Catholicism: A Global History from the French Revolution to Pope Francis by John T. McGreevy (review)

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Forum Review Essay

John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism: A Global History from the French Revolution to Pope Francis* (New York: Norton, 2022. Pp. 528. Paperback $22.00. ISBN: 978-1-324-06604-0)

Introduction*

Stephen Schloesser (*Loyola University Chicago*)

At the outset of his introduction to *Catholicism*, John McGreevy lays out two reasons for writing this book. First, to make an argument: "a better understanding of Catholicism enhances our grasp of the modern world. No institution is as multicultural or multilingual, few touch as many people" (ix). Second, to answer a personal question: "Most of my life has been spent studying in, teaching at, writing about, and administering Catholic institutions. Almost daily I get asked (and wonder): how did we get here?" (xi). Additionally, the choice to approach this study via global history is both personal and historiographical. Although McGreevy has "tried to understand Catholicism in one nation-state and through its missionaries" in earlier studies, he acknowledges that "The biggest change in history writing in my lifetime has been the loosening of the clamps of the nation-state." This global history demonstrates that, in modern Catholicism, "doctrines, people, and devotional objects also crossed borders with ease" (ix–x). The reader will see that influences throughout this account are migratory, multi-directional, and hence mutual.

The book's overall structure is suspended between two revolutionary events separated by roughly two centuries: the French Revolution's (1789) inauguration of modernity; and the Second Vatican Council's (1962) attempt to come to terms with that modernity. McGreevy divides his narrative into three overall parts. Part I, "Revolution and Revival, 1789–1870" (1-108) surveys eighty years of Catholicism's ongoing reinvention—from bare survival of the French Revolution (and its exportation abroad via the

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Napoleonic Wars), through its 19th-century revival, and ending with the extinction of the papal monarchy and Papal States.

Much of the narrative is driven by a contest over two visions of Catholicism, a debate beginning in the early 1700s about Catholicism's relationship to the "modern world." On the one hand, "Ultramontanism" viewed the transnational papacy as Catholicism's primary source of authority. On the other hand, "Reform Catholicism" sought greater consistency with Enlightenment ideals of science and empirical investigation and, as a corollary, more deference toward local episcopal and lay authority. Synods played a key role in this movement, most especially the Synod of Pistoia (1786) held just three years before the French Revolution. "From Baltimore to London to Goa, then, and soon in Warsaw, Madrid, and Mexico City, Reform Catholic sensibility prompted discussion of limits on papal authority as well as sovereignty and constitutions. By the 1780s, new forms of representation within both church and state seemed a logical next step" (15).

History, however, defies logic. Beginning in 1814, after twenty-five years of bare survival, Catholicism not only revived but thrived in an ultramontanist form (cf. Joseph de Maistre, *Du Pape*, 1819). Ultramontanist doctrine intransigently opposed the dominant spirit of the age—i.e., liberal nationalism—and its self-consciously cosmopolitan reach transcended nation-state boundaries. However, the distinction between cosmopolitanism and nationalism was not a simple binary. As the century progressed, a somewhat paradoxical Catholic ultramontanist nationalism arose as a form of political resistance to imperialism: Irish Catholics against the British, Polish Catholics against Russian Tsars, Croatian Catholics against Habsburgs (95). The story became even more complicated during "one of the great migrations of modern history" (97). Immigrants adopted new national identities in their adopted homelands even as they resisted total cultural absorption. Part I ends in 1870 when, just months after the suspension of the First Vatican Council (due to the imminent Franco-Prussian War), the Italian *Risorgimento* completed its creation of the nation-state by conquering Rome and crowning it as the kingdom's capital. And yet, in a stunning synchronicity, the council's dogmatic definition of "infallibility" unwittingly gave the papacy a new future identity and purpose—even as the infallible pope was now without a state or monarchy for the first time in 1100 years, loudly lamenting his predicament as a "prisoner of the Vatican."

