ABSTRACT

ONE MAN’S STRUGGLE:
PIUS IX AND THE CHANGE IN PAPAL AUTHORITY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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This thesis examines papal authority in the nineteenth century in three sections. The first examines papal issues within the world at large, specifically those that focus on the role of the Church within the political state. The second section concentrates on the authority of Pius IX on the Italian peninsula in the mid-nineteenth century. The third and final section of the thesis focuses on the inevitable loss of the Papal States within the context of the Vatican Council of 1869-1870. Select papal encyclicals from 1859 to 1871 and the official documents of the Vatican Council of 1869-1870 are examined in light of their relevance to the change in the nature of papal authority. Supplementing these changes is a variety of seminal secondary sources from noted papal scholars. Ultimately, this thesis reveals that this change in papal authority became a point of contention within the Church in the twentieth century.
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A Thesis

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I. Introduction

Europe in the nineteenth century was a continent teeming with discord, dissension, and uncertainty. While Austrian Prince Klemens von Metternich’s Concert of Europe attempted to dictate the state of European affairs, the Great Powers could no longer ignore the nationalistic cries of their inhabitants. Complicating this further was the Industrial Revolution in England and France that allowed Western Europe to advance more quickly than its neighbors in the east, specifically Austria and Russia. The economies of these two antiquated and absolute powers relied heavily on the labor of serfs and peasants, which caused these lower classes to constantly clamor for representation and deliverance. The clamor for representative government reached its apex in 1848 with widespread revolutions sweeping the Continent. Despite the brutal suppression of most of these revolutions by absolute governments, one lasting effect was the prevalence of three strong and enduring ideas: nationalism, liberalism, and rationalism.

After the revolutions of 1848, the Italian peninsula found itself in a unique and precarious position. The constitutional monarchy of Sardinia-Piedmont yearned to unite the peninsula under its guidance, but could not act militarily without compromising its position with Austria, the overlords of the Italian provinces of Lombardy and Venetia since the Congress of Vienna. Fortunately, the Italian War of 1859 between France and Austria provided the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont with the opportunity to begin the process of unifying Italy as it was able to secure Lombardy from Austria. Although the 1859 Peace of Villafranca between France and Austria would halt this phase for the time, Victor Emmanuel II, king of Sardinia-Piedmont, witnessed a partial realization of his dream of achieving unification when the provinces of Tuscany, Bologna, Modena, Parma, and Romagna voted to join with his kingdom in 1860. Furthermore, the military expedition of 1860 by Giuseppe Garibaldi secured the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies for Turin. In March of 1861, the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont controlled most of the Italian peninsula, declared itself the Kingdom of Italy, and turned its attention to the final two traditional yet still separate lands of Italy. The first, Venetia, would be annexed in 1866 as a result of Italy’s alliance with Prussia during the Austro-Prussian War, but the second, Rome, would not be added until 1870 when Italian soldiers entered the Eternal
City. It is the response of the papacy to the events culminating in this final annexation that is the subject of this thesis.

In 1846, the College of Cardinals voted for Giovanni Mastai-Ferretti to succeed the deceased Pope Gregory XVI. He took the name Pius IX. Initially a liberal minded pope, Pius granted a constitution, the Statuto, to his subjects, but Roman revolutionaries forced him to flee to Gaeta in 1848 and this resulted in a profound change in his secular and ecclesiastical policies, which became increasingly conservative, until his death in 1878. It was during the pontificate of Pius that a series of encyclicals\(^1\) were issued that vehemently condemned the nationalistic actions of Victor Emmanuel II and his prime minister, Count Camillo Benso di Cavour. These encyclicals culminated with the opening of the First Vatican Council in 1869, which yielded the doctrine of papal infallibility. Until the end, Pius IX fought to keep the Patrimony of Peter from becoming part of unified Italy and, although Rome was eventually incorporated into Italy, the Roman Question would not be ultimately settled until the Lateran Treaty in 1929 between Pope Pius XI and Benito Mussolini.

This thesis is an examination of papal authority in the nineteenth century. In order to provide a more complete examination of this issue, the text is divided into three sections. The first examines papal issues within the world at large, specifically those that focus on the role of the Church within the state. The second section concentrates on the authority of Pius IX on the Italian peninsula in the mid-nineteenth century. Catholic pronouncements, such as papal encyclicals, provide the evidence used to illustrate Pius’s perceived prestige during this time. The third and final section of the thesis focuses on the inevitable loss of the Papal States within the context of the Vatican Council of 1869-1870. Select papal encyclicals from 1859 to 1871 and the official documents issued at the Vatican Council of 1869-1870 are important to this central idea in light of their relevance to political issues facing the papacy at the time. Further, these documents reveal, through their official language, ideas that fortify Pius’s traditional belief of the superiority of his position in relation to other heads of state. These original

\(^1\) According to the Catholic Encyclopedia (http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05413a.htm), an encyclical is “nothing more than a circular letter…[and] are generally concerned with matters which affect the welfare of the Church at large.” It is important to note also that although “the pope should have given to any of his utterances the form of an encyclical does not necessarily constitute it an ex-cathedra pronouncement and invest it with infallible authority.”
pronouncements not only tell the story of one man’s struggle against modernism and nationalism, but also reveal how he manipulated the institutions of the Roman Catholic Church in order to provide the papacy with a weapon to protect his traditional political status. The documents of the Vatican Council, while veiled in the language of the Church, nonetheless allowed the pope a final assault on the forces of nationalism and modernity. Supplementing these primary sources are a variety of relevant and seminal secondary sources regarding this topic by such noted papal historians as JB Bury, EEY Hales, Dom Cuthbert Butler, and Frank J. Coppa. It is important to note that throughout this thesis, many references to the unification process of modern Italy appear as well as do references to Napoleon III’s Imperial France and the Habsburg Empire of Austria. These are meant to provide context as these formative events acted as immediate catalysts of change and represent the challenges to Pius’s perceived political hegemony in European affairs. While these topics are important in many regards to the ideas of nationalism and modernism, they act as a side note in a discussion of papal authority and therefore will remain secondary in its exploration.

A second note of important to a more complete understanding of the ideas contained in this thesis is the necessity of defining certain terms that appear throughout the text. In order to ensure the accuracy of the definitions of these terms within the context of Catholicism and the papacy, it was necessary to consult the 2003 edition of the New Catholic Encyclopedia (NCE). The first and most important term is primacy, which the NCE defines as “that full, supreme, and universal authority over all the bishops and faithful of the Church which belongs by divine right to the bishop of Rome as the successor of St. Peter, who received such a primacy among the Apostles directly from Christ” and therefore is used within the context of Church administration. A second and similar term is authority, which by itself is defined as “a moral power that exercises an essential function as a cause of united action.” Fortunately, the NCE distinguishes between various types of authority, including two that are essential to this thesis. An aspect of Civil or Temporal Authority is the Gelasian Doctrine, which “holds that human society is subject to dual organization and control, based on the difference in kind of the

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2 The New Catholic Encyclopedia. 2nd ed., s.v. “primacy.”
3 The New Catholic Encyclopedia. 2nd ed., s.v. “authority.”
values that need to be secured” with “spiritual interests and salvation being…the concern of the Church” and “secular interests [being] the maintenance of the peace, order, and justice.” Ecclesiastical Authority, in contrast, is traditionally defined as arising “from the need of pruning the exuberance of Christian activity and from the need of maintaining free from aberration doctrines not passively received sometime in the past but doctrines constantly pondered and daily being reduced to principles of action.” To simplify, ecclesiastic authority is not to be used to rule the Church, but to keep its focus and adherence on the Gospels. Throughout the remainder of this thesis, the proceeding definitions are applied when these terms appear.

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II. Primary Sources

The first documents consulted for this thesis were select encyclicals issued during the papacy of Pius IX. These act as the foundation for this study of papal authority and the resulting political ramifications. The word “encyclical” derives from two Greek words, “en, in, and kyklos, a circle.”

Claudia Carlen defines an encyclical letter (letterae encyclicae) as “a document…addressed to the bishops of the world but intended through them for all the faithful.” While there are some encyclicals that have historically been directed at the masses, such as *Pacem in Terris* by John XIII, these documents are specifically directed to the bishops as these individuals are aware of the character of their flocks and thus more sufficiently equipped to apply the precepts of these documents more effectively. Due to the idea of apostolic succession, the mandates of the Church act as an extension of its power of *magisterium ordinarium* and the sovereign power of the pope extends to four types of ecclesiastic matters: faith, morals, discipline, and administration.

Encyclicals cannot be read in the same way as other manuscripts; They are biased from the viewpoint that they possess and propagate the opinion of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and this aspect must be remembered at all times. The language that they contain is often ecclesiastical in its references to the role of Christ and the universal Church in the world, but political messages are evident in certain encyclicals. An example of one such encyclical with a political message as well as one that acts as the basis for papal primacy and papal authority is *Unam Sanctam*, issued in the fourteenth century by Pope Boniface VII. This document is seminal in that it states explicitly that “of the one and only Church there is one body and one head, not two heads like a monster; that is, Christ and the Vicar of Christ, Peter and the successor of Peter,” thus establishing the papacy as not only the principal authority on spiritual matters but those secular interests as well due to “it [being] absolutely necessary for salvation that every human be subject to the Roman Pontiff.” This document, while retaining its ecclesiastic character, addresses a political issue as viewed through the eyes of the Catholic Church.

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8 Fremantle, 25.
Although encyclicals are unique documents, they provide the basis for this thesis due to the wealth of political content that they contain as well as an indisputable view by the papacy regarding the role of the Catholic Church in the world.

One area of concern for the use of encyclicals is the legitimacy of their translation. The encyclicals selected for this thesis were initially obtained on the Internet at such sites as www.papalencyclicals.net and www.catholic.net. As the integrity of documents found on the Internet is questionable, it was necessary to authenticate the documents through consultation with notable and reputable scholarly works. This was achieved after the translations were verified with another set of translations complied by Claudia Carlen, IHM, in her 1981 five volume work, Papal Encyclicals. Although the translations obtained on the Internet contained small changes in language, the two sets of documents were otherwise identical. Further consultation with Claudia Carlen’s Papal Pronouncements revealed that both sets of translations remained true to the spirit and integrity of the encyclicals as the central themes and messages were consistent. As a result, the validity of the translations found on the Internet was deemed to be accurate and thus able to be used as sources for this thesis.

The second series of documents used in the composition of this thesis were those produced at the Vatican Council of 1869-1870. While similar to the encyclicals in that they are official pronouncements of the Catholic Church, these documents differ significantly in their presentation. The dogmatic constitutions are not addressed to the bishopric as are the encyclicals but to the body of the Church as a whole. This is evident in the documents Dei Filius and Pastor Aeternus in which Pius IX addresses the episcopate as opposed to members of the Church hierarchy and in which he pronounces issues of a doctrinal nature.10 A second type of document issued at the Vatican Council was the allocution. This document, unlike the encyclical and dogmatic constitution, was addressed to only those cardinals “assembled in secret Consistory”11 and was not meant to be disseminated to the public. This is evident in the language of the allocution in which Pius speaks directly to those “venerable brothers” assembled at the Vatican.

10 This is consistent with Carlen’s classification of a dogmatic constitution as a “doctrinal and disciplinary pronouncement” and one “that may be considered the most solemn type of document issued by the pope in his own name.”, Papal Pronouncements, xii.

11 Carlen, xiii.
Council and through which he speaks of the evils threatening the Church, himself, as well as their own legitimacy. The allocution represented the pope speaking directly to his cardinals and therefore was meant to convey his opinions more personally than a document made public and open to scrutiny by individuals and states. Though the form of the Vatican Council documents differed from that of the encyclicals, both sets of documents shared the goal of conveying papal opinion as well as exerting papal primacy in order to influence the decisions and opinions of the Church body.

This thesis seeks to examine the notion of papal authority using a long term historical perspective while focusing on issues of church-state relations in the world at large, the Italian peninsula, and the Papal States. Previous scholarship by such noted historians as Bury and Hales use encyclicals and other official documents of the Catholic Church as secondary evidence rather than primary evidence in that their respective focal points are on Pius IX as an individual, as opposed to his achievements, and those events that affected his life. This focus leads to a cursory and limited examination of sources that could potentially deepen their research significantly. This thesis, in contrast, uses these sources as the primary source of evidence to explain a change in the idea of papal authority. A perspective such as this provides an explanation of a central issue often overlooked by historians and aids in filling gaps in their research. Through a combination of the two theses, a more complete understanding of Pius IX’s contribution to Western civilization is achieved.
III. Historiography

In order to better understand the argument of this thesis, it is first necessary to examine the work that has preceded it. As it is an impossible task to consult all sources regarding this particular subject, many of the seminal English monographs, biographies, and primary documents contribute to this thesis and this historiography reviews these works that are cited prominently throughout. Chronologically, the monographs consulted begin in 1878 with the Reverend Bernard O’Reilly’s, *Life of Pius IX* and end with Frank J. Coppa’s 1998 work, *The Modern Papacy Since 1789*. The encyclicals are dated from 1859 through 1871 and the decrees from the First Vatican Council are confined to the years of the council’s existence, 1868-1870. This historiography examines those sources whose contributions to this thesis have been extraordinary and outlines the author’s central argument(s), explains the style in which the work was written, and also explains how each work contributes to the development of historical study regarding papal authority and Pope Pius IX.

