

## Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective

*The One, the Few, and the Many*

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## Religion and Politics in Iberia

*Clericalism, Anticlericalism, and Democratization in Portugal and Spain*

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### INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION AND POLITICS IN IBERIA

In the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic "consensual" Iberian region, religion and politics has generally hinged on the issue of clericalism versus anticlericalism. The Roman Catholic Church plays a leading role in the political and social fabric of Portuguese and Spanish society, so it has quite naturally engendered both unbridled loyalty and fierce opposition among the population in each nation. The clerical/anticlerical cleavage has long been a major aspect of Iberian politics and society, but in recent years, its salience has declined under democratic rule in Portugal and in Spain.

This chapter will approach the question of religion and politics in the Iberian peninsula by examining the emergence, development and evolution of the clerical/anticlerical cleavage in both Portugal and Spain. It will first present a brief overview of the religious composition in each nation, then discuss three key phases of the religion and politics relationship in the twentieth century in each country, and conclude with some thoughts on what may account for the narrowing, or perhaps even the eclipse, of the Iberian clerical/anticlerical divide in recent years.<sup>1</sup>

### A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RELIGION AND POLITICS IN IBERIAN SOCIETY

#### The Religious Composition of Portugal

The population of Portugal (which includes those living on Portuguese territory on the European continent and in the Atlantic islands of the



<sup>1</sup> The author wishes to express his gratitude to Dr. Janice Farnham, R. J. M., of the Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for her assistance with this chapter.

Azores and Madeira) numbers approximately ten million people. Some 97 percent of this population is at least nominally Roman Catholic, and most baptisms, marriages, and funerals are performed according to Roman Catholic ritual. For these reasons, the Catholic Church has come to be known as the very definition of Portuguese civil society (de Sousa Franco 1987). Thus the population of Portugal is not divided in its religious faith, but in their levels of devotion.

There are important regional variations in the practice of Catholicism. Some 70 percent of the population living in the central and northern regions, and in the islands, regularly attend Sunday Mass. In contrast, only about 30 percent of nominal Catholics routinely attend Mass in the city of Lisbon, and that percentage drops to roughly 15 percent of nominal Catholics in the scarcely populated region of the Alentejo, south of Lisbon (Wiarda 1994).

The central, northern, and island areas are rather conservative politically, and devoutly Catholic; the impoverished region of the Alentejo is both communist and anticlerical. Perhaps the most convincing explanation offered to account for these regional differences centers on patterns of land ownership: In the center and northern regions, as well as in the islands, most people own small tracts of land. These parcels barely provide subsistence for the people, but at least do give them a sense of ownership in the land. On the other hand, about 10 percent of the population lives under very different land ownership patterns in the Alentejo region. The land in this area is very flat and dry, and frequently suffers droughts. There, large tracts of land are owned by Lisbon aristocrats, who spend occasional weekends and vacations there. This population of landless peasants, who work the land and are poorly and irregularly paid, tend to be procommunist and anticlerical.<sup>2</sup>

British and American citizens have brought Protestantism to Portugal, but it constitutes only 1 percent of the population. Many British live in the Algarve region in the far south of Portugal, and are members of the Church of England. Several American Protestant groups, including Mormons and Pentecostals, have been active in Portugal of late. This foreign presence in Portugal represents approximately 50,000 persons. The Portuguese Jewish community is centered in Lisbon, and numbers around 1,000 persons (Wiarda 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Tom Gallagher (1996) also notes that the Roman Catholic Church's support of the right-wing Prince Miguel in the Portuguese civil war of 1832-4 hurt its standing among the population in the Alentejo, and was a key factor in the development of the strong anticlerical feelings in that region.

### The Religious Composition of Spain

The Spanish population numbers some 39 million, almost four times the size of the Portuguese population.<sup>3</sup> As in Portugal, approximately 97 percent of the population of Spain are Roman Catholics, and most baptisms, marriages and funerals are performed according to Roman Catholic rites (Clark 1990). And like Portugal, there is a clerical/anticlerical cleavage that is important to understanding Spanish politics.

The clerical/anticlerical cleavage in Spain has typically followed urban/rural and conservative/progressive societal cleavage patterns. Urban, well-educated, and politically progressive city dwellers have been far less likely to regularly attend Mass than people living in the country. Indeed, approximately 60 percent of nominal Catholics living in the countryside attend Mass frequently, with roughly 30 percent of them attending Mass regularly. In contrast, only about 20 percent of Catholics living in the large cities, including Madrid, attend Mass regularly (Clark 1990).

Historically, practicing Catholics in Spain have supported conservative political parties, which traditionally espoused a worldview similar to that of the Church. Anticlerical sectors have tended to support parties of the left. More recently, practicing Catholics have demonstrated a willingness to support leftist parties. For example, in what was arguably a watershed event, upwards to 25 percent of practicing Catholics voted for Felipe González's Socialist Party in the 1982 legislative elections (Pérez-Díaz, 1993). Further, it is becoming more common for educated, city people to attend Mass regularly. As we will examine later, this new and unusual pattern of behavior may be a result of the momentous internal changes experienced by both the Spanish state and the Roman Catholic Church over the past thirty years.

Finally, and similar to the Portuguese case, most Protestants in Spain are of foreign origin. Only representing 1 percent of the population, there are about 300,000 total Protestants of various denominations, including the Church of England, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Mormons. The Spanish Jewish community numbers about 13,000 people (Clark 1990).