Part II, "The Milieu and Its Discontents, 1870–1962" (109–271), surveys the ninety years from Vatican I to the eve of Vatican II. McGreevy

characterizes this period as marked by a "milieu," that is, the building of a massive global infrastructure fueled by the conviction that Catholics needed their own institutions. In response to nationalist attacks, cosmopolitan Catholics built a subculture parallel to dominant institutions (119). This milieu faced two intertwined main challenges: urbanization and migration across national borders, both fueled by industrialization's exponential growth and a consequent need for labor (121–22).

A great deal happens during these ninety years, including fascism, communism, two world wars, atomic weaponry, and the postwar Cold War dominated by two superpowers. In terms of the book's overall structure, two chapters in this section are especially worth underscoring as inflection points: "Empire" (c. 6, pp. 135–55) and "Decolonization" (c. 10, pp. 245–71). Beginning especially in the 1880s, New Imperialism had been another consequence of advancing industrialization (thanks to post-1850s steelmaking), made possible by trains, steamships, the telegraph, and weaponry. It coincided with the papacy of Leo XIII which began in 1878, just six years before the opening of the Berlin "Congo" Conference (1884–85) that would carve up colonized Africa. Leo, a pope without a monarchy or kingdom, could now be transnational in a way his predecessors could not. As he promoted mission expansion in this new context, the Ultramontanist "milieu" spread across the globe: "Everywhere Catholics built dense networks of organizations and nurtured self-segregation" (138). Even local synods, "once vehicles to oppose Roman authority, as in the Synod of Pistoia in 1786, became mechanisms for Roman control" (137).

Inevitably (and quickly), Catholic and imperial interests needed to be reconciled. Missionaries followed the same ideological line as liberal imperialism, seeing themselves as bringing "civilization" along with Christianity. Yet, even in the midst of the racial hierarchy implicit in the "civilizing" project, Indigenous individuals exercised remarkable agency. Chapter 10, "Decolonization: A Catholic Global South," brings the narrative to the eve of the 1960s council. Certainly, nineteenth-century missionaries "had been global in their orientation" as they traveled "to all corners of the world with their devotional objects, architectural plans, and Latin textbooks." But the Second World War had been a watershed and point of no return: in its aftermath, "Indigenous people fully joined the conversation" (248–49). Enter Pope John XXIII and *aggiornamento*.

Part III, "Vatican II and Its Aftermath, 1962–2021" (274–422), surveys the sixty years from the council's opening to the papacy of Francis. Thanks to McGreevy's "global" method and structure, the Council can now

be seen and interpreted from a longer range Third Millennium perspective as a response to postwar decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s—as well as a foreshadowing of today's post-colonial pluralistic condition. The almost sixty years since the Council's closure have been a slow pilgrimage—both exhilarating and excruciating—toward multi-polar de-centration. In its methodological attention to entanglements, global history shines a blinding spotlight on the hard processes of disentangling. Those hard processes constitute the now familiar reality of the Church in the modern world.

What lesson might this story of the past hold for Catholicism's future? "Catholicism in the twenty-first century will be reinvented, as it was in the nineteenth," observes McGreevy. "We just don't know how. If this book provides a savvy baseline as the process unfolds, it will have served its purpose" (xiii).

REVIEWS

Massimo Faggioli (*Villanova University–Pennsylvania*)