In 1908, John Bagwell Bury examined the papacy of Pius IX through a series of four lectures that he delivered during his tenure as Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University. In 1930, Bury submitted the transcripts of these lectures for publication and intended to produce a monumental work of papal history that covered the entire nineteenth century from the papacy of Pius VII to that of Leo XIII. Unfortunately, the manuscripts of the first volume (1804-1864) and the third volume (the papacy of Leo XIII) were lost and R.H. Murphy, in his forward to the 1964 edition, notes that one does not know for sure if these lectures were ever written or even delivered. The surviving lectures concentrate on the papacy of Pius IX from 1864 through 1870 and are divided into four stages: the Syllabus of Errors, the Vatican Council, the Doctrine of Infallibility, and the Fall of the Temporal Power. A product of the traditional European historical discipline, Bury sought to follow von Ranke’s example by explaining history *wie es eigentlich gewesen*. As a result, the author composed his text in the form of a narrative centered primarily on the ecclesiastic events during the six years examined. A collection of names, dates, and events, Bury makes very few speculative arguments instead preferring to remain close to the letter and spirit of the original texts.

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In his concentration on the 1864 *Syllabus of Errors*, Bury presents a paragraph-by-paragraph explanation of the primary provisions of this document and explains their significance on the Catholic world at large as well as on the situation in which Pius IX found himself politically. Bury states that the most important of these provisions regarding the Kingdom of Italy’s desire to incorporate Rome into its possessions and the papal response (the Roman Question) is provision 80 of the *Syllabus of Errors*. In this provision, Pius condemned the idea that, “the Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization,”\(^{13}\) as this secular idea suggested that the papacy should not rule a temporal domain and an idea that Bury describes as “a perfectly logical consequence of the whole theory”\(^{14}\) of the Church’s role in the contribution and justification of State affairs. Despite the apologetic nature of this particular example, Bury’s work is greatly influential on future scholarship as it provides an explanation of the complexities of papal politics during this period.

Cecil Scott Forster, in his 1927 monograph *Victor Emmanuel and the Union of Italy*, interestingly explores the reign of the first king of the united Italy. Not only is this historical character examined in light of his achievements as head of state but also his relationships with other notable Italian leaders of the time, including, to a large extent, Pope Pius IX. In the tradition of the Rankean school, Forster begins his narrative with an examination of the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia after the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and continues through the reign of the unfortunate Charles Albert I, Victor Emmanuel II’s father. Once completed, Forster focuses mainly on Victor Emmanuel II and explores his diplomatic and state maneuvers in regard to his goal of uniting the Italian peninsula.

In regard to Forster’s treatment of Pius IX, the author presents an unfavorable view of the pope that he often substantiates through the use of his language. Describing him as reactionary and presenting him as a cruel monarch and one unfit to rule temporal lands, Forster often constructs his narrative in such a way as to vilify Pius and idealize Victor Emmanuel II. One such example of this is in Forster’s chapter on the annexation of Rome in which he suggests that the doctrine of infallibility acted as a “confirmation

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\(^{13}\) Pius IX, “Syllabus of Errors,” *Papal Encyclicals Online*, 8 December 1864, [http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syl.htm](http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syl.htm) (24 February 2003).

\(^{14}\) Bury, 40.
that Pius was suffering from acute megalomania."^{15} While his treatment of Pius is less than flattering in most instances, Forester’s work, nonetheless, contributes greatly to future work of historical scholarship as it provides an excellent context for the union of Italy.

EEY Hales’s 1954 work *Pio Nono* is similar to Bury’s *History of the Papacy in the Nineteenth Century* in that this work examines the pontificate of Pius IX within the context of the contemporary political climate. According to Hales’, Pius may be considered “the central figure of the mid-nineteenth century,"^{16} due to his position against modernity and liberalism. While there were those who did not agree with his views, the eyes of the world were nonetheless upon the pope from the 1850’s until the 1870’s. While Bury began his work with the *Syllabus of Errors* of 1864, Hales’ work begins with the papacy of Gregory XVI and Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti’s (later Pius IX’s) role within his predecessor’s pontificate. Once the context of Europe in the later 1840’s is firmly established, Hales begins his narrative and ultimately takes his reader on a journey through each stage of Pius’ own pontificate, all the while focusing on the political events of the period.

A telling episode in Hales’ work that illustrates his use of the political narrative is chapter V in which he recounts the competition and hostility between Turin (the capital of the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont) and Rome. Divided into four parts, Hales deftly explains the deterioration of the political relationship between king and pope as he sets the stage for the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. Hales argues that although “Pio Nono had already conceived a strong, paternal affection for Victor Emmanuel [II]”^{17} at the time of the latter’s assumption of the throne of Sardinia-Piedmont, the king’s prime minister Cavour would agitate matters so that any “quarrel, which [was] still predominately religious, [would] become predominately political,”^{18} such as the passage of the Siccardi Laws of 1851 which abolished Church courts and the right of sanctuary and limited the number of Feast Days. While this is a small example of Hales’ style, it is indicative of the narrative throughout the entire work. Though an older

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^{15} CS Forester, *Victor Emmanuel II and the Union of Italy*, (Safety Harbor, FL: Simon Publications, 2001), 187.
^{17} Hales, 171.
^{18} Hales, 177.
monograph, *Pio Nono* is still widely regarded as a seminal text due to the foundation it lays for the study of the nineteenth century papacy.

Frank J. Coppa provides a modern treatment of Pius IX’s papacy in two works, the biography *Pope Pius IX* and the *Modern Papacy Since 1789*. Published in 1979 and written in a style similar to that of Bury, *Pope Pius IX* is an examination of the whole of Giovanni Mastai-Ferretti’s (the future Pius IX) life from his birth in 1792 to his death in 1878. Coppa’s motivation for this work lay in his desire to present Pius as a central figure “in Italian and European affairs [during the nineteenth century] and as head of the universal Church…a personality of worldwide importance.”

This detailed account not only examines the political significance of Pius in European affairs, but also explores his life outside of the papacy, including the relationships that the pope cultivated with such notable figures as King Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia-Piedmont (and later of united Italy) and Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli, the papal secretary of state. Through his consultation with an exhausting amount of primary and secondary sources, Coppa ultimately regards Pius IX as “the chief architect of the modern Church prior to John XIII and the Second Vatican Council.”

The more recent *Modern Papacy Since 1789*, published in 1998 and essentially a work of political history, presents Pius as “a pontiff capable of healing the rift between the faith and contemporary developments” such as the ideas of modernism and liberalism. Coppa provides two detailed chapters, “The Holy See in a turbulent decade” and “Papal intransigence and infallibility”, on the papacy of Pius that account for his initial espousal of liberal ideas, his turn to conservatism after his flight to Gaeta in the Kingdom of Naples, his struggles to consolidate and protect his authority, and finally, on the Vatican Council and the doctrine of infallibility. Ultimately, Coppa ascertains that Pius’s “claim to be God’s representative on earth, and his assertion that the Church had to instruct, direct, and govern the Christian world” to be problematic in that it “clashed with the liberal demand for popular sovereignty and the nationalist call for the omnipotence of

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20 Coppa, 198.
the state,"²² and that this produced one of the most pressing challenges for the papacy in the modern world.

While not a traditional monograph, Claudia Carlen’s 1990 two volume *Papal Pronouncements* is vital to any study of the papacy in that it places the encyclicals of Pius IX in context with those handed down by preceding and succeeding popes. Written in a style in which encyclicals issued from 1748 through 1978 are listed in chronological order with a description of the major points of each document, Carlen provides a history of the papacy as seen through its official documents. This format allows for an investigation of previous papal documentation in order to more fully understand the challenges facing Pius during his papacy. This immensely useful work also provides clear definitions as to the many differing types of papal documents issued from 1748 to 1978. Carlen defines each of type of document so as to distinguish it from other documents issued. These distinctions are important as they aid in differentiating an encyclical from an apostolic constitution, an apostolic exhortation, or a simple letter (*epistola*). Carlen’s work, while not a direct examination of any pope or encyclical as was Bury’s or Hales’ works, is nonetheless important as it aids in applying the writings and speeches of the popes properly within their historical context.

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²² Coppa, 116.
IV. Issues of Church and State: Boniface VIII and Unam Sanctam

Up to 1870, the Papacy enjoyed a unique position in European state affairs. This was due to its dual role as the spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church and their role as sovereign masters of the Papal States. In order to understand the importance that Pius IX placed on retaining his traditional secular political status, it is necessary to revisit certain events throughout Catholic history that contributed to the papacy as an ecclesiastic and secular entity. After the Emperor Constantine moved the seat of government of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople in the fourth century, the city of Rome was left without an effective ruling body. The bishops of Rome seized this opportunity to establish themselves as the masters of Rome and took steps to consolidate their power over the succeeding years as this position became synonymous with the papacy. Such popes as Damasus I (r. 366-384), Leo I (r. 440-461), and Gelasius I (r. 492-496) developed and expanded upon the idea of papal primacy, which meant that popes, by virtue of their connection to the apostle Peter, were the defining architects of Church and secular policies. Although this was an unwritten and yet understood notion throughout Europe, it would ultimately be articulated by Pope Boniface VIII in 1302 with his papal bull, Unam Sanctam and it is this document from which the issue of papal authority that arose during the pontificate of Pius IX traces its roots.

In response to challenges to his authority by the English and French monarchies, Pope Boniface VIII promulgated Unam Sanctam in order to firmly establish his authority over secular rulers. In this document, Boniface advanced the Gelasian Doctrine (Doctrine of the Two Swords) by noting that “of the one and only Church there is one body and one head, not two heads like a monster; that is, Christ and the Vicar of Christ, Peter and the successor of Peter.” represent the body and head of the universal Church thus leading the pope to be above all due to his intimate spiritual connection with Christ and his ability to interpret the word of God in the world. He commented further that popes “are informed by the texts of the Gospels that in this Church and its power are two swords; namely, the spiritual and the temporal.” This statement is essential to the understanding of papal authority in secular affairs as it illustrates the idea that secular domains are gifts from God alone and that, due to his position as chief interpreter of the Gospels, secular governments should heed the word of the pope in affairs of state. While
he recognized that the Church is directly administered by the pope in Rome, the state is
governed “by the hands of kings and soldiers, but at the will and sufferance of the priest.”
Therefore, as kingdoms were able to influence certain actions in dioceses within their
borders, the Church too should influence the actions of kingdoms due to Boniface’s
reasoning that as “one sword ought to be subordinated to the other [as local dioceses were
to their respective governments]…temporal authority, [should also be] subjected to
spiritual power.” John H. Munday supports this view because of the notion that “the
highest pontiff, who holds the apex of the Church and who verily can be called the
Church, must be feared and his commands obeyed, because his power is spiritual,
celestial, and divine, and is without weight, number, and measure.”

Boniface ended his bull by firmly stating that “spiritual power surpasses in dignity and in nobility any
temporal power whatever, as spiritual things surpass the temporal,” therefore “it is
absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman
Pontiff.”

Unam Sanctam is an important document for a number of reasons, not the least of
which is its groundbreaking articulation of papal authority. First, Boniface understood
that in the fourteenth century, the influential position of the papacy in political matters
was on the decline and that states acted independently of the pope’s advice and counsel.
Anne Fremantle notes that “as the Church became increasingly involved in politics, the
opposition to it grew, not only of those who were pro-emperor against the pope, but of
those who sought to appeal from the policies…of the current pope to that of a general
council of the whole Church.”

Kings, such as Edward I of England and Philip the Fair of France, challenged the pope on matters of political and ecclesiastic significance in part
because “real princely government was already emerging around 1300” and “the idea of
the ‘arbitrary power’ or ‘free will’ that empowered princes to act without the constraints
of prior law or public assemblies was already well defined,” whereas previously, the
papacy enjoyed a privileged and influential position in matters of government.