### THE ORIGINS OF THE CLERICAL/ANTICLERICAL DIVIDE IN IBERIA

Portugal and Spain are two of the oldest nation-states in Europe, and the Roman Catholic Church has played a preeminent role in all sectors

<sup>3</sup> This includes those living on the national territory on the Iberian peninsula, the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands in the Atlantic, and the city-states of Ceuta and Melilla in North Africa.

of society in each country since their founding almost one thousand years ago. Indeed, Rome was not only present at their founding, but had a hand in the very creation of these states (Payne 1974). In each case, the Church provided material and spiritual support to the Portuguese and Spanish kings during their battle of *reconquista* against the North African Moors. Rome's support for the national project in Spain and Portugal generated widespread elite and popular support for the Catholic Church, which, in turn, became part of the very national fabric of these two countries. As Eusébio Mujal-León (1982) observes:

Historically, the link between Catholicism and the State has been very close in Spain: the Church has an exalted role in the *reconquista* from the Moors and galvanized subsequent crusades against Jews and heretics domestically, and against Protestantism in Europe more generally. As cement for the Castellan monarchs and their successors in building the Spanish nation, Catholicism became indissolubly linked to the national identity.

Mujal-León's observation can equally be applied to Portugal. In short, the Catholic religion is an essential element of the present spiritual life, culture, and history of Portugal and Spain.

A logical corollary to the first point is that anticlericalism – the outright rejection of the church and of all religious things – has also been a pronounced feature of the political and social life of Spain and Portugal throughout their respective histories. The seeds for the clerical/anticlerical cleavage line were sown at the very birth of the Portuguese and Spanish nation-states. Absolute political power and legitimacy in Portugal and Spain until the democratic revolutions of the modern era were in the hands of the monarch, in line with the doctrine known as the divine right of kings. That doctrine postulated that monarchical power was absolute, granted to the monarch by God. The Roman Catholic Church legitimized the monarch's claim to divine authority, and, in turn, typically received royal grants of land, among other goods (Higgs 1979). In spite of the occasional conflict between the Crown and the Church (for instance, when the monarch resented the influence of a particular bishop, or of a religious order) the relationship between them was generally stable and mutually beneficial. Certainly, the imperial power of Portugal and Spain in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries brought great riches to the monarchs, and extended the scope of the Roman Catholic Church worldwide (Boxer 1978). These successes deepened aristocratic support for this Iberian absolutist model of political development, which was predicated upon the alliance of cross and sword (Bruneau 1976).

To be expected, this system of governance posed a great challenge to Portuguese and Spanish reformers in the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789 (see Gibson 1989 and Payne 1973). These reformers

tended to be well-educated people from aristocratic families, and at least at first, members in good standing with the Church. Yet, try as they might, their efforts at reform were consistently rebuffed by the monarch, and by the Church hierarchy.

Indeed, the institutional Catholic Church stood staunchly against the democratic and liberal revolutions of the modern era, in favor instead of the existing order (Conway 1997). Pope Pius IX, who served between 1846 and 1878, was generally distrustful of liberal, republican, and socialist political movements, considering each of them to be flawed in important ways. Following the political and social upheavals associated with the revolutions of 1789 and of 1848, and the loss of papal territories during Italian unification in 1860, Pius IX viewed these new philosophies as not only a direct threat to the fabric of European society, but also as a grave danger to the papacy itself. In response, he issued the *Syllabus of Errors* in 1864, which denounced liberalism and republicanism as incompatible with Catholic and Christian views (Chadwick 1975). He felt that these modern approaches to government were too materialistic, too individualistic, and hostile to God. The *Syllabus* was followed a few years later by the doctrine of Papal infallibility, issued by the First Vatican Council in 1870. That doctrine established the papacy not only as the moral, spiritual, and institutional center of the Catholic Church, but also as the focus of Catholic opposition to modernity. Thomas Boekenkotter (1990) remarks that these actions, considered in their entirety, resulted in "a divorce of secular culture from the Church and the state of siege mentality that characterized modern Catholicism down to our day." In short, the official Church reaction to the first wave of democratization in Continental Europe was to react against it, to oppose it, to fear it, and to condemn it.

By so strongly resisting the changes associated with the democratic and liberal revolutions of post-1789 Europe, a whirlwind of anticlerical sentiment settled in upon reform sectors throughout the continent, especially in Catholic countries. Gildea (1994) notes, for instance, that anticlerical sectors in France strongly believed that the Church represented a serious danger against reason, progress, and freedom, and, therefore needed to be removed from the political and social equation before true progress could be made.

The same was true for Iberian anticlericalism. Indeed, although long a part of Iberian history, the origins of the modern clerical/anticlerical cleavage line at the elite level can be traced to the very first encounters between the Iberian children of the Enlightenment (i.e. the university educated city dwellers), who preferred a republican form of government, and the protectors of the old Iberian order (i.e. the crown, the military, the old aristocracy, and the Roman Catholic Church). In reaction to the

1864 *Syllabus of Errors*, these reformers sought, among other objectives, to remove the Church from its dominant societal role in education. Education was a concern to republican sympathizers, because in their view, enlightened change could only emanate from people open to new ideas, philosophies, and, in particular, new approaches to knowing God (Gibson 1989).

Neither the Church nor the reformers were particularly interested in compromise, and quickly came to view each other as the enemy. In particular, Church leaders reasoned that if they were to maintain their privileged position in society, then the reformers would have to be kept out of power. Alternatively, the reformers understood that any chance they had of success required that the Church and the other elements of state power be dislodged from it (Shubert 1990). In short, the Spanish and Portuguese Republicans were often frustrated by having to deal with a powerful crown and aristocracy, who were supported by a conservative Church hierarchy (see Herr 1971 and Wheeler 1978). Mutual resentment was generated, the Republicans became staunchly anticlerical, and the clerical/anticlerical division was intensified among the political elite.

