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**Can a Catholic be liberal? Roman
Catholicism and liberalism in a political
economy perspective (1823-1971)**

Stefano Solari



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Abstract: In the nineteenth century, Enlightenment philosophy and modern political thought found tough opposition in the Roman Catholic Church. Liberalism was associated with Free Masons conspiracy and revolutionary intent. Nonetheless, liberalism and political economy induced the Church to develop some theoretical analysis and specific theoretical positions in terms of social philosophy and social economics. This paper presents an analysis of encyclical letters and writings of Catholic scholars, to elaborate on the theoretical points used to contrast liberalism. Compromises, as well as turning points in the evolution of the Catholic position, are investigated. Lastly, the epistemological and historical reasons for the affinity of Roman Catholicism with ethical liberalism and the limits of this similarity are discussed.

Keywords: liberalism, Roman Catholicism, liberty of the ancients, social liberalism

Liberal and Catholic, a philosophical drama

The relationship between religion and political economy involves many interesting historical, cultural, and philosophical issues that can become serious concerns for intellectually engaged people. Italy, as the centre of Roman Catholicism, has suffered from a bad conflict of conscience [1] that arose in the nineteenth century: the difficult overlapping of political-economic and religious beliefs that resulted also in drastic measures as the *Non Expedit* (1868-1919).[2] In France this issue caused similar concerns, but also found some early innovative interpretation. The solution, as we know, is that contradictory beliefs do not represent a serious practical concern for a good life. On the contrary, they supply fuel for challenging intellectual debates, keeping scholars' boredom away.

Augusto Del Noce (1946) began one of his short articles, asking, ‘Can a Catholic be liberal? And a liberal be Catholic?’ His reflection led to an affirmative answer. Del Noce’s position was a reaction to some negative opinion expressed by Benedetto Croce in his political history (1931; 1938). After the Second World War, the birth of the Christian Democratic parties raised these issues [3] and found the contributions of Maritain (1933; 1943), De Ruggiero (1925), and many others. Croce (1931) argued that Catholic philosophy has the form of *idealism, which is not compatible with the epistemology of liberalism*. Even if religion is not exactly a philosophical system, he highlighted a precise epistemological gap that could not be overlooked.[4] On the other hand, it is impossible to deny that the Catholic religion considers the principle of liberty the fundamental root of the value of the person.

The problem is complicated, on the one hand, by the difficulty in defining liberalism, and, on the other, by a long historical tradition of dissent by the Church regarding the development of actual political liberalism. Actually, the development of social Catholicism was conceived as a political perspective in opposition to liberal regimes and socialism.[5] Therefore, from a historical perspective, even when the *ancien régime* was over, the Roman Church has always attempted to build some *third way*, considering the liberal ideal a rationalistic mistake and an odd political philosophy (see Almodovar and Teixeira 2008 and Solari 2007; 2010a). In general, the intellectual interaction was not between Catholic theology and political economy but between Catholic moral philosophy and political philosophy. As concerns political economy, it is certainly more a political rather than an economic problem. A certain converging view between liberalism and Catholicism is the common opposition to socialist planning, but this cannot be a strong affinity.

The study attempts, first, to single out the relevant features of the varieties of liberalism that may represent a more or less acceptable political perspective for a Catholic. In the second section, the historical change in the attitude of the Church, following the modification of context, is briefly presented. Then, the main Church’s documents on liberalism are discussed in theoretical terms to determine what has officially been said and why. The central issues are discussed, focusing on the difference between liberty and freedom and on different individualisms.

Liberal what?

Liberalism, as a political ideology and movement, originally developed in opposition to the *ancien régime*, intended as the hierarchical and authoritarian model of integration of theological-political power. In that regime, in Continental Europe, religion represented the main cultural public space and had a monopoly on life's moral narrative. In general, the modern world has seen a constant attempt to push religion into the private sphere of the individual, emancipating politics and economic actions from the cogent moral regime (Taylor 2007). Can we, in times of genetically modified organisms, have a hybrid called Catholic liberalism? Over the course of time, liberalism has found different theorizations and applications, among them, social liberalism finds many points in common with the social view of Catholicism. Many economists and philosophers did not find any contradiction in this double intellectual identity: Frédéric Bastiat, Charles Périn, Luigi Einaudi, Joseph Schumpeter are just some examples of liberal scholars with an evident root in Catholicism. [6]

Consequently, liberalism should be analysed and précised in its founding ideas to study how much it contrasts with the Catholic vision of person and society. To this problem, we can add another concern, clearly expressed by Villey:

...very few non-Catholics are able or competent to understand what Catholicism is, ... Conversely, very few Catholic theologians really know what economic liberalism is or are acquainted with the way in which the market economy functions. (Villey 1959, p. 251)

Besides this ascertainment, Villey (1959) accused non-liberal Catholics of being ignorant of how markets operate and of economic theory in general. His critique, however, was superficial and incapable of getting into the scientific fundamentals of both positions. The result is a series of theory-free accusations.[7] The Christian religion, however, provides no social recipe. The New Testament provides no insights into the right political-economic organization of society (differently from Judaism and Islamism). In this way, a confrontation makes no sense, as the two systems are 'situated existentially at different levels' (Villey 1959, p. 252). Nonetheless, Roman Catholicism has produced a well-developed corpus of social theories in strict adherence to its moral philosophy, which is

based on solidarity and not on individualism. From that perspective, Catholic liberals are seen as suffering from some form of schizoid pathology.

Liberalism is simply based on the ideas of liberty and individual autonomy, and on these elements, it constitutes its ethical dimension. It states the unlimited sovereignty of the individual as a natural rights holder. Liberalism supports the idea that the individual is the only one who knows what is good for him/her. This is obviously in contrast with any *communitarian* view as the Roman Catholic, stating that people have some natural obligation toward their next and that defines what is good through instituted processes. Liberalism also tends to abandon Aristotelian *virtue ethics* for some form of *consequentialism*, which is nonetheless often used in the Catholic doctrine (Crespo 2013).

Liberals believed that the political incorporation of religion failed in improving humanity without coercion. The only solution had to be individualization and the combination of religious sentiment and ethical views into the individual sphere: a fundamental point in the process of secularisation. Liberalism involves some morals of responsibility and is against the morals of conviction (as liberals often address Catholicism). Pluralism and relativism appear to be indispensable elements of liberalism, but they are highly problematic in the Catholic religion. Cubeddu (2003) asked how it is possible to make the finalism of human nature compatible with the non-finalism of the market and political institutions. The common good, universal ethical principles, and the universal destination of goods are prominent principles in the toolkit of Catholic scholars and are difficult to combine with liberalism. Nonetheless, they have been reframed and interpreted differently in the course of history.