McGreevy's book sets a very high standard for future attempts to tell the story of Catholicism in the modern global world. The book adopts and defends strongly the very Western caesura of the French Revolution: "Until the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, no single event in the history of modern Catholicism was as momentous, none as disruptive, as the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars" (5–6). Comparatively, the American Revolution plays a very minor role. At the same time, while devoting great attention to the churches of all continents, it's a very American Catholic-shaped global history. For example, it seems to classify the global Catholic culture of anti-Americanism as a minor chapter in this history, for example, in the chapter on *Ressourcement*, when McGreevy talks, in contrast to Maritain, about "the reflexive anti-Americanism of personalists such as Mounier" (225). As McGreevy knows very well, there have been in the twentieth century deep tensions between the American foreign policy in support of the liberal-capitalist order on one side and global Catholic movements (beginning in Europe) on the other side. These tensions are still an integral part of the picture at the level of philosophical, aesthetic, and moral cultures—visible especially in Pope Francis' pontificate, even before and independently from the irruption of the post- and de-colonial narratives. McGreevy's deep awareness of this kind of tensions emerges when the book acknowledges that the efforts of Catholic intellectuals active in what he calls "Reform Catholicism" in the nineteenth century were not as ready to capture the

hearts and minds of the faithful as ultramontane and devotional Catholicism was. This is a dynamic still in play in a de-Europeanized or post-European Catholicism today. It also says something on the relationship between a freedom-orientated (religious freedom, but also LGBTQ rights) twenty-first-century American Catholicism and the reception of its cultural, theological, and political projections by a more "liberationist" Church in the global South.

This American vantage point plays a role also in the fifteenth chapter, "Sexual Abuse (and Its Cover-Up)", and the conclusion. Writing on the abuse crisis was a necessary but not easy choice. The chapter locates the scandal in a wide ecclesial context: the interaction between the very strong papal charisma of John Paul II and other key figures in the Catholic Church (e.g. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago and Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini of Milan, 390); the struggle over abortion as the central battle in the "culture wars"; Rome dealing with feminist and liberation theology; the AIDS crisis and the different, opposing positions of the Vatican and of American theologians over homosexuality. It's a very important choice as it explains the explosive effects of the revelations of the cases, but even more of the cover-ups: the abuse crisis is global, not just geographically, but also thematically. In dealing with this, the American vantage point is an advantage in order to perceive the depth of the trauma.

McGreevy provides a much-needed historical assessment that breaks the quasi-monopoly of journalistic report and judicial sentences on the abuse crisis. He is not afraid of reminding us that "cover-ups—and actual acts of abuse—compromised bishops and cardinals around the world with diverse ideological views" (406). At the same time, he recalls one of the most egregious cases of abuse and of cover-up at the highest level, the case of Marcial Maciel and the Legionaries of Christ, and the response given by the founder of the magazine *First Things*, Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, who declared Maciel's innocence "a moral certainty" (407).

McGreevy concurs in seeing in the transition from John Paul II to Benedict XVI a periodizing moment in the global history of the Church's response to the scandal: "Only after John Paul II's death and his own election as Pope could Benedict XVI restart the investigation" (408). The author sees in Francis' pontificate the culmination of a second phase (after the first from the 1980s to the *Boston Globe* "Spotlight" investigation): "This second phase of the sexual abuse crisis—focused on cover ups as much as abuse incidents—culminated in 2018 [. . .] In the fall of 2020, Vatican officials released an unprecedented, admirably detailed report detailing McCar-

rick's ascent in the hierarchy" (408). This is an US-centered periodization that might not fit the history in other Catholic churches.

The book makes distinctions between the responses of different popes to the crisis: "Francis' first assessments of the ongoing sex abuse crisis were defensive [. . .] Then he changed his mind [. . .] These conversations created momentum for Francis to develop mechanisms for oversight of bishops, not only priests" (416). Since the time of the completion of the book, a series of events and incidents have made this judgment less certain and subject to revision in the future. McGreevy is on safer terrain when he lays out one of the most delicate issues to understand the complexity of global Catholicism: "The next challenge will be to implement reforms in parts of the world such as sub-Saharian Africa and South Asia, where there are claims of sexual abuse of nuns by priests, but without the media scrutiny, legal mechanisms, or reformed church structures to provide voice for survivors" (417).

McGreevy had the courage to address this topic when, according to many, it is still too early, given the impossibility to access important archives, the ongoing developments that make of it a moving target, and the ideological divides underlying the competing theological narratives on the roots of the crisis.