There were anticlerical sentiments at the popular level in Iberia as well. Indeed, popular anticlericalism has been a feature of Portuguese and Spanish civil society since at least the seventeenth century (Badone 1990; see Ullman 1968). In Spain, for instance, Adrian Shubert (1990) notes that a 1627 collection of Spanish proverbs contained hostile feelings against the clergy. Among the complaints voiced at the popular level were rent disputes with the land-owning Church, as well as a generalized view of the clergy as "greedy, oppressive and immoral." Ruth Behar (1990) observes that those espousing an anticlerical worldview consider priests to be mere equals, "functionaries of the church and of the state," who have no special powers to "hear confessions, provide Communion, and give the sacraments." Likewise, Caroline Brettell (1990), following Joyce Riegelhaupt (1984), notes that popular anticlericalism in Portugal characteristically views the parish priest, as well as the church hierarchy itself, to be impediments to knowing God.<sup>4</sup> Such popular sentiments of anticlericalism have, of course, many causes; arguably, the Church's close relationship with the monarchy, its fear of modernity, and its neglect of the general population in Iberia, helped to generate those feelings (Burns 1992).

<sup>4</sup> Although there were cases of popular anticlericalism in Portugal, it should be noted that the anticlericalism under the First Portuguese Republic was found primarily among the political elite. Unlike Spain, there were no cases of church burning in Portugal (Gallagher 1996).

#### CRITICAL PHASES BETWEEN RELIGION AND POLITICS IN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Both Portugal and Spain went through three distinct phases of relations between religion and politics during the twentieth century. First, the population of each country lived under anticlerical Republican regimes at the beginning of this century. Second, both adopted proclerical fascist and corporatist regimes in the 1930s. Third, they each made successful transitions to democracy in the 1970s and 1980s, and these new democracies each adopted constitutional provisions guaranteeing the freedom of religion.

There is one important difference between their national political experiences during this time as well: Spain suffered through a divisive civil war in which religion played a very contentious role from 1936 to 1939. During the Spanish Civil War there were brutal acts perpetrated by anticlerical Republican forces against members of the clergy, including the murder of priests, nuns, and monks, as well as the burning of churches and convents (McLeod 1997). These frightful acts, in a real sense, dismembered Spanish civil society, and subsequent efforts to bridge this cleavage in Spain became momentously difficult.

There were also two distinct phases in the politics of the Roman Catholic Church in the twentieth century. From the turn of the century until the Second Vatican Council in 1962, the Church was an antimodern, antidemocratic, antiliberal institution. After Vatican II, the Church fully embraced the idea of reconciling itself to the modern, liberal and democratic world. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that a new kind of official Roman Catholic Church was born after the 1965 issuance of both *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae*. It is important to note, however, that Vatican II did not just happen; it was the end-point of what had been a complex and long-evolving debate among theologians within the Church, some of whom had argued since the First Vatican Council for the need to adapt Catholicism to modernity (Bokenkotter 1990). The Church's adoption of that view at Vatican II had profound implications for Portuguese and Spanish Catholicism. We will return to this point shortly.

#### PHASE ONE: ANTICLERICAL REPUBLICAN REGIMES IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULAR (CIRCA 1900s TO 1930s)

Iberian democratic reformers finally managed to seize power in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Once in power, the First Portuguese Republic (1910–26), and the Second Spanish Republic (1931–6), attempted to exclude the Roman Catholic Church from state power and curtail its influence in civil society. Let us look at each case in some detail.

### The Portuguese First Republic and the Church (1910–26)

The overthrow of King Manuel II by young Republicans in 1910 paved the way for the inauguration of Portugal's First Republic. This was an elite, anticlerical and Lisbon-based regime. (Payne 1980). This regime was a "republic" in name only, it did not allow many groups in the society to participate politically and discouraged the creation of organizations in civil society (Robinson 1979).

The First Republic was particularly successful in blocking the Church from any influence in the state. In that regard, Prime Minister Afonso Costa steered a number of the most restrictive anticlerical laws in Portuguese history through the National Assembly, including the *Lei de Separação* of 1911. Following the 1905 French law of separation, this new Portuguese law not only separated church and state, but it also placed the Church under the control of the state, and closed the theology program at the University of Coimbra (Gallagher 1996). It provided for the closing of many seminaries, the elimination of the national observance of holy days, the secularization of cemeteries, and the nationalization of some Church property. Even some of the eighteenth-century anticlerical laws, which dated back to Marques de Pombal's expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal, were brought back into effect. In sum, the Portuguese First Republic created a strong, centralized, secular, and administrative state in Lisbon, which, combined with the widespread anticlerical feeling among civil servants, kept the institution away from state power during the life of the First Republic (Linz 1977, Opello 1991). And yet, this effort to contain Church influence was not very successful. Richard Robinson (1979) has noted that:

[these laws] proved counterproductive in as much as it further stimulated a revival of religious feeling and brought about an increased sense of urgency among Catholics concerning the problems of building up the organizational structure of religion. Far from bringing greater unity, it divided society by reinforcing political and ideological divisions.

In fact, these legislative measures prompted the formation of Catholic groups throughout the country by people who were deeply troubled by the official anticlericalism of the Lisbon regime. One of these groups, the *Centro Academica da Democracia Cristão* (CADC, the Christian Democracy Academic Center), was founded by students at the University of Coimbra in 1912. Two of its student members later played critical political roles: One of them, Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira, became the cardinal of Lisbon and the other, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, became the country's dictator (Gallagher 1996).

Ultimately, the First Republic was overthrown by a military coup on 28 May 1926. The regime's effort to limit Church influence was but one

of several factors in its eventual downfall, which also included political instability and a bad economy. To address the economic situation, the military asked Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, who was by then a professor of economics at the University of Coimbra, to become the minister of finance. He accepted, and by 1929 had successfully brought order to the national economy. When the military decided to return to the barracks in 1933, they offered to support him as the new premier. Salazar accepted, and established a new order, called the *Estado Novo*, or New State, in 1933 (Linz 1977). Among other goals for this new regime, Salazar sought close ties with the Church.

### The Spanish Second Republic and the Church (1931–6)

The same general pattern between church and state existed in Spain in the early portion of the twentieth century. Although the First Spanish Republic (1810–1923) had managed to coexist with the Catholic Church, the Second Republic (1931–6) was overtly hostile to it (Callahan 1984). Anticlericalism became a pronounced feature in the 1930s, when some of the most drastic anticlerical laws in Spanish history were adopted (Payne 1984).