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23 John H. Munday, Europe in the High Middle Ages, 1150 – 1300, (Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education
Limited, 2000), 375.
24 Boniface VIII, “Unam Sanctam,” Papal Encyclicals Online, 18 November 1302,
http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Bon08/B8unam.htm (12 April 2004).
25 Fremantle, 74.
26 Munday, 365.
Furthermore, the loss of gravity regarding the practice of excommunication\textsuperscript{27} was apparent because rulers found that, despite being excommunicated, their roles as governing officials remained stable and constant in their regions. Although there would continue to be challenges to papal authority from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries, \textit{Unam Sanctam} more firmly established the papacy as a viable political force in European affairs and one that could not be easily avoided nor disregarded.

As Boniface VIII battled with Philip the Fair of France and Edward I of England, a movement emerged within the Church that espoused the belief that no single pope was able to completely and thoroughly understand and interpret the Word of God. Known as Gallicanism, its adherents not only upheld this notion but acquiesced that the rule of the state was paramount to the doctrines of the Church. Alec Vidler defines this doctrine simply as a political situation in which the state regarded “the Altar and the Throne as interdependent; [the Church] acknowledged the royal authority over the Church and minimized that of the papacy.”\textsuperscript{28} An essential component to Gallican belief was the notion that the interpretations and decrees of a General Council were superior to that of a single pope. Gallicans found their legitimacy in the rulings of “the Council of Constance, held 1414-1418, [which] maintained that a General Council of the Roman Church had primacy over even the pope,” due to the belief that such a body received its power directly from Christ and that “all persons, no matter of what rank or dignity, the Pope himself not excepted, are bound to submit in those matters that concern the Faith.”\textsuperscript{29} Wholly embraced by the Church in France, Jacques-Benigne Bossuet articulated the official formulation of the Gallican position in 1628 with his “Four Articles”, in which he:

1. Rejects the deposing power and the right, direct or indirect, of the Pope or the ecclesiastical power to interfere in civil and temporal affairs;
2. Asserts the full validity of the decrees of the fourth and fifth sessions of Constance on the authority of the General Council over the Pope;
3. Declares that the exercise of the Apostolic power is to be regulated by the canons of the Church, and in France by the laws and customs of the Gallican Church; and

\textsuperscript{27} According to the Catholic Encyclopedia <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05678a.htm>, excommunication is defined as “exclusion from the communion, the principal and severest censure, is a medicinal, spiritual penalty that deprives the guilty Christian of all participation in the common blessings of ecclesiastical society.”


\textsuperscript{29} Gedde MacGreggor, \textit{The Vatican Revolution}, (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1957), 114.
4. In questions of faith the Pope has the chief part, and his decrees apply to all the churches and each church in particular; yet his judgment is not irreformable unless the consent of the Church be given to it.\textsuperscript{30}

In his seminal work \textit{The Vatican Council, 1869-1870}, Dom Cuthbert Butler notes that “these articles were in 1690 declared by [Pope Alexander VIII] to be null and void, but without the theological censure [by Rome in order to prevent the spread of Gallican ideas]; they could be, and were, taught in Catholic schools in France and elsewhere.”\textsuperscript{31}

While the history of the Church is filled with those who disagreed with various aspects of its administration, those adherents of Gallicanism were unique. First, Gallicanism readily gave the mandates of a secular ruler more weight than those from Rome. This compromised the legitimacy of the Roman Pontiff due to the Gallican claim that they could accept those decisions advantageous to them and disregard those that were not. Second, the authority of a king or prince replaced that of the Pope. This reduced the pope to a mere political advisor as opposed to one who dictated it. While there remained those lands that adhered to Boniface VIII’s articulation of papal authority and that “it would be a mistake…to suppose that…Gallic tenets were held universally in France,”\textsuperscript{32} France, especially at this stage of her nation building, represented a turn away from the dominance of the papacy to one in which the accepted ruler of a domain was dominant in his own lands.

In contrast to the political ideas of Gallicanism, there were those within the Church that still looked to Rome as the leading authority in political and primacy in spiritual matters. Its adherents, situated primarily beyond the Alps in Italy and Austria and as a result called Ultramontanists, believed that church authority lay in the hands of the single pope and it was this idea that most closely corresponded with the beliefs articulated by Pope Boniface VIII in \textit{Unam Sanctam}. The earliest articulation of the tenets of Ultramontanism was set forth by Cardinal Robert Bellarmine in his seminal work \textit{Controversies against the Heresies of our Times} in 1586. Butler paraphrases Bellarmine’s theory of the papacy as one in which “the government of the Church is not a

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Butler, 37.
democracy, nor an aristocracy, but a monarchy,” as set forth by the Petrine texts (Epistles of St. Peter) which establish the pope as supreme “by divine ordinance – ‘iure divino’, not merely ‘iure ecclesiastico’.” With this clarification of papal primacy, Bellarmine, according to Butler, proceeded then to comment on the relationship between the pope and a General Council, the body that Gallicans view as superior in matters of Church doctrine. While “[the right] belongs to the pope to convoke a General Council or to sanction its being convoked by another,” the General Council is without legitimacy unless its rulings are agreed upon by the pope as it is this official who is “simply and absolutely…above the Universal Church, in that he is the Head of the whole Church on earth, [which thus makes him] above a General Council, [who] can recognize no judge upon earth above himself.”

A resurgent Ultramontanism became a powerful force in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries due in large part to Napoleon I’s “recognition that the Pope had [primacy] to demand the resignation of French bishops, which would never have been allowed by the royal government before the Revolution.”

This action not only empowered the Roman faction, but greatly discredited the Gallicans due to the Corsican’s desire to placate the pope so as to legitimize any dynastic ambition he had. With the demise of the Bonapartist regime and the subsequent restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, the Gallican ideals again were prevalent within the French Church, but those seeds sown by the Ultramontanists would slowly take root and ultimately be cultivated by Félicité de Lamennais, who believed that the “only hope for recovery [in the years following the Revolution] lay in a return to dependence on authority: the authority of tradition; the authority of the Church, centered in the papacy; and authority in the State, of which legitimate monarchs were the bearers.”

Lamennais believed that Ultramontanism combined with a liberal regime could lead to an outcome similar to that of the Catholics in Belgium, who were able to secure their independence from Holland. While his proposal that the papacy “should abandon its dependence on temporal power and on the sovereigns of the Holy Alliance, and trusting only to its spiritual authority…lead the world into a new order based on constitutional liberty and moral

33 Butler, 40.
34 Vidler, 20.
35 Vidler, 69.
regeneration,” was never implemented, Lamennais nonetheless strengthened the New Ultramontanist notion that “advocated papal absolutism and urged that the papal power must be accepted as supreme of the regal,” due to the papacy’s role as being “the mouthpiece of...universal consent [the test of truth].”  

Ultramontanism is an important part of an examination of papal primacy for the following reasons. First, it advocates the notion that neither a single individual nor a body of individuals is superior to the pope in matters of Church law. This gives legitimacy to such popes as Boniface VIII and Pius IX who acted in the dual capacities of secular monarch and universal priest. Since, according to Butler’s paraphrasing of Cardinal Bellarmine, “when [the pope] teaches the whole Church in things pertaining to faith, he cannot err,” the pope should receive the dignity and reverence given to the rulers of temporal domains. This naturally opposes the Gallican idea that the Church is subject to the demands and governance of a country’s given ruler. A second important facet of Ultramontanism is its prevalence in the Italian peninsula. Italian clergy viewed their Church as supreme in both political and ecclesiastic matters and supported the claims of the papacy in order to safeguard their own privileged positions within society on the peninsula. This geographical concern assumes that the Church in “Italy” should forever be able to govern its temporal domains without interference from a secular king or government. It is this second issue that will become a point of contention between Pius IX and the government of Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia-Piedmont that will, in the late 1850’s, come to espouse Cavour’s idea of una chiesa libera nel stato libero (a free church in a free state”).

To conclude, the issue of papal authority that arose during the pontificate of Pius IX traces its roots in the words of Unam Sanctam, the challenge of Gallicanism, and the response of Ultramontanism. Pius, despite his attempts at liberalism in the early years of his papacy, firmly believed in the precedent set by Unam Sanctam and acted accordingly, as seen by his negotiations and agreements with such secular rulers as Louis Napoleon (Napoleon III) of France, Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia (to whom the pope would never refer after 1861 as king of Italy), and Franz Josef, Habsburg emperor of Austria.

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36 Butler, 46.
37 Butler, 41.
and Hungary. The idea that the pope was to wield the dual swords of spiritual and temporal authority led Pius to reject the Gallican claim that the Church was subject to a particular government and certain encyclicals issued by Pius between 1859 and 1871 reveal how the pope attempted to use his position in order to influence political events in both the Italian peninsula and other Catholic countries. Finally, the convening of the Vatican Council in 1869 is the ultimate expression of Pius’s advocacy of papal superiority in both spiritual and temporal affairs as it was this body that formally articulated the doctrine of papal infallibility. Pius, using his position as head of the Church, negotiated the decree that gave him the final word on all matters relating to Church dogma, the doctrine of papal infallibility. With this as context, it is now possible to examine politically-influenced encyclicals issued by Pius IX from 1859 to 1871 and their significance to the question of papal authority regarding the issue of Italian unification, which represented the greatest challenge to the popes’ traditional status.
V. The Pope in Italy: Political Papal Encyclicals

The European political climate in the 1850’s was tense due in large part to two events that not only threatened the “long peace”, but also disrupted the perceived harmony of the Concert of Europe. The first was the issue of the decaying Ottoman Empire and how the Great Powers were to act once the “Sick Man of Europe” died. Russia, hoping to increase her prestige among her European counterparts, was eager to defeat her long standing rival in the East, gain new footholds on the Continent, and improve her economic position due to access to the Mediterranean through the Dardanelles straits. These prospects alarmed the Sea Powers of England and France, who felt obliged to aid the Turks against their Eastern foe. Among the Great Powers, the one that refused to commit to the Western coalition or ally itself with Romanov Russia was Habsburg Austria. The young emperor Franz Josef and his foreign minister Count Karl Ferdinand Graf von Buol-Schauenstein rejected the advice of the aged Klemens von Metternich and deemed it in the best interests of the Monarchy to act as mediators throughout the Crimean conflict of 1854-1855. Unfortunately for the emperor, Buol’s policy succeeded in doing nothing more than creating animosity against Austria from both sides and allowing a small ally of the Sea Powers, the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont, to cull increased favor with the British and the French.

It was in this context from which the second political issue of the 1850’s, the Italian Question, emerged. At this time, the Italian peninsula consisted of four primary units: the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont, the Austrian-governed provinces of Lombardy and Venetia, the Bourbon Kingdom of the Two Sicilies centered in Naples, and the Papal States in central Italy. France was eager to control Italian affairs due in part to the insistence of Napoleon III that “his position would never be secure ‘until the [French] Empire has had its original, hereditary, and predestined illness [the French view of the troublesome Italian peninsula].’” Therefore, he allied himself with Count Camillo Benso di Cavour and the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont in order to rid the peninsula of Austrian influence, become the sole guarantor of Italian security, and to ultimately establish himself as the prime influence in peninsular affairs. Due to the brilliant political

maneuvering of Cavour who duped the Austrians into issuing an ill-timed ultimatum, this alliance incited a war with Austria in 1859 in which the revolutionary spirit of 1848 again spread throughout the whole of Italy. Austria, wanting a *casus belli* for war with the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont, fell into Cavour’s trap and “drafted an ultimatum demanding the disarmament of [Piedmont-]Sardinia,” which Austria knew King Victor Emmanuel II and Cavour would almost certainly reject. After Sardinia-Piedmont rejected this ultimatum, a war indeed transpired. This action led the French to intercede on the side of the Piedmontese and victories began to mount for the allies. King Victor Emmanuel II, “not indifferent to the cry of anguish directed toward [him] from so many parts of Italy,” began to express his desire to act in order to unite the peninsula under the rule of the House of Savoy.

This desire of the king of Sardinia-Piedmont naturally disturbed the Roman Pontiff in that it implied that Piedmont-Sardinia, despite its perceived adherence to Ultramontanist leanings, would not hold the Papal States exempt from any action taken to create a united kingdom in Italy. This is what prompted Pope Pius IX to issue the encyclicals *Cum Sancta Mater Ecclesia* in May and *Qui Nuper* in June of 1859. Therefore, Pius IX called upon those “in Friendship and Communion with the Holy See,” to offer prayers in order that “God [will] turn his wrath from us and banish war to the very ends of the Earth.” The use of the 27 April 1859 encyclical *Cum Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, or Pleading for Public Prayer, by Pius IX – thoroughly conservative by this time due in part to his experiences in 1848 - was a savvy way to enlist the aid of Catholic Europe in order to stem the tide of nationalism that flowed from Turin. The idea that the secular government of Piedmont-Sardinia desired to unite Italy at the cost of papal territory convinced the pope that “Italy was witnessing an apocalyptic struggle between the forces of good, led by himself, and of evil, led by Turin.”

