians, philosophers and theologians came together. Roughly speaking⁹, 'Romantic-organic' and 'historical' thinking gained ground over against 'Enlightenment' tendencies in Catholicism. A theological representative of 'organic' thinking was the Tübingen theologian Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838). Although his *Symbolik* (1832) was still irenic in tone, it presented a new apologetic of the Catholic Church with a distinctly anti-Protestant note: the organic unfolding and development of Catholic truth in history stood against the criticism of Protestantism, which remained essentially a negation without substance of its own.

The beginnings of neo-scholasticism in Germany were a result of the French (or rather Alsatian) period in the Mainz seminary under Bishop Joseph Ludwig Colmar (1760-1818). The seminary's new regent Bruno Franz Leopold Liebermann (1749-1844), who taught from 1803 until 1824, and other professors had come from Strasbourg and stood under the influence of contemporary French anti-revolutionary thinking and ultramontanism. In 1821 the Mainz circle founded the influential journal *Der Katholik. Eine religiöse Zeitschrift zur Belehrung und Warnung* (The Catholic. A Religious Journal for Instruction and Admonition) which continued until 1918.

Nevertheless, the ultramontanes were not without opposition. The 1820s and 1830s saw an anti-celibacy and pro-synod movement in South-West Germany, which tried to establish lay participation in church government. Before and around the 1848 Revolution the ultramontane and 'rationalist' mobilisation of lay people competed on an impressive scale. More than 500,000 pilgrims to the Holy Coat of Trier in 1844 - a typical ultramontane re-enactment of baroque piety - were counterbalanced by thousands of *Deutschkatholiken* (literally 'German Catholics'), who formed independent parishes and created 'rationalist' liturgies in German. Recent research has shown that the religious reform impetus of the *Deutschkatholiken* has to be taken seriously; it was not a primarily or merely political movement for freedom under the guise of anti-ultramontane protest.¹⁰

The ultramontane political movement around the 1848-1849 Frankfurt Parliament used the new civil liberties for their ecclesiastical agenda: 400 *Pius-Vereine für religiöse Freiheit* (Pius (IX) Associations for Religious Freedom) and similar associations were founded. The first national congress of these associations was held at Mainz in October 1848, where - on the model of the Irish Catholic Association - a *Katholischer Verein Deutschland* was founded. Except for war times, similar national gatherings of the associations were from then on held annually and under changing names (the name

⁸ Weiß, *Begegnungen mit Klemens Maria Hofbauer*; Id., *Kulturen - Mentalitäten - Mythen*.

⁹ Theological 'Romanticism' would have been impossible without an antecedent 'Enlightenment' as precondition. The relative continuity between the two is clearly visible in the biographies of Sailer,

Möhler or the Countess Gallitzin. Cf. Holzem, *Weltversuchung und Heilsgewißheit*; for a short synthesis see Kustermann, "Romantik".

¹⁰ Smolinsky, "Synoden"; Holzem, *Kirchenreform und Sektenstiftung*.

Keepsake print of the pilgrimage to the Holy Coat
of Trier, 1844.
[Private collection]

Katholikentag was adopted only in 1948). In order to influence the debates on fundamental rights in parliament, the associations organised 1,100 petitions. Ultramontane bishops like Peter Joseph Blum (1808-1884) of Limburg favoured this kind of mobilisation. Within the Frankfurt Parliament 'bad' and 'good' Catholic members were almost equal in numbers - with lay- and clergymen on both sides. The 'bad' Catholics included for example the *Deutschkatholik* Robert Blum (1807-1848) and the Wessenbergian Dean of Constance, Vincenz Kuenzer (1793-1853); the 'good' Catholics were loosely organised in the 'Catholic Club' initiated by an episcopal Member of Parliament, namely Melchior Diepenbrock of Breslau. Prominent names were here Ignaz von Döllinger (1799-1890) (then a convinced ultramontane) or the future bishop of Mainz Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler (1811-1877). The Catholic Club failed to secure ecclesiastical control of the primary schools, but religious instruction was safeguarded as a regular school subject in the projected constitution. Liberal attempts to prohibit obligatory clerical celibacy and the introduction of the Jesuit and Redemptorist orders in Germany were successfully frustrated. The churches were to be given the right to order their internal affairs themselves, although "within the framework of common law". The ultramontane offensive met with the criticism of the prominent 'enlightened' theologian Johann Baptist Hirscher (1788-1865) at Freiburg, who called for synods made up of laity and clergy alike, in order to introduce some lay participation *within* the institutional church and to compensate for the loss of (lay) government control. Hirscher's pamphlets were quickly put on the Index of forbidden books.¹¹

The use of print media for communication within German Catholicism increased continually before 1848.¹² According to a contemporary categorisation there were four types of journals: those with a strictly theological-scholarly orientation, like the *Theologische Quartalschrift* from Tübingen or the Hermesian *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und katholische Theologie* (Bonn), both connected with a university faculty and addressing theologians and the educated clergy in general. The *Jahresschrift für Theologie und Kirchenrecht der Katholiken* or the *Freimüthige Blätter über Theologie und Kirchentum* had a distinctly enlightened touch, whereas the *Katholische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Kunst* was clearly ultramontane. A second type of journal stood for the propagation of 'Catholic Science' and *Weltanschauung* in the ultramontane sense among an educated lay public: here the two-weekly *Historisch-politische Blätter* of the Munich Görres-circle was most prominent. In the third category many periodicals cared for concrete pastoral needs with sketches for homilies and catechesis. In the fourth category 'the Catholic people' were addressed directly in mostly weekly periodicals (*Kirchenblätter für das katholische Volk*), which combined edification, entertainment and information. Here the already mentioned ultramontane *Katholik* from Mainz was most prominent,

¹¹ Horstmann, *Katholizismus und moderne Welt*; Schwedt, "Die katholischen Abgeordneten der Paulskirche und Frankfurt"; Id., "Vom ultramontanen zum liberalen Döllinger"; Köster, *Der Fall Hirscher*.

¹² Cf. the synthesis in Schneider, *Katholiken auf die Barrikaden?*, 33-94, and Burkard; "Presse und Publizistik".

though not without enlightened and supraconfessional alternatives like the *Badisches Kirchenblatt*. In the end most dioceses had *Katholische Sonntagsblätter*¹³ which began as private initiatives (mostly of priests) and - after gaining episcopal approval - ended as official diocesan organs (especially after the Second World War).