Following the seven-year military dictatorship (1923–30) of Primo de Rivera, who had overthrown the First Republic with the promise to restore order, a new Republican regime was created following gains made by Republican forces in the 1931 municipal elections. King Alfonso XIII abdicated the Spanish throne, and the Second Spanish Republic was formed. One of the goals of the well-educated, secular and urban-based leaders of the Second Republic, led by Prime Minister Manuel Azaña of the anticlerical Radical Party, was to undermine the power and influence of the Catholic Church in Spanish politics and society (Pérez-Díaz 1993). To that end, they included several anticlerical legal provisions in the Constitution of 1931. Among other measures, these constitutional provisions disestablished the Church, cut off all state subsidies to religious organizations, and secularized cemeteries. There were also stipulations for the legalization of divorce, a secular education system, and the confiscation of Jesuit properties. Further, public religious displays were disallowed, and some religious orders were expelled (Andrés-Gallego and Pazos 1998).

Despite this hostile tone against the Catholic Church, Pope Pius was ready to work with the Republic even as late as 1935 (Bokenkotter 1990). But the Republicans were not interested in developing a working relationship with the Church. Moreover, the anticlerical tone of the new Republic ignited a somewhat dormant anticlericalism among the population (O'Connell 1971). In May of 1931, for example, angry crowds in Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, and in other large cities burned churches, and

destroyed over twenty convents (Payne 1984). This hostile anticlericalism in the early years of the Second Republic did not bode well for the development of a societal consensus on the role of religion and politics later on.

Conservative Catholics were greatly concerned with these attacks on the church. They were represented in Parliament by the so-called Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right (*Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas*, or CEDA), which was led by the devout Catholic law professor, José María Gil Robles (Vincent 1996b). The CEDA sought to carve out space for the Catholic Church in the Second Republic, and its political position was considerably strengthened when it emerged as Spain's largest political party after the 1936 legislative elections. In return for his party's strong showing, Gil Robles was given a cabinet position (Shubert 1989). And yet, no real accommodation among the opposing sides was ever reached.

Catholics were particularly alarmed when the anticlerical socialist and communist alliance, known as the Popular Front, gained a plurality in the 1936 legislative elections (Hermet 1980). When the new leftist government announced that it planned to pursue massive nationalizations, militant Spanish nationalists and fascists, inspired by the emergence of fascist governments in Germany, Italy, and Portugal, argued that the time was ripe for the Second Republic to be overthrown. Shortly thereafter, on July 7, 1936, a national insurrection broke out. Spain divided into pro-Republican and pro-Nationalist zones, and both sides committed horrible atrocities in what became a fratricidal civil war (see Sanchez 1964).

In reaction to the anticlerical tone of the Second Republic, the Spanish bishops proclaimed their support for General Francisco Franco in 1937, opting for fascism over the modern political ideologies of republicanism, socialism, and communism (Andrés-Gallego and Pazos 1998). That decision particularly enraged the Republican side, and, in response, many of its political activists decided to attack the Catholic Church itself. Although churches were generally respected in the Nationalist zone, they came under attack in the Republican zone. There, anticlerical radicals killed some 4,184 priests, 2,365 monks, and 283 nuns. They also burned churches, abbeys, and convents (Shubert, 1989). This cemented the clerical/anticlerical cleavage, and made any eventual societal healing rather problematic (Edles 1998).

#### PHASE TWO: PROCLERICAL CORPORATIST REGIMES IN IBERIA (CIRCA 1930S TO 1970S)

In the aftermath of these anticlerical Republics, right-wing fascist regimes were put into power by the military in Portugal and Spain. Once in

power, both Salazar in Portugal and Franco in Spain built proclerical, antimodern, antirational, antiliberal, anticommunist corporatist states, in direct opposition to the anticlerical Republican regimes. In addition, each leader reached formal agreements, or Concordats, with the Vatican, to demonstrate to their respective populations that the Pope himself supported their new political regimes (Brassloff 1998).

#### Salazar's Portugal and the Church

Portuguese dictator Antonio Salazar designed a corporative system of government in 1933, calling it a New State, or *Estado Novo* (Robinson 1979 and Whitehead 1986). With the blessing of the Portuguese Church, Salazar used the ideology of corporatism to oppose democratic philosophies that dominated political discourse in Continental Europe and in the Anglo-American world (Linz 1965).

In particular, Salazar was influenced by two Papal encyclicals: *Rerum Novarum: The Condition of Labor* in 1891, authored by Pope Leo XIII,<sup>5</sup> and by Pope Pius XI's 1931 encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno: After Forty Years* (see Hollenbach 1979). Salazar sought to create a corporative system of government and societal organization in Portugal that he believed represented a third way from the models of democratic liberal capitalism and state-run communism. Corporatism, he argued, would avoid the excesses of individualism and materialism, and result in the common good. Article 5 of the *Estado Novo* Constitution, adopted in 1933, declared Portugal to be a corporative and unitary Republic, in which the family and the Church played leading roles (Gallagher 1983). The Constitution also recognized Catholicism to be Portugal's official religion (de Sousa Franco 1987).

The cardinal of Lisbon from 1930 to 1971 was Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira, who had been a member of CADC with Salazar at the University of Coimbra (Gallagher 1996 and Georgel 1985). Working with him, Salazar helped the Catholic Church in a number of ways. He shepherded various statutes through the newly created Corporative National Assembly, including the creation of the Church radio station, known as *Radio Renscença*, the creation of Catholic University in Lisbon, and legislation against Protestant missionary activities. The Concordat of 1940 signed between Salazar's Portugal and the Vatican further cemented this relationship. This agreement provided for the recognition of the Holy See by Portugal, prohibited government officials from interfering with Vatican correspondences with the Portuguese Church, and granted the Church the right to establish its own education system, which would

<sup>5</sup> Pope Leo XIII served from 1878 to 1903.

function alongside the state system. It also ascribed civil status to Catholic marriages, and forbade divorce (Bruneau 1976).