39 Taylor, 111.
One of the most important issues of contention between the Sayonard monarchy and the papacy in the early years of Italian unification was the notion of *una chiesa libero nel stato libero* (a free church in a free state). Cavour’s idea consisted of two parts. First, there was an economic component that called for state confiscation of Church lands and properties which in turn could be sold for profit. The first evidence of Cavour’s adherence to this idea occurred in 1854 with a proposed bill before the Piedmontese legislature to close monasteries in order to raise 900,000 lire to compensate clergy for their losses during the Napoleonic period. After much political intrigue, including Cavour’s resignation and return to government, the result was “a major excommunication [by Pope Pius IX] against those responsible for the law,” which included both Cavour and “Victor Emmanuel himself who now had to sign [the law].”\(^{43}\) By 1867, “2,000 religious institutions were deprived of legal status and 25,000 ecclesiastical bodies were suppressed” in order for the government to raise funds and by 1882, “over a million hectares of church land were sold off.”\(^{44}\) The second component was political and provided the rationale that justified the first component (compensation). Cavour believed that a state could not survive if the Church had more influence over its citizens than the government. Therefore, he strove to break the power of the Church on the Italian peninsula by curtailing many of the clergy’s traditional privileges. Two further examples of this policy were the closing of the ecclesiastic courts and the introduction of civil marriage on the peninsula. By working towards a “free church in a free state”, Cavour was actually strengthening the power of the Crown while diminishing that of the Church.

In the late 1850’s, Pius IX attempted to increase his involvement in political affairs on the Italian peninsula. Although Sardinian Prime Minister Cavour’s policy focused “not so much of national unification as the dislodging of Austria from Italy,”\(^{45}\) it was recognized that the Papal States, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and the provinces of Lombardy and Venetia were essential to any scheme designed to produce a whole Italy. Pius IX, in order to protect his domain, was “in the embarrassing position of having troops of both [France and Austria] on [his] territory,” and this led Turin to


announce that it would invade Papal lands under the pretext of war with Austria. Finding himself in an uncomfortable position, Pius IX again used his ecclesiastic primacy in an attempt to influence political policy by issuing the encyclical Qui Nuper (On Pontifical States) on 18 June 1859. This encyclical is important in that it, like Unam Sanctam, overtly “[stresses] the Church’s need for…temporal power,” 46 despite those “who seek to become subject to that Italian Government which for these last years has acted as an adversary to the Church and it’s legitimate rights and sacred ministry.” 47 Pius IX firmly believed that he wielded the two swords alluded to by Pope Boniface VIII as Bishop of Rome and secular monarch of the Patrimony of Peter and that the latter was “committed to each pope as a sacred trust, as the guarantee and defense of the Pope’s universal spiritual ministry.” 48 As a result, Pius became increasingly more willing to use whatever means were at his disposal to ensure the conservative Catholic status quo that existed long before borders were redrawn in 1815 at Vienna and as to ensure that the Cavourian notion of “free church in a free state” would not interfere with his right of supreme arbiter of Roman Catholic doctrine.

Despite the presence of Austrian and French soldiers in Rome, events unfolded in 1860 that exacerbated the uncomfortable relationship between the conservative Pope Pius IX and the liberal King Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia-Piedmont. Politically, the decisions by Napoleon III to pursue a separate peace with Austria at Villafranca in 1859 as well as fostering “closer relations with England and on a virtual break with the Papacy,” 49 led to icy relations with the government in Turin who felt betrayed by the French emperor. This resulted in a period of quiet for the embattled pope thanks in large part to the resignation of Cavour. Unfortunately, this quiet was short-lived due to the return of Cavour to government in Sardinia-Piedmont on 16 January 1860, and subsequent rekindling of the alliance between the French and Sardinia-Piedmont with a gift of Nice and Savoy to the French. The papal response to this action was another, more overtly political encyclical, Nullis Certe Verbis (On the Need for Civil Sovereignty), issued on 19 January 1860. The encyclical is different from the previous

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46 Frank J. Coppa, 131.
48 Duffy, 224.
49 Clough and Saladino, 110.
two in that Pius dismissed his tactic of veiled, divine requests in favor of verbally attacking Napoleon III. Despite the French presence in Rome, Napoleon pressured the Pope to renounce the papal province of Emilia “because of the rebellions stirred up in [it].” Pius denied this request because of the conception that it would involve “violating solemn oaths by which [he] is bound,” as the head of state of this region. Interestingly, *Nullis Certe Verbis* illustrates Pius’s haughtiness as he scoffed at the French emperor’s request because “the far greater part of the population [of the Papal Lands] showed itself induced in no way to support” the rebellions. This proved unfounded until the “spring of 1860, [when a] plebiscite in Romagna [approved] the annexation of this papal province to Piedmont.”

The encyclicals issued by Pius IX in the years of the Italian wars of unification are significant because of their use of religious language to reassert Pius’s idea of the political importance of the papacy in the contemporary world. As illustrated by the language of *Cum Sancta Mater Ecclesia* and *Qui Nuper*, the Pope attempted to use his role as spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church in order to influence political events. This was an ambitious undertaking in that Italian Roman Catholics, from whom the Pope expected absolute loyalty, continued to act in the spirit of nationalism as opposed to that of religious allegiance. Particularly significant is the language of *Nullis Certe Verbis* regarding Pius’s view of his own political clout. There are the customary references of Roman Catholic scripture, but the essence of the encyclical is found in the diatribe directed against Napoleon III. These three encyclicals reveal that Pius attempted to secure his power through the use of ecclesiastically worded political documents in order to secure the boundaries of the Patrimony of Peter and to assure that the wave of nationalism sweeping through the Italian peninsula did not come crashing down on the Eternal City of Rome itself.

*Cum Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, *Qui Nuper*, and *Nullis Certe Verbis* indicate that any potential loss of papal authority was a primary concern of Pius IX. In *Cum Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, Pius uses his authority to grant certain privileges to the faithful “whose

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51 Clough and Saradino, 111.
dispensation the Most High has granted to [him]”\textsuperscript{52} in order to fortify his position as the chief guarantor of spiritual salvation. Through this action, Pius reminds all that he alone is responsible for the interpretations of the word of God and implies that those who oppose him are not privy to these benefits. \textit{Qui Nuper} likewise asserts papal authority by articulating Pius’s willingness to battle for the continuance of his temporal power. Pius states that he “will suffer any danger and any bitterness before [he] forsakes in any way the apostolic office”\textsuperscript{53} granted to him through his succession to the Chair of Peter and naturally this included both swords of spiritual primacy and political authority that Pius perceived as his right. Finally, \textit{Nullis Certe Verbis} in 1860 clearly reiterates the belief within the Ultramontane faction of the Church that “God gave the civil power to the Roman Pontiff, so that he, never subject to any power, might exercise in full liberty and without any impediment the supreme task of the apostolic ministry divinely committed to him by Christ our Lord.”\textsuperscript{54} This last declaration directly challenges the government of Sardinia-Piedmont and illustrates Pius’ willingness to oppose them as their quest for a unification of Italian lands under their governance would compromise his right as a secular ruler thus undermining the foundation of papal authority that existed for hundreds of years.

Under the leadership of Victor Emmanuel II and Cavour, the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed on 17 March 1861. Within a month of its inception, the Holy See issued a proclamation protesting “the act [of Victor Emmanuel II naming himself king] by which there is assumed a title whose aim is to legitimize the inequity,”\textsuperscript{55} directed against the Papal States. With a majority of the Italian states and provinces unified, new problems arose that further threatened the authority of the pope. Though Rome and the area immediately surrounding the city continued to be ruled as Papal States in the early 1860’s, Italian nationalists felt that any “Italy” was incomplete without its traditional capital. Therefore, the nine years between unification in 1861 and the incorporation of Rome into the Kingdom of Italy in 1870 were “marked not only by frenetic political

\textsuperscript{52} Pius IX, \textit{“Cum Sancta Mater Ecclesia”}.
\textsuperscript{53} Pius IX, \textit{“Qui Nuper”}.
\textsuperscript{54} Pius IX, \textit{“Nullis Certe Verbis”}
activity, but also by important religious initiatives as well,"56 such as the opening of the Vatican Council in 1869. Through the encyclicals *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* and *Quanta Cura*, with its accompanying *Syllabus of Errors*, it is evident that Pius IX again attempted to assert papal authority and reclaim fleeting prestige and influence on the European stage.

The founding of the Kingdom of Italy complicated the role of Pius IX as spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church and threatened his view of his own authority. Not only were the lands of the Patrimony of Peter threatened, elements within the universal clergy itself began to show signs of dissent against the Holy See by actively and overtly following policies not endorsed by Rome. An example of such behavior was the resurgence of the Gallican and Conciliar movements in France who sought to disassociate Rome from the state Church. Firmly believing this situation to be a result of Italian governmental interference, Pius believed it necessary to reiterate the role of the Church in the minds and hearts of the people while simultaneously striking a blow against the monarchy in Turin. The vehicle by which Pius was able to achieve both ends was the encyclical, *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore*, or On Promotion of False Doctrines, issued 10 August 1863. Due to this document’s multifaceted nature, *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* is examined in two parts. The first stresses the political qualities of the writing and the second examines the use of religious primacy to influence political action. Once each part has been individually explained, the value of *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* as a means of asserting authority is more clearly visible.

Pius IX did not scale back his efforts to attack the legitimacy of the Kingdom of Italy, despite it having been a political entity for over two years in 1863. He understood, however, that the Holy See was no longer in a position to threaten military action in order to combat Piedmontese aggression, as the approximately 750 soldiers of the Palatine Honor Guard were not sufficiently equipped to challenge the larger Italian military. Still mostly reliant on soldiers from Austria and France for safety, Pius, when he “received the French officers on New Year’s Day 1863, gave them the warmest expressions of

gratitude for their protection.” In an attempt to find satisfaction with this precarious and humbling position, the pope issued an encyclical on 10 August 1863. In the first lines of *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* (On Promotion of False Doctrines), Pius condemned the perceived war against the Catholic Church “especially declared [in] unhappy Italy…by the Piedmontese government and stirred up more violently day by day.” Pius further attacked his northern neighbor by “[condemning] those who attack and despise the Church itself, its sacred laws, ministers, and this Apostolic See.” These lines are an obvious reference to the Siccardi Laws of 1851 and to the perceived Piedmontese tactic of turning Catholic clergy against Rome, as reports of this reached the pope’s ears in the Eternal City. In the eyes of the Holy See, the Pope was a victim of aggression brought about by the Kingdom of Italy, which acted in response to an “unbridled and damnable self-love and self-interest that [has driven Turin] to seek [its] own advantage and profit with clearly no regard for [its] neighbor.” Despite its scathing tone in the early portions of the encyclical, *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* also attempted to achieve solidarity among the Italian people against these injustices. Pius praised those Italian subjects who supported his struggle and who, “with deep Catholic sensibilities, abhor the many impious and destructive efforts taken against the Church,” and added that it was necessary for the faithful to alleviate the dangers facing the Church “with money, at other times with other gifts.” While he made no mention as to what these other gifts were, Pius implored his flock to reject the overtures made by Turin in the name of the one, true Church. Through the use of *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore*, Pius IX vowed to continue to fight in order to safeguard his primacy in Church and authority in civil affairs. The encyclical also revealed, however, that Pius was aware that his traditional authority was becoming more tenuous day-to-day.

*Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* reflects Pius IX’s use of religious traditions to reassert traditional notions of papal authority in regard to the liberal movements sweeping through Italy and the rest of Europe since 1848. As to the state of the Faith, “the Pope’s

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57 Coppa, 144.
60 Pius IX, “Quanto Conficiamur Moerore”
attitudes towards the irreligious [or liberal and secular] tendencies of his times was...coloured by the happenings on his own doorstep,” as E.E.Y. Hales notes in his 1956 work, *Pio Nono*, and therefore Pius deemed it necessary to voice his displeasure at the progress of such tendencies. As with his political convictions, Pius made his displeasure known within the confines of *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore*. Perceiving that certain members of the Catholic clergy politically strayed from the Church of Rome, Pius felt it “necessary to mention and censure a very grave error entrapping some Catholics who believed that it was possible to arrive at eternal salvation although living in error and alienated from the true faith and Catholic unity.” Having established the tone by which he would treat such behavior as a whole, Pius turned his attention to members of the clergy themselves whom he felt were being influenced by Turin. It was these “clergy in Italy who, forgetful of their vocation, do not blush in the least to spread abroad false doctrine, even in subversive writings,” through a show of support for the secular Kingdom of Italy and, more importantly to the pope, “arouse the people against [him] and this Apostolic See...oppose our civil rule...[and] shamelessly and zealously support the enemies of the Catholic Church,” all the while “emboldened by the approval of the Piedmontese government and its Parliament.” Having made this statement and formally charged the government in Turin with tampering with his bishops and priests, the pope stressed to all clergy that “it behooves [them] to use every care and diligence that so detrimental a condition,” be further prevented and so that their salvation, and that of their flocks, remained assured. Like his use of *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* for political reasons, Pius IX skillfully denounced his enemies through the religious provisions of this encyclical and further attempted to temporarily secure his authority by invoking the immorality of the secular world and the purity of the Roman Catholic Church under his guidance.