Social Catholicism can be interpreted as a scientific counter-reaction to liberalism. Even if for most of the nineteenth century most of Continental Europe was far from being a 'liberal society', liberalism was acquiring a certain political hegemony. The economy of that century can be best described as being in a state of transition lacking the suitable institutions that would have granted a certain sustainability to the process of industrialization. Catholic scholars did not express a position against markets and freedom of choice but had a different view of the position of man in society (besides a political position to preserve).

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Students of liberalism as Nadia Urbinati (2013) and Catherine Audard (2009) have pointed out some fundamental points that identify liberalism:

- *individual sovereignty*, particularly autonomous moral judgments and the self-awareness of individual rights, including the idea of *liberty of the moderns* (no constraints);
- the constitutional state to set limits to public powers;
- the primacy of free market as an allocation mechanism.

The constitutional state has been gradually accepted by the Church over the course of history, even though the priority of formal law over morals is still a problematic issue. Freedom of conscience as the central point of liberalism surely clashes with Catholicism, which is framed by a hierarchically coordinated system of interpretation of what is good.

Michael Freedman (1996) argued that liberalism is based on three layers of concepts of different importance, which can be arranged differently to give birth to different forms of liberalism. The fundamental concepts are liberty and individuality (individualism has both a positive and normative character). Adjacent liberal concepts are democracy, equality, social justice, and the role of the state. Lastly, peripheral concepts are often borrowed from other ideologies. This hierarchy of ideas clearly allows us to mix some liberal fundamentals with some more superficial principles borrowed from religion (e.g., social liberalism or ethical liberalism as that of Tocqueville).[8] However, religion has its fundamental concepts on the status of the person producing some clash with the liberal core: is this clash viable?

Catholic economist Francesco Vito (1947) believed that economic liberalism is incompatible with Catholicism because competition cannot be the main regulating form of society. However, the neo-liberal economist Wilhelm Röpke ascertained the similarity of Catholicism and his liberalism, as they both refer to the political principles that defend the individual from political authority's abuses (Röpke 1947). However, he was almost the only one (with Alexander Rüstow) to frame neo-liberalism in this direction.[9]

Still, on ways of classifying and analysing liberalism, Giordano (2010) considered Bernard Manin's distinction [10] between *market liberalism*, based on

constitutions to control power (with a clear distinction between the private and the public sphere) and *counterbalancing powers' liberalism* obtained by fragmentation of powers (represented by Charles-Louis Montesquieu, James Madison, and Alexis de Tocqueville, characterized by a fuzzy distinction between public and private in the classic, non-Roman tradition). By contrast, Sidentop (1979) proposed a distinction between English liberalism, focusing on the political sphere and underestimating civil society, and Continental liberalism, following a sociological and historical approach to political theory, which was deeply focused on the idea of civilization. A part of the latter developed a subjectivist approach to economic decision-making that is open to including moral evaluations, better than other approaches. However, this distinction tends to focus on peripheral concepts and not on the core of the issue.

Catherine Audard (2009) focused on the basic distinction between Locke's and Hobbes' classic liberalism, forming subsequent developments of this approach. In particular, the tradition of Locke and its anthropological and political insights allow for the best comparison with the Catholic view. Other approaches, such as those of Hobbes and utilitarian theory, are more evidently at odds with it.

In general, it is difficult to distinguish the historical from the theoretical level because theory evolves in response to societal and political changes. Often, major arguments have been developed as an answer to contingent problems. Moreover, we find Catholic political or social economists with different orientations. In what follows, some short stories of the evolving attitude of the Church and its scholars are traced.

The changing attitude of the Church

In Continental Europe, the French Revolution represented a crucial point in the process of breaking the theological-political power. In the first part of the nineteenth century, the Catholic Church hoped to reconstitute the unitary political regime of the preceding century. By the middle of that century, after notable hesitations due to the Revolution of 1848, social Catholicism had to progressively accept the constitutional state and rebuild a bottom-up approach to social systems. Secularization took place at different times with different intensity in different places (Faccarello 2017). Nonetheless, the Church could not

accept that individual sovereignty would lead to autonomous moral judgments. Consequently, Catholic scholars developed an autonomous view of political economy and social reform aiming to go beyond the ideas of liberalism and socialism. They proposed a *third way* based on a different epistemology based on Catholic anthropology and old natural law. Their theory was based on the idea of the *necessary sociability of man*, interpreting economic choice as integrating a plurality of action motives beyond simple self-interest. In this way, they could consider different allocation mechanisms within society. However, the most difficult theoretical task was the integration of freedom with law and communitarian morals, whereas liberalism kept such elements sharply apart. In this case, the approach of the aristocratic stream of Catholicism (from von Clemens A. von Ketteler to Oswald von Nell-Breuning) prevailed on the liberal (e.g., Périn). The result was an *ethical economy* perspective magnifying the role of civil society and social institutions in the coordination of individual decision plans. This led to a *corporative economy* that in the second half of the Twentieth century also gave some legitimation to the mixed economy (Solari 2010b; Figuera and Pacella 2021; Sandonà and Solari 2021).

Nonetheless, this was not a compact movement. We had several Catholic scholars that produced liberal theories looking to a compromise with religion. Firstly, some liberal economists as Charles Comte and Charles Dunoyer acknowledged the role of (Catholic) religion (Faccarello and Steiner 2008).[11] Liberal Catholic circles emerged as that of Félicité de La Mennais, who published the journal *L'Avenir* in 1830-31 with Jean-Baptiste H. Lacordaire and Charles F.R. Montalembert.[12] Then, Charles de Coux with his *Économie Politique* was probably the first in 1830-31 to propose a Catholic political economy (Faccarello 2017), followed by Alban Villeneuve-Bargemont in 1834. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Charles Périn adopted a liberal-paternalistic approach, but that was not the way followed by the Vatican. Before him, Antonio Rosmini produced a large amount of philosophical, political, and anthropological studies that represented a liberal Catholic theory, but he did not produce explicitly any economic study although his ideas could be seen as forerunner of the Austrian school. Some of his moral principles found the disapproval of the Pope (Leo XIII in 1887 officially condemned with *Post Obitum* forty sentences in the works of Rosmini).