John Frederick Schwaller (*University at Albany, SUNY*)

This is a breathtaking and quite thorough study of the Catholic Church in its worldwide scope. In many ways it is a tour de force of scholarship, bringing a wealth of sources under control while attempting to develop themes that link the mammoth scope of the topic. Unfortunately, McGreevy either smooths over or consciously omits local details. While helping to streamline the narrative, the detail is lost, diminishing the story. One minor comment at the outset. While the book has solid endnotes, it lacks a bibliography that would have been of immense assistance to other scholars and in the classroom.

Early on, McGreevy accurately describes the complex administrative climate in the newly independent Latin American nations. The issue of episcopal appointments reflected a deep division among leaders of the governments of the region. The factions that emerged after Independence broke into two main groups: those who supported episcopal appointments forwarded from national governments (as political heirs of the monarch in colonial times) and those who regarded the right to episcopal appointment

as reserved to the pope. McGreevy recognizes the tension that beset the early Latin American nations regarding this issue.

The dichotomy of ultramontanism and Reform Catholicism is not so simple in Latin America. There were probably three camps. One was clearly ultramontane and saw independent nations wherein the Church was controlled by the papacy, something that had not occurred in the previous two hundred years of colonization. A second camp opted for Independence but where the Church was subject to a new national authority, inheriting the old patronage powers of the monarch. Lastly, there were the supporters of Independence who envisioned something like the United States, with freedom of religion, wherein the state took no role. These three united to achieve Independence and then quickly broke into warring factions over the relationship of the Church to the State when it came time to govern, mostly along the lines proposed by McGreevy. Thus, while McGreevy accurately reports the result that affected Latin America, his analysis of the development of that situation glosses over the issues that for most of the participants were the central ones.

One additional issue that Latin Americanists would have with McGreevy's account is the lack of understanding of Spanish surnames. In Spanish, most individuals use compound surnames in which the first of the two surnames indicates the father's family, while the second is the mother's. While McGreevy calls the Independence figure Miguel Ramos Arizpe simply Arizpe, it should be Ramos Arizpe, or at least Ramos; while he calls Bishop Manuel Abad y Queipo simply Queipo, it should be Abad y Queipo, or at least Abad.

In looking at the nineteenth century, McGreevy is largely silent about the major issues confronting the Church. While he hints of difficulty in discussing the issue of episcopal appointments, it went far deeper than that. In most Latin American nations, parties antagonistic to the Catholic Church gained power at various times in the century, generally known as Liberals While all embraced some form of anti-clericalism, many were fiercely so. Most sought civil registry, limits on Church wealth, and limits on clerical participation in politics. The conservatives sought to maintain the centrality of the Church. This rich story is largely ignored, even though it forms the woof and weft of Latin American Catholicism.

In the nineteenth century and certainly in the twentieth and twenty-first century, the independent republics each developed in a unique manner, responding to the local needs of the populace. In this McGreevy

does a solid job of placing each country in an appropriate context for the development of the Church in that time and place. In short, countries with large Indigenous populations (Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, etc.) have dramatically different trajectories from places with small Native populations, such as Costa Rica, Argentina, and Chile.

In his discussion of the Mexican Revolution and subsequent Cristero Revolt, McGreevy weakens his argument by not tracing the political role of the Church after the victory of the Liberals in the wake of the disastrous French intervention of the 1860s. In short, there is no mention of José Porfirio Díaz, Mexico's long-time dictator. Although the darling of the Liberals, during his rule, he went from adherence to Liberal doctrine to a full-out embrace of the Church. By the outbreak of the Revolution in 1910, the Church had become identified closely with the Díaz regime. When delegates met to write the new post-Revolution constitution in 1917, many of the Radical ones, heavily influenced by Socialist and Communist theories, sought to limit the Church as much as possible, given the resilience of the Church over the decades. President Plutarco Elías Calles then sought to enforce these constitutional provisions. That ignited the faithful to revolt against the central government. The national government over-reacted and began an all-out campaign against clergy and the Church. McGreevy accurately describes the reaction, but without the context it just seems like one president was particularly anti-clerical, rather than seeing Calles' reaction as part of a long thread in Mexican history.