Early in 1864, Prime Minister Marco Minghetti, a protégé of Cavour, negotiated the September Convention with Napoleon III, which provided for the “gradual evacuation of French troops from papal territory on condition that Italy guarantee the integrity of the remaining papal state and that, as a [gesture of goodwill in the spirit of the September

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61 Hales, 241.
62 Pius IX, “Quanto Conficiamur Moerore”
Convention, the Kingdom of Italy transfer its capital from Turin to another city.” The government ultimately decided on Florence as its temporary capital although King Victor Emmanuel II made no secret of his desire to ultimately include the city of Rome in his kingdom. While this agreement helped to guarantee Italian territorial integrity against France, nationalist Italians were disheartened at the thought of Rome remaining separate from the Kingdom of Italy and not yet its capital. Those who supported the September Convention hoped to ease Italian fears by asserting that the proposed move from Turin to Florence was a temporary one and that it did not mean “the abandonment of hopes that Rome would become the capital,” but Italian relations with Pius IX were deteriorating quickly and prospects for negotiating the peaceful return of Rome became increasingly dim. It was in this atmosphere that Pius IX issued arguably the most politicized of those encyclicals written in regards to Italian unification and the loss of the Papal States. On 8 December 1864, Pius issued the monumental Quanta Cura (Condemning Current Errors) and its accompanying Syllabus of Errors and, through them, asserted his Gelasian authority by “[condemning] nationalism, liberalism, and everything else that undermined his temporal position.”64 As with Quanto Conficiamur Moerore, Quanta Cura and Syllabus of Errors are examined in parts in order to understand fully what each document states and how Pius IX used each document to not only continue his crusade against the perceived immoralities of the Italian government, but also, to safeguard his waning authority and political influence on the European continent.

As the Quanta Cura is by nature a document of the Roman Catholic Church, it is composed in a language that reflects its ecclesiastical nature. While this does not prevent the document from containing certain political attributes, the Syllabus of Errors contains most of the more overt political references. It is the religious language, however, that is important in this instance and which the Pope used to condemn the events directed against the Church and his own position as keeper and protector of the swords of temporal and spiritual power. The encyclical begins, as Shepard Clough notes, with the condemnation of the separation of the Church from civil affairs, which opposed the

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63 Clough and Saradino, 140.
Gelasian belief of Pius IX, as well as his predecessors, that the Catholic Church should freely exercise even to the end of the world a certain degree of influence over civil affairs. Furthermore, Pius states that “to take away that mutual fellowship and concord of counsels between Church and State which has proved itself propitious and salutary, both for religious and civil interests,” was a clear violation of the word of God and, as such, was not acceptable in any fashion. In order to justify this reasoning, the pope argued that if religion is taken away from civil society, “[substituted] instead of true [moral and spiritual] justice and lawful right, ‘material force’,” this would then lead some to “proclaim that the will of the people…is the supreme law, unbound by any divine…Ius.” Therefore, Pius argued that without the Catholic Church to educate them, “the tender and flexible minds of young men may be infected and depraved by every most pernicious error and vice.” It was vices such as these that Pius identified as contributing to the decline of Catholic, and by extension his own, influence in state affairs existing in Europe by the mid-1860’s.

As previously mentioned, the liberalism of mid-1860’s Europe, as evident by attempts to redefine the nature of traditional, absolute governments such as in Austria, comprised the foremost obstacle to Catholic influence in secular affairs and in the declining prestige of the Papal Territories. In order to combat these forces better, an aging Pius IX strove in the mid-1860’s to issue, according to Eamon Duffy, statements that would consolidate and safeguard the traditional beliefs on authority espoused by the Catholic Church while simultaneously forever denying the call for modernization for which liberals clamored. The Quanta Cura illustrated this commitment in that it contains political language corresponding with Pius’s desire to retain temporal prestige or, at the very least, damage the growing prestige of the Kingdom of Italy in the eyes of the Great Powers. To a degree, Pius succeeded in this second endeavor by calling to the attention of Roman Catholics the actions of Florence (the new Italian capital) “to deny all those rights of the same Church and [Holy] See [that] concern matters of the external order.” The pope believed strongly that the Kingdom of Italy actively promoted the

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66 Bury, 6.
67 Pius IX, “Quanta Cura”
68 Duffy, 229.
belief among Catholic nations “that the Church’s laws do not bind in conscience unless they are promulgated by the civil power.” Incorporated into this was the notion “that the Church [had] no right of restraining by temporal punishments those who violate her laws;” a privilege that the Church enjoyed dating back to the Renaissance. Thus, his command that the beliefs set forth in the Quanta Cura against the immoralties of civil authority “be thoroughly held by all children of the Catholic Church as reprobated, proscribed, and condemned,” illustrates the venom that the pope incorporated into his writings against the civil power in Italy and provides further evidence of Pius’s intense desire to retain his traditional authority in light of the increasing call for liberalism.

Accompanying the Quanta Cura was the Syllabus of Errors, an unquestionable document of Pius IX’s denial of liberalism for the Catholic clergy to use in order to combat the liberal and modern ideas of their flocks. Like the Quanta Cura, the Syllabus of Errors appeared “as a sort of reply to the September Convention between Italy and France, which had caused great indignation at Rome.” This document “catalogues 80 propositions which were being taught in one place or another, in Pio Nono’s lifetime, and which had been adjudged by him to be erroneous.” Though at first glance, the Syllabus of Errors is an extremely difficult document to comprehend fully, Bury notes in his History of the Papacy in the Nineteenth Century that “the [Syllabus of Errors] states the errors which are to be rejected, [and] in order to obtain the true doctrine, [one] has to convert the negation into a positive form.” Proposition 8 states, for example, that “as human reason is placed on a level with religion itself, so theological must be treated in the same manner as philosophical sciences.” What Pius stated, as correctly interpreted by Bury, is that “as human reason cannot be co-equalised with religion, therefore theological studies cannot be treated like philosophical studies.” As illustrated by Bury’s interpretation, specific provisions within the Syllabus of Errors completely explain Pius’s traditional view of his Church and lend themselves to more

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69 Pius IX, “Quanta Cura”
70 Bury, 9.
71 Bury, 4.
72 Hales, 257
73 Bury, 11.
75 Bury, 13.
fully clarifying the full meaning of Pius’s desire to retain his traditional authority on the Italian peninsula.

Of the 80 propositions contained within the *Syllabus of Errors*, numbers 19 to 38 (chapter five), “which concern the Church and her rights,” and numbers 39 to 55 (chapter six), which “concern Civil Society, considered in itself and in its relations to the Church”\(^{76}\); comprise the contents of chapters five and six of the *Syllabus* and are the most relevant to a discussion on Pope Pius IX’s view of papal primacy and the role of the papacy in secular politics. The fifth chapter of the work, entitled *Errors Concerning the Church and Her Rights*, acts, in Bury’s words, as “the formal declaration of war on the Modern State.”\(^{77}\) The first proposition (19) of this chapter defined the position of the Roman Catholic Church in civil society by condemning the fallacy that:

> The Church is not a true and perfect society, entirely free; nor is she endowed with proper and perpetual rights of her own, conferred upon her by her Divine Father; but it appertains to the civil power to define what are the rights of the Church and the limits within which she may exercise those rights.\(^{78}\)

Remembering to change this statement from the negative to the positive, proposition 19 “asserts that the Church, as an independent society, is not bound to submit to the laws of the State.”\(^{79}\) Therefore, such legislation as the Siccardi Laws had no jurisdiction in papal areas these were still recognized as such and actively governed in 1864 by the pope. With proposition 19 establishing the tone, other propositions in chapter five supply ample evidence of a papal foreign policy that was influenced by the Pope’s overwhelming desire to retain his authority at the expense of the infant Kingdom of Italy.

Although all of the propositions in chapter five of the *Syllabus of Errors* illustrated those actions and beliefs regarding civil society that Pius IX deemed to be false, there are those specific propositions that most clearly illustrate the view of the Church and papacy by the secular world in 1864. For example, proposition 20, a strong example of such adverse popular views, states that “the ecclesiastical power ought not to

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\(^{76}\) Hales, 257-258.

\(^{77}\) Bury, 18.


\(^{79}\) Bury, 18.
exercise its authority without the permission and assent of the civil government.\textsuperscript{80} This statement was problematic to Pius in that the Catholic Church, thanks in part to the actions of strong popes and \textit{Unam Sanctam}, perceived itself as being an institution that influenced secular policies long before the Kingdom of Italy came into being. Therefore, this idea that civil authority was superior to the spiritual power contradicted the papal idea in which the pope, as master of two swords, received his primacy as a right of his apostolic succession.

Shifting from the idea of legitimacy, propositions 24 through 27 focused on the Church’s temporal authority, with proposition 24 being perhaps the most significant of the four. This proposition states that “the Church has not the power of using force, nor has she any temporal power, direct or indirect.”\textsuperscript{81} A strong statement to condemn, there are two arguments that attempt to explain its importance. The first explanation addresses “the general theocratic doctrine of the indirect power of the Church over the temporal sphere.”\textsuperscript{82} The second argument is more telling as it justified the Church’s actions during the Inquisition. While this may seem a far cry from the loss of temporal authority, this explanation reasserts Pius IX’s belief in the power that the Church \textit{should} have so that, “with the sacrifice of a few crafty wretches, hundreds of regiments of souls may be saved.”\textsuperscript{83} Therefore, the condemnation of the idea stated in proposition 24 reaffirmed Pius’s belief in the necessity of possessing temporal power in order to achieve a victory that the Church viewed as both political and spiritually advantageous and necessary for the prosperity of a vast flock.

As was with proposition 24, propositions 25 through 27 also serve to illustrate Pope Pius IX’s disdain of liberal Europe. Pius, in thesis 24, condemned the idea that although the temporal power might bestow some of its power on the episcopate, this power is “revocable by the civil authority whenever it sees fit.”\textsuperscript{84} While it may appear that what Pius stated is that since power was \textit{not} granted by the state then the state \textit{cannot} revoke it, Bury argues without much concrete evidence that the importance of this thesis

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{80} Fremantle, 146.
\item\textsuperscript{81} Fremantle, 146.
\item\textsuperscript{82} Bury, 21.
\item\textsuperscript{83} Bury, 22.
\item\textsuperscript{84} Fremantle, 146.
\end{itemize}
lay in the idea “that concessions made by the State cannot be revoked.”85 This brings into question, however, the point in time in which the state transferred some of its authority to the Church. It must be noted that the Church until 1850 enjoyed certain privileges on the Italian peninsula as well as in other Catholic states, such as tax exemptions and the right to try individuals in ecclesiastic courts. Although state governments did not overtly legislate these privileges, Catholic clergy enjoyed certain advantages as a result of the importance of allegiance that princes and rulers felt was necessary with the Church. If this acts as the period in which the transfer of power occurred, Pius’s argument has merit in that one cannot revoke what one had not given.

Addressing a central grievance of the Holy See, proposition 26 condemned the notion that “the Church has no innate and legitimate right of acquiring and possessing property.”86 This proposition is interesting as it asserted, as Bury explains, the principle of the Dead Hand (the condition of property or other gifts left to a corporation in perpetuity especially for religious purposes)87, and protested the practice of modern states to limit the acquisition of Ecclesiastical property,88 as was happening in Italy and France. Proposition 26 is closely related with proposition 27, which condemned the idea that “the sacred ministers of the Church and the Roman pontiff are to be absolutely excluded from every charge and dominion over temporal affairs.”89 Pius reasoned that because the Church does possess land, the clergy then has the right, as do the rulers of other lands, to rule in a manner consistent with a monarchial or feudal form of government. While Bury speculates that this proposition focuses more on “whether [clergy] should be ineligible to serve in Parliament,”90 this point is moot because of Pius having already implied in Iamductum Cernimus (1861) that Italian Catholics should not participate in civil government in view of the fact that the “rejection with dignity and firmness the hypocritical pretences under which the Church is asked… to reconcile itself with Italy.”91 Thus, propositions 24 and 27 are consistent with Pius’s behavior and statements regarding the position of the Roman Catholic Church in the modified

85 Bury, 24.
86 Fremantle, 146.
88 Bury, 24.
89 Fremantle, 146.
90 Bury, 25.
91 Carlen, I:36.
European community and illustrate his continued willingness to combat the forces of liberalism that threatened, not only the secular authority of the Church, but the ecclesiastic primacy of the papacy as well.