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After the loss of temporal power in Central Italy (1870) with Leo XIII, the Vatican displayed a change in the attitude of encyclicals. The latter became more theoretical, explaining the principles and the reasons for dissent in more detail. Catholic social economists emphasized the social bases of markets and the role of a *morally constrained liberty*. They also consistently highlighted the importance of collective action, the role of authority, and the principle of subsidiarity in the supply of public services. Therefore, Social Catholicism developed as a moral philosophy in which the social dimension of human action produces a relevant public dimension of economic processes. Finally, economic institutions had to be expression of practical reason and had to be shaped in a way to serve the common good.

The consequence is that social Catholicism adopted a different epistemology compared to liberalism and socialism, leaving abstract theory underdeveloped. Such epistemology was inherently social and favourable to bottom-up contributions to economic reform.

When Catholics directly entered politics in the twentieth century, obtaining a leading role after WWII, social Catholicism became a crucial 'political culture' of the ruling classes in many European countries (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy, partially in France), helping the consolidation of liberal capitalism in the form of mixed economies (Magliulo, 2022).[13]

The early Church documents on liberalism

Looking at documents that express the official position of the Roman Church, encyclical letters, apostolic exhortations, messages, etc. from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth, we find little explicit reference to liberalism. Socialism and communism have often been the objects of criticism, while liberalism is criticized implicitly by referring to its constituting ideas. Modernism, republicanism, Jacobinism, and Enlightened philosophy are often the most precise targets of critics. The ideas of French enlightenment, which had been the object of censorship during the eighteenth century, when they were simply considered heresy, increasingly became the focus of criticism and condemnation when they became leading principles of actual political reforms (see Clark and Kaiser 2003).

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Leo XII (1823–1929), in *Quo Graviora*, (March 13, 1826) addressed the problem of Free Masons (similarly to the previous lamentations of Clement XII, Benedict XIV, and Pius VII), who were accused of spreading false ideas and projecting hostile political changes. The content of these ideas, however, is not related to liberalism or any other more specific idea.

Pius VIII (1829–1830), in *Traditi Humiliati*, (May 24, 1829) pointed out ‘numberless errors and the teachings of perverse doctrines which, no longer secretly and clandestinely but openly and vigorously, attack the Catholic faith...revolt against religion through philosophy (of which they proclaim themselves doctors) and through empty fallacies devised according to natural reason’ (Pius VIII, 1829: §3). The main problem of concern was *indifferentism*, which today we would name *relativism*,^[14] interpreted from the point of view of religious belief, and the *harmful and pestiferous books* spreading irreligious ideas.

Gregory XVI (1831–1846) held a position strenuously against modernity and progress in general. *Mirari Vos* (August 15, 1832) was a reaction to the publication of *L’Avenir*, in which Félicité de La Mennais and some other intellectuals ^[15] opened the way to *Catholic liberalism*. This encyclical letter has, as its target liberalism (cited only in the title), the State–Church separation and *indifferentism*. It is written against ‘the insolent and factious men’ (Gregory XVI 1832, §14) ^[16] that spread liberal theories. He argued that ‘academies and schools resound with new, monstrous opinions, which openly attack the Catholic faith’ (Gregory XVI 1832, §14). For what concerns liberalism, we can find an attack on liberty of conscience and freedom to publish: ‘absurd and erroneous proposition which claims that liberty of conscience must be maintained for everyone’ (Gregory XVI 1832, §14). ^[17] ‘Nor can We predict happier times for religion and government from the plans of those who desire vehemently to separate the Church from the state’ (Gregory XVI 1832, §14). Therefore, it is the core of the liberal political ideology that is criticized, but it is not the economic aspect of liberalism, nor is liberalism distinguished from the variety of political theories favouring modernity and the evolution out of the *ancien régime*.

In *Singulari Nos*, June 25, 1834, Gregory XVI attacked again the mistakes of Félicité de La Mennais (mainly expressed in *Les Paroles d’un Croyant*). He found that ‘it corrupts the people by a wicked abuse of the word of God, to dissolve the bonds of all public order and to weaken all authority. It arouses, fosters, and

strengthens seditions, riots, and rebellions in the empires. We condemn the book because it contains false, calumnious, and rash propositions which lead to anarchy' (Gregory XVI 1834, 8). He added that 'We speak here also of that erroneous philosophical system which was recently brought in and is clearly to be condemned' (Gregory XVI 1834, §8). That delegitimated Liberal-Catholic circles, however, the feeling is that the target is not liberalism as an individual ideology but rather any reform to move society away from the ancient social and political system. Therefore, we find the critique of some central tenets of liberalism, but the extent is limited to what concerns religious themes (indifferentism) and political themes—that is, the conservation of the old vision of society.

Pius IX (1846–1878) was immediately perceived as more favourable to change, but the Revolution of 1848 led him back to a more rigid attitude. Nonetheless, we can perceive a partial change of perspective yet in his first Encyclical Letter written on Nov. 9, 1846, and in two Allocutions delivered in Consistory, the one on Dec. 9, 1854, and the other on June 9, 1862. The letter *Qui Pluribus* (Nov. 9, 1846) is, again, against secret sects and the *unbridled license to think, speak, and write*. However, we can find some discussion on the right interpretation of reason to overcome the ideas of the Enlightenment: 'They claim for themselves without hesitation the name of "philosophers"... They feel as if philosophy, which is wholly concerned with the search for truth in nature, ought to reject those truths which God Himself... these enemies never stop invoking the power and excellence of human reason' (Pius IX 1846, §5). Therefore, the Pope reaffirms the traditional interpretation of reason and the moral nature of naturalism. In the allocution *Quibus Quantisque* (April 20, 1849), written from the exile of Gaete, we can find a further attack on Free Masons. Similarly, in *Noscitis et Nobiscum* (Dec. 8, 1849, after political disorders), he blames secret sects for attempts to draw the Italian people to Protestantism.[18] Here, we find the first citations of *Socialism* and *Communism*, which are considered misapplying the concepts of liberty and equality. However, if socialism is perceived as a specific political system, there is no blame for liberalism as such. The theme of the *right interpretation of reason* is, again, the central theme of the allocution *Singulari Quadam* (Dec. 9, 1854). Pius IX argued that the 'worshippers of human reason, who set up reason as a teacher of certitude, and who promise themselves that all

things will be fortunate under its leadership, have certainly forgotten how grave and terrible a wound was inflicted on human nature from the fault of our first parent; for darkness has spread over the mind, and the will has been inclined to evil' (Pius IX 1854). Therefore, perfect rationality is seen as a mistaken assumption. Similarly, the allocution *Jamdudum Cernimus* (March 18, 1861) rejects modernity. However, there is no reference to the kind of spontaneous order theories of society coming from Scotland that constitute the real alternative to Catholic organicism.