The parts of the history of the Church in Latin America that make it into McGreevy's book from the mid-to late twentieth century are accurate. McGreevy does a fine job of tracing the rise of liberation theology, along with its partial demise under John Paul II and Benedict XVI. The election of Pope Francis and his effect on Latin America, his home region, and the world, in general, is outlined as well as one can hope in a work as massive and complicated as this.

This is a solid work. Its sections on Latin America, while generally accurate, however, lack some of the detail that would make the narrative more compelling and, in many ways, understandable. As historians we look at change over time. Not providing adequate background simply makes the story less complex, but understanding complexity is what we strive to accomplish.

James Jay Carney (*Creighton University*)

The cover is tantalizing. An African priest stands on an altar, hands clasped in prayer, with two Black seminarians bowing slightly before him. The image promises so much—a truly global Catholic history that places the continent with the fastest-growing Catholic population at the center of modern Catholic history. Disappointedly for this reviewer, the implicit potential of the cover remains largely unfulfilled in John McGreevy's otherwise excellent survey of modern Catholic history from the late eighteenth century to the present.

A historian of the American Catholic experience, McGreevy focuses *Catholicism* around questions of church, state, and public religion within the Western European and North American contexts. His tautly woven narrative opens with the traumas of the French Revolution, read through the sympathetic liberal lens of Abbé Henri Gregoire and the critical conservatism of Irish priest Henry Edgeworth. Building from this ideological dichotomy, McGreevy frames the first part of his book as a titanic struggle between Enlightenment-tinged "Reform" Catholicism and conservative, reactionary Ultramontanism. He argues that the Ultramontane "milieu" ultimately carries the day due to its success in fostering popular devotions and "tapping into the spiritual longings and fears of ordinary men and women" (36). In the second and third parts of the book, McGreevy explores Catholicism's and the papacy's contested engagements with nationalism, Christian democracy, fascism, communism, human rights, development, and the sexual revolution (especially contraception). And one should give credit where credit is due: McGreevy's book is by far the most eloquent, compelling history of Catholicism that I have ever read. His framing of each chapter around a representative Catholic personage—such as Edith Stein in the gripping eighth chapter, "Crisis: The Politics of the 1930s"—draws the general reader in through personal biography without sacrificing the complexities of modern western Catholicism's nuanced political and cultural history. McGreevy's extensive footnotes also point the way to numerous avenues of further research for the attentive graduate student or scholar.

And the global dimensions of modern Catholicism are by no means absent. McGreevy's analysis of Latin America is consistently strong, and his sixth chapter offers a serviceable overview of missionary Catholicism in Asia and Africa during the high imperial period (1875–1915). He also notes the influence of West African intellectuals like Léopold Senghor and Alioune Diop on the Church's shift toward a more anti-colonial,

multicultural, and pro-democracy position after the Second World War (249–53). McGreevy rightly concludes that African and Asian bishops had a major influence on Vatican II's opening to liturgical inculturation and the vernacular language (283). Finally, he incorporates compelling personal narratives woven around figures such as Ma Xiangbo, the Chinese lay nationalist, Josephine Bakhita, the Sudanese slave turned Catholic sister and saint, and Dom Hélder Câmara, the Brazilian bishop and tribune for the poor.

However, the reader of *Catholicism* gets very little sense of how the faith is actually practiced in the Global South, especially in the midst of African Catholicism's boom since the 1960s. In this regard, critically important Global South developments such as the Catholic Charismatic Movement, medicine and education, or small Christian communities receive remarkably short attention considering their central importance in Catholic mainstays like Uganda, the Philippines, and Brazil. Further attention could also be paid to how and why African church leaders have been so involved in the public sphere, or why they have transcended traditional Western polarizations between social justice activism and sexual conservatism. And even the compelling biographical narratives are often drawn in service to primarily Western narratives concerning nationalism, anti-slavery, and anti-communism. The major currents of *Catholicism* always seem to flow out from the European metropole to the colonial periphery.