Mobilisation and Polarisation, 1848-1870

It has been said that the Catholic Church, or more precisely the bishops, profited most from the 1848 Revolution.¹⁴ Indeed, state control became, sooner or later, less rigid in many states of the German Federation, most notably in Prussia. Bishops were free to meet for national or provincial conferences - even the latter had been regarded with suspicion by the governments. The first German episcopal conference was held at Würzburg in October-November 1848 under the presidency of Cardinal Johannes von Geissel (1796-1864), the archbishop of Cologne. Döllinger was present as theological adviser. The bishops' memorandum of 14 November called for a reduction of state interference, but opted against a separation of state and church. Confessional schools and religious instruction were main concerns as well as complete episcopal control over the training of priests. On the reform side, the celebration of diocesan and provincial synods according to the ordinances of the Council of Trent was to be revived and a national council (*National-Concil*) projected. A joint *Agentur*, a representative office in Rome, was planned. Pope Pius IX was asked for his consent concerning the national council, which he denied after six months' hesitation. The intransigent Munich nuncio Carlo Sacconi (1808-1889) and the extremely ultramontane Munich archbishop Karl August von Reisach (1800-1869) had sown seeds of distrust in Rome by evoking the spectre of an anti-Roman national church. Reisach was the first German bishop who had been trained in the 'new' Roman *Collegium Germanicum* (revived in 1818-1819). Outside Bavaria, so-called *Germanikerbischöfe*¹⁵ were excluded by the governments and became more frequent only after 1918. The national council never met, and diocesan synods remained virtually unknown until 1918. A prominent exception was the Provincial Council of Cologne under Cardinal Geissel in 1860, which not only prescribed disciplinary measures in the ultramontane sense (e.g. by reducing the use of German hymns and favouring Gregorian chant), but also touched on dogmatic matters by defining - against 'Darwinism' - the direct divine creation of Adam and Eve and by invoking the infallible *magisterium* of the Roman Pontiff. Inside the dioceses the trend towards centralisation, episcopalisation and an overall ultramontanisation was strengthened. All bishops now nominated a vicar-general as their *alter ego* and head of the diocesan administration. Apart from this, the bureaucratic structures developed in the first half

¹³ For instance in Rottenburg: Wolf and Seiler, eds., *Das Katholische Sonntagsblatt*.

¹⁴ Geschichtsverein, ed., *Die Revolution von 1848*.

¹⁵ Peter Walter, in Gatz, ed., *Der Diözesanklerus*, 253-263; Leitgöb, *Vom Seelenhirten zum Wegführer*.

Johannes von Geissel, *photograph, c.1860.*
[Leuven, K.U.Leuven, Maurits Sabbebibliotheek:
05:27*GOER 81/2]

F. Hanfstaengl, Ignaz von Döllinger, *photograph,*
c.1860
[Private collection]

of the century were still functioning. They underwent no essential changes until the huge administrative expansion which came after 1950-1960.¹⁶

After the failure of the Frankfurt Parliament, the political mobilisation of the laity in 1848 was channelled mainly into the social field, where associations like the male *Vinzenz-Vereine* (on the model of the French *Conférences de Charité*, founded in 1833 by Antoine Frédéric Ozanam in the spirit of Saint Vincent de Paul) and the female *Elisabeth-Vereine* (named after Saint Elisabeth of Hungary) were active. The problems of early industrialisation and pauperism were perceived as *Soziale Frage* (the 'social question'). The priest Adolf Kolping (1813-1865) founded in 1849 the Cologne *Gesellenverein* (Journeyman's Association) which turned into a highly successful movement and effectively improved the living conditions and the religious and educational standards of journeymen. *Arbeitervereine* (workers' associations) were similarly active, and with the public pronouncements of Bishop Ketteler of Mainz the social question was identified as a problem which needed state intervention and could not simply be remedied

¹⁶ Cf. the example of Münster: Damberg, *Moderne und Milieu*.

by private or ecclesiastical charity. In the social context, the re-foundation of female congregations (mostly under diocesan law) had begun early in the nineteenth century, but gained considerable momentum now. Their fields were education, child care and care for the sick. The evolution of a modern hospital system in Germany would have been impossible without the dedication of these women. In this *catholicisme au féminine* (Claude Langlois) it was not only energetic founder personalities like Katharina Kasper (1820-1898) of the *Arme Dienstmägde Jesu Christi* (the *Dernbacher Schwestern*) who could be active in an ecclesiastical field, but young women in general found an attractive religious and professional alternative to the vicissitudes of married life.¹⁷ A multitude of Franciscan, Dominican, Vincentian and other congregations were active; and their membership rose quickly to about 67,000 sisters in Germany in 1910.

Under the Prussian Constitution of 1850 even male religious orders were allowed (though not in Württemberg or Baden, where ultramontanes craved for “freedom as in Prussia”). In Bavaria the Romantic sympathy of King Ludwig I for the Benedictines had allowed the re-foundation of a dozen monasteries from 1830 onwards. They were expected to run *lycea*, which became important centres of Catholic education (e.g. the abbeys of St Stephan at Augsburg and Metten near Deggendorf). Even where they were not allowed to settle permanently, the Jesuits and Redemptorists were able to take up their missions again after 1850, thus infringing the exclusiveness of pastoral care by secular parish priests. The mission movement was favoured by ultramontane bishops and parish priests as well as patrons from the Catholic nobility who were often at odds with the central government of their respective state.¹⁸

The ultramontane movement had had considerable success in reducing state ‘interference’ in ecclesiastical matters. When the ‘common enemy’ had thus become less important, the internal diversity of the movement became more palpable. The Romantic interest in history had led to the evolution of historicism - a trend shared at least partly by church historians like Döllinger, who began to deconstruct traditional narratives of church history (e.g. his *Papstfabeln des Mittelalters*, 1863). In addition, the confrontation with Enlightenment and German Idealism had not remained without effect on German university theologians like Kuhn at Tübingen (see above). These aberrations from a strict scholastic approach were regarded with scepticism in Mainz and Eichstätt. The Würzburg university faculty had become another centre of neo-scholasticism: here the bishop sent many seminarians to the *Germanicum* for the study of ‘Roman’ theology. Thus, alumni of the *Germanicum* like Joseph Hergenröther (1824-1890) and Heinrich Denzinger (1819-1883) (first editor of the famous *Enchiridion symbolorum ac definitionum* (1854), which assembled the source texts for the construction of the ‘Roman *magisterium*’) were able to dominate the faculty from the 1850s onwards. The tension between ‘Roman’ and ‘German’ theologians became public on

¹⁷ Gatz, ed., *Klöster und Ordensgemeinschaften*; Meiwes, “*Arbeiterinnen des Herrn*”; Zimmermann and Priesching, eds., *Württembergisches Klosterbuch*.