In 1862, Pius IX published the well-known *Syllabus of Errors* (June 9), in which a set of modern mistakes were denounced:

I Pantheism, naturalism, and absolute rationalism, in which the only relevant point here is the third, where the idea that human reason – without any reference to God – is the sole arbiter of truth, good and evil is declared false, while stating that law which secures the welfare of men and of nations.

II Moderate rationalism.

III Indifferentism and latitudinarianism.

IV Socialism, communism, secret societies, biblical societies, clerico-liberal societies.

V Errors concerning the Church and her rights.

VI Errors on civil society... among which is 39: the state as a source of all rights (that can be related to Hobbes).

VII Errors concerning natural and Christian ethics.

VIII Errors concerning Christian marriage.

IX Errors regarding the civil power of the sovereign Pontiff.

X Errors about modern liberalism, among which the point 77 argues that 'In the present day, it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other forms of worship'. At point 80 liberalism is cited: 'The Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization' (Pius IX 1862).

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The actual reference is political liberalism, with a specific mention of *clerico-liberal societies*. Points V, IX, and X testify to the difficulty of adapting to changing political regimes. They testify the reluctance to any mingling with cultural and political liberalism.

In a few years (in 1870), the Church would lose its temporal domain, which would force a change of perspective.[19] The following year, in *Quanto Conficiamur Moerore* (Aug. 10, 1863), there is some more interesting critique of the central points of economic theory. We can read a negative assessment of self-interest seen as the ‘most pernicious error... unbridled and damnable self-love and self-interest that drive many to seek their own advantage and profit with clearly no regard for their neighbour. We mean that thoroughly insatiable passion for power and possessions that overrides all the rules of justice and honesty and never ceases by every means possible to amass and greedily heap up wealth’ (Pius IX 1863, §11). Then, there is a condemnation of Liberal Clericals, which is a reference to Antonio Rosmini.[20]

Quanta Cura (Dec. 8, 1864) condemned some current errors: ‘deceptive opinions and most pernicious writings to raze the foundations of the Catholic religion and of civil society... applying to civil society the impious and absurd principle of “naturalism”’ (Pius IX 1864). The fact that the liberty of conscience and worship is each man’s personal right is defined as the *liberty of perdition*.

Leo XIII (1878–1903) was the pope who developed encyclical letters in a more explicit theoretical direction, and these documents became more interesting and precise sources of the political economy position of the Catholic Church on social and economic issues. The first letter, *Apostolici Muneris* (Dec. 28, 1878), however, is against the mistakes of socialism. *Diuturnum Illud* (June 29, 1881) is more interesting because it discusses the origin of civil authority. It proposes arguments against social contract theory, from Hobbes to Rousseau, and favours an organic society.

Etsi Nos (Feb. 15, 1882) contains some discussion on some central ideas of utilitarian economic thinking and states that in the view of economists, ‘the regulation of life merely depends upon the good pleasure and free will of man. In society, the liberty without limit which they preach and pursue engenders license, and this license is very soon followed by the overthrow of order, the most

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fatal scourge of the public welfare' (Leo XIII 1882, §8). This, however, is not only referable to liberalism but to a wide variety of modern theories. In *Humanum Genus* (April 20, 1884), the pope goes back to the problem of Masonry and the wrong idea of liberty of the adherents to that society.

Immortale Dei directly discusses the *Christian Constitution of States* (Nov. 1, 1885). It presents the first discussion of liberty: 'Liberty is a power perfecting man, and hence should have truth and goodness for its object. However, the character of goodness and truth cannot be changed at option. These remain ever one and the same, and are no less unchangeable than nature itself. ... Whatever, therefore, is opposed to virtue and truth may not rightly be brought temptingly before the eye of man, much less sanctioned by the favor and protection of the law' (Leo XIII 1885, §32). In fact, 'the Church cannot approve of that liberty which begets a contempt of the most sacred laws of God, and casts off the obedience due to lawful authority, for this is not liberty so much as license, and is most correctly styled by St. Augustine the *liberty of self-ruin*... Indeed, since it is opposed to reason, it is a true slavery' (Leo XIII 1885, §37). The true liberty does not allow men to be the slaves of error and of passion, and we should care that 'liberty of action shall not transgress the bounds marked out by nature and the law of God' (Leo XIII 1885, §46). Therefore, moral liberty is wrong. However, the fundamental examination of the notion of liberty was proposed in more detail three years later in *Libertas* (June 20, 1888) (discussed further below).

Papal documents after *Rerum Novarum*

Rerum Novarum (May 15, 1891) represents a fundamental point for the development of the social doctrine, which allowed a more precise discussion of the economic epistemology that divides Catholicism from liberalism. Therefore, this encyclical letter directly addressed political economy issues. *Rerum Novarum* still includes a critique of revolutionary changes, which are all the same accepted in their direction, even if they are seen as requiring specific institutions to preserve justice in economic relationships. It is a critique of actual economic systems and not of theories, but it adopts the economic categories of capital and labour. However, it never uses the term 'liberalism'. It argues in favour of institutions that liberals tended to avoid (trade unions, associations,

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etc.), but it has a pragmatic approach. Remarkably, Leo XIII in this letter adopts a very liberal (Lockean) conception of property rights that compensates for the introduction of the demand for social justice in favour of labour (Waterman 1982; 2016; Solari 2020). This fact also highlights the reluctance of the pope to let rights as property exclusively depend on formal law. Leo's remaining works, *Dall'Alto dell'Apostolico Seggio* (Oct. 15, 1890), *Custodi di Quella Fede*, and *Inimica Vis* (both Dec. 8, 1892), are, again, against Masonry. Lastly, *Graves de Communi Re* (Jan. 18, 1901) is about Christian democracy (influenced by the research of Giuseppe Toniolo), which is a final acceptance of modern democracy but conceived in a way still far from liberal constitutionalism. In a way, the pope had to cope with the actual situation and begin to open toward a bottom-up, reorganized political action of Catholics within the state.