In spite of his general proclerical stance, Salazar never actually allowed the Church much influence on political matters. This point is well illustrated by Salazar's troubles with Oporto's bishop Antonio Ferreira Gomes in 1958. At that time (which was before both the start of the colonial war and Vatican II) the bishop wrote a poignant letter to Salazar, which criticized the *Estado Novo*'s record on human rights in Portugal and in the African colonies. Salazar's response to this overt act of defiance was to first, not to allow Ferreira Gomes back into Portugal following a 1959 trip abroad, and, second, demand that the Vatican name a new bishop of Oporto. The Pope refused Salazar's request, and a stalemate ensued: Ferreira Gomes was not allowed to return to Portugal for ten years (Gallagher 1996). Salazar took advantage of this situation to warn other clergy that he would not tolerate any further dissent among Catholics, and took steps to keep power away from Church officials.

Salazar sought to concentrate actual power in his own hands, and was wary about sharing it. Although he was more than happy to appear with the Cardinal of Lisbon and other Church officials in photo-ops, and to support proclerical legislation, the *Estado Novo* ultimately belonged to Salazar, and to no one else. In this regard, the Portuguese historian A. H. Oliveira Marques (1976) reminds us that:

The Catholic feature of the New State must be emphasized but not exaggerated, for Salazar's regime (unlike Franco's) never posed as an "apostolic" system engaged in some kind of crusade against anti-Catholic elements. The Premier's few public remarks on Catholicism and religion in general were always strikingly moderate and tolerant, in contrast to his strong beliefs and extremist attitudes on other subjects. His speech of 1940, when the Concordat with Rome was signed, showed a remarkably middle-of-the-way position, uncommitted to any all-pervasive Church influence and definitely opposed to Church meddling in politics. Thus no attempt was made to reunite Church and State.

Salazar did grant the Church a privileged position in his *Estado Novo*, and simultaneously, kept it at arm's length from actual political power.

#### Franco's Spain and the Church

In Spain, many Catholics, reacting against the radical anticlericalism of the Republican period, supported Franco. Once in power, Franco abolished all anticlerical legislation adopted during the Republic, and in 1941 reached an important agreement with the Spanish Church. That agreement provided that Catholicism would be named as Spain's official religion, granted the Church freedom to operate without state limits, and

provided for state funding for the Church, among other measures (O'Brien and Shannon 1997).

In spite of these apparent good relations, the Catholic Church was very wary about the actual political direction Franco would follow in the late 1930s and early 1940s. At that time the Spanish Church was a profoundly conservative and antimodern institution, and it distrusted the radicalism and dynamism of one of Franco's biggest supporters, the Falange fascist movement. Certainly, the Church and the Falange were tactical allies during the Civil War, but a future collaboration between them after Franco's victory was unlikely (Payne 1984).

The defeat of the Axis powers by the Allied Forces in World War II ended any chance of a powerful state role for the Falange in Spain, and paved the way for improved ties between Franco and the Church (Mujal-León 1982). That relationship was codified with the August 27, 1953 signing of the Concordat between the Vatican and the Spanish state, which provided that Catholicism would continue its status as Spain's official religion. In addition, the Concordat exempted the clergy from state taxation, permitted Church documents to be published without prior censorship, granted a state subsidy to religious personnel, and gave the Church the right to supervise religious education in schools. In return, the Vatican recognized Franco's state, and agreed to permit it some say in the appointment of Spanish bishops.<sup>6</sup> Franco's rule was never seriously challenged from within Spain, and the support he received from the Church was an important element of his legitimacy. Surprisingly, the first significant winds of political change to reach Franco's Spain actually emanated from the Vatican.

#### The Impact of the Second Vatican Council on Iberian Religion and Politics

By the 1960s the Vatican began to move away from its former "third way" of fascism-corporatism social organization, even though this system was still being used by Portugal and Spain (Dorr 1992). The new realities of the Cold War, and the threat of the spread of atheistic communism worldwide, greatly concerned both Pope John XXIII and his successor Pope Paul VI, who wanted to carve out a new place for the Roman Catholic Church in the modern world (Hastings 1991).

John XXIII, who was the Pope from 1958 to 1963, wrote two significant encyclicals, *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris*

<sup>6</sup> When the economy was sputtering in the 1950s, Franco turned for help to the technocratic ministers affiliated with the Catholic lay order Opus Dei. They were permitted to run the economy, and by opening the protected economy to the world, fundamentally changed the course of economic policy. Opus Dei had a significant hand in what became known as the so-called Spanish economic miracle in the 1960s and after.

(1963), which focused the attention of the Church squarely on the key social and political justice issues of the modern and industrializing world. Although this body of work manifests the traditional Catholic wariness of the Lockean emphasis on individualism and views of private property, it also seeks to reconcile Catholic concerns for the dignity of human life with the modern demands for political freedom and economic equality (see Seidler and Meyer 1989).<sup>7</sup> In other words, under Pope John's leadership, the Church began the process of reconciling itself, at least partially, with liberal, representative democracy.

One of the key issues Pope John XXIII wanted explored as he convened the Second Vatican Council in 1962 was the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the modern world. After three years of discussion and debate, the Second Vatican Council, with the approval of Pope Paul VI, released *Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* and *Dignitatis Humanae: Declaration on Religious Freedom* in 1965.<sup>8</sup> In what was arguably a watershed event in the life of the modern Church, these two documents attack any and all political regimes that do not guarantee and protect human rights and religious freedom. They also assert that governments should protect the rights of free assembly, of common action, of expressing personal opinions, and of professing a religion both privately and publicly.