¹⁸ Geschichtsverein, ed., *Kulturkampf*; Lill, *Der Kulturkampf*; Weiß, *Die Redemptoristen in Bayern*; Burkard, “*Volksmissionen und Jugendbünde*”; Heitz, *Volksmission und badischer Katholizismus*.

the occasion of the *Münchener Gelehrtenversammlung* (Munich Congress) of 1863. In his programmatic speech, Döllinger compared scholasticism to an old building beyond repair. In opposition to the backward Roman school, he praised the modern 'scientific' German school, which unlike scholasticism was open to historical research and needed real freedom in order to fulfil its role within the church. After Munich, the split between neo-scholastic and 'German' theologians was obvious.¹⁹ Pius IX widened the gap by his letter *Tuas libenter*, sent to Archbishop Gregor von Scherr (1804-1877) of Munich after the congress. The letter had been inspired by Scherr's predecessor Reisach, who had been promoted (perhaps 'a-moted' would be more to the point) to a cardinalship at the Curia, and demanded the subjection of theology under the Magisterium.

The conflict was also fought out on the field of clerical and lay education, with the alternatives: seminary or state faculty, Catholic university or state university. In the first instance, bishops like Reisach and Ketteler praised the exclusive theological training in a seminary, 'away from the world' and under close episcopal surveillance, as the only truly 'Tridentine' solution. Reisach's seminary at Eichstätt had become a model of ultramontane clerical education before 1848, and Ketteler withdrew his seminarians from the Giessen Faculty of Catholic Theology back to Mainz in 1850. However, the Giessen state Faculty was the only one to be eventually dissolved; the other bishops did not follow Ketteler's example. In the second instance, the project of a Catholic university in Germany was formulated at the 14th *Generalversammlung der katholischen Vereine Deutschland* (General Assembly of the Catholic Associations of Germany) at Aachen in 1862. The motivation for the project came from the perceived discrimination against Catholic laymen at state universities, dominated by Protestants and liberals, and the moral dangers inherent in public, non-religious universities. A Catholic university was seen as the only possible means to do away with academic imparity with the Protestants and with the general Catholic educational inferiority. The University of Louvain, re-established in 1834-1835 as the Catholic University of Belgium, served as a model. Opposition against this project of the Catholic laity came primarily from university theologians like Johannes Ev. Kuhn and Carl Joseph Hefe (1809-1893) at Tübingen. Kuhn argued for the autonomy of the arts and sciences; 'Catholic' chemistry, physics, mechanics etc. were nonsense. For Kuhn the university was not a place of an authoritarian education under clerical surveillance, but a space for 'self-thinking and research'. Catholics should try to succeed at the state universities, and not simply leave them in the hands of the Protestants. The project of the Catholic university failed in the end, mainly for financial reasons, and was realised on a small scale at Eichstätt only in 1980.²⁰

¹⁹ Bischof, *Theologie und Geschichte*.

²⁰ Garhammer, *Seminaridee und Klerusbildung*; Scharfenecker, *Die Katholisch-Theologische*

Fakultät Gießen; Brandt, Eine katholische Universität in Deutschland?; Wolf, Ketzer oder Kirchenlehrer?, 156-167.

In the New German Empire, 1871-1914

The First Vatican Council created the Old Catholic schism in Germany, which robbed the church of a large portion of its not too numerous lay intelligentsia, and served, together with the 1864 *Syllabus errorum*, as a pretext for Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*.²¹ This attempt to re-introduce the pre-1848 state control of the church in Prussia, and the effects of church resistance against it created severe difficulties in diocesan administration and pastoral care. In 1881, of 4,627 Prussian parishes 24% were vacant (without regular parish priest), while 601 parishes were without any priest at all. In Gnesen-Posen with its strong Polish population, 13.2% of the Catholics had no pastoral care.²² In 1878 only three Prussian bishops were in office, the rest deposed, exiled or in prison. Theological faculties continued to work, but numbers of students fell sharply: at Bonn from 169 in 1870 to 88 in 1880, at Breslau from 132 to 65, at Münster from 199 to 75. Besides, all seminaries, theological colleges and minor seminaries in Prussia were closed. Theology students emigrated west and south: from 1873 to 1887, 78 priests for the Cologne archdiocese were ordained in the seminary at Roermond in the Netherlands. Würzburg, Tübingen and Eichstätt were other popular places of refuge. At the same time, Jesuits and Redemptorists were banned from the German Empire (1872-1917) and had to move their houses e.g. to Austria, the Netherlands or England. In Prussia, all orders and congregations, except those for the care of the sick, were suppressed in 1875; many of them went to the USA with its strong population of German Catholic immigrants (numbering about two million persons around 1900). The ordinary training of priests in Prussia could be slowly resumed only after the *Erste Friedensgesetz* (First Law of Peace) in 1886, when the discriminating *Kulturexamen* (literally 'cultural examination') of candidates for ordination was abolished; for the Polish dioceses of Kulm and Gnesen-Posen the seminaries at Posen (Poznan) could be reopened only in 1889. Similar situations could be encountered in Baden (archdiocese Freiburg) and to a lesser degree in Hessen-Darmstadt (diocese Mainz). Württemberg and Bavaria were relatively untouched, though not without confessional polarisation.

The *Kulturkampf* had some lasting secularising effects like the diminution of church influence on schools and the introduction of registry offices and compulsory antecedent civil marriage (until 2009). On the other hand, it brought a political mobilisation of Catholics on a scale unknown before. The Centre Party, founded in 1870, gained 24.8% in the election for the Reichstag (Imperial Parliament) of 1875, amounting to more than 80% of the Catholic vote. The number of Catholic papers doubled between 1870 and 1885: from 126 to 248. Two national centre papers emerged and remained influential until their suppression by the National Socialists: the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* (1868-1941), owned by the Cologne publisher family Bachem, and the more conservative *Germania* (1870-1938) from Berlin, with its priestly editor-in-chief Paul Majunke (1842-1899), a skilled confessional polemicist and typical 'press chap-

²¹ Geschichtsverein, ed., *Kulturkampf*.