A final proposition to examine in light of its connection to Pius IX’s crusade against liberalism is proposition 80. This is the culmination of the *Syllabus of Errors* and provides an excellent and clear summary of the entire document. Pius, in this statement, vehemently condemned the notion that “the Roman pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization.” 92 Like proposition 26, this is an allusion to a previous papal document. In *Iam dudum Cernimus*, Pius attempted to illustrate that modern civilization does nothing more than “[plunder] the Catholic Church of legitimate possessions…[enrich] non-Catholic institutions with the spoils…[and allow] liberty of speech and press [to] those who attack the Church, but [suppress] those who speak and publish the truth.” 93 This statement further asserts the principles that drove the Church, according to Bury, “which [were] uncompromisingly medieval,” in nature. An important aspect of proposition 80 is found in its contribution to future Catholic doctrine. The principles of conservatism were not only held by Pius during the nineteenth century, but also by his successor Leo XIII who “saw in the views, laws, and life of contemporary society a retrogression to heathendom” which led to his issuing of the encyclical *Libertas* in 1888, “a condemnation of liberalism as immoral.” 94

In conclusion, the *Quanta Cura* and the *Syllabus of Errors* were vital components of Pius IX’s view regarding his own authority in light of the challenges presented by the new liberal, secular Italian state and also acted as extensions of Church belief denouncing liberalism. It is important to note that during this time, conflicts arose between Catholic Austria and her northern neighbor, Prussia. As was the case with Italy, Pius was dismayed at the thought of another liberal revolution that would further limit the power of the Catholic Church in Europe. The *Syllabus of Errors* contributed to anti-Catholic feeling on the Continent and in colonial possessions, as persecution against the Church grew stronger and led to a series of encyclicals condemning these acts. To conclude, the *Quanta Cura* and *Syllabus of Errors* marked a deep point in papal power during this

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92 Fremantle, 152.
93 Carlen, I:36.
94 Bury, 40.
period that only the Vatican Council would eclipse. From 1865 through the return of Rome to Italy in 1870, Pius attempted measures that were increasingly desperate and which he hoped to recapture a feeling of religious conservatism in order to protect primarily his waning political clout but also his domains as well. Although he would ultimately lose his secular domain, the Vatican Council of 1869-1870 revealed to the world how tenuous Pius’s hold over his own Church had become and illustrated the depths of the pope’s intense desire to regain his prestige as well as the desperation and need for immediate action present within the pope’s mind.

Despite the insurmountable differences that existed between the Catholic Church and the Kingdom of Italy regarding the city of Rome, political relations up to 1866 were strained yet remained civil. Pius IX publicly issued encyclicals as a blanket means of influencing political policy, but also maintained a private correspondence with King Victor Emmanuel II in order to discuss important matters of state. These relations would be severely tested and ultimately shattered by a series of actions beginning in 1867. In January, for example, Italian Premier Bettino Ricasoli of the Right proposed a law that would “[make] for a total separation of Church and state: the state would relinquish all its rights over pontifical and diocesan religious acts,” but would also “abolish all remaining special privileges of the Church,”95 thus ending Catholicism’s tenure as the official state religion of Italy. While this law caused great consternation among members of the government and was subsequently rejected, relations suffered greatly as a result of the spirit that guided it.

The confusion in the government provided a veil under which Giuseppe Garibaldi, the quintessential Italian patriot, attempted to reclaim Rome for Italy in 1867. Like his actions in Sicily in 1860, Garibaldi’s plan was to raise a force of volunteers, march to Rome, and liberate the Eternal City. An alarmed Italian government, knowing that such an action would be in violation of the September Convention, attempted to curb Garibaldi’s action “and, in fact, on September 24 Garibaldi was arrested, but three days later… [was] allowed to return to his home.”96 Nevertheless, Garibaldi escaped and led the march in late October. The Italian king, bowing to French pressure, issued a

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95 Clough and Saladino, 146.
96 Clough and Saladino, 146.
proclamation condemning the action stating “scores of volunteers incited and seduced by the work of a certain party have violated the frontiers of my state without my authorization or that of my government.”97 Though French soldiers defeated the Italian volunteers at Mentana on 3 November (and subsequently returned to Rome in order to defend the pope), Pius IX’s security was not assured. Though he praised Napoleon III for his aid and the French soldiers for their valor, the pope realized that Garibaldi, “supported in a thousand ways by the government of Florence and its ‘miserable and pathetic king,’ might have triumphed, if not for the assistance”98 of a foreign power, in this instance France, thus revealing the frailty of Pius’s secular status.

1870 was the final year in which the last remnant of the Papal States, the city of Rome, was independent from the Kingdom of Italy. Pius IX learned a valuable lesson in 1867, in that he was completely dependent on foreign assistance in order to maintain his temporal sovereignty. In 1870, tensions between France and Prussia escalated into war and a desperate Napoleon III withdrew his forces from Rome in order to employ them against Prussia, whose modern military proved its battlefield superiority. King Victor Emmanuel II, respecting the might and skill of the Prussian military and still reeling from his perceived betrayal at Villafranca by France in 1859, viewed the French defeat at Sedan on 2 September 1870 as an opportunity to annex the city of Rome into his kingdom. Using the war as a *casus belli*, Victor Emmanuel II wrote to the pope on 8 September and explained that, in order to secure the latter’s safety, it would be absolutely necessary to send “troops…beyond the [border of Rome and Kingdom of Italy] and occupy those positions indispensable for the safety of Your Holiness and the maintenance of public order.”99 In reply, Pius declined this invitation adding “I thank God for allowing Your Majesty to fill with bitterness this last period of my life.”100 Nevertheless, Italian forces entered Rome on 20 September with the city surrendering, with the exception of the Vatican palaces and Castel Sant’Angelo. A plebiscite held on 2 October legitimized the annexation of Rome into the Kingdom of Italy and the long awaited

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97 Ghiron 114-116, as quoted in Clough and Saladino, 149.
98 Coppa, 153.
100 Cappelletti, 436 as quoted in Clough and Saladino, 155.
dream of unification was fulfilled. Content, Victor Emmanuel II could at last look over his provinces knowing that the entire peninsula was his. Pius, however, did not rest so easily.

On 1 November 1870, Pius IX issued the encyclical *Respicientes* (Protest of the Taking of the Pontifical States) in response to the Italian invasion and subsequent annexation of Rome. This particular encyclical is unlike the other documents previously examined in that it contains a description of the events leading up to the loss of the territories from 1859 through 20 September 1870. This provided the Catholic clergy with a biased account of the evils done to their Church on behalf of the Italian king and his parliament. Within the document, Pius revealed his motivation for recounting these events as he felt that “if [he] remained silent, [he] could be accused before God and the Church of having consented to these perverse disturbances.” Furthermore, Pius declared his intention “to retain all the dominions of this Holy See and its rights whole, entire, and unviolated, and to transmit them to [his] successors.”

Unfortunately for him, the pope did not have the military means at his disposal to accomplish this feat as the primary Catholic powers reeled from their own internal problems. In France, the loss to Prussia and capture of Napoleon III signaled the end of the Second Empire while the newly proclaimed Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary recovered slowly from the effects and ramifications of its own war with Prussia and the *Ausgleich* of 1867. With the sword of temporal authority all but broken, Pius used the one last power at his disposal that could be used as a political tool: excommunication (although such figures as Cavour and Victor Emmanuel had suffered this punishment long ago). Pius ended *Respicientes* by declaring that “any who have invaded or usurped [Papal] provinces or [Rome] (as well as those commanding these things and their partisans, helpers, advisers, and followers) have incurred excommunication.”

*Respicientes* illustrated an important turning point in Pius’s actions. Pius used excommunication as a means to stabilize his declining power situation. Knowing that his temporal power was no more, the pope, perhaps overconfident in his own importance due to the recent doctrine of papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council, used his primacy within the Church to offset the loss of political

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102 Pius IX, “Respicientes”
prestige. Excommunication allowed him to strike a blow to the credibility of the Italian government through the remaining institutions available to him as Roman Pontiff.

The final encyclical important in any discussion of Pius IX’s view of papal authority in the nineteenth century is *Ubi Nos* (On Pontifical States). Issued on 15 May 1871, *Ubi Nos* is a last gasp of political authority as Pius attempted to form a *de facto* government-in-exile. In order to accomplish this, Pius first established the notion of wrongful and forced exile from the Papal States by the Kingdom of Italy. Pius condemned the Italian government and their “[Law of Guarantees[^103] that is] compensation for stripping [him] of [his] civil rule,” which they accomplished only “by a lengthy series of machinations and their unholy arms.”[^104] Once he established the “characteristic of the Piedmont government to unite continuous, base pretense with shameless contempt for [his] papal rank and authority,” in order to convince the powers of the world that he was a victim, Pius could reassert his legitimacy as a ruler and head of state as granted by apostolic succession. While popes “have been established as interpreters of the natural and divine law for the entire world,” and through the notion that “Divine Providence gave the civil rule of the Holy See to the Roman Pontiff,”[^105] a worldly ruler had no authority to relieve the pope from temporal authority and thus the actions of the Kingdom of Italy were essentially null and void. Unfortunately for Pius, the Catholic political world did not agree with his Gelasian view of the papacy as “France was in no condition to consider other’s troubles; Austria was anxious to gain Italy’s goodwill; Russia had no interest at all in the Pope…while England displayed both sympathy with Italy and antipathy with the Pope.”[^106] With no significant military power willing to rally to his banner, Pius decided to “fight to recapture his temporal kingdom from his base in the Holy See”[^107] as a self-imposed prisoner in the Vatican.

After 1871, Pius IX’s fight for temporal authority ended. Future encyclicals concentrated more on the state of the Church and less with political issues that occupied

[^103]: Law of Guarantees: “legislation by the Italian government recognizing the independent status of the pope and relinquishing civil controls on the clergy,” as defined in Davis, *Italy in the Nineteenth Century*, 268


[^105]: Pius IX, “Ubi Nos”

[^106]: Forester, 193.

[^107]: Kertzer, as found in Davis, 196.
the pope during a majority of his long and distinguished papacy. As a result, the struggle of Pius was never resolved in his lifetime. His successor, Leo XIII, issued the monumental *Rerum Novarum* on 15 May 1891 - exactly 20 years to the day of Pius’s own *Ubi Nos* – due to his realization that “the Church was discrediting itself in many countries by its support of extremist conservatives and lost monarchical causes,” such as the one Pius himself engaged in for the better part of two decades. Although the principal message of this encyclical was the propagation of Catholic trade unions, *Rerum Novarum* began to bridge the chasm between Church and government by stressing the belief that “the Church could accomplish its purposes far more effectively by forming political parties and working through representative governments instead of opposing them.”

Historians such as Felix Gilbert note that despite the overtures of *Rerum Novarum*, the Vatican would not be satisfied with their situation within the Kingdom of Italy until Benito Mussolini and Pius XI concluded the Lateran Treaty of 11 February 1929 in which “the pope was recognized as the independent ruler of a small state – Vatican City – and the church received a large financial sum as restitution for the expropriations at the time of Italy’s unification.” With this treaty achieved, the papacy was begrudgingly satisfied with its reduced role in the international arena, but the papacy would never again boast of the prestige and authority wielded by their predecessors prior to the accession of Pius IX.

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VI. The Loss of the Papal States: The Vatican Council

By the winter of 1868, the Roman Question became an item of an increasingly symbolic importance to Pope Pius IX. No longer simply an issue of territorial right and secular jurisdictions, Rome symbolized the last remaining stronghold of papal authority that Pope Boniface VIII had outlined in *Unam Sanctam* in 1302. Looking at the European map, Pius saw traditionally pro-papal Catholic states in political turmoil. In 1867, Franz Josef of Austria realigned his government in order to more fully involve the Magyars of Hungary in official decisions. This *Ausgleich* ended 180 years of Austrian dominance over the affairs of the lands of St. Stephen as the Habsburg rulers looked inward at their own state rather than at external affairs. The Empire of France was in no better shape as Napoleon III’s failed escapade in Mexico greatly damaged his prestige on the Continent and diplomatic relations with Prussia soured to the point of open hostility between the two nations. Pius realized that a military engagement between Prussia and France would almost certainly lead to the withdrawal of the French garrison in Rome thus dangerously compromising the security of Rome to the degree that the Kingdom of Italy could occupy the Eternal City with minimal loss in men and resources and with little possibility of censure from the Great Powers.