*Gaudium et Spes* manifests the Vatican's interest in breaking its alliance with the dictators in Portugal and Spain. It declares that the Church "stands ready to renounce the exercise of certain legitimately acquired rights if it becomes clear that their use raises doubt about the sincerity of her witness or that new conditions of life demand some other arrangement." Similarly, *Dignitatis Humanae* proclaims religious freedom to be a basic human right, and calls upon all governments to protect that right, claiming that "a wrong is done when government imposes upon its people, by force or fear or other means, the profession or repudiation of any religion, or when it hinders men from joining or leaving a religious community." These documents made it crystal clear that the Vatican had come to view the continuance of its close relationship with the reactionary Iberian regimes as harmful for the Church, as well as for Iberian society, and wanted to change course.

<sup>7</sup> Pope John XXIII, who served between 1958 and 1963, made a number of key contributions to Catholic social justice teaching. In 1961, he issued *Mater et Magistra*, which deals with the question of social justice. In that encyclical, he emphasizes that the state has the moral duty to intervene in the marketplace to ensure that property be used for the common good. Two years later he authored the watershed encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, which endorses the "welfare state" model of capitalism. In particular, it supports the rights to life, food, clothing, shelter, medical care, culture, and education of all people.

<sup>8</sup> Pope Paul VI served from 1963 to 1978.

In their totality, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae* identified a new and proper role for the Church in the modern world. Rather than maintaining a sixteenth-century theocratic state model, which was characteristic of the pre-Vatican II Church in Portugal and Spain, the post-Vatican II Church saw itself as an essential and dynamic player in both political and civil society. Within that context, it sought to maintain its traditional role in education and health care, as well as use its influence to sway larger societal debates on abortion, contraception, divorce, welfare, and other human rights issues to its point of view (see Hanson 1987). As such, the Catholic Church not only reconciled itself to the modern, democratic, and liberal world, but it also attempted to carve out a "moral space" within it where it could play a critical role. The Church changed after Vatican II, and that change influenced the course of Iberian Catholicism.

### Vatican II and Portugal

Vatican II took place as Portugal was waging its colonial war in Africa. The Vatican was not at all happy about the Portuguese regime's failure to reach a political settlement with the African nationalists, and made its displeasure known. To that end, Pope Paul VI, who had visited Fátima in 1967, infuriated Salazar's successor, Marcello Caetano, when he received the leaders of the liberation movements from Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and Cape Verde at the Vatican in 1970 (Gallagher 1996).<sup>9</sup>

Bishops in Portugal and Spain became more public in their criticisms of their respective regimes, encouraged by the teaching of Vatican II. In Portugal, for example, the bishops of Beira and of Oporto publicly questioned the ethics of continuing the colonial war. A Catholic intellectual movement was founded at that time, which was rather critical of the regime, and its journal, *O Tempo e o Modo*, became an influential source of ideas in the anti-Salazar movement. These developments assuaged concerns held by many devout Catholics, who feared that the Church's official association with the regime might cause the growth of anticlericalism in civil society (de Sousa Franco 1987).

The fact that some Portuguese bishops were openly critical of the regime and of the colonial war prevented a close working relationship between the Church and state in the 1960s and beyond. And yet, as long as the conservative Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira remained Cardinal of Lisbon, the Portuguese Church officially remained loyal to Salazar. Cerejeira took great steps to limit and control the implementation of the

<sup>9</sup> Caetano became Portuguese Premier in 1968.

changes adopted at the Second Vatican Council in Portugal, and managed, at best, to hold off the winds of change for a few years.

### Vatican II and Spain

Vatican II started something of a *problematique* within the Spanish Church, which was experiencing great internal changes in the 1960s and 1970s (Cooper 1975). On the one hand, the older Spanish clergy were opposed to *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae*. Some 90 percent of the Spanish bishops, most of whom had lived through the Spanish Civil War, were against the new teachings (Edles 1998). On the other hand, younger priests were very supportive of Vatican II. According to the findings of a 1970 poll, 62 percent of the Spanish clergy actually opposed the Church's close relationship with Franco's regime. That number jumped to a 86 percent disapproval rating when just considering the responses of priests under thirty years old (Shubert 1989). In addition, the first Joint Assembly of Bishops and Priests held in 1971 declared that since the special relationship between Franco and the Church was born out of the fratricidal civil war, it was, almost by definition, shameful, and should be ended.

Vatican II played a critical role by providing large sectors of the clergy both the justification, and institutional support, to break with Franco's regime (Brassloff 1998). There were efforts at increased ecumenical dialogue to discuss how the Spanish Church should integrate the new teachings. Among the important Catholic journals at the time were *Aún*, published by the Jesuits, and *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, founded in 1963 by Joaquín Ruiz Giménez. These journals were leading the way to a generalized philosophical and spiritual reawakening in Spain (Vincent 1996a).

Pope Paul VI wanted to end the close association of the Church with the Franco regime. The key instrument at his disposal was the naming of new bishops in Spain. After Vatican II, the Pope began to reject candidates recommended by Franco for positions in the Spanish Church, avoiding direct conflict by making "interim" appointments. Over Franco's objections, Paul VI named Vincente Enrique y Tarancón as Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain in 1969, and later named him Archbishop of Madrid. Under Tarancón's leadership, the Spanish Church started to implement the teachings of Vatican II, and adopted a more politically moderate tone (Pérez-Díaz 1993). In spite of his disagreements with the Pope, Franco remained loyal to his faith to the end. His death on November 25, 1975 ended an era, and set up both the possibility for a peaceful transition to democracy, as well as the normalization of church-state relations in Spain.

Both Salazar and Franco had built conservative antimodern regimes in the 1930s, which were in harmony with the then constituted Catholic Church. However, when the Church changed after Vatican II, both of these regimes lost a vital part of their *raison d'être*. In the end, neither of these regimes managed to last much time beyond Vatican II, nor, perhaps more importantly, beyond the deaths of their founders.