In comparison to recent Evangelical and Protestant histories of modern Christianity, Catholic histories trend very European. Centuries of western European cultural influence, the emphasis on hierarchical unity, and the constant pull back to "Rome" may explain some of this. With that being said, I do think there is much more to be uncovered in the remarkably diverse localities that comprise the modern, global Catholic story. In this regard, my hope is that McGreevy's excellent survey history represents an opening salvo rather than the final word.

Tuan Hoang (*Pepperdine University*)

I am tempted to call John McGreevy's excellent history of modern Catholicism by an alternative subtitle: the rise and fall of ultramontanism. For it tells a number of familiar subjects and themes such as papal infallibility, devotionalism, and missionaries—and with vigor, choice quotations, and apt anecdotes characteristic of the author's previous works. But the book shows a lot more in addition to nineteenth- and twentieth-century ultramontanists and their opponents. The tension between church and

democracy, for instance, is among the book's biggest themes. An early chapter is called "Democracy," and the theme prominently figures in several subsequent chapters. The sections on Christian democracy are especially well described and analyzed.

More subtle is the theme of church and political violence. This violence did not stop after the French Revolution but continued in different forms and different eras and forced ecclesial authorities and ordinary Catholics to examine long-held beliefs and assumptions. Most significant was the Holocaust. But there was also violence in Europe during 1848, or violence during colonialism and decolonization in Africa and Asia, or violence in Latin America and Eastern Europe during the Cold War. McGreevy skillfully weaves through different kinds of political violence over two centuries and in many countries. As a result, the book could be considered to be—here is another of my alternative subtitles—a modern history of Catholic involvement with political violence.

There is further an impressive unity between length and contents. The main text appears in fewer than 430 pages: long for a monograph but somewhat short for an ambitious general history like this work. McGreevy's story moves breezily in fifteen chapters divided into three sections: the middle section longer than the first; the last longer than the middle. A book of this kind, large-scale and synthetical, deserves a second edition in the future. In some respects, a later edition is inevitable because historians continue to churn out strong and innovative scholarship about modern Catholicism, including histories of the global south. The situation should be ripe for further incorporation into a general history such as this book.

With this assumption of a revised edition, I'd like to offer a couple of suggestions. First, the book explains well the enormous importance of Marian devotion and pilgrimages at Lourdes and, more broadly, intense and renewed ultramontane devotionalism. On the other hand, there is little about Our Lady of Fatima, whose figure rivaled and, for a period during the Cold War, surpassed the popularity of Our Lady of Lourdes in the global Catholic imagination. An analysis of this devotion—and alongside other major forms of twentieth-century devotionalism, including those after the Second Vatican Council—should account for some of the most lasting legacies of ultramontanism. This additional account of devotionalism among the laity would also give more balance to the book's general and understandable emphasis on elite Catholics.

Second is the sizable absence of discussion about Catholic relations with other Christian denominations and other world religions. Most refer-

ences to Catholic-Protestant relations appear in the first half of the book, and there is very little about the subject for most of the twentieth century, especially the post-Vatican II era. (Tellingly, the index does not have an entry on ecumenism.) This is no doubt a result of the book's sharp focus on intra-Catholic developments. I think, however, that more attention to relations with other Christians and other religions would enhance the claim of the subtitle—the actual subtitle, not one of mine—to be a global history.

RESPONSE

John T. McGreevy (*University of Notre Dame*)

My thanks to the reviewers for their thoughtful assessments and to the editors of the *Catholic Historical Review*, especially Nelson H. Minnich, for commissioning and shepherding the essays.