Eric Hobsbawm states that Pius IX’s church at this time is one that “demonstrated, by the very extremism of [its] rejection of everything that characterized the mid-nineteenth century, that [it was] entirely on the defensive”\(^{110}\) and, as a result, left Pius politically isolated and in desperate need of a vehicle with which to reassert his authority. In this climate, the pope finally undertook an action long desired by His Holiness and one that was perhaps the most ambitious gamble of his political career, the convocation of a general council. In order to better understand the political ramifications of the Vatican Council regarding Pius’s political authority, it is first necessary to understand the state of the Church immediately before the Vatican Council as well as the justification that the pope used for calling a general council\(^{111}\). Regarding the first issue –

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\(^{111}\) According to the Catholic Encyclopedia (http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04423f.htm) defines a general council as “legally convened assemblies of ecclesiastical dignitaries and theological experts for the purpose of discussing and regulating matters of church doctrine and discipline,” and is comprised of five (5) elements: “a legally convened meeting; of members of the hierarchy; for the purpose of carrying out
the state of the Church on the eve of the Vatican Council – Hermann J. Pottmeyer offers an excellent and concise explanation of those issues (or, in his own word, “traumas”) facing the Catholic Church leading up to the convocation of the council in 1868. First, there were the traumas of Conciliarism and Gallicanism. As previously stated, Gallicanism espoused the belief that the rule of the state was paramount to the doctrines of the church and Bousset articulated this belief in his Four Gallican Articles of 1628. Conciliarism, Pottmeyer explains, was fundamentally similar to Gallicanism and consisted of four theories, two moderate and two radical, which argued the positions of both pope and council as leader in the establishment of Church doctrine. Pottmeyer gives a definition, admittedly oversimplified, of each of the theories:

1. **Radical Papal Theory**: the pope alone has the *plenitudo potestatis*, the “fullness of power”; all power in the church comes from the pope as representative of Christ, so that in the case of a heretical pope or an abuse of the papacy only a intervention of God can rescue the Church;
2. **Moderate Papal Theory**: papal primacy of jurisdiction; also asserts that the authority of the college of bishops, which together with the pope as its head, represents and leads the church;
3. **Moderate Conciliar Theory**: is distinguished from the moderate papal theory only by the fact that in the case of the abuse of office by a pope it assigns a controlling function to a council, which can expel a heretical pope from the church; and
4. **Radical Conciliar Theory (Conciliarism)**: asserts that a council, being a unique representative of the universal church, stands in principle above the pope.112

Since the Council of Trent (1545-1563), no clear decision had yet been made regarding primacy within the Church and therefore Gallicans and Conciliarists attempted to thwart the papacy’s attempts to enact Pope Boniface VIII’s ideas on papal authority as set forth in *Unam Sanctam*. Therefore, the issue facing Rome at the time of the Vatican Council was the age-old idea that a council was better suited to decide the canon of the Church and to interpret the word of God in the Gospels for Catholics throughout the world as well as to “[deny] the divine institution of the papal office.”113 Pius IX naturally saw things differently and utilized his right as a Roman Pontiff to “convoke general councils, in order that with the advice and assistance of the bishops of the Catholic

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113 Pottmeyer, 39.
world…might…so dispose everything as to define the doctrines of faith, to secure the destruction of the most prevalent errors, defend, illustrate, and develop Catholic teaching, restore and promote ecclesiastical discipline and the reformation of morals,” under the auspices that “no one, at the present time, can ignore how horrible is the storm by which the Church is assailed, and what an accumulation of evils affect civil society,” a reference to the actions of Savoyard Italy against the papacy. This justification was important in that Pius guaranteed more widespread support within the Church as he brought the bishops more tightly under his guidance through the use of an accepted institution of the Church while simultaneously using the pretext of battling perceived injustices directed against it as his motivation. This enabled him to overcome the efforts of Gallicanism and Conciliarism as many non-European bishops accepted this rationale and traveled to Rome in order to participate, but “those who were in the secrets of the Vatican knew that the intention was a definition of Infallibility.”

The second trauma facing the Catholic Church at the time of the Vatican Council was the support of various nations in Europe for a state-controlled church. This coincided with the Gallican belief that the laws of rightful secular governments superseded those of Rome. In seventeenth to nineteenth century France, the church was an appendage of the state and the king, who “was morally bound by the divine and natural law and what were historically the ‘basic laws’ of the monarchy,” used the Church in order to substantiate his legitimacy as well as to illustrate that “the king [was] the only power that could establish peace and order.” The basis for this power was the idea of sovereignty, defined as “the supreme, absolute, indivisible power of the state to rule and issue decrees without dependence on any other consent or confirmation.” While kings used this idea to legitimize their rules, the papacy espoused it to make decisions that were free from outside political influence and that could not be countermanded by any other power within the Church. The idea of sovereignty was important to the Church as it provided a justification against the ideas of Gallicanism and Conciliarism as well as against the interference of outside powers, specifically the

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115 Bury, 55.
116 Pottmeyer, 42.
117 Ibid.
Kingdom of Italy and, to a lesser degree, France. Furthermore, the concept of sovereignty allowed Pius IX to justify his vehement resistance to the idea of Rome being made a part of the Kingdom of Italy as “Rome does not belong to the Italians but to the Catholic world, [and] that it cannot become the political capital of Italy because it is already the religious capital of Christianity.” Therefore, the desire by some for a state-controlled church forced the pope to consider an action that would forever free the Church from Gallican and Conciliar ideas while simultaneously furthering papal primacy and authority within its own sphere.

The final issues facing the Church at the time of the Vatican Council were those problems related to reconciling the Catholic tradition with rationalism and liberalism. The eightieth and final proposition of the Syllabus of Errors in 1864 “declared anathema that the ‘pope could and should reconcile himself and come to terms with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization,’” but this did not cease the criticisms that the Church endured as a result of the Enlightenment and subsequent rise in the sciences and humanities during the nineteenth century. As nations and people embraced the idea of self-determination in thought and political action, “the church’s response of rejection strengthened the representatives of progress in their conviction that progress would win out only if it opposed the church and, ultimately, religion.” The response of the papacy to the ideas of rationalism and liberalism was immediate; Rome attempted to reinforce her traditional avenues of authority, as evident by the political encyclicals issued during the pontificate of Pius IX, as well as to strengthen the notion of authority in the Gelasian model with the aid of the Ultramontane movement. This was a dangerous gambit as nations increasingly espoused secular ideas based on the Enlightenment, such as “the tendency towards the separation of church and state, known as ‘Josephism’,” in Austria, at the cost of religious, specifically Catholic, tenets that previously guided the actions of a state and provided a privileged place for the papacy in the affairs of secular governments. Nevertheless, it was during these years that the papacy “understood themselves and their teaching authority to be the most important bulwark against the

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119 Pottmeyer, 46.
penetration of modern thought into the church," and ultimately led to the convocation of a general council to once and for all lay to rest the notion of papal primacy with an endorsement of infallibility.

The issues facing the Church during the years leading up to the convocation of the Vatican Council were troublesome in that they weakened the foundation in which the papacy established its notions of primacy and authority. Gallicanism and Conciliarism revealed that movements within the Church desired to delegate the primacy of the pope to a body of men in order to prevent a gross misuse of power. The desire for a state-sponsored Church illustrated the use of the Catholic Church and the popes as a political tool by governments in order to gain legitimacy and to safeguard their positions through the language of ordination. The most damning of the traumas, however, remains the dialectical conflict between modernism and liberalism and traditional Catholic thought. Gone were the days in which a pope could, due simply to his office, decree and it be followed without question. The nineteenth century had, thanks in large part to the Enlightenment, ushered in an age of skepticism regarding religion and, if the papacy were to remain an important and relevant force in European politics, revealed the necessity for a re-articulation of papal authority that could no longer be questioned or ignored.

Having established the rationale for the convocation of the Vatican Council (henceforth referred to as Council), it is possible to now examine the decrees of this general council in regard to their significance to papal primacy. The apostolic letter\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Aeterni Patris} formally convoked the Council on 29 June 1868 and Pius sent two further letters on 8 September (\textit{Arcano Divinae Providentiale}) and 13 September (\textit{Iam Vos Omnes}) to invite the bishops of the Orthodox Church as well as Protestant and other non-Catholics, respectively, to attend the Council. Pius issued an allocution\textsuperscript{122} on 8 December 1869 that formally opened the Council and included, as part of the text, a Profession of Faith. On 24 April 1870, the Council produced a first dogmatic (or apostolic)

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{121}] Carlen defines an apostolic letter as a writing that “deals with affairs of an executive or administrative order such as erecting and dividing mission territory, designating basilicas and approving religious institutes. The pope does not, strictly speaking, establish laws when he issues apostolic letters, but simply discharges his office as ruler and head of the Church,” I:xiii.
\item[\textsuperscript{122}] According to the Catholic Encyclopedia (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01325c.htm>), an allocution retains the original Roman use of “a speech made by a commander to his troops...to animate and encourage them,” as well as adding an ecclesiastic significance of “a manifesto when a struggle between the Holy See and the secular powers has reached an acute stage.”
\end{footnotes}
constitution\textsuperscript{123} (\textit{Dei Filius}), which claimed to “profess and to declare, from [the] chair of Peter…the salutary doctrine of Christ, after proscribing and condemning contrary errors in virtue of the power bestowed on [the Council] by God.”\textsuperscript{124} Finally, the Council issued \textit{Pastor Aeternus}, a further dogmatic constitution, on 18 July 1870, which acted as the pinnacle of the Council as it is this document that formally defined papal primacy and the doctrine of infallibility as it is understood today. The official documents of the Vatican Council\textsuperscript{125} reveal Pius’s use of Catholic institutions as an ultimate means to prolong his relevance and the realization of his importance in secular political affairs.

At the time of the issuing of the \textit{Quanta Cura} and the \textit{Syllabus of Errors} in 1864, Pius IX began to formulate the plan for convoking a general council in response to the perceived evils facing him, and by extension the Church, in the 1850’s and 1860’s. With the contents of the Syllabus having leaked to the European press before the document’s official release, Pius, on 6 December 1864, “informed the cardinals of his intention to convoke a council of the church ‘to counter by such an extraordinary measure the extraordinary needs of the faithful,”\textsuperscript{126} which supports the Reverend Bernard O’Reilly’s assertion that “this crowning labor of Pius IX’s pontificate was so evidently the continuation of all his past labors, one might think that to seek dark motives and to assign other labors must appear preposterous.”\textsuperscript{127} While initially reluctant to acquiesce to the pope’s call, the hierarchy ultimately conceded and, on 29 June 1868, Pius formally convoked the Council through the issuing of the apostolic letter \textit{Aeterni Patris}.

Although an apostolic letter, \textit{Aeterni Patris} is consistent with the political encyclicals of Pius IX in that it illustrates his view of civil society as corrupt and in dire need of the guidance of the Church and, more specifically, himself. In the opening paragraphs of this apostolic letter, Pius articulated his legitimacy for convoking the general council through the use of language that spoke to the necessity of safeguarding

\textsuperscript{123} Carlen defines a Dogmatic or Apostolic Constitution as “a doctrinal and disciplinary pronouncement,” and a document that “may be considered the most solemn type of document issued by the pope in his own name.” \textit{Papal Pronouncements, A Guide: 1740-1978}, (Ann Arbor: Michigan: Pierian Press, 1990), I:xii.
\textsuperscript{125} The exception to these documents are the apostolic letters \textit{Arcano Divinae Providentiale} and \textit{Iam Vos Omnes} due to their being simply correspondence of invitation to leaders of the Orthodox Church and Protestants to attend the Council.
\textsuperscript{126} Noether, 224.
\textsuperscript{127} O’Reilly, 429.
“the unity and integrity of the Church and its government… [which] must remain permanently stable.”128 Throughout the document, the reference to the Kingdom of Italy as the primary cause for “periods of calamity for our holy religion and for civil society” is obvious as are his attempts to paint the Council as the only means through which to “stamp out rampant errors; propagate, explain, and develop Catholic doctrine; protect and restore ecclesiastical discipline; and reform corrupt morals.”129 Through the use of such language, Pius accomplished two goals that he had for the Council. First, he clearly marked King Victor Emmanuel II as an antagonist against the entire Catholic Church, not simply against the papacy. This led to the accomplishment of his second goal, the unification of Church leaders against a common enemy. By painting King Victor Emmanuel II as an “unhappy wanderer [who might] be led back to the right road of truth, justice, and salvation,” Pius provided the Council with a model for corruption and a decline in civil morality whose actions contributed to the current state of affairs, politically and ecclesiastically, for the Catholic Church. Using this as a source motivation, the Council could then strengthen its ability to again enable “piety, honesty, uprightness, justice, charity, and all the Christian virtues [to] be vigorous and flourishing, to the greatest utility of human society.”130 Before closing his letter, Pius warned opponents of the Church, specifically the Italian parliament, not to interfere with the workings of the Council, lest they “will incur the wrath of almighty God, and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul.” From Aeterni Patris, it is obvious that Pius intended this Council to be the last word in the heated debate of whether the papacy should be allowed to interfere with the workings of civil government.