Pius X represents a step back to what concerns the opening to modernism. *Lamentabili Sane Exitu* (July 3, 1907) is a letter on the role of the Church and theology.[21] *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (Sept. 8, 1907) expresses a further condemnation of modernism, but it is mainly directed at strictly theological issues.[22]

In the Encyclicals of Pius XI, we find many arguments in favour of a *third way*, which was mainly theorized and popularized by German-speaking Jesuits and by Giuseppe Toniolo in Italy. *Quadragesimo Anno* (May 15, 1931) points to liberalism as a theory that imbued past government action (§10), even though the pope admitted that this doctrine is heterogeneous. It argues that we can receive 'no help from either Liberalism or Socialism, for the one had proved that it was utterly unable to solve the social problem aright, and the other, proposing a remedy far worse than the evil itself, would have plunged human society into great dangers' (Pius XI 1931, §14). It insisted that 'the principles of Liberalism were tottering, which had long prevented effective action by those governing the State' (Pius XI 1931, §27). Importantly, it emphatically stated that 'let all remember that Liberalism is the father of this Socialism that is pervading morality and culture and that Bolshevism will be its heir' (Pius XI 1931, §122). Pius XI also wrote a letter on the 1929 crisis: *Nova Impendet* (Oct. 2, 1931). However, asking for charity, donation, and solidarity, this letter was not an occasion for blaming liberalism. *Divini Redemptoris* (March 19, 1937) is written against Bolshevik communism. It contains some insight into the distribution of

income that expresses principles far from liberal ideas: ‘workingmen are denied a salary that will enable them to secure proper sustenance for themselves and for their families...’ (Pius XI 1937, §52) (the Italian version sounds more finalistic). The sense is that if capitalists do not assure the viable remuneration of the working class, communism could be a serious menace.

After the end of the war, Pius XII wrote *Humani Generis* (Aug. 22, 1950), which is an important epistemological and philosophical document against false philosophy, such as evolutionism, existentialism, and some kind of historicism, but contains nothing specifically relating to liberalism. Finally, John XXIII, in his *Mater et Magistra* (May 15, 1961), expressed some further argument against the naturalistic conception of reality that denies any connection between morals and the economy, which after all is not in opposition to old liberalism. It also criticizes *unbounded competition* and other practical precepts of unregulated capitalism, but liberalism is never cited. It nevertheless argues, in opposition to most liberalism, that *labour is no commodity* and that the state cannot be absent from the economy. He also pointed out the dangers of the *international imperialism of money* and the capture of public powers by organized interests. Similarly, to *Rerum Novarum*, he argued in favour of the development of new institutions that are able to regulate the new capitalistic context.

Paul VI, in the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (Dec. 12, 1965), highlights the principles of *Vatican Council II*. Section §17 is titled *Liberty Greatness* and acknowledges that persons perform aware and free choices according to personal convictions. Nonetheless, it remarks that some fundamental social ties are necessary to human flourishing as the family and the political community (§24). Moreover, the end of action has always to keep the common good in sight, avoid excessive inequality and go beyond individualistic ethics (§30). It states that whatever the property regime, the universal destination of goods should be kept in sight: private property has also a social nature (§69). Later, discussing the problem of the organisation of property in agriculture, it reaffirms the distributionist principle of the desirability of small, diffused properties.

Two years later, the Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (March 26, 1967) in section §26 affirms that advantages of industrialisation may lead to good results if not framed by *unbridled liberalism*. The latter is defined as ‘economic progress, free competition as the guiding norm of economics, and private ownership of the

means of production as an absolute right, having no limits nor concomitant social obligations' and paves the way to a *particular type of tyranny* that Pius XI called *international imperialism of money* (Paul VI 1967, §26). This letter develops particularly the issue of developing countries. In that context, free trade can be called just only when it conforms to the demands of social justice (§59). Previously it had reaffirmed that the right to private property is not absolute and unconditional (§23).

Paul VI repropose the critique of liberalism in the Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (May 14, 1971). The pope writes that 'the Christian who wishes to live his faith in a political activity which he thinks of as service cannot without contradicting himself adhere to ideological systems which radically or substantially go against his faith and his concept of man. ... nor can he adhere to the liberal ideology which believes it exalts individual freedom by withdrawing it from every limitation, by stimulating it through exclusive seeking of interest and power, and by considering social solidarities as more or less automatic consequences of individual initiatives, not as an aim and a major criterion of the value of the social organization' (Paul VI 1971, §26). In section §35, this letter points at those aiming at the renewal of the liberal ideology in sight of efficiency and the defence of the individual against both large organisations and totalitarian states, developing a new model of liberalism more adapted to present-day conditions. This apparently is a good representation of Wilhelm Röpke's and *social market economy* neo-liberal approach (Felice and Sandonà 2017). However, Christians should not forget that 'at the very root of philosophical liberalism is an erroneous affirmation of the autonomy of the individual in his activity, his motivation, and the exercise of his liberty. Hence, the liberal ideology likewise calls for careful discernment on their part' (Paul VI 1971, §35). This is the clearest position of the Church on liberalism in the XX century, going straight to the point raised in this writing: careful discernment.

Looking at this unfolding of the Roman Church's position on liberalism, we may distinguish the critical position on the French Enlightenment based on the wrong idea of individual autonomy, which has been constant in the last three centuries. Then, in the eighteenth century, as a consequence of the French Revolution and the various changes in political regimes, the main problem was the loss of the organic nature of the polity in favour of constitutional liberalism,

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plus cultural secularization. However, by the end of the century, that turned to be a lost battle, and the Vatican found new ways of dealing with the new regimes, particularly after the fall of the Austrian empire. The protagonist of the end of the nineteenth and throughout the twentieth centuries was *unregulated capitalism*. Nonetheless, the central epistemological tenet of liberalism, individual moral autonomy, remains a focal point of Church's documents.