Why write a history of modern Catholicism?

Stephen Schloesser SJ's lucid summary gets it right. My goal was to think about Catholicism from a global standpoint, consolidating the superb secondary literature that has emerged in the last scholarly generation. W.W. Norton allotted me 140,000 words. This boundary condition limited what I could include, but also led to a better book since I intended *Catholicism* to engage not just specialists but the elusive general reader. Two recent histories inspired me: Tony Judt's majestic *Postwar*, on Europe since 1945, and Jill Lepore's, *These Truths*, a bravura one-volume history of the United States. Readers will decide whether my accomplishment approaches theirs.[1]

"Summary" is the wrong term for Schloesser's essay since he also makes several incisive observations. The most important of these is the centrality of imperialism and then decolonization. I didn't anticipate this. But both topics are crucial. After World War I and through the 1960s, debates on these issues reached Vatican officials, who often sympathized with indigenous Catholics. They also reached Paris, Lisbon, Brussels, Rome, and Berlin, where government and church officials often supported a colonial vision of church and state. And they animated indigenous Catholics in Senegal, China, and elsewhere, who articulated demands for independence or inculturation in both political and religious terms.

1. Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York, 2005); Jill Lepore, *These Truths: A History of the United States* (New York, 2018).

The Second Vatican Council remains a fundamentally European event when measured against the theological controversies that animated it. But just as the Shoah shadowed the debates at the council, as Schloesser himself has argued, so too did consciousness of a global church.[2] Even before the council, theologians such as Karl Rahner and the young Joseph Ratzinger made this point about a global consciousness. Important case studies such as Elizabeth Foster's *African Catholic* now offer an historical perspective on how the council, with its promotion of the vernacular liturgy and representation from around the world, should be understood, to use Rahner's famous phrasing, as the rebirth of a global church.[3]

Massimo Faggioli welcomes my decision to devote most of one chapter to the sexual abuse crisis. Both of us resist the idea that since many archives are closed for the contemporary period, we cannot make assessments. We actually possess archival evidence—from court cases and government and ecclesiastical commissions—in grim abundance. The challenge is to do ordinary historical work on a fraught topic: analyzing change over time and locating Catholic sexual abuse within broader societal frameworks. I suggested in *Catholicism* that the ultramontane focus on clergy and bishops made the patterns of abuse, and then cover-ups, eerily similar across national boundaries. This still seems to me right. I also think that the crisis of actual abuse in North America, Europe, Australia and perhaps even countries such as Chile may be diminishing given declining parental trust in clergy and new safeguards. It is not, of course, over for survivors. It is not over for church officials. In many countries, the abuse crisis has sharply diminished the plausibility of Catholic organizational structures developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially around sex and gender. New structures are only dimly on the horizon.

Faggioli does not disagree with any of this, but wonders if I still write from too American a vantage point. Perhaps. What forms sexual abuse took in Catholic Kenya, Catholic Mexico, or the Catholic Philippines needs more investigation. Equally unclear, as Faggioli rightly points out, will be the legacy of Pope Francis.

John Frederick Schwaller generously describes *Catholicism* as a "breathtaking" achievement but regrets the absence of local details. He is

2. Stephen Schloesser, "Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II," in *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?* ed. David Schultenover (New York, 2007), 92–152.

3. Rahner and Ratzinger quoted in 1961 in *Catholicism*, p. 421. Elizabeth Foster, *African Catholic: Decolonization and the Transformation of the Church* (Cambridge, MA, 2019).

not wrong to do so. Anyone reading *Catholicism* and hoping to gain insight into the dynamics on the ground in, say, Bolivia, will be disappointed. I don't think, though, that I ignore the anti-Catholicism he references among Latin American liberals of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This anti-Catholic liberalism (often with deep European roots) occupies much of chapter five and along with the Catholic response of building distinct institutions should be one of the key themes of any global history of the modern period. I wish I had done more with an important distinction he makes between Latin American countries with significant indigenous populations and Latin American countries without such populations. The indigenous, rural poor in Brazil, Mexico, Bolivia, and elsewhere remained more distant from the ultramontane world. Their initial Catholic evangelization occurred in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not the nineteenth and twentieth, and their story in the modern period remains too obscure.