²² Gatz, ed., *Der Diözesanklerus*, 105-124.

lain'. The years before 1900 saw the perfection of a veritable Catholic media system in Germany: in addition to the papers and various periodicals there were the printed pastorals of the bishops and the bilingual editions of papal pronouncements. There were also the big Catholic publishing houses: Herder in the first place, but also Pustet, Schönigh, Kirchheim, Aschendorff and many others. Their products comprised popular religious books for use in modest households like the *Kalender für Zeit und Ewigkeit* (first published in 1843) by Alban Stolz, or Goffiné's classic *Hauspostille* (first published 1690 with a multitude of later editions) or the annual *Haus- und Volkskalender* (since 1849) in Rottenburg; but also products for more advanced needs like the Catholic *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (1865; 12th edition 1911) by Gustav Brugier or the critical biography *Goethe* (1879-1882) by Alexander Baumgartner SJ (1841-1910). There were the Catholic *belles-lettres* that could be read without danger for religion and morals like the Catholic epic *Dreizehnlinden* (1887) by Friedrich Wilhelm Weber (1813-1894) which saw 200 editions at Schönigh. This wealth of production was presented in special Catholic review journals like the *Literarische Handweiser* (1862-1931) or the *Literarische Rundschau* (1881-1914).

Parallel to the political mobilisation in the Centre Party and the outreach in a Catholic media system, the organisation of Catholics in social, charitable and religious associations saw an unparalleled intensification between 1880 and 1914. Mainstream German social Catholicism, which opted for concrete reforms within the framework of a liberal society and a moderate capitalism, had its mass organisation in the *Volksverein für das katholische Deutschland* (seat: Mönchen-Gladbach). The idea of the *Volksverein* (People's Association) came from Ludwig Windthorst (1812-1891), the leader of the Centre Party, who wanted to create a Catholic counterpart to the social democratic movement. The *Volksverein* reached Catholics of all classes, counting 180,000 members in 1900 and peaking with 800,000 in 1914. It organised social instruction on a broad scale which helped recruit leaders for the Catholic unions and the Centre Party. Besides, the *Volksverein* also did apologetic work by distributing tracts and booklets on religious questions, so as to enable workers to defend their faith in discussions.

Social mobilisation and organisation coincided with an intensification in the religious praxis of Catholics (church attendance on Sundays and reception of sacraments). The entire process shows analogies with the 'pillarisation' of society in the Netherlands, and has been described in recent research as the formation of a Catholic 'milieu'.²³ The overall trend of a Catholic intensification of religious life and socio-political mobilisation, however, varied from region to region: in rural Bavaria (diocese of Regensburg) for instance, the traditional Catholic way of life (*Lebenswelt*) simply persisted whereas in rural Westphalia around Münster a mobilisation was effected. An explanation for this is offered by the 'cleavage-theory': in rural Bavaria the cleavage factors of state-church conflict (*Kulturkampf*) and conflict between centre and periph-

²³ Arbeitskreis, "Konfession und Cleavages"; Holzem, "Das katholische Milieu".

ery (western provinces of Prussia versus Berlin) were lacking. Similarly, the formation of a 'milieu' depended on a certain 'critical mass' of Catholics in the cities: in Bochum, the gap between labour and capital and that between state and church were effective, whereas in Prussian industrial cities with very few Catholics they were not. With the lack of a serious state-church conflict in Bavaria the Catholic workers in Munich favoured the social democrats instead of the Centre Party.

The attitudes of Catholics towards the new German nation state were ambivalent. Before the Prussian victory over Austria and its allies in 1866 their mental orientation had clearly been directed towards Vienna and not towards Berlin. The Prussian occupation of Hanover, Nassau, Hessen-Kassel and Frankfurt was regarded with dismay by many Catholics. Bishop Ketteler of Mainz and Bishop Blum of Limburg, however, were quite happy to accept the new situation as they hailed the relative freedom of the church in Prussia. The unifying effects of the war against France in 1870-1871 were also felt among Catholics, although their religious interpretation differed from Protestant Germans: for the latter France was punished as godless and Catholic at the same time, whereas the German Catholics thought that the French Catholics received the just reward only for their religious decadence.²⁴ The Catholic historical construction of the German identity remained different, too: Luther as national hero of a "Holy Evangelical Empire of the German Nation" (as famously formulated by the Protestant theologian and anti-Semitic social politician Adolf Stoecker (1835-1909)) was unacceptable. Catholics favoured Saint Boniface instead, as the 'apostle of Germany' and father of a Christian nation.²⁵ The hugely successful charity for diaspora Catholics was aptly named *Bonifatius-Verein* (founded in 1849), whereas the Protestants had struck a more militant note with their *Gustav-Adolf-Werk* (already founded by 1832 and named after the Swedish king and 'saviour' of German Protestantism). After the disillusionment during the *Kulturkampf* the mental need for Catholic integration in the Reich was felt more and more keenly; Catholics wanted to have their fair share in an economically, politically and scientifically successful nation. The Fulda bishops' conference for instance demanded Catholic missions in the German *Schutzgebiete* (de facto colonies) and simultaneously the *Afrikaverein deutscher Katholiken* was founded in 1888 under the protectorate of the archbishop of Cologne. Even the Centre Party paid a posthumous tribute at the grave of Bismarck. The nationalisation of episcopate, clergy and laity made progress under Wilhelm II, who had some pro-Catholic tendencies. Male Catholic orders, e.g. the Steyl Missionaries and the Missionary Benedictines were allowed to take over missions in the new German colonies. On the other hand, Polish Catholics found help in the episcopate against state efforts towards their complete Germanization.²⁶

Apart from the national loyalty, Catholics were often strongly attached to their 'local' monarchs: this is evident for Bavaria (with the Catholic Wittelsbach dynasty) and Württemberg, where the *Kulturkampf* had not been grave and where bishops

²⁴ Rak, *Krieg, Nation und Konfession*.

²⁵ Weichlein, "Religion und Nation". Cf. Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*;

Stambolis, "Nationalisierung trotz Ultramontanisierung".