Which autonomy? Liberty, freedom, and the view of *Libertas*

Individual autonomy and freedom are two strictly interrelated concepts. Martin Rhonheimer (1997) highlighted two relatively parallel traditions of classical liberalism. The former, referring to Montesquieu, the *foundation fathers*, Constant and Tocqueville, keeps a political perspective (based on an imperfect nature of man); the latter considers liberalism as part of an anthropological and moral doctrine and can be referred to Kant and J.S. Mill. Similarly, Leo Strauss (1995) underlined the disappearance of authority and fixed norms as well as the lowering of moral ideals in modern liberalism. The latter, characterizing what he calls *open society*, is non-theological and non-metaphysical. Old liberalism, the *closed society* traced back to Greek antiquity up to Lucretius, is based on the relative insignificance of human activity when not understood in the whole order of things. In fact, the ancients understood the relation of sense perception and *logos* differently than do the liberals. Nonetheless, the conflict between the open and closed societies is not a conflict between reason and revelation. The differences are to be found in which virtues are considered fundamental to make the political order possible.

The contribution of Benjamin Constant at the beginning of the nineteenth century helped to point out a relevant difference between the liberties *of the ancient* and *of the moderns*. Although this distinction was first expressed by Sismondi (1818), Constant (1819) captured the two liberalisms well (Galaston 1991; 1995; 2002). Modern liberty includes the emancipation of the market from political institutions. In modern theories the political order is conceived as a contractual construction and not a natural order (Audard 2009, ch.2). The freedom of the moderns is directly opposed to the priority of political or religious authority in the structuring of society.

By contrast, the liberty of the ancients requires individuals' participation in a continuous process of political construction in a bottom-up perspective. It is based on horizontal sociability driven by an interaction able to discover the right rules to its ends. The latter is close to the view of Locke and Burke's conservative liberalism as well as to federalist liberalism.

This distinction may help highlighting the theoretical difficulties of Catholicism with liberalism. A concept individually centred and abstracted from the moral and legal context makes no sense from the Catholic perspective (De Ruggiero 1925, p. 425). *Liberty*, on the other hand, is the concept that makes the distance between liberal and Catholic thinking closer. This aspect was remarked by *Civiltà Cattolica* before the formal expression in the fundamental Encyclical letter *Libertas* (1888).

Luigi Taparelli wrote a series of articles in *Civiltà Cattolica* (1860) on the legally based liberty (see Mastromatteo and Solari 2014), which is defined *public liberty*. The latter, he stated, assures the respect of all rights of individuals taking place to social interaction. Consequently, the correct concept of liberty is that assuring the respect of individual moral, social and legal rights. This means that the study of economic interaction cannot elude a legal analysis of individuals' position in the social system (Taparelli 1860, p. 41). This element allows for a connection to Locke's classic liberalism and has many similarities to the *liberty of the ancients* introduced by Benjamin Constant.

The original theorization of Locke was based on 1) the idea of individual consent to government; 2) the idea of self-ownership or self-mastery; and 3) the existence of natural rights within a system of natural law thinking (Tierney 2005). The second point may contain some problematic concept relatively to liberty, depending on how we conceive it, but it is mainly the 'natural law-natural rights' connection that poses some difficult issue. In fact, compared to the ancient tradition of natural law, which was in progress (Tierney 1997), it represents a change in perspective. Natural law is seen as producing some natural rights (Locke 1660-64; see also Finnis 1980), the latter being interpreted as a global sphere of personality in continuity with laws. This allows Locke's theorization to change focus from laws to rights (Zuckert 1997). However, such a focus produces a non-neutral change, as it tends to make rights absolute, whereas they depend on the interpretation of laws, institutions, and relationships. In this change,

liberty tends to expand when we neglect or abstract it from the source of rights. This, however, happened after Locke and not much in Locke's approach (Tierney 2005), which maintains some strong moral dimension. We may say that in Locke's approach, as for the Church, there is a continuum between moral principles and the law. From the Catholic view, politically established civil laws had to be in harmony with moral law.

This reference to the moral dimension remains evident in virtue-based liberalism. In fact, Adam Smith exalted the *happy mediocrity* of bourgeois virtues as a fundamental element of capitalism: prudence, alertness, temperance, justice, self-control, and benevolence (in contrast with ancient virtues as 'sense of sacrifice,' 'honour,' 'self-denial to the public'). These virtues played a fundamental regulating role in economic processes. Such morally shaped foundations of behaviour were progressively lost with utilitarianism and other positivistic definitions of economic agency.

One of the central points of classical liberalism is the *neutrality of institutions* relative to the good life. This was a Lockean legacy that became a fundamental concept in the US Constitution (see Casalini 2002). Contrary to the hopes of the Vatican, consent had to be strictly political and not violate the inalienable rights of the individual conscience. This led to confining faith in the private sphere. This is certainly a problematic aspect of liberalism that has been discussed in encyclical letters on 'indifferentism' and on the danger that Catholicism would be transformed along the lines of Protestantism if the ideas of liberals would have prevailed. In the Christian view, *order*—the set of laws regulating civil and economic life—is a progressive result of providence. In liberalism, it is the result of fortuitous casualty induced by the prudential manipulation of circumstances. Burke and the federalist tradition conceived of this ordering as spontaneous and shaped by morals. In modern liberalism, this aspect has been lost.

The status of Catholic liberty was officially defined in *Libertas* by Leo XIII (June 20, 1888). This letter was written as an academic essay on liberty. It starts with a position close to liberalism:

Liberty, the highest of natural endowments, being the portion only of intellectual or rational natures, confers on man this dignity - that he is 'in the hand of his counsel' and has power over his actions. ... Man, indeed, is free to obey his reason, to seek moral good, and to strive unswervingly after his last end. Yet he is free also to turn

aside to all other things; and, in pursuing the empty semblance of good, to disturb rightful order and to fall headlong into the destruction which he has voluntarily chosen. (Leo XIII 1888, §1)

In this sentence, Leo XIII expressed ideas close to classical liberalism, the idea of a legally shaped and morally bounded liberty. This means that the Church is in favour of human liberty. Nonetheless, people often misunderstood what liberty is. In this way, ‘either they pervert the very idea of freedom, or they extend it at their pleasure to many things in respect of which man cannot rightly be regarded as free’ (Leo XIII 1888, §1). In this way, the pope talks about *natural liberties* adopting the language of liberals. Natural liberties are differently shaped compared to *moral liberty* derived from classical reason. We define goods as anything that can be the object of our desires. It follows that ‘freedom of choice is a property of the will, or, rather, is identical with the will in so far as it has in its action the faculty of choice. But the will cannot proceed to act until it is enlightened by the knowledge possessed by the intellect’ (Leo XIII 1888, §5). The good in the Catholic perspective is defined in conformity with classical reason as in medieval thought. Reason is far from being perfect and therefore human liberty necessarily stands in ‘need of light and strength to direct its actions to good and to restrain them from evil’ (Leo XIII 1888, §7). This *ordering of reason* is what Catholics define as the *moral law*. This implies that individual free will is relatively weakened in favour of the moral necessity socially defined. This is also the Neo-Thomistic view of *natural law* adopted by Leo XIII, which is naturally carved in the mind of man: the reason asking us to do the good. Moreover, moral principles are universal, and the Church supplies an interpretation of their application which leaves little autonomy to the individual in this regard. Such a limitation in individual freedom does not totally clash with economics, where ends are given, and the focus is on means. The problem is with the absolute autonomy of individual preferences.