### PHASE THREE: THE NEW DEMOCRATIC REGIMES IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULAR (1970s TO PRESENT)

Quite unexpectedly, Portugal and Spain adopted democratic regimes in the 1970s. The two nations followed very different paths to democracy: There was revolutionary upheaval in Portugal, and an evolutionary process of change in Spain. And in each case, the new regimes sought to concurrently limit the influence of the Roman Catholic Church while maintaining good relations with it. Of note, the post-Vatican II Church strongly supported the efforts in each country to build democratic regimes.

#### The Church and Portugal's Transition to Democracy

By the early 1970s, the Portuguese regime was in crisis. Portugal's thirteen year (1961–1974) colonial war in Africa had eroded its legitimacy in the eyes of not only elements of the Church, but also among junior military officers. These officers formed themselves into an opposition group called the Armed Forces Movement (MFA), and overthrew the regime on April 25, 1974. That military action plunged the country into a two-year period of turmoil and agitation (see Manuel 1995).

Once in power, a key problem for the MFA was that it was ideologically fragmented, and was not sure in what direction to take the country. Factions of various political ideologies appeared among MFA soldiers, including moderate, socialist, and communist groups. They battled each other in an effort to gain control of the levers of governmental power from 1974 to 1976. During that larger political struggle, many MFA members displayed strongly anticlerical feelings. Holding the Church responsible for its collaboration with the long-lasting Salazar dictatorship, there were many MFA-inspired attacks against the Church during the transition.

Antonio de Ribeiro, the new bishop of Lisbon (Cardinal Cerejeira had stepped down in 1969) was extremely careful in his statements during this time, taking great pains not to incite anticlerical movements, and to limit attacks against the Church. Communist-leaning MFA Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves, had the opposite fear. He understood the power and authority of the Church, and feared a religious backlash against the

MFA. Throughout his rule in 1974 and 1975 he worked hard not to offend the conservative clergy, and to find common ground with progressive Catholics. Further, Gonçalves tried to stop radical anticlerical activities engineered by MFA member.

The anticlerical situation, however, quickly spiraled out of the control of both Ribeiro and Gonçalves, as evidenced by the *Radio Renascença* case. During the so-called "hot summer" of 1975, communist workers took over the Church-run *Radio Renascença*, and broadcasted anticlerical propaganda. They held the station for over a year, and were only removed in the fall of 1976 by MFA commandos, who were by then under the control of political moderates (Manuel 1995).

There were other incidents. The MFA's radical anticlerical 5th Division Cultural Dynamism squad, for example, sought to reeducate the people about the virtues of communism. Upon entering a village, these officers would sometimes take down crucifixes on chapels and churches, and require the village people to listen to their interminable lectures on why all religions, and especially Catholicism, were bad. As Gonçalves had feared, these activities induced an impassioned reaction against the communists and other leftist groups by the country people in the deeply religious northern areas and in the Islands.

Indeed, these anticlerical actions revived an allegiance to the Church by many Portuguese, who felt that the leftist MFA threatened their very way of life. During that time, the supposed Marian apparitions at Fátima took on powerful symbolism for many people. According to devout Catholics, the Virgin Mary appeared to three country children of Fátima in May of 1917 and asked them to pray for the conversion of Russia from the coming evils of communism. In 1975, the possibility of a communist regime in Lisbon led many people to believe that they had not been praying hard enough. So, believers prayed for the conversion of Russia, as well as for that of Portugal.

The Catholic Church spoke out during this time as well. For example, prior to the April 25, 1975 elections for a Constituent Assembly, Portuguese bishops asked all Catholics to vote for any party that would guarantee the values of family, education, and liberty, and warned the people not to accept at face value the easy promises of any party which pledges the creation of a "utopia-on-earth" program (Manuel 1995). In addition, Antonio Ribeiro, the cardinal of Lisbon, addressed the MFA's anticlericalism in his homily at Sunday Mass on March 27, 1975:

For a little while now we have been aware that anti-clericalism in Portugal, an old sin, an inheritance from another era, has sprung back to life at this time with vigor and strength. But, it has also occurred to us that [anti-clericalism] has as an obstacle the civil and common sense of the Portuguese people. . . . The shame-

less and insolence of some of the political activists has been greeted with the reproach and disapproval of the Portuguese people, even non-Catholics.

The moderate results of the April 25, 1975 election combined with the politico-military victory of the moderate "Group of Nine" MFA officers in November 1975 was warmly greeted by Church officials. The Church also supported the democratic Constitution of 1976, which provided for freedom of religion as well as a separation of Church and state (Manuel 1996). In the years since the adoption of the new democratic constitution the Party of the Democratic Center (CDS) has been likened to a Christian Democratic type party, but there has been no successful explicitly Catholic political movement in Portugal.<sup>10</sup>

### The Church and Spain's Transition to Democracy

Unlike the Portuguese case, the Spanish transition was a negotiated and gradual process of political opening which took place under the close guidance of Franco's successor, King Juan Carlos. Both sides of the Spanish Civil War had reason not to work with the other side after Franco's death. The Republicans could fault the Church for its staunch support of a brutal dictator; the Church could accuse the Republicans of atrocities committed against priests and nuns in the 1930s (Hanson 1987). And yet, both sides agreed that it would be best to set these vindications and revindication aside, and try to build a new and peaceful order.