James Jay Carney, in contrast to Schwaller, thinks I am "consistently strong" in my depictions of Catholicism in Latin America but weaker on the day-to-day life of Catholicism in sub-Saharan Africa. I don't disagree, in part because the secondary literature on the region, at least in the languages I can read and excepting Carney's impressive studies of Uganda, seems to me less rich. Carney's more subtle point is more challenging.[4] He worries that *Catholicism* remains anchored in "primarily Western narratives concerning nationalism, anti-slavery, and anti-communism." Faggioli, similarly, notes (and I think defends) *Catholicism*'s origin point in that European event par excellence, the French revolution. All correct, although the global reverberations of the French revolution, in Haiti, North and South America, and across the whole of Europe made it less provincial than we might assume. So too for the cold war, which began in Eastern Europe but shaped tens of millions of lives in Vietnam, the Congo, El Salvador, and elsewhere between 1945 and 1989.

Tuan Hoang—on whose dissertation committee I proudly served—wonders about the relative neglect of Marian devotions and ecumenism. A revised edition would touch on important (and recent) Marian devotions and apparitions well beyond Lourdes. It might do more with Fatima, too, and its absorption into the Catholic cold war. A greater focus on ecumenicism would be welcome, even if I do examine some of the easing of tensions between Protestants and Catholics, and Jews and Catholics, in the

4. For example, J.J. Carney and Jonathan Earle, *Contesting Catholics: Benedicto Kiwanuka and the Birth of Postcolonial Uganda* (Surrey, 2021).

run-up to the Second Vatican Council. Udi Greenberg's recent and forthcoming work demonstrates how ecumenism could also mean Protestants and Catholics uniting around less appealing messages such as an exclusive or racial nationalism.[5]

Hoang speculates about alternate titles. I'd take "The rise and fall of ultramontanism" with one proviso. The conciliar texts produced at Vatican II offered something quite different than the ultramontane understanding of Church, and much of the past sixty years within Catholicism has been an intermittently fractious, exhilarating, and as yet unsuccessful effort to develop a new synthesis. My parents, born in 1937 and 1939, grew up as did so many of their contemporaries, not just in the United States but around the world, in a milieu profoundly shaped by ultramontane institutional and devotional forms. Its assumptions, for a time, were theirs. None of this is the case for their adult grandchildren.

The rapidity of this change offers historians of Catholicism unusual opportunities. So too does the demographic shift from Europe and North America to the global South. Faggioli notes the persistence of anti-Americanism in some Catholic circles in twentieth-century Europe. The even more interesting question, in my view, is how a Catholicism governed (in Rome and elsewhere) by actors from the global South, far more than other global institutions such as the IMF or the United Nations, will position itself. The papacy of Pope Francis, his identification with Latin America's poor, his focus on climate change, and his geopolitical detachment from the cold war borders of the West, offers us a glimpse of this multipolar future.

How to write a more decentered history of a centered institution undergoing such a transition is the gauntlet thrown down by Jay Carney. I might frame the challenge differently since I see the centering of Catholicism as part of its importance for global history. But I share Carney's hope that Catholicism will yield new interpretations. It's not just the ultramontane era that is waning. The last figures active at Vatican II, most notably Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI), have passed from the scene, making the council a properly historical event, beyond living memory. I'd be delighted to write the introduction to a second edition of *Catholicism* in a decade if W.W. Norton allows me. Even better, though, would be for historians reading this forum to remedy its inadequacies with more compelling accounts.

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5. Udi Greenberg, "Catholics, Protestants and the Violent Birth of European Religious Pluralism," *American Historical Review*, 121 (2019), 511–38.