²⁶ Gatz, ed., *Kirche und Muttersprache*.

and prominent Catholic professors usually received personal nobilitation (i.e. ennoblement, therefore: *von Döllinger*, *von Hefele*, *von Kuhn* etc.). Even in Baden with its strong polarisation and the special situation of a Catholic majority in the population and a Protestant dynasty, the *Großherzog* (archduke) was a popular figure.

Theologically, the religious crisis around 1900 was echoed in the *Reformkatholizismus* ('Reform Catholicism'-movement), which strove to integrate Catholicism into Wilhelmine society. The movement marked also a tendency towards internal pluralisation in German Catholicism and a modification of the ultramontane agenda. The effects of Vatican I and the Old-Catholic schism had severely damaged German Catholic university theology. Entire faculties like Bonn had been paralysed; others like Tübingen sought refuge in a self-imposed sterility and kept clear of controversial questions. The excommunication of Döllinger was a warning signal, and only in the 1890s did the field begin to come to life again. A leading figure was Herman Schell (1850-1906) who taught dogmatics and apologetics at Würzburg. Schell had a strong Thomist orientation, but worked for a modernisation of scholasticism, in order to make it more effective against monist tendencies in the *Zeitgeist*. He tried to integrate modern concepts of freedom and personality in theology and developed a dynamic notion of God as 'purest act', 'self-ground' and 'self-cause' (*Selbstgrund* and *Selbstursache*). Historical criticism (as found with Alfred Loisy in France) remained foreign to Schell, but he tried to present the traditional Christological notions in an actualised form according to contemporary cultural optimism and its stress on 'fresh vitality': Christ as 'vigorous personality' and 'fountainhead of the Divine which lives in modern culture'. Here, Schell was very close to contemporary Catholic 'Americanism' and its slogan "Church and Age Unite!". With regard to eschatology, Schell opted for milder solutions, which would allow for post-mortem penitence for 'deadly sins' - a rather progressive view in times when the material existence of hell fire was upheld by scholastic theologians like Joseph Bautz (1843-1917) at Münster.²⁷

Schell tried to answer the fears and sensibilities of educated Catholics (*Bildungsbürger*), where he made a great impact.²⁸ Schell's breakaway from ultramontane cultural dualism became even more visible in his programmatic booklet *Der Katholizismus als Princip des Fortschritts* (Catholicism as Principle of Progress, 1897). In the context of a lively debate on 'Catholic inferiority' Schell and other reformers like the church historians Franz Xaver Kraus (1840-1901) and Albert Ehrhard (1862-1940) wanted to demonstrate the potential for modernity in Catholicism: this comprised the demand for free academic research, for theological studies at the universities rather than in 'Tridentine seminaries', and for a disentanglement of the all too close connection between Catholicism and Centre Party politics. Church historians like Ehrhard and

²⁷ Graf and Renz, eds., *Umstrittene Moderne*; Blaschke and Kuhleemann, eds., *Religion im Kaiserreich*; Weiss, *Der Modernismus in Deutschland*; Arnold, *Kleine Geschichte des Modernismus*; Hausberger, *Herman Schell*.

²⁸ Dowe, *Auch Bildungsbürger*. Similar attempts were made in England by George Tyrrell and St. George Jackson Mivart ('Happiness in hell').

Sebastian Merkle (1862-1945) opted for a revision of the ultramontane view of history: the Middle Ages should serve no longer as an ideal for all things Catholic. Renaissance Humanism and Catholic Enlightenment were rehabilitated and confessional polemics against the Reformation and Luther reduced in order to facilitate Catholic integration in the Reich. In the end, the reform Catholics did believe in Catholic superiority over Protestantism, but aimed at demonstrating this in a fair competition. Their option for inculturation brought sometimes with it a certain affinity with *völkisch* nationalism and liberal Protestant anti-Judaism; on the other hand, they were less prone to ultramontane aversions against freemasons and 'Jewish capitalism'.²⁹

Reform Catholicism was not highly organised but internally diverse; loose personal networks which reached out to similar movements of 'liberal Catholicism' in Italy, France, England and the USA were dominant. The *Kraus-Gesellschaft* (Kraus-Association, named after the liberal Catholic Franz Xaver Kraus, who died in 1901) with its journal *Das 20. Jahrhundert* failed to unite the entire movement. More important was the cultural journal *Hochland* (1903-1941; 1946-1971), founded by the layman Carl Muth, a protagonist of the *katholische Literaturstreit* which was waged for and against the confessional character of literature. Muth opted for more literary freedom, though his outlook was not decidedly modern: Schiller and Goethe remained the classic models for him (still a comparatively progressive opinion in German Catholicism). *Hochland* tried to present all fields of culture and science and remained a formative influence on educated Catholics. It was nearly put on the Index in 1911.³⁰

Although the bishops of Bamberg and Passau signed the appeal for a memorial of their friend Schell, deceased in 1906 after continued attacks on his orthodoxy, Reform Catholicism met - on the whole - with episcopal scepticism. Bishop Leopold Haffner (1829-1899) of Mainz had denounced Schell at the Roman Curia, where his main works were put on the Index in 1899. Other prominent adversaries were the bishops of Rottenburg and Trier, Paul Wilhelm von Keppler (1852-1926) and Michael Felix Korum (1840-1921). Keppler's public polemic against *Margarinekatholizismus* ('margarine Catholicism') in 1902 became famous; it was inspired by the conservative cultural pessimism of the *völkisch* author Julius Langbehn. The crisis escalated with the Roman measures against modernism after 1907. Critical church historians and historians of dogma like Joseph Schnitzer (1859-1939) were especially vulnerable. Careers within the church were ended or - as in the famous case of Franz Joseph Dölger (1879-1940) - led into other directions, away from theology proper and on more secure and positivistic fields like Dölger's project 'Antiquity and Christianity' with its trend towards cultural

²⁹ Baumeister, *Parität und katholische Inferiorität*; Landersdorfer, "Hie Staatsschule, dort Kirchengeschule"; Hürten, "Karl Muths 'Hochland' in der Vorkriegszeit"; Blaschke, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus*.

³⁰ Haustein, *Liberal-katholische Publizistik*; Arnold, *Katholizismus als Kulturmacht*; Schmidt, "Handlanger der Vergänglichkeit"; Osinski, *Katholizismus und deutsche Literatur*; Merlio, "Carl Muth et la revue 'Hochland'"; Weitlauff, "Modernismus litterarius"; Busemann, "Haec pugna verum ipsam religionem tangit".

history. The Bonn New Testament scholar Fritz Tillmann (1874-1953) changed to moral theology after his reception of literary criticism had been complained about by the Roman Congregation of the Consistory. With the introduction of the anti-modernist oath in 1910, the existence of theological state faculties was endangered. The liberal university establishment and the governments initially refused to accept theologians who had sworn the oath. The episcopate, however, was anxious to preserve the status quo and to avoid another catastrophe like that after Vatican I; Pope Pius X eventually exempted the German professors from the oath. The intellectual problems of 'modernism' remained unsolved, but cropped up again - on a theologically lower level and in a transformed manner - in the various 'movements' (youth, liturgy, ecumenism), after the First World War.

In spite of these difficulties Catholic theology participated in the boom of 'German science' around 1900. Institutionally, 'seminars' were created, both in the sense of specialist libraries with studying facilities within the faculties (as in the splendid new university buildings of Freiburg and Würzburg) and as a new form of teaching, by which the students could be trained in a critical approach towards source documents and their interpretation. A prominent example for the fruitfulness of this innovation were the *Veröffentlichungen aus dem kirchenhistorischen Seminar München* (publications of the seminar for ecclesiastical history at Munich University), edited by Alois Knöpfler (1847-1921), where hopeful young theologians published editions and critical studies. In his speech in celebration of the emperor's birthday in 1907, Adolf Harnack (1851-1930), the prominent liberal Protestant church historian, praised the general scientific progress in Catholic theology as a hopeful sign for an interconfessional détente within the German nation. Harnack singled out Franz Wieland's (1872-1957) critical work on the historical development of the sacrificial character of Mass - which helped to bring Wieland into grave ecclesiastical troubles. Although many of the young talents were thwarted by anti-modernism, the overall innovation persisted. New 'scientific' journals like the *Theologische Revue* (founded in 1902 and modelled on the Protestant *Theologische Literaturzeitung*) or the *Biblische Zeitschrift* (founded in 1903) helped to intensify communication and mutual critique. New theological disciplines emancipated themselves and were institutionalised: *Missionswissenschaft* (missiology) was established as an ordinary chair at Münster in 1914. Its first incumbent, the Alsatian Joseph Schmidlin (1876-1944), was indeed the founder of this new branch in Catholic theology and his seminar at Münster served as a model for similar institutions around the world. Before the background of German colonialism, the project had been favoured by lay Catholics, the episcopate and the Prussian government alike. Christian archaeology as a science had been promoted in Germany by the liberal Catholic Franz Xaver Kraus, with his close contacts to Italy. After Kraus' death in 1901, his library and legacy were used for the creation of a *Seminar für Christliche Archäologie* at Freiburg Theological Faculty. His pupil Joseph Sauer (1872-1949), an important protagonist of Christian iconography, became the first incumbent of the ordinary chair founded in 1916. The impact of 'scientific' theology can also be measured by the increase in doctorates. The university faculties conferred doctorates, which were canonical and

state degrees at the same time. Thus, Bonn, Freiburg, Munich, Münster, Tübingen and Würzburg were attractive centres of qualification. In Freiburg, for instance, 209 theological doctorates were conferred between 1870 and 1914 (compared with 60 between 1846 and 1870).³¹

In addition, Catholic chairs for history and philosophy (later called *Weltanschauungsprofessuren*) were established in the philosophical faculties of some universities, and many future priests acquired a doctorate there - often with prominent professors like the historian Heinrich Finke (1855-1938) at Freiburg or the philosopher Georg von Hertling (1843-1919) at Munich. Even the monastic and mendicant orders began to join in this movement in order to qualify their future lecturers. Thus, apart from the university professors a huge reservoir of ordained doctors of theology and/or philosophy was available. These men combined the pursuit of scientific interest with their pastoral work. A monument to their zeal is the *Kirchliches Handlexikon. Ein Nachschlagewerk über das Gesamtgebiet der Theologie und ihrer Hilfswissenschaften*, edited in two large volumes with almost 5,000 columns by Michael Buchberger in 1907-1912. The successor of this *Handlexikon* was the *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (10 vols., 1930-1938) which established itself as the leading Catholic theological encyclopaedia (second edition 1957-1968 by Karl Rahner, third edition 1993-2001 by Walter Kasper). Already in 1902, Franz Xaver Funk (1840-1907), a leading critical church historian of his time, could sum up the success of Catholic theology in Germany rather assertively and with a certain cultural nationalism: "On the entire field of theology a higher scientific activity was developed [in Germany after 1815]. It is sustained by the theological faculties at the universities, to which other institutes of learning [e.g. the Bavarian *lycea*] have since been added. The opposition to Protestantism proved to be a strong incentive; and although this contact has sometimes been not without disadvantages, on the whole far more good for faith and science came out of it. The Romance peoples, who had held the first place in this field before, were now left behind by Germany. [...] They lack the theological faculties, which have shown themselves as so beneficial in Germany. In these countries the clergy is educated almost entirely in seminaries, and these institutes [...] proved to be no places of scientific research and work."³²

Apart from these overall theological developments it is difficult to generalise about reform in 'the German Catholic Church' before 1914. The episcopal conferences, which became more regular and important in these years, are a possible focus. After the unique event of the national conference in 1848, the Bavarian bishops met regularly from 1850 at the *Freisinger Bischofskonferenz*. Those from Prussia and the smaller German states did so from 1867 at the *Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz*. A second national

³¹ Weiß, *Der Modernismus in Deutschland*; Schepers, "Widerspruch und Wissenschaft"; Wolf and Arnold, eds., *Die katholisch-theologischen Disziplinen*; Müller, *Joseph Schmidlin*; Arnold, *Katholizismus als Kulturmacht*; Müller, *Fünfhundert Jahre theologische Promotion an der Universität Freiburg i. Br.*

³² Kany, "A Century of Catholic Theology"; Franz Xaver Funk, *Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte* (1902), 587, cit. after Wolf, "Der Historiker ist kein Prophet", 86. Cf. Arnold, "Konfessionalismus und katholische kirchenhistorische Forschung".