Leo XIII particularly criticized liberalism for incorporating principles of naturalism and rationalism in the field of morality and politics. Rationalism is the creed of the supremacy of the independent human reason, refusing submission to faith or other authorities. Consequently, reason is seen as the only judge of truth. Therefore, the issue of the definition of liberty is nothing else than the problem of an independent morality.

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It is interesting to note that the pope admitted that an ethical liberalism exists, probably referring to Rosmini or to the French school of *Angers* (also called Catholic ‘school of liberty’).

There are, indeed, some adherents of liberalism who do not subscribe to these opinions ... compelled by the force of truth, do not hesitate to admit that such liberty is vicious, nay, is simple license, whenever intemperate in its claims, to the neglect of truth and justice; and therefore they would have liberty ruled and directed by right reason, and consequently subject to the natural law and to the divine eternal law. But here they think they may stop, holding that man as a free being is bound by no law of God except such as He makes known to us through our natural reason. In this they are plainly inconsistent. (Leo XIII 1888, §17)

Therefore, the pope reaffirmed that ethical liberalism should not exalt individualism, otherwise it would not be so different from the liberalism of the moderns.

The pope demands a limitation for what concerns some fundamental liberal freedoms concerning the press and speech. There could be no such right if not used moderately and within the bounds of morality. However, also *liberty of conscience* is problematic: ‘If by this is meant that everyone may, as he chooses, worship God or not, it is sufficiently refuted by the arguments already adduced. But it may also be taken to mean that every man in the State may follow the will of God and, from a consciousness of duty and free from every obstacle, obey His commands’ (Leo XIII 1888, §30).

All this explains the completely illiberal part of *Libertas*: the refusal of the sovereignty of people (§16), the denial of ‘so-called’ liberties of religion (§19), worries about freedom of speech and the press (§23), teaching (§24), and conscience (§30). All these liberties would have endangered the right ordering of reason operated by the Church; it would have lost control of the moral–political public space, leading to the individualization of conscience.

Individualism, good vs. bad?

Individualism is apparently a crucial aspect that hinders the popes from recognizing some affinity with classical liberalism. The problem is what

individualism means. Locke's individualism is based on a juridical and evolutionary approach to the individual that is not totally incompatible with Neo-Thomism (which, through Late-Scholasticism, incorporated some individualistic concepts). According to Locke (1690), the individual has his/her rooting and his/her belonging; it is not isolated. In particular, the self-conscience defined by Locke is a relationship with others' feedback on the self (Audard 2009). This is not in conflict with the idea of a person, even if it is not exactly a communitarian conception.

By contrast, Hobbes developed a methodological individualism that is really at odds with Catholic thought. Michael Freeden (1996) argued that methodological individualism cannot well represent the moral individualism of classic liberalism up to John Stuart Mill. Later, the *philosophy of moral sense* of Anthony A.-C. Shaftesbury, Francis Hutcheson, and Adam Smith shifted individuality from reason to sentiment. This is also not harshly conflicting with Catholic anthropology, but it is less close to it, similarly to Protestantism. Hume affirmed that the individual is not naturally gifted with a moral sense but that he has a natural sympathy for the others. Sympathy is the precondition for moral sentiments derived from it. This is in opposition to Catholic anthropology.

For Tocqueville, there are two forms of individualism: a low quality and an honourable one, able to foresee the common good and induce people to associate to reach it. For communitarians, individuals also have to identify themselves with the common good. This idea is certainly superficially similar to that of Thomas Aquinas but much simplified and avulse from the complex interplay of moral norms and individual reason.

Consequently, we can distinguish Hobbes' atomistic and methodological individualism from moral individualism. The latter, however, is diversified, and only a few streams of it can be approached in Catholic anthropology. William Galston (1995) proposed a similar distinction based on: a) the pluralistic individualism of Protestant reformation and the 'liberalism of fear' (Locke and Montesquieu) and b) the monistic individualism of Enlightenment, including Hobbes.[23]

John Stuart Mill studied the free development of individuality as a fundamental principle of well-being. He also (inconsistently) developed a dynamic and

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relational vision of individuality. However, other parts of his work remain anchored to utilitarianism. Utilitarianism neglects the social nature of individual interests, which is, in any case, a problem for the whole of liberalism.

Catholic personalism may be considered less distant from liberalism. Personalism is a perspective innovation, emerged in the first half of the Twentieth century, producing an evolution of the Catholic approach to social sciences, up to that time deeply affected by the structural approach of German socioeconomics. It consisted in a shift of perspective, from the social order and policymaking privileged by early scholars to the study of the *acting person*.^[24] Particularly, Mounier (1949) centred the social and economic study on the person, distinguishing it from 'the individual' that was emerging at time from mainstream microeconomics. This person is intended as acting morally and with a concern for the common good. In this way, economic decision-making can be centred on the person, but this is not the utilitarian individual theorised in modern liberalism. This perspective reached some success in the USA thanks to Peter Danner (1982; 2002) and Edward O'Boyle (1998) (Marangoni and Solari 2010). We can consider this perspective compatible with the free-market economy and with many of the fundamental tenets of liberalism but requiring a solidaristic dimension that is only partially conceived in the Lockean tradition. All that has consequences when conceiving policymaking (Bombaci 2022).

Conclusion: Catholic religion and liberalism with careful discernment?