Franco's chosen successor, King Juan Carlos, was in essential agreement as to the Church-state relations in the post-Franco era with Cardinal Enrique y Taracón. The Concordat of 1953 would be scrapped, and a new relationship would have to be negotiated. In 1976, however, the matter was not just up to the two of them – the political parties also had a say in the new Church-state relationship. Representatives from the traditionally anticlerical Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the Spanish Communist Party (PCE), negotiated with the pro-Church conservative forces of the Alianza Popular (AP) and the Union of Christian Democrats (UCD) in 1977 and 1978. These were hard and important

<sup>10</sup> The failure of Catholicism to become a significant political force under democracy in Portugal may be seen as a legacy of the treatment of the Church by the *Estado Novo*. Tom Gallagher (1996) has astutely noted that "If democracy's chance had come in the late 1950s or 1960s, rather than in 1974, Catholics could have played an important role in defining the shape of the new politics. The Church and its lay offshoots had many public-spirited individuals within its ranks at that time whose dedication to the cause of political and economic justice was shaped by profound religious convictions. But most of them would subsequently channel their energies in other directions as the space in which to express political and social concerns within the church became increasingly circumscribed."

negotiations. Ultimately, a set of compromises were reached by the parties on the so-called "*night of Jose Luis*," which took place on May 22, 1978, named after the restaurant where the negotiations took place (Edles 1998). Although the socialists and communists went into the negotiations with the goal to disestablish the Church once and for all, they finally agreed to a compromise with the conservative forces in the name of political stability and societal peace.

The terms of this compromise essentially achieved two objectives: to please the anticlerics, it created a free and open religious space for all religions, and allowed for state-run schools; to please the clerics, it recognized the indispensable role of the Catholic Church in the life of the nation. In particular, all sides agreed to Article 16 of the Constitution of 1978, which reads: "The public powers will take into account the religious beliefs of Spanish society and will maintain the consequent relations with the Catholic Church and other confessions." Their agreement also led to the elaboration of Article 27 of the Constitution, which separates private and public education, and Article 32, which provides for civil divorce procedures. Although some remaining pro-Franco members of the Spanish clergy, including Cardinal Primate Marcelo González Martín, denounced these agreements, the Constitution received the endorsement of the Spanish Bishops' Conference (Hastings 1991). The compromises reached on "*the night of Jose Luis*" granted stakes in the new democratic system to both clerical and anticlerical elements, improving the new regime's chances for durability.

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 formed the basis of a new Concordat signed between the Vatican and the Spanish state on 3 January 1979. By the terms of this new agreement, the king gave up all of the rights accorded to the Spanish state from the Concordat of 1953. For its part, the Church also relinquished its special rights, including the ability to block civil divorce proceeding. This new Concordat managed to amicably settle the new terms of the religion and politics relationship in Spain, all the while avoiding the divisive anticlericalism of the Second Republic (Hanson 1987).

#### CONCLUSION: HAS THE CLERICAL/ANTICLERICAL CLEAVAGE BEEN TRANSCENDED IN IBERIA?

The historical terms of the clerical/anticlerical divide in Iberia have been finally settled, and the relationship between religion and politics in Portugal and Spain has entered into a new phase. Two key factors are responsible for this transformation.

First, the governments of Spain and Portugal have significantly changed over the past thirty years. After the successful wave of democ-

ratization in the 1970s, they are each currently enjoying stable, democratic rule for the very first time in their respective histories. Further, the new opportunities presented to each of them by membership in the European Union has tended to shift the attention of the political elite away from purely parochial concerns to the larger issues affecting Europe. The Church certainly plays an important role in each country, but there are no longer any legal restrictions on other religions: The 1976 Portuguese Constitution, and the 1978 Spanish Constitution, each provide for a separation of Church and state. This is not at all to say that religion has become politically irrelevant in contemporary Portugal and Spain, but to point out that there has been a significant shift from the close Church-state relationship in the 1940s and 1950s to the present situation in which religious issues are discussed in an open democratic forum, and processed through the party system.

In addition, the Roman Catholic Church has also changed significantly in the years since Vatican II. Having reconciled itself to the modern world, the Church accepted the transition to a liberal democracy in each country. It now understands that it will have to fight for its views on moral issues in the imperfect forum of democracy, and that it will sometimes lose legislative battles. Functioning under a democratic regime and with a free press, many internal problems of the Church have become well known to the citizenry of Portugal and Spain in recent times as well, including the decreasing number of priests and nuns. The Church has been unable to stop legislation legalizing divorce, and continues its struggle against the legalization of abortion in both Portugal and Spain. The generally moderate behavior of the post-Vatican II Church, combined with an awareness among the population of the Church's internal problems, have tended to assuage the fears of the anticlerical factions in each country that the Church would regain its former position as a hegemonic power in Iberian society.

Of course, people still disagree about religion and politics, but it no longer represents the flashpoint it once did. In many ways, then, the present terms of the church-state relationship in Portugal and in Spain under democracy are more tenable and, perhaps, even more durable, than when the Church enjoyed "special rights" under corporatism. As such, an unexpected result of the democratization of Portugal and Spain in the 1970s may be seen to be the eclipse of the traditional clerical/anticlerical divide in Iberia in the 1980s and 1990s.

What role will religion play in the politics of the future for Portugal and Spain? That is an open question, but it is certainly safe to assume that religion will continue to be an important force in Portugal and Spain under the new democratic regimes. Even after all of the changes brought on by democratization, Portugal and Spain remain Catholic countries,

and the attitudes of the clergy can and will continue to influence the attitudes of their numerous flock. In this regard, Ronald Inglehart, in his recent study of forty-three nations entitled *Modernization and Post-modernization*, has placed Portugal and Spain in a category known as "Catholic Europe," along with Belgium, France, and Italy. Inglehart's findings suggest that even though the direct influence of the Catholic Church has dropped off in recent years, these populations continue to demonstrate more traditional, so-called survival values than the populations of the Protestant nations of Northern Europe. These survival values include preferences for law and order, strong political leaders, jobs and economic growth, a hierarchical religious structure, and a social structure predicated on a two-parent heterosexual family unit. Inglehart notes that these are the dominant values of not only Catholic Europe, but are shared with the Roman Catholic countries of Latin America and East Europe as well.

At the very least, we can take from Inglehart's findings that even as the Roman Catholic Church recedes from its former powerful position in the two Iberian nation-states, indications are that it will continue to influence the morality and values of this population. As we reach the end of the twentieth century, Portugal and Spain may be presently classified as modern, democratic, stable, European, and Catholic countries.

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