conference was held in 1905, but was established permanently only in 1933, when National Socialism made the need for joint decisions more urgent. A look at the protocols of the *Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz* shows a variety of topics that touch on the question of internal ecclesiastical reform.³³

For example, the establishment of new parishes was apparently a main concern of the bishops, especially in the industrial Rhine/Ruhr areas.³⁴ The background is easily explained. The population in the area of the Deutsche Reich increased from 31.7 million in 1850 to 58 million in 1910 (the percentage of Catholics rose only slightly from 36.21% in 1871 to 38.99% in 1910). Mobilisation and urbanisation were concomitant effects of industrialisation. In 1907, 48% of the population no longer lived in their place of birth. This created pressing problems in the growing urban parishes. After the *Kulturkampf* a regular programme for the building of new churches began. As the income of the financially autonomous parishes from their local church tax did not suffice, diocesan offertories were held. In addition, under the presidency of Cardinal Georg von Kopp (1837-1914) the *Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz* made obligatory the formation of parish federations (*Gesamtverbände*) which received the right to raise church taxes, thus putting an end to parish autonomy and creating a system of subsidy for financially weaker parishes. At the same time a diocesan rate for church tax was fixed and an inter-diocesan assistance fund created. It was not only the financial side of pastoral expansion which posed problems; the double juridical difficulty (canon law and state law) of the founding of new parishes had to be overcome. Therefore, apart from the official foundation of a new parish or parish-vicariate (*Pfarrvikarie*) by canonical separation from its 'mother', a variety of models for the creation of semi-dependent *Filialkirchen* (daughter churches) was developed.

The new situation was not only dealt with in financial and legal ways; in 1911 the *Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz* discussed pastoral care in the big cities in a comprehensive sense as a new challenge. Archbishop Nörber of Freiburg presented a new concept of city pastoral organisation: apart from new parishes and vicariates he proposed detailed card files on the faithful in order to facilitate systematic pastoral visits to all Catholic households. A lay apostolate in the strict sense was not envisaged, but in the extension of the associations (*Vereine*) he saw an important help for pastoral care. It was therefore only logical that the bishops tried to establish more control over and more coordination of the Catholic associations. This applied for example to the various mission associations, founded by laymen (*Franz-Xaver-Verein*, *Kindheit-Jesu Verein*, *Bonifatius-Verein*). The *Charitasverband für das katholische Deutschland* founded by prelate Lorenz Werthmann (1858-1921) in 1897 was acknowledged by the conference in 1916 as the official umbrella organisation for all diocesan *Caritas* (charitable) committees.

The importance of the social question for pastoral care was another main concern of the bishops. Already in 1890 Franz Hitze (1851-1921), co-founder of the *Volks-*

³³ Gatz, ed., *Akten der Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz*.

³⁴ Id., ed., *Die Bistümer und ihre Pfarreien*.

The Catholic associations greet the dignitaries at the *Katholikentag* at Mainz in 1911, *photograph*.
[Leuven, KADOC]

verein, had presented a memorandum to the *Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz* which asked for a special training of priests in this field. A deep division inside the conference was created by the problem of inter-confessional Christian unions which were favoured by the *Volksverein* (the *Mönchengladbacher* or *Kölner Richtung*) and the left wing of the Centre Party, whereas Cardinal Kopp and Bishop Korum (representing the *Berliner* or *Trierer Richtung*) championed the cause of the strictly confessional *Fachabteilungen* in the Catholic workers associations (*Arbeitervereine*). The latter were mostly led by priests and dependent on the hierarchy, whereas the *Kölner Richtung* aimed at a relative independence from the bishops in questions of social politics. Thus, the problem of 'integralism' was raised, which was central in the latter stages of the modernist crisis under Pope Pius X. The pope favoured the *Berliner Richtung*, but under strong political pressure from Germany his encyclical *Singulari quadam* (1912) made possible a toleration of the Christian unions, while the confessional *Arbeitervereine* were still clearly favoured by the pope. On the whole, the majority of German bishops were successful in moderating Roman influence in these years, thus saving social Catholicism and Christian democracy from the grave difficulties they had to undergo in Italy and France.³⁵

³⁵ Brack, *Deutscher Episkopat und Gewerkschaftsstreit*.

Apart from the predominant interest in educational matters (confessional primary schools and religious instruction) the conference had to deal with a variety of questions that corresponded with the differentiation and modernisation of society in general. For instance, higher mobility increased the 'problem' of mixed marriages and their validity. Here the conference was successful in obtaining papal assent (1906) for an extension of the *declaratio benedictina* (1741) which had suspended the strict Tridentine rules for Germany. This very generous solution was replaced by a stricter policy only with the new *Codex Iuris Canonici* of 1917. From then on and well into the 1960s the old ultramontane 'battle against mixed marriages' (*Kampf gegen die Mischehe*) was fought more fiercely again. Mixed marriages were regarded as creating religious 'indifferentism' and as endangering the existence of small diaspora parishes.

War and Reform, 1914-1918

182 The First World War was interpreted by the German bishops as an occasion for the religious purification and self-reform of society. National integration was paramount, and support for the 'just cause' unanimous.³⁶ With self-confidence the Jesuit Peter Lippert (1879-1936) proclaimed that the edifying national solidarity and religious awakening at the beginning of war in August 1914 had also been prepared for by the pastoral and educational work of German Catholicism, whose priests had, in spite of all difficulties (*Kulturkampf!*), preserved the people mentally sane and physically fit and whose patriotic political and social activity in the associations had contributed to national education.³⁷ National unity was thus interpreted as a success of ecclesiastical reform and mobilisation. In this sense, the war was a grand opportunity for mission and outreach. The *Militärseelsorge* (pastoral care for soldiers) was well organised: Prussia had a *Feldpropst* (a military vicar-general with the rank of a titular bishop). In Bavaria this function had to be fulfilled by the archbishop of Munich-Freising. The numbers for Bavaria are interesting. Between 1914 and 1918, 401 priests served as army chaplains, while 1,354 theology students and candidates for the priesthood served in the army, many of them as medical orderlies. A disproportionately large number of them were killed: 504 (37.4% as compared to 15% in the army in general).³⁸ The students often rose quickly to become officers - with effects on their mentality that persisted during their later priesthood or episcopate (a prominent example is the later bishop of Münster, Michael

³⁶ Geschichtsverein, ed., *Christentum und Krieg in der Moderne*; Scheidgen, *Die Deutsche Bischöfe im Ersten Weltkrieg*.

³⁷ Peter Lippert, "Weltkrieg und religiöses Bekenntnis", *Stimmen der Zeit*, 88 (1915), 4-10, here 7,

cited after Schreiner, "Helm ab zum Ave Maria".

³⁸ The percentage of fallen theology students was even higher in other places: Tübingen 55%; Paderborn 31.8%. Gatz, ed., *Der Diözesanklerus*, 145.

Keller (1896-1961)).³⁹ The theological faculties and seminaries tried to stay in contact with their students, not only by letter, but also with tracts and booklets.⁴⁰

Theologically, the war created new opportunities for national ecumenism. During the Reformation Jubilee of 1917 a joint committee of Protestant and Catholic (church) historians (amongst others Harnack, Karl Holl (1866-1926), Sebastian Merkle and Martin Spahn (1875-1945)) was formed in order to overcome the confessional stereotypes concerning the interpretation of Reformation and Counter-Reformation (or Catholic Reformation). Catholic war theology itself became less triumphant from 1915 onwards and centred on the meaning of suffering. On the whole, the pronouncements of the German episcopate were more restrained than those of their Austrian colleagues.⁴¹ The 'spectacle' of an open clash with the French episcopate, which had backed the propaganda work *La Guerre Allemande et le Catholicisme* (1915) and its interpretation of the war as an anti-Catholic Prussian aggression, was narrowly avoided and the task of anti-propaganda delegated to a working group of Catholic theologians, philosophers, historians and Centre Party politicians.⁴² Christian universalism did not become entirely extinct, though reservations regarding the war were rare among the Catholic elites.⁴³

'A New Time'

In contrast to Protestantism, the downfall of the German monarchies in 1918 left the Catholic Church institutionally untouched; unwavering feelings of allegiance to the monarchy were more or less confined to Bavaria. But implicitly, many dioceses had to 're-invent' themselves in terms of their identity, as their *raison d'être* had referred directly to the nineteenth-century monarchies. The solution was often inner mobilisation and further episcopalisation.⁴⁴ The Weimar Constitution brought the necessary 'liberty' for these developments, while preserving the privileged legal status of the churches. The inner mobilisation of the dioceses could profit from the anti-individualistic 'Zeitgeist' after 1918 and its predilection for the 'objective' which favoured the Catholic Church as a 'given' institution. The *Liturgische Bewegung* (liturgical movement), which strove to facilitate the 'active participation' (*actuosa participatio*: Pope Pius X) of the faithful in the Latin Mass (for instance by the German-Latin missal of Anselm Schott OSB) and the *Jugendbewegung* (youth movement) with its anti-bourgeois attitude and its option for 'freshness' and 'vitality' were amalgamated in German Catholicism by the

³⁹ On him Damberg, *Moderne und Milieu*.

⁴⁰ For instance Heinrich Finke, ed., *Kraft aus der Höhe. Ein Pfingstgruß ehemaliger und jetziger Universitätsprofessoren an ihre Kommilitonen im Felde*. Kempten-Munich, 1915; cf. Arnold, *Katholizismus als Kulturmacht*, 311.

⁴¹ Holzapfel, "Krieg als 'heilsame Kreuzes- und Leidenschule'"; cf. Krumeich, "Gott mit uns"; Achleitner, *Gott im Krieg*.

⁴² The so-called 'Arbeitsausschuss zur Verteidigung deutscher und katholischer Interessen im Weltkrieg'; Scheidgen, *Die Deutsche Bischöfe im Ersten Weltkrieg*, 258-269; Arnold, *Katholizismus als Kulturmacht*, 310-317.

⁴³ Fuchs, *Vom Segen des Krieges*.

⁴⁴ Arnold, "Bistumsjubiläen und Identitätsstiftung".

theologian Romano Guardini, who gained influence in the *Bund Quickborn* (Quickborn Youth). The renewed perception of the church as *Gemeinschaft* ('community') became essential for the post-war generation of clergy and the educated laity. This coincided with a theological reorientation. The Barthian turn away from liberal Protestantism had its analogy in Catholic theology, where the old ultramontane anti-liberalism was now amalgamated with the anti-individualism of disillusioned 'modernists'. A typical product of this process was Karl Adam's (1876-1966) *Das Wesen des Katholizismus* (The Spirit of Catholicism, 1924) with its vitalistic and communitarian orientation.⁴⁵

The liturgical movement gained additional momentum by the refoundation of monasteries after 1918, when the last obstacles against male orders and contemplative orders were removed. In Württemberg, for instance, the old Benedictine abbeys of Neresheim (1919) and Weingarten (1922) could be resettled. Bishop Keppler of Rottenburg and his colleagues favoured this 'holy Catholic spring' (*ver sacrum catholicum*) of the early Weimar Republic. On the diocesan level, purely clerical synods under episcopal control were held according to the new Codex of 1917 (e.g. Cologne 1919, Rottenburg 1919) which dealt with pastoral (e.g. catechism) and administrative (e.g. payment of parish priests) problems. In the diocese of Cologne in 1919-1920 several regional *Katholikentage* demonstrated the strength of organised Catholicism⁴⁶, even in times of crisis, when a national *Katholikentag* was not yet possible (the first after the war was held at Frankfurt in 1921). Eugenio Pacelli (from 1917 nuncio for Bavaria, after 1920 for the entire Deutsche Reich) was much impressed by the high degree of organisation in German Catholicism.⁴⁷ His aim, however, was to conform the German situation to the Roman ideals of theological neo-scholasticism, the centralistic *Codex Iuris Canonici* of 1917, and of the hierarchically controlled *Actio Catholica* (from 1922).

⁴⁵ Krieg, *Romano Guardini*; Ruster, *Die verlorene Nützlichkeit der Religion*; Raffelt, "Die Erneuerung der katholischen Theologie"; Wolf, "Der Historiker ist kein Prophet"; Arnold, "Konfessionalismus und

katholische kirchenhistorische Forschung"; Krieg, *Karl Adam*; cf. Bucher, *Hitlers Theologie*.

⁴⁶ Klöcker, *Katholikentage im Erzbistum Köln*.

⁴⁷ Wolf and Unterburger, eds., *Eugenio Pacelli*.