Catholicism is, without any doubt, at odds with Hobbesian thought and utilitarianism for they leave no space to both spirituality and social obligations deriving from the social nature of man. It apparently displays some epistemological affinities with the empiricist non-rationalistic tradition of Locke and Burke, which is nonetheless almost extinct today or has undergone an evolution that makes it less open to Catholicism. In any case, moving the Catholic view in the direction of Locke means shifting it into the epistemology of Protestantism. However, this is exactly what happened to Catholicism with secularisation, when it lost the monopoly in the public sphere that allowed the control of consciences (the historicist immanentist dimension cited by Croce

1931). In the context of individualization of consciences, *ethical liberalism* supplies a nearly acceptable understanding of social and economic action. Obviously, in this change, many Catholics turned to socialism as an alternative destination, but that is another story.

Popes of the nineteenth century were aware that liberalism was heterogeneous and that it could include some ethical or social dimension not totally at odds with Catholicism. Therefore, Catholic documents from 1826 to 1971 often expressed resentful condemnation of specific and concrete expressions of liberalism, seldom of liberalism as a whole. The specific target of criticism was, instead, the French Enlightenment and modernist philosophy. Popes defended the communitarianism of their religion and the centrality of the Vatican hierarchy in the control of the social definition of the good. Therefore, they often attacked indifferentism and masonry, which directly expressed a concrete political menace for the Church. Most of the conflicting points pertain to the political and social domains and to concrete reforms that endangered the monopolistic position of this institution.

A few documents expressed detailed theoretical points discussing liberal tenets (*Libertas, Rerum Novarum, Quadragesimo Anno* and *Populorum Progressio*). These Papal documents [25] made some clear point against individualism that is still fundamental for any attempt to recover some syncretic matching of liberalism and the Catholic religion. To obtain such a mix, we should adopt a very relative form of liberty, obtainable only in very closed communities, or define a liberalism open to the reception of moral obligations defined in a community (ethical or social liberalism). Acceptable economic outcomes are not the result of the matching of self-interested individual claims through the market. They derive from socially aware persons that can act within the limits of social obligations in sight of the common good. The pretention of producing Catholic liberalism based on strong enforcement of ideas as unlimited individual accumulation and an individualistic form of moral freedom would automatically push it toward something else.

Endnotes

- [1] Naturally, liberalism does not hinder anyone to love his next as himself. Nonetheless, some clash between institutions and morals may occur, particularly as concerns the narrative we use to interpret the options of economic decisions.
- [2] In 1868 the *Sacra Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari* answered *non expedit* (not opportune or convenient) to an inquiry of some bishops about the lawfulness for Catholics to take part to Italian polls. That was confirmed in various documents till 1919.
- [3] Particularly in the context of their adhesion to the Western block.
- [4] In general, liberals and even more libertarians are in difficulty understanding practical science. Catholics see a limited extent for abstract modelling.
- [5] The identity of the Catholic socialist (worst if communist) was even more troubled than the liberal, of course, and represented a specular drama.
- [6] We can add Alexis de Tocqueville, John E.E.D. Acton, and Luigi Sturzo to this group (Antiseri 2010), except that they were not exactly economists.
- [7] Raimondo Cubeddu also argued that the critics of Catholics to the market lack technicality. They are based on consequences and not on theoretical points (Cubeddu 2003, p. 193).
- [8] Catherine Audard (2009, p. 31) argues that liberalism, also in its social declination, is not a socialism because equality has a different sense in it.
- [9] Wilhelm Röpke's liberalism gave priority to social integration compared to efficiency (Resico and Solari 2018). Many liberals can be included in the category of 'social liberalism', but the exact meaning of 'social' is always different.
- [10] In an essay titled 'The two liberalisms' published in 1985 in *Problemi del Socialismo* VII (3-4), 45-62.
- [11] Also the group of Coppet and Benjamin Constant acknowledged the role of religion and proposed a different understanding of self-interest, but they pointed to the protestant stream of Christianity (Faccarello and Steiner 2008).

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[12] This happened also in Italy with the writer Alessandro Manzoni in contact with Antonio Rosmini (Muscherà 2019).

[13] By the end of the 1970s, however, social Catholicism was accused of becoming an ideology, supporting progressive policies (Chenu 1979).

[14] Indifferentism: 'This perverse opinion is spread on all sides by the fraud of the wicked who claim that it is possible to obtain the eternal salvation of the soul by the profession of any kind of religion, as long as morality is maintained' (Pius VIII 1829, 3).

[15] We mention Charles F.R. Montalembert, Jean-Baptiste H. Lacordaire, Philippe Gerbert, Charles de Caux, the latter author of one of the first manuals of social economy.

[16] 'We had to use Our God-given authority to restrain the great obstinacy of these men with the rod' (Gregory XVI 1832, 14).

[17] 'Cities renowned for wealth, dominion, and glory perished as a result of this single evil, namely immoderate freedom of opinion, license of free speech, and desire for novelty' (Gregory XVI 1832, 14).

[18] After the attempted revolution of 1848, Pius IX favoured the development of Jesuit studies and the creation of *Civiltà Cattolica* that begun publications in 1952. The publication was critical of liberalism, but it developed, thanks to Taparelli, a position that remained compatible with it. *Liberatore* (1872) was also quite harsh toward liberalism, but his thought was less influential.

[19] *Ubi Nos* (May 15, 1871) is about the annexation of Rome to Italy but raised no specific comment on liberal theory or practice. The explicit change of perspective happened with the II Vatican council and was stated in *Gaudium et Spes*.

[20] Rosmini was attacked mainly for his too close support of Piedmont's policies rather than for his liberal ideas.

[21] In Section (5), it contests the assertion that 'since the deposit of Faith contains only revealed truths, the Church has no right to pass judgment on the assertions of the human sciences' (Pius X 1907, §5).

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[22] But it is not enough for the Modernist school that the State should be separated from the Church. 'For as faith is to be subordinated to science, as far as *phenomenal elements* are concerned, so too in temporal matters the Church must be subject to the State' (Pius X 1907, §25), 'It is this inevitable consequence which impels many among liberal Protestants to reject all external worship, nay, all external religious community, and makes them advocate what they call, *individual religion*' (Pius X 1907, §25).

[23] Audard (2009) also proposed George Kateb's distinction (valid in the US): 1. negative individualism, will of resisting to interferences of others, state...; 2. positive individualism, autonomy, and creation dependent on others (Mill); 3. open individualism, to the others and the different.

[24] Mounier kept a certain anti-capitalistic attitude in his writings, particularly in (1934).

[25] Source of English translations of encyclical letters: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/>, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/index_it.htm.

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