With the aim of Aeterni Patris as “combating…error, defining and developing doctrine, while upholding ecclesiastical discipline and fighting corruption,”131 the effects of this simple document affected governments across Europe and the world. First, the convocation of the Council predictably upset the Italian government. Italian Prime Minister Minabrea worried what “the Council might do and feared that [it] would prove detrimental to Italian interests” to such a degree that he briefly allowed a counter-Council

129 Broderick, 13.
130 Broderick, 15.
in Naples to convene but was ultimately forced to close it “under the pretext that it disturbed international relations.” Bavaria shared the reservations of the Italian government and drafted a letter to Pius that “asserted that the Council could not establish new dogma, could not proclaim a new doctrine not contained in Holy Scripture or Apostolic Tradition and would only set the old and original truth in light.” French opinion, however, was of the utmost importance to Rome as French soldiers continued to defend the Holy See from invasion in 1869. Napoleon III continued to highly value papal acceptance of his empire and pressured Prime Minister Émile Ollivier to support the Council and “although [Ollivier] would have preferred Gallican ideas to prevail…he recognized that in view of the strong Ultramontane currents running even in France [that] this was impossible,” and thus assured French support to the convocation of the Council. These three examples illustrate the continuing influence that Pius held within the international political arena. Any doctrines drafted, especially ones that defined infallibility, would have enormous repercussions as it was feared that future laws and deeds of government would again be susceptible to the opinion of the pope. Despite the fears of Italy and Bavaria and continued persecution of the Polish church by the Russian tsars, “gifts poured in from every country…[such as] paintings by famous masters, gold chalices of all sorts…[and] great mounds of cheese and wine from the Pope’s humbler children” to celebrate the opening of the Vatican Council,” which revealed that support for Pius was high and strengthened his resolve to reassert his authority in the political arena.

Although Pius IX, in principle, convoked the Vatican Council on 29 June 1868, the Council did not formally open until 8 December 1869. During this time, Pius organized the machinery of the Council in order for it to proceed smoothly according to his whims and motivations. On 2 December, a brief preliminary assembly of the 503 bishops and cardinals transpired and, after a speech that “was disappointing to the audience, who hoped to hear definitely what the programme would be,” the members

132 Frank J. Coppa, Pope Pius IX, 158.
133 Coppa, 158-159.
134 Butler, 80.
136 Bury, 76.
of the Council learned, among other troubling aspects, that “the Pope claimed the exclusive right of initiating proposals, a right which had not been claimed at Trent or any formal Council.”137 Upon the official opening of the Council six days later, the members of the Council learned a great deal more about Pius’s ideas for the Council in his allocution of that day.

The Allocution of 8 December 1869 begins as previous ecclesiastic documents with language speaking of praise and glory to Jesus Christ and God, thanks to the tireless efforts of the clergy to propagate the faith, and calls attention to “the fury with which the ancient enemy of the human race has attacked and still attacks the house of God… [with] freedom as a cloak, the conspiracy wages unceasingly against Christ’s holy Church fierce warfare, tainted with crimes of all sorts.”138 The language of this allocution is immensely important as it legitimized the war between the pope in Rome and the secular king of Florence using a spiritual context. As the shepherd of the Catholic flock, Pius’s heart ached at the thought of the “wretched condition of great numbers of men, who have been deceived, and who are straying from the path of truth and justice, and therefore of true happiness;”139 a path that, as the members of the Council learned on 2 December, was his way. This reference to the Kingdom of Italy, specifically her government, is an obvious one as Pius’s previous encyclicals illustrate the pain that the “straying” of Victor Emmanuel II and subsequent rejection of papal influence caused the pope. The first part of this document closes with an enjoining of the Council to unite as “together…peace can be restored to kingdoms, law to barbarians, quiet to monasteries, order to churches, discipline to clerics, and an acceptable people to God.”140 This phrase, however, is not enough to guarantee the cooperation of the members of the Council, so Pius cleverly included another facet in his allocution that coerced the Council member to “solemnly promise and swear true obedience to the Roman Pontiff, vicar of Christ, and successor of blessed Peter, the head of the apostles,”141 a profession of faith. Therefore, the allocution of 8 December 1869 not only illustrates the legitimization of Pius’s war against the

137 Bury, 77.
139 Broderick, 31.
140 Broderick, 32.
141 Broderick, 36.
secular governments of Europe and specifically the Kingdom of Italy, it also provides a means through which to tie the bishops and cardinals more closely to his desires thus consolidating his primacy within the Church.

After December 1869, the debate within the Vatican Council proceeded into 1870 and debate centered around a “schema of a dogmatic constitution on ‘Catholic doctrine against the manifold errors flowing from rationalism’.” This schema consisted of two parts with the themes of “Faith” and “The Church” dividing Dei Filus into eighteen chapters in which such topics as the condemnation of materialism, pantheism, and rationalism and issues regarding the unity of God, the Holy Trinity, Creation, the Incarnation and Redemption occupied the Council for its first four months. While those chapters focused on the Church would take many months of debate, those on Faith were “after much debate...unanimously agreed on April 24th [1870], and duly confirmed by the Pope, in the formal Constitution Dei Filius.” Dei Filius is an interesting document in that it consists of two parts. The first is the explanation of the decisions of the Council and the second is the official articulation of the doctrine. This document is important to Pius IX’s expression of his authority as it reasserted the basis for his primacy through the use of Church institutions as well as articulated the condemnation of rationalism in regards to matters of faith. Rationalism, according to Dei Filius, caused men to be “misled by diverse and strange teachings, and erroneously confusing nature and grace, human knowledge, and divine faith,” thus further leading men to “distort the genuine meaning of dogmas that Holy Mother Church holds and teaches, and to imperil the integrity and soundness of the faith.”

This statement is far more damning to the advocates of rationalism than the rejection in the Syllabus of Errors that the “Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself to, and agree with, progress, liberalism, and modern civilization” in that it illustrated the support of the Catholic clergy for the state of the Church and defense of traditional precepts that the Church followed for hundreds of years. While most of the document focuses strictly on matters of a spiritual nature, the conclusion clearly warns those enemies of the Church that “to observe the constitutions

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142 Butler, 157.
and decrees in which perverse opinions… [are] proscribed and forbidden by this Holy See,” and further reveals Pius’s use of the Council as a vehicle to reassert his primacy over his Church and, by extension, increase his influence on the European stage.

With a clarification of issues of faith completed, the members of the Vatican Council and Pius IX turned their attentions to issues facing the contemporary Church. Pius, satisfied that the Council was in a position to debate the issue of infallibility, acted and on 29 April 1870, “Pius agreed to give precedence to the schema on the powers of the Pope, taking it out of its proper order despite the opposition of the minority [inopportunist] and the reservations of many in the majority.” Pius’s greatest adversary in this matter was Bishop Dupanloup of Orleans who, on 23 April, wrote to the pope warning him that the issue of Infallibility “had already set Europe on fire: [and that] the fire will become a conflagration, if by a violent haste it seems, at all costs and by a change in the natural order of things forestalling the hours of Providence, the thing is carried by assault.” Pius, polite yet undeterred, responded by dismissing Dupanloup’s concerns and implored him “not to wish to be wise in [his] own eyes, or to rely on his own prudence,” and to “return…to that golden simplicity of little ones” by assenting to having the issue put forward. Ultimately, Pius won out in the matter and the Council debated the issue and articulated it in the dogmatic constitution Pastor Aeternus on 18 July 1870.

Like the previous Dei Filius, Pastor Aeternus articulated the official Catholic response to those issues regarding the Church at the time, specifically papal primacy and infallibility. In regards to the topic of papal primacy, Pastor Aeternus articulated three closely connected points that outlined its emergence and justification. The first was that because Peter was chosen by Christ himself as the rock upon which the Catholic Church was to be built, he received the privilege of primacy in Church affairs. Therefore, if one “should say that Peter the Apostle was not constituted by Christ the Lord as the first of all Apostles…or that the same Peter received directly and immediately from the same Jesus
Christ our Lord a primacy…let him be anathema.”149 This first part clearly revealed the foundation of the belief of primacy as being a gift from Christ and led to the second point, that of apostolic succession. Based on this idea, “whoever succeeds Peter in this chair acquires the primacy of Peter over the whole Church, according to Christ himself.”150 This legitimized Pius’s claim of primacy in matters of the Church, which extend, as articulated in the third chapter of the document, to those believers involved in secular government. This third and final point states that the pope “has the right, in the exercise of his office, to communicate freely with the shepherds and flocks of the entire Church; so that he can teach and direct them in the way of salvation.”151 Furthermore, this third chapter condemned those who believed that “this communication of the supreme head with the shepherds and flocks can be impeded [freely]; or who subject this communication to the power of the state by claiming that any decisions by the Holy See…do not have force and value unless confirmed by the [vote] of the secular power.”152 Therefore, Pius, through the use of the Council, succeeded in legitimizing the precepts of Unam Sanctam in a religious context and gave him the perceived right to interfere with those Catholic secular governments due to their being members of the Catholic flock. Through the articulation of papal primacy, Pius could further legitimize his claim of infallibility in matters of the Church and, by extension, secular government.

The last chapter of Pastor Aeternus focuses specifically on the notion of papal infallibility. This chapter begins by relaying the history of the Church regarding this subject and illustrating the times in which the Church, at the Fourth Council of Constantinople (869), Second Council of Lyons (1274), and the Council of Florence (1438), granted the pope powers to decree in the best interests of Christ’s Church on Earth. The last paragraph of the documents articulates the formal definition of infallibility:

And so, adhering faithfully to the tradition known since the beginning of the Christian faith…we teach and define as a divinely revealed dogma that when the Roman Pontiff speaks ex cathedra, that is, when in the discharge of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, and by virtue of his

150 Broderick, 56.
151 Broderick, 58.
152 Broderick, 59.
supreme apostolic authority, he defines that a doctrine concerning faith or morals must be held by the whole Church, he possess through the divine assistance provided to him in blessed Peter that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed his Church to be endowed in defining a doctrine concerning faith or morals; and that such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, not from the consent of the Church.  

This was a monumental victory for Pius in a number of ways. First, he further legitimized his claim of jurisdiction in secular affairs, such as those of the Kingdom of Italy, as he could decree on matters of morality and thus condemn the actions of a government that acted contrary to his whims. This is extended to Victor Emmanuel II and the Kingdom of Italy who, as Catholic and members of the flock, had to defer to Pius in matters concerning the city of Rome and “if the secular power strays from the right way it will be judged by the spiritual power…[thus] whoever resists [the papacy] resists the ordinance of God.”  

Second, Pius was no longer tied to the Fathers of the Church in matters of the Faith as his decrees were absolute by themselves. With this inhibition gone, the pope could speak against the actions of secular government and the clergy had no other recourse but to acquiesce to his opinions since, as C.S. Forester notes “no one really knows when the pope is speaking ex cathedra or not – he is not bound to declare whether he is or not.” Though the vote for this decision was of a democratic fashion with only two dissenting votes as most of the minority had left the Council, it “provided the moral unanimity needed” to legitimize Pius’s claim and give him this great and awesome power.

Though Pius IX won a stunning victory through his use of ecclesiastic institutions, he would ultimately lose his temporal domains because “the announcement [of infallibility] had no effect on Victor Emmanuel II; his army waited patiently on the frontier for an opportunity to thrust this infallible Pope from his temporal throne.”  

Political events unfolded in Europe that forced the French to withdrawal their garrison in Rome in order to shore the regiments battling the Prussians and this provided Victor

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153 Broderick, 63.
154 Bury, 139.
155 Forester, 188.
156 Hales, 311.
157 Forester, 188.
Emmanuel II with a perfect opportunity to do just that. On 20 September 1870, Italian soldiers entered Rome and Pius, determined to hold out until the end, “retired to the Vatican and the Italian army occupied all Rome save for the Leonine city.” Pius remained a prisoner in the Vatican for the remainder of his life and continued to issue encyclicals addressing the state of the Church, including the loss of his temporal domains, but never again openly challenging the Kingdom of Italy for a stake in its secular affairs or those of other Catholic states. Although the battle for his temporal gains was lost, Pius’s ecclesiastic victory had far more reaching effects as Catholics to this day regard the pope as infallible when speaking ex cathedra and the papacy continues to act in a position of worldwide importance. Therefore, one may argue that the nature of papal authority simply changed rather than be destroyed with the loss of Rome to the Kingdom of Italy.

158 Forester, 